

The Warren Record

Commissioners, Trustees Meet For Hospital Discussion

By KAY HORNER
News Editor

The prognosis for the survival of small, rural hospitals like Warren General is not good, a University of North Carolina professor of social and administrative medicine told Warren County citizens and officials at a public meeting last Wednesday.

"Since 1983, the use of hospitals has been going down," Glenn Wilson told the audience that filled

the county courtroom, "and 50 to 60 of the state's 132 hospitals now have occupancy rates less than 60 percent. If we put our heads in the sand, 30 to 50 hospitals in North Carolina will have to close."

A Warren General Hospital Task Force in a report released in June suggested that the hospital explore alternate methods of care such as outpatient services, but Wilson in his comments advocated that area hospitals be created to serve

several counties under the umbrella of multi-county hospital authorities.

Wilson's suggestion was bitter medicine for some of those attending the meeting, which was called by county commissioners, members of the hospital task force, and hospital trustees.

Martha Page, administrator of Warren Plaza Rest Home, expressed concern for the health care of her residents.

"We have 100 elderly, senile, sick patients and it's very hard to transport them to Henderson or to other hospitals," she said. "I've been here seven years and this hospital has saved many patients' lives that I know about."

Mrs. Page also charged that the hospital had long been neglected by county officials.

"The hospital should have been on the list of priorities long ago," she said, "before this desperate situation developed....I sincerely hope that you people will realize that we have 200 people (in Warren Plaza and Warren Nursing Center) who depend on that hospital."

Warren General, which opened in 1951, has in recent years suffered from underutilization of services. More recently, it has experienced financial difficulty due to cost containment efforts such as those mandated recently by the federal Medicare program, and its inability to afford the specialized personnel and equipment needed in the modern practice of medicine.

As a county hospital, Warren General has also carried the liability of indigent patients.

No one is turned away because of the inability to pay, and Mrs. Eva M. Clayton, chairperson of the county commissioners, said Wednesday that "some people we know we are serving free of charge and there are others who promise to pay and don't."

The fact that rural hospitals throughout the nation are in the same predicament as Warren General seemed scant consolation for those who spoke at the meeting.

Gladys Wemyss of Warrenton said the operation of the hospital "has always been a struggle. If there is any way possible, we should concentrate on what we have and make it work. It's an asset and it saves lives."

Mary West, a nurse at Warren General, told the group, "There are two people (treated recently at the hospital) who would not be alive today if we had not been there and a doctor had not been in the hospital. There was no time to get anywhere else."

Warren County Health Director Joe Lennon suggested that future plans for the hospital include a "beefed up" emergency room with more extensive services.

"We must do something to provide people in Warren County with excellent around-the-clock care," Lennon commented. "You don't schedule a heart attack."

There has been no discussion by county or hospital officials of eliminating emergency room services which are vital not only to county citizens, but also to the location of industry in the county.

Col. Herman Andersen, a past administrator of the hospital now serving in a volunteer capacity, urged support for the hospital "until we get something better."

"We've come a long way and I'm sorry to see the hospital in the shape it's in," Andersen said, agreeing that a consolidation of area health care agencies might provide the "biggest health value for the tax dollar."

Warren General is the first county-owned hospital in the state to seek alternative methods of service to its current 37-bed in-patient services.

Seventh District Representative Frank W. Ballance, Jr., a Warrenton attorney, said at the meeting that funding for conversion of the hospital into a facility offering services other than in-patient care might be available from the General Assembly.

"The General Assembly likes to fund projects which are models," Ballance said. "If we are in a position by November to put plans on paper, in February we can present the plans."

"I know these people (who spoke at the meeting) are sincere," Ballance said, "...and I know what the citizens want. We want a hospital, but we want what we can't pay for."

The N. C. Office of Rural Health Services, whose representatives were on hand Wednesday, was asked last month by county and hospital officials to conduct a study of Warren General to determine how it could be converted into a viable health care facility. The agency has been directed to have its report ready within six months.

"We have deadlines," Mrs. Clayton noted. "We can't study this forever."

Sheriff's Deputies Crack Cases, Nab Three On Larceny Charges



POSTMASTER BRUCE BELL

Postmaster Stepping Down

By MARY C. HARRIS
Staff Writer

After 21 years of working to ensure that "neither snow nor rain nor heat nor gloom of night stays these couriers from the swift completion of their appointed rounds," John Bruce Bell is ready to allow someone else to open the letters addressed to the U. S. Postmaster, Warrenton Office. He has announced his retirement effective October 3.

Having spent most of his adult life as an automobile salesman, with the exception of four years

of military duty, Bell came to the Post Office Department in 1963. His first appointment was postmaster of Macon, where he served until 1975 when he was chosen to fill the vacancy left in the Warrenton office by the death of Postmaster A. C. Blacklock.

In an interview this week, Bell reflected on the changes he has observed as the Post Office Department has evolved into the U. S. Postal Service. He has seen rural routes consolidated, making the longest of the three

(Continued on page 8)

Three arrests were made yesterday (Tuesday) by the Warren County Sheriff's Department in connection with break-ins in the area, according to Chief Deputy Bobby Dean Bolton.

Larry Wayne Hamm, 26, of Warrenton was arrested yesterday and charged with breaking into Warren Plains Methodist Church and with larceny of two air-conditioners and draperies, as well as injury to real property at the church.

A Virginia man, Steven Leonard Haislip, 20, of Gasburg, Va. was also arrested in connection with that break-in and charged with breaking and entering and larceny.

Deputy Bolton said that Hamm was charged with breaking into a mobile home owned by Cheryl Coffman of Norlina, located on the Airport Road north of Warrenton, and with the theft of an air-conditioner, couch, chair, brass lamp and set of bamboo curtains.

The break-in at the mobile home occurred on Aug. 10, and the church break-in was Aug. 16.

Both men were being held in Warren County Jail as of presstime Tuesday. Hamm is being held on a \$5,000 bond and Haislip on a \$10,000 bond.

Also arrested on connection with the mobile home break-in was David Allan Aycock of Norlina who was charged with breaking, entering and larceny. He was released on his own recognizance.

All three are scheduled to appear in Warren County District Court today (Wednesday).

In addition, Deputy Bolton said he has a warrant for the arrest of Robert Pitchford, Jr., 17, of Rt. 3, Warrenton on a charge of possession of stolen goods in connection with the mobile home break-in, but the warrant had not been served as of late yesterday afternoon.

That warrant also includes a charge of breaking, entering and larceny of a firearm from the residence of C. B. Stegall of Warrenton on August 4.

Deputy Bolton was assisted in the investigations by Sheriff's Deputies L. E. Harrison, and Thomas McCaffity, and Warrenton Police Chief Freddie Robinson.

Unclaimed Money Is Available

By MARY C. HARRIS
Staff Writer

A total of \$3,172.45 in unclaimed or abandoned property is payable to 30 people of Warren County from the N. C. Escheat Fund, according to information released on August 15 by State Treasurer Harlan Boyles. The fund, set up by law and administered under the direction of the State Treasurer, has returned more than \$350,000 to people throughout the state as a result of last year's concerted effort to restore unclaimed and abandoned property to its proper owners.

Over 11,000 businesses, corporations, firms, banks, insurance companies and the like are on the master file of holders required to report to the Escheat Fund. These holders of property determined to be unclaimed and abandoned must first attempt to locate the owner before remitting the property to the Department of the State Treasurer.

Law requires that lists of owners of such property be sent each year to every clerk of court in the state. These lists are then made available for public inspection at each courthouse and are kept on permanent file in the clerk's office. Efforts to return the property are being intensified, and the treasurer has enlisted the aid of the state's newspapers.

If the owners cannot be found, the money is invested by the Department of the State Treasurer, and the interest is used to provide educational loans for qualifying N. C. students in the state's colleges and universities.

"I know that people are very grateful when they read in the paper that there is money waiting for them," Boyles asserted, "and our department is gratified by this help as well."

The following persons of this county may write to the Abandoned Property Office, Department of State Treasurer, 325 North Salisbury Street, Raleigh, N. C. 27611 or call (919) 733-4440 to get information about the unclaimed property listed:

WARRENTON

Joseph Green, Mannie L. Green and Charlie Alston.....	\$209.34
Warren Building & Development, Inc.....	47.51
Yettie Wilson and Elizabeth Smith.....	472.86
Bobby Jefferson and Lois Jefferson.....	82.88
Candies Davis.....	37.25
E. A. Turner ITF Alvette B. Turner.....	67.99
Georgia J. Exum.....	34.89
Benjamin Kieshawn Kearney or Joselyn Kearney.....	25.64
Catherine Williams.....	25.41
Joel K. Green.....	263.50
Jan W. Pittman.....	26.43
Paul P. Pope.....	48.00
Mary Bryant.....	47.95

NORLINA

Charles Burton, Jr. —	
Joyce F. Burton, Trustee.....	316.43
William Champion.....	74.17
Chris White or Travis White.....	145.79
David Boyd or Rosa Boyd.....	70.61

Prices Near \$1.70 Here

Hopes that tobacco prices would continue to rise as the season progressed were fulfilled Monday as the Warrenton market moved into its third week of sales.

Mrs. Alice Marie Robertson, sales supervisor, reported that Warrenton's warehouses sold 376,273 pounds of tobacco for a

(Continued on page 8)

Joyce Hawkins.....	25.18
George Howell and Mary W. Howell.....	59.32
Martha Jiggetts and Marvin Jiggetts.....	26.66
John C. Allen.....	50.00
Glenis Alston.....	50.00
MACON	
Steve Danial Brickhouse by William V. Brickhouse.....	26.60
Clyde E. Brown.....	26.87
Kenneth E. Bender.....	34.40
William C. Harris.....	32.56
RIDGEWAY	
Mary Frances Henderson.....	762.93
Spencer Henderson, Sr.....	26.90
MANSON	
Alvin J. B. Hawkins.....	25.77
Glenn Casey.....	28.55



Jonas Milo Alston, left, new Warren County deputy sheriff, takes the oath of office administered by Mrs. Dora Stegall, assistant clerk of court. Witnessing the Monday morning ceremony is Sheriff T. R. Williams. (Staff Photo)

Warren Native Is New Deputy

A 24-year-old Warren County native, Jonas Milo Alston, was sworn in on Monday morning as a deputy sheriff for Warren County. He became the sixth full-time deputy on Sheriff T. R. Williams' force.

Alston took his oath of office from Mrs. Dora Stegall, assistant clerk of court. He will now undergo seven weeks of basic law enforcement

training at Vance-Granville Community College.

The son of Mr. and Mrs. Stephen T. Alston, Sr. of Airport Road, Alston is a graduate of John Graham High School and was awarded a diploma from North Carolina Central University in 1981. He majored in political science with emphasis on criminal justice.

From 1980 until 1984 he worked in public safety with Duke University. He was a Department of Correction employee from February until earlier this month when he resigned to accept the deputy's post.

Also a resident of Airport Road, Alston is a member of Greenwood Baptist Church. He is single.

Homeowner Care Urged By Firemen

Several residences in Warren County have suffered fire damage due to direct or indirect hits by lightning during recent electrical storms.

The Warren County Fire Commission urges homeowners to have a qualified electrician check for smoldering fire or other damage to electrical systems if they suspect that their homes have been hit by lightning.

"With a direct hit, instant fire usually results," O. L. "Butch" Meek, vice chairman of the commission said this week. "With an indirect hit, shortages in the circuit could occur causing a smoldering fire that lays there until it gets enough oxygen to ignite."

Meek said the fire could ignite as long as three or four days after the lightning strikes.