

The Warren Record

From The Halls Of Montezuma, To The Warrenton-Norlina Road



Peering from the top of this military tactical vehicle, these two marines seem ready to do battle to defend their encampment on a 25-acre tract here near Warren Hills Nursing Center on U.S. 158. The marines and sailors, participants in a 15,000-person exercise that will culminate in a mock battle to be fought at Ft. Pickett, Va., bivouacked this week on land belonging to M. C. Hicks of Wise. (Photo by Brenda Clarke)

By THURLETTA M. BROWN
News Editor

"We've certainly had all the protection we'll ever need" was the comment made in jest on Tuesday by Mrs. Emily Johnson, who for two nights, has had as her next door neighbors a convoy of military vehicles and a few battalions worth of marines who had used the 25-acre tract adjacent to the Johnson residence on US 158 here as their campsite.

The marines had bivouacked in Warren County while en route to Ft. Pickett, Va. for a training exercise.

According to Sgt. Bob Beyer, media chief at Camp LeJeune, some 15,000 persons, 1,000 tactical vehicles and 250 aircraft are involved in an exercise designed to test the ability of the II Marine Expeditionary Force to operate and move over extended dis-

tances. Beyer gave his assurance that area citizens had no reason to be alarmed. "There are always a number of training exercises and there is nothing unusual this time—except it is the first time for one of this scale," the sergeant said.

The operation was begun on Oct. 17 and by Oct. 23, the initial convoys of vehicles had begun their journey northward to Ft. Pickett and A.P. Hill, Va. "The operation will continue through Oct. 26," Sgt. Beyer said, "with the 24th through the 26th being the busiest period."

Sgt. Beyer said that during the movement phase of the operation, marines and sailors, the II Marine Aircraft Wing and a security force, which serves as a support group, will stay at pre-arranged rest areas. "Many of those rest areas were provided by

landowners," the sergeant said.

And, in Warren County, that rest area was provided by M. C. Hicks of Wise, owner of the land adjacent to Warren Hills Nursing Center.

Hicks, an army veteran himself—missing action in World War I by only a few weeks, was contacted in person by Capt. Harper regarding the use of his land. "They came to visit me over 30 days ago," Hicks said. "I said that it would be fine to camp there, if they wanted to, as long as there was no damage done to the property." The 25-acre tract has been reserved through Nov. 5, Hicks said, but a colonel who visited him again on Tuesday said it was unlikely that another encampment would be established there.

The marines bivouacked this week in Warren County will be

home again at Camp LeJeune by Nov. 3 or Nov. 4, Sgt. Beyer said. The choice of route taken from Camp LeJeune to Ft. Pickett, Va. has been left to the discretion of the unit's commanding officer. According to Beyer, the officers have the option of using more than one route and Warrenton just happened to be the one selected. "Since this exercise is being conducted as though it were 'the real thing,' the commanders must plan and implement alternate routes.

The marines will be met at Ft. Pickett by a smaller "opposing force" that has made a similar trek from an undisclosed northern location. There they will engage in a "force-on-force" training operation. "Although there will be no live rounds of ammunition fired, they will enact (Continued on page 8B)

Guideline Effect 'Hard To Predict'

By THURLETTA M. BROWN
News Editor

Controversial minimum facility standards for schools may have little impact on construction costs associated with Warren County's new middle school, Superintendent Michael Williams said Monday.

Believed by many educators and administrators to be excessive, the proposed standards—which govern everything from size of classrooms to lights and ceiling heights and were approved last June by the General Assembly—are being reconsidered. During that review, equipment standards proposed that establish guidelines for virtually everything from number of trash cans and pencil sharpeners, will also be reviewed.

The development of the guidelines can be traced back to a 1985 report made by the Public Education Policy Council to the General Assembly in which minimum standards were requested. When the legislature passed the School Facilities Finance Act in 1987, it directed the State Board of Education to establish minimum standards for facilities, furnishing and equipment.

But, the minimum facility standards would greatly increase the cost of school construction and would offset the benefits that would have been realized through the School Facilities Finance Act.

According to a report made recently by the North Carolina School Boards Association, the proposed minimum standards would cause a 41.4 percent increase in costs associated with

the construction of a typical elementary school, a jump from \$6.58 million to \$9.3 million. The cost of a new high school would increase 5.8 percent, from \$9.55 million to \$10.45 million. The typical junior high school would increase in cost by 9.4 percent, from \$6.3 million to \$7.29 million.

Warren County's new middle school had been estimated at \$6.95 million. "The real effect of the proposed minimum standards would be hard to predict," Superintendent Williams said, but we are comfortable in knowing that some of the proposed items had already been included in our original specifications.

The new standards require that middle schools have art classrooms, as an example. The specifications for Warren's new middle school included that feature. "If the proposed new standards are employed, as presently published, and are applied here," Williams said, "there would be a cost increase."

Reactions to the proposed minimum facilities standards will be received on Nov. 1 in Raleigh. In preparation for the public hearing, the N.C. School Boards Association will present its position concerning the need for some of the facility standards and the resulting increased costs. The following recommendations—endorsed by the Warren County Board of Education, along with similar boards across the state—will be made by NCSBA:

- The facility standards adopted by the State Board of Education in June of this year be (Continued on Page 3)



Norlina's former fire chiefs, as well as present chief Gene Medlin, were honored Monday night when Mayor W. K. "Bill" Delbridge unveiled an engraved plaque bearing their names. Shown during the ceremony which came during an appreciation dinner for fire depart-

ment members and wives are, left to right, Leigh Traylor, John Clarke, Hector Aycock, all former chiefs; current chief Medlin; and Delbridge. The new plaque is scheduled to hang in the town's fire hall. (Staff Photo by Howard Jones)

Appreciation Banquet Held For Local Firemen

Norlina citizens Monday night said a collective "thank you" to members of the town's volunteer fire department during a steak dinner held at the Norlina Landmark. Wives of firemen were special guests for the 7 p.m. event.

Underwritten by contributions from Norlina business firms and individuals, the gala affair was the outgrowth of residents' desire to show their appreciation to the fire unit which last month was named Warren County's best all-round fire department for the second year in a row.

Fire Chief Gene Medlin thanked retired firemen for their

efforts in staging the meal, and paid special tribute to Mr. and Mrs. Ebin Willis, owners of Norlina Clover Farm, for spearheading the dinner.

Mayor Bill Delbridge served as master of ceremonies, telling firemen and guests during the evening that he hoped that as much as \$20,000 in matching state funds—provided under provisions of House Bill 300—might be available to assist in an expansion of the town's fire house.

Delbridge said he hoped to be able to make a pitch for Norlina's bid for the state funds with Max Powell, assistant state

fire marshal. Powell, a former Durham television newsman, was unable to attend the session, but sent Wilburn Small to represent the Department of Insurance.

Small, an operations officer for the department, drew on his experiences as both a paid and volunteer fire fighter during a brief talk following dinner.

Small echoed the theme of the night when he told firemen that "all of us need for somebody to appreciate us."

Noting the fact that all members of the Norlina Town Board were present, the speaker said "it's very gratifying to see of-

officials of the city thank their fire department."

He said, "there's no way this state can pay for volunteer efforts" in fire fighting, but said the General Assembly was working to help firemen meet their expenses.

Small said fire departments are being affected by many programs at the federal and state level and that firemen "have to take advantage of the opportunities and training we are given."

Norlina firemen who took team and individual awards during the 1988 Fireman's Day (Continued on Page 3)



Mrs. Junell Blaylock, left, director of Warren County Schools Exceptional Programs, and B. J. Gill, speech/language teacher and a member of the Special Olympics Task Force, are shown with a check in the amount of \$3,400, one of five grants awarded in the country by Special Olympics International's Community Outreach Grant program.

Mrs. Blaylock applied for the grant in July and was notified in September that Warren County Schools Exceptional Program was the first exceptional education program to receive one of the grants that are to be used for expanding the number of athletes, families and volunteers in the Special Olympics program.

Warren Program One Of Five In Nation To Receive Grant

Christmas came in September this year for the Warren County Schools Exceptional Program, thanks to the time and effort given by an employee of the local school system.

Mrs. Junell Blaylock, director of the Warren County Schools Exceptional Program, received notice from the Special Olympics International Headquarters at the end of September that her application for a Special Olympics Community Outreach Grant had been approved. The grant, in the amount of \$3,400, was one of five community outreach grants in the country and was the first awarded to an Exceptional Education Program.

The Special Olympics Community Outreach Grant Program is intended to significantly expand the number of individuals

with mental retardation participating in Special Olympics by establishing new Special Olympics programs and/or strengthening and expanding existing Special Olympics programs in local communities.

The funds for the grants were made available last year by several rock 'n' roll stars who donated their talents to sing Christmas songs for an album entitled, "A Very Special Christmas." Some of the stars included Bruce Springsteen, Whitney Houston, Madonna, U2 and Run-D.M.C. Profit from the album totaled more than \$5 million. All proceeds were given to Special Olympics International.

"These grants are only the first in what we hope will be a series of similar grants in the months

and years to come," said Eunice Kennedy Shriver, chairman of Special Olympics International.

Warren County Schools Exceptional Program has focused its emphasis on helping teachers bring the benefits of Special Olympics to people with mental retardation by targeting the following goals for the program:

- providing Special Olympics training material for new coaches, new athletes and new volunteers;
- purchasing additional sports equipment for expansion of local games;
- providing additional transportation for athletes to local, regional and state games;
- and purchasing public relations material for all community involvement events. (Continued on Page 3)