

Warren County Population Growth Lags Behind State, Nation

Warren County's population—while showing growth of 2.3 percent between April, 1980 and July, 1987—has increased at a slower rate than that experienced across North Carolina and in the United States, a report released recently by the Census Bureau has shown.

According to the report, the number of persons in Warren County increased from 16,232 in April of 1980 to an estimated 16,600 in July of 1987. During the same period, however, North Carolina's population increased from 5,881,766 to an estimated 6,412,000 for a percentage increase of 9.0 percent. The nation's population increased from 226,545,805 in April of 1980 to an estimated 243,376,000 in July of 1987, for a 7.4 percent increase, which lagged almost two percentage points behind that of North Carolina.

While the Census Bureau makes a comprehensive count of the national population only every 10 years, it issues periodic estimates which update these totals. The revised estimates are important for reasons beyond their statistical significance because a number of federal agencies base grant funding for localities on these reports. Additionally, many national corporations take the reports into consideration as they plan future activities. In some locales, on several occasions, interim population reports by the Census Bureau have distressed local officials so much that they have gone to court to prevent

the federal government from making use of the figures for funding projections. It is for these reasons that the Warren County Board of County Commissioners and other municipal officials have encouraged active participation by the county's citizenry in the soon-to-be-begun comprehensive census project.

The most recent interim Census Bureau report revised population estimates made by the last local population report. According to that report, in 1986, the population in Warren County had been 16,700 instead of the updated estimate of 16,600. Also in that report, the United States had been 241,038,000, while the tally recorded for North Carolina had been 6,331,000—both lower than the revised counts.

To obtain preliminary population figures, the Census Bureau makes use of federal tax data to determine the number of persons whose county of residence has changed, along with data on Medicare enrollees and independent studies to estimate the population over 65 years of age. In addition, the bureau includes birth and death statistics to estimate natural (as opposed to migratory) net population changes. Other factors used in preparing the interim population reports include resident students, military personnel and immigration from abroad. The interim reports are estimates, census officials admit, but it is generally agreed that these are the most reliable population estimates available.

According to Census Bureau officials, this is the first time in this decade that a revision of county estimates has been released. There are so many factors which affect local population changes that it is highly unusual for the rate of change for a county's population to remain constant over a 10-year period. If the rate of population change in Warren County had continued as it did from 1970 through 1977 until 1980, the county's population would have grown by 10.4 percent. In fact, Warren County's population had increased by only 2.7 percent at the end of the decade.

As is the case for counties, changes in national and state population seldom remain constant over a 10-year period. If, for example, the national rate of population were to continue at its current rate, the number of persons living in the United States would increase by 10.8 percent by 1990. Whether or not this will occur remains to be seen, census personnel have said. From 1970 through 1977, the national population showed an 8.3 percent increase. If this rate had remained level throughout the decade, the country's population would have increased by 10.2 percent from 1970 through 1980. Actually, the national population grew by 11.4 percent from 1970 through 1980, a rate 3.1 percent higher than would have been the case.

State population changes are affected in the same way. If current demographic trends remain level, the population of North Carolina will have increased by 12.4 percent by 1990. An 8.7-percent increase was seen from 1970 through 1977, and had that rate remained level throughout the decade, the country's population would have increased by 10.2 percent. Actually, an 11.4 percent increase was experienced.

Statisticians feel that population estimates for 1987 do indicate certain general demographic trends. The Census Bureau had predicted that the national rate of population growth would decline and that has been the case. By 1990, the Census Bureau had predicted that the national population would range from 245,743,000 to 254,122,000. At some point in the next century, however, census officials have predicted that the national population will become level and remain at about 300,000,000.

Information released in the current population report indicated that the population of Warren County is changing at a less-rapid pace than it did from 1970 through 1977. During that period, the Census Bureau estimated that population growth was 7.5 percent. If the current rate of population change in Warren County continues through 1990, the population of Warren County will have increased by 3.1 percent, statisticians predict.



Warrenton Postmaster Sherwood Knight (center) and his staff were selected recently to receive the Management Sectional Center Manager's Award of Excellence for a perfect safety record during 1988. Shown with Knight are Jess Willis, Raleigh MSC coordinator, (left) and Ross Garulski, sectional center manager (right). The award was presented at the recent MSC Postmaster's Conference.

Two Warrenton Locations Entered

Two Warrenton locations—one a business and the other a residence—were found Monday to have been sites of unauthorized weekend entry, Police Chief Freddie Robinson said Tuesday.

The Warren Record on Monday morning was found to have been entered by a person or persons who had apparently kicked in the rear door of the building. According to the report taken by Police Officer Robbie Ayscue, the loss was limited to a small amount of cash and damage to the rear door.

A similar unauthorized entry into a garage apartment at the Ridgeway Street residence of Mr. and Mrs. Claude Bowers was also reported Monday. Entry had been gained through the back of the apartment by splitting the facing of the door, Chief Robinson said. An earlier break-in at the apartment had also been reported. According to that report taken by Sgt. Officer George Alston, about \$10 in cash was said to be missing.



These three Warren County residents had major roles at Farmers' Night held here on Friday night by the Warrenton Lions Club. Shown, left to right, are club president David Proctor; Lynn Carr, county executive director of the ASCS and main speaker; and Lion Dorsey Capps, who directed the roasting of barbecued pork served at the event. (Staff Photo by Howard Jones)

VGCC Trustees Seeking \$76,250 For Annex Here

Warren County's local government will be asked to provide \$76,250 for its satellite campus, following the recent approval of the 1989-90 budget for Vance-Granville Community College by its board of trustees.

Warren's local funds would be pooled with those from other local governments to provide \$696,590.

If granted, in addition to Warren's contribution, Vance County would provide \$420,000, while

Granville County's portion would be \$140,000.

Vance-Granville Community College will also request from the State \$5,996,512. In addition, VGCC has estimated it will need \$369,612 in federal monies and \$1,004,808 from other sources, including bookstore and vending-machine revenues.

The college's 1989-90 total budget request is \$8,094,522, down slightly from last year's budget of \$8.5 million.

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Farmers, Lions Club Hosts Observe Night With Barbecue And Speech

Some 160 Warren County farmers and their Warrenton Lions Club hosts gathered at the Lions Den here Friday night for a meal of barbecued pork and an in-depth look at provisions of the 1985 Farm Bill.

The occasion was the club's annual Farmers Night and the meal was prepared under the direction of veteran pig cooker Dorsey Capps, a club member. Lion President David Proctor presided.

Guest speaker for the yearly event was Lynn Carr, a Sampson County native and executive director of the Warren County Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service for the past two years. He was introduced by Lion Roy Pat Robertson.

Carr, who said he decided to speak on the 1985 farm bill because "it concerns farmers and landowners alike," told those in attendance that the bill was created by Congress to control supply and demand of commodities while protecting the country's natural resources.

He said the bill is implemented by the U. S. Department of Agriculture, created by Abraham Lincoln in 1862 "to serve not only the farmer but every American alike."

Carr focused his attention on the conservation portion of the bill, particularly the Conservation Reserve Program which was created to take highly erodible land (HEL) out of production. He said fields which erode severely on at least two-

thirds of the acreage is considered HEL land.

Annual payments from ASCS are available to cover half the cost of planting trees or fescue on HEL land taken out of production. Carr said the 10-year program is particularly good for absentee landowners.

To date, some 30 million acres of USDA's 45-million-acre goal have been entered in the program. In Warren County, about 5500 acres have been enrolled. This acreage consists of one-third trees and two-thirds grassland, Carr said, and represents 18 percent of Warren's total cropland.

Carr also touched on the Sodbuster part of the farm bill, and said it holds hope for a lot of HEL land in Warren County

which does not qualify for the Conservation Reserve Program.

Sodbusting, he said, means breaking out or farming new land with an approved conservation plan from the Soil Conservation Service that will keep erosion at a minimum.

Carr said the SCS takes conservation practices such as waterways, diversions, terraces, crop rotations and row patterns and uses these in the conservation plan. Persons with HEL fields need to have a conservation plan by Jan. 1, 1990.

In closing, Carr paraphrased an automobile commercial currently seen on television, saying that the heartbeat of America is agriculture, and commending the Warrenton Lions Club for its commitment to agriculture.

Comparison Counties Picked

Three of four counties expected to be compared with Warren County during a two-year planning study were selected Thursday by members of the Strategic Planning Executive Committee meeting at the Courtyard Inn.

Committee members directing a long-range planning study agreed to seek statistical data from Northampton and Lee counties in North Carolina and Brunswick County in Virginia in carrying out the project, funded primarily by a \$40,000 grant from the Rural Development Center of North Carolina.

During Thursday's Session—the first following a day-

long training workshop held several weeks ago—committee members voted to select two counties with similar demographic statistics to Warren, and two with contrasting profiles. A fourth, and final, county is expected to be selected on April 6 when strategic planners meet next.

Chairman Sears Bugg presided over Thursday's well-attended luncheon meeting. An environmental scan discussion was led by Shane Cochrane of the Kerr-Tar Council of Governments. County Manager Charles J. Worth reported on staffing consideration for the project.