

## State and National

# Hazardous waste site locations under consideration

By DAVID ETCHISON

The location for a low level hazardous waste disposal facility in North Carolina has been narrowed to two locations: one in Richmond County and one on the border between Wake and Chatham counties.

The N.C. Radioactive Waste Management Authority, formed in 1987, is composed of a board of 15 citizens, five of whom were appointed by the governor, five by the lieutenant-governor, and five by the speaker of the N.C. House of Representatives. The group "has the final decision (as to the location of the site), the governor does not," said Bill Furney, commission public information officer.

The commission began its search for a site by considering the entire state. By

November 1988, 38 percent of the state remained under consideration. In March 1989, 9.5 percent of the state was to be considered. By November 1989, the list narrowed to four sites: Richmond, Rowan, Union and Wake counties.

On Feb. 20, the list was narrowed to a site in the far southeast corner of Richmond County and 4 miles north of the South Carolina border, or one straddling the southwest border of Chatham County and the northeast border of Wake County.

The sites chosen have "met all technical requirements like depth to ground water, low population density, absence of flood-prone areas and others," Furney said. The Waste Management Authority will approve the site in two or three weeks or ask for further study. If a site is approved, an extensive year long

study will be done. The site will be approved after that, or further studies will be done.

In 1980 the Federal Government approved the Low Level Radioactive Waste Management Policy Act, which says that each state must be responsible for its own waste. This was done to encourage regional cooperation in hazardous waste disposal.

North Carolina is a member of the Southeast Compact, a group of eight states that have agreed to share the responsibility of the disposal of wastes.

"It makes more sense for states to work together on this (waste disposal)," said David Prather, deputy director of communications with Gov. Jim Martin's office.

For the past 17 years, a facility in Barnwell, S.C., has been handling waste

from the Southeast and all over the country. South Carolina is considered the first state to host a disposal facility, and North Carolina is the next. Each Southeastern state constructs a facility, and it is used by all the member states for 20 years or until 3 million cubic feet of waste has been stored. Another state then takes over the responsibility.

As for the disposal site, "this thing is a multiple engineered disposal facility. It's not a dump," Furney said.

The facility will be built and operated by Chem-Nuclear Systems, Inc., the same firm that runs the Barnwell site. Most of the waste will come from nuclear power plants.

Waste taken to the new site will be unloaded inside a building to eliminate worker and environmental exposure, said Judy Karlewicz, community relations

specialist at Chem-Nuclear. The containers will be put into a concrete overpack six inches thick and filled in with sand. The overpack will go into a concrete module vault and closed with a steel-reinforced concrete ceiling. The vault will be capped with layers of sand, gravel, clay and a plastic liner. Finally, it will be covered with soil and vegetation. In addition, a leak detection system is being developed to be installed under the facility.

"I would have no fear of living beside this facility," Furney said. "I'd be more afraid of being hit by a car." Protesting groups are "blowing it way out of proportion," he said.

Karlweicz said, "North Carolina has accepted this responsibility (the Southeast Compact). Chem-Nuclear has run the Barnwell plant responsibly and

successfully and can do so here."

Stan Williams, vice-president of public affairs for the Greater Raleigh Chamber of Commerce, said "We support that location (on the Wake-Chatham border). Our board chairman appointed a task force to make a recommendation to the board of directors. We brought in experts from both sides of the question. Neither the N.C. Conservation Council or the N.C. Environmental Defense Fund raised any objections (to the Wake-Chatham site).

Robert Gunn, interim county manager in Chatham County, said, "I think the (Chatham County) commissioners are disappointed that our county was included on the list. We already have the nuclear plant (Shearon Harris) in our back yard, and we don't want to become a dumping ground."

## Hospital Association sponsors prenatal health care program

By JANNETTE PIPPIN

Staff Writer

Employers now have the chance to lower their health-care costs and help lower North Carolina's infant mortality rate through a new program to be sponsored by the N.C. Hospital Association.

The \$25,000 statewide educational campaign for pregnant workers called "Don't Rob Your Cradle" hopes participating state hospitals will pass the message on to area businesses.

The focus of the campaign is to inform working, insured women of the necessity of adequate prenatal care. Now, women with low incomes and poor insurance coverage are least likely to receive prenatal care, a contributing factor to infant mortality.

During meetings in Charlotte and Raleigh introducing the program to hospital representatives, William Erwin, a hospital association spokesman, said businesses could benefit from lower

health-care costs.

"When prenatal care is poor, the number of premature births increases, and then businesses pay more insurance because the care of premature babies costs more than the average prenatal care costs," Barbara Barnett of the association's public relations department said.

Erwin said that the average bill for prenatal care and a normal birth was about \$2,000, and that the cost of care for a premature infant could exceed \$54,000 in the first year.

Once the program begins in the spring, participating hospitals will go into the workplace of interested businesses and distribute educational materials such as posters and brochures. A music video promoting prenatal care by featuring pregnant women dancing and singing an amended version of a pop song called "Doing it All for My Baby" also will be included. The program is identical to one developed by

the public relations firm Chernoff, Silver and Associates a year ago in Columbia, S.C.

"South Carolina is already doing it, and now North Carolina hopes to start its own efforts in reducing the state's infant mortality rate," Barnett said.

North Carolina had the highest infant mortality rate in the country in 1988 with 12.7 deaths for every 1,000 live births.

N.C. Gov. Jim Martin established a commission to study the issue of the mortality rate in December, but hospital association administrators say the campaign was in the works before Martin organized the commission.

"The two efforts are being done separately, but we hope they will have the same end (decreasing the mortality rate)," Barnett said.

Of the 128 acute-care hospitals in the state, 50 attended the informational meetings held by the hospital association this week.

## Democrats accuse N.C. governor of misusing funds for campaigning

By ERIC LUSK

Staff Writer

Most N.C. Republicans say they think Democrats are politicking in accusing Gov. Jim Martin of misusing state funds for campaign purposes.

The governor's Research Office had made 651 long-distance phone calls and compiled files of 352 of the state's political figures possibly using the state's money, according to a report issued earlier this week by State Auditor Ed Renfrow.

Renfrow said while some political activity did go on in the Research Office, the amount of questionable use could not be determined.

Larry Davis, N.C. Democratic party chairman, said Martin should return \$200,000 to the state, the amount of money he thought Martin used for political purposes.

Martin instead agreed to reimburse the state for \$15.35 of long-distance

phone calls made with state money.

David Prather, deputy director of communications for Martin, said the accusations made against the governor were untrue and while some mistakes were made, 99.5 percent of the time the governor had a clean slate.

"Out of the 651 calls listed in the audit, only a couple dozen were even questionable. Plus, 560 of those calls came after the election (in 1988), so we couldn't be using those for campaign business."

Prather said calls made to the National Republican Committee may have been for research or study purposes.

"Just because we called them (National Republican Committee) doesn't necessarily mean we were doing it for political reasons. For instance, it may have been research for Governor Martin's report on abortion."

Davis could not be reached for comment.

Tom Ballus, community director of

the N.C. Republican committee, said Democrats were just politicking and the auditor's report contained nothing definite.

"It's just an election year. The Democrats are hoping this incident will trickle down and affect other Republicans."

Ballus said Wednesday that Renfrow might be trying to hurt Martin because he had interest in running for governor.

Renfrow denied the allegation, saying politics had no bearing on his report.

"The State Auditor's office makes no distinctions. It's unprofessional and I feel it's unethical."

Ballus said Martin was justified in keeping files on political figures.

"It is his business to know who the political makers and shakers are in this state, especially since he's the only governor in the nation without a veto."

## Billionaire Trump profits from publicity of breakup with wife

From Associated Press reports

NEW YORK — Donald Trump said Thursday the tabloid headlines, talk-show jokes and other publicity over his breakup with wife Ivana have boosted business for his multibillion-dollar casino, hotel and airline empire.

But the developer, who normally basks in the limelight of media attention, said in an interview that he had paid a heavy personal price for any benefits to his business resulting from the unhappy marriage drama.

"It's horrible. I hate it. I hate the publicity," Trump said in his glitzy 26th-floor office commanding a view

of Central Park and the Plaza Hotel, another property he owns.

"It's been on a personal basis difficult because I happen to like Ivana. ... But it's something you have to go through, and in many cases a lot of people have to go through it. People grow apart."

Trump said the splashing of his name through the media in the past two weeks, when word of the breakup came, has boosted business at his two hotel-casinos in Atlantic City, N.J., the Plaza Hotel and the Trump Shuttle.

"The business has never been better but because it's a private company

most people don't know about it. For all the wrong reasons, the last two weeks it's been even better yet."

He said the potential loss of Ivana, his business partner and the manager of the opulent Plaza in Manhattan wouldn't create a void in his organization or have

a negative impact over the long term.

"That's one of the reasons you sign a pre-nuptial agreement," Trump said.

"If something should happen, you know what you have to pay out, and that's one of the reasons that when you're in business it's very important to have a

pre-nuptial agreement signed."

Under an agreement Ivana is contesting, she would receive \$25 million and the couple's home in Connecticut as well as custody of their children. Trump's holdings are estimated to be worth up to \$4 billion. In his best-

selling book "The Art of the Deal,"

Trump called Ivana "incredibly good at anything she's ever done, a natural manager," and credited her for the strong performance of his Trump Castle hotel-casino in Atlantic City, which she used to manage.

## Prison expansion to remedy overcrowding crisis

From Associated Press reports

RALEIGH — North Carolina is already building prisons as fast as possible and will be able to use new facilities to address the current crowding crisis, a co-chairman of the Special Committee on Prisons said Thursday.

Rep. Anne Barnes, D-Orange, told the panel that even though the ultimate goal of building prisons was to give each inmate more space, that goal need not be achieved until 1994. Some of the new beds can be used to create new capacity in a system whose population often exceeds its legislated capacity.

"Moving toward 50 square feet (per inmate) is the goal by 1994, but once

those beds come on line, they can be utilized at less than 50 square feet," she said. "These are not solutions for a long term if projections are that the inmate population continues to grow."

Barnes said she made the statement in part to answer Gov. Jim Martin's call for a \$490 million bond issue to build 9,500 more prison beds. She said she didn't think the current crisis warranted calling a special legislative session.

"Something that large deserves careful consideration. Traditionally, that is not the way special sessions operate."

While prison admissions were up nearly 30 percent in January 1990 over January 1989, Barnes said the five-year

record of admissions had wide variations, ranging from 1,132 in April 1987 to a high of 2,233 in August 1989. January's mark of 2,061 could indicate a trend, she said.

Skip Capone of the state Attorney General's Office said about 500 new beds would be available by July, including nearly 300 in March.

The other co-chairman, Sen. Dave Parnell, D-Robeson, said a special session might be needed to increase the prison capacity to reflect new beds. "That's the only reason I see that a special session would do any good."

Capone said using the new beds for additional capacity would not interfere

with a consent decree with the U.S. Justice Department that ended a lawsuit over prison crowding.

But Rep. Doris Huffman, R-Rowan, said she was concerned about the signal such an action might send. "I just hope that this is not construed as contradictory to what we've said," she said.

The committee also endorsed a proposed constitutional amendment that would let the General Assembly mandate prison alternatives as punishment for certain crimes. The constitution now allows only the death penalty, imprisonment, fines, removal from office and disqualification from holding office as punishments.

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