

# THE PILOT

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## Daly Convicted On Libel Count, Sentence Suspended, \$500 Fine

Vincent J. Daly, who lists his age as 35, his address as 855 East Indiana Ave., Southern Pines, and his occupation as a psychologist, was sentenced to 12 months in prison, assigned to work on the state highways, when he was convicted on a charge of criminal libel in Moore County Recorder's Court Tuesday. The sentence was suspended on condition that he pay a \$500 fine and costs amounting to \$116.50 and that he not violate the laws relating to libel during the next two years.

Daly paid the fine and costs. He did not enter an appeal.

Daly was arrested last week on a warrant signed by Mrs. S. O. Nicholson of 170 E. New York Ave., who charged that he circulated four North Carolina newspapers, including The Pilot, with defamatory matter about her. The full texts of the letter and statement sent to the four newspapers appear in another story on this page.

In court Tuesday, Daly pleaded not guilty to the charge against him.

### Judge Quotes Advice

Before rendering his judgment, Judge Rowe said: "One of the best pieces of advice I ever heard is that if you can't say something good about a person, don't say anything."

"If the defendant had written a letter to one person only or to some friend, I probably would have a different feeling about the matter, but they were sent to four newspapers and, considering what the letters contained, I am satisfied beyond a reasonable doubt of the defendant's guilt."

"I think the defendant made a big mistake in writing the letters. Fortunately he didn't do much damage to his intended victim in the eyes of the editors to whom the letters were sent, all of whom have testified here today that they did not believe the contents."

"We have no evidence that he has been accused of violating any law up to this occasion. Sometimes I impose a sentence and let it hang over the head of a defendant to drop if he violates any law, but I see no reason in this case why I should not confine the application of the suspended sentence simply to a violation of the libel laws."

"I want the defendant to understand that the court considers the offense serious. At the same time, I don't want to overly or unduly punish him."

### Long Trial

The trial was one of the longest ever held in Recorder's Court, starting about 10:30 a.m. and continuing until after 7 p.m. with an hour's recess at noon. Argument of technical points of law raised



V. J. DALY

by the defense consumed much of the session.

The defendant did not take the stand. His only witnesses were two employees, Miss Edwina Hallman and Mrs. Martha Underwood, and several character witnesses, all from out of town, for the two employees, and a relative of one of the employees. No character witnesses were called for Daly himself.

Daly was represented by Richard L. Brown of Albemarle and

Garland Garris of Biscoe. Assisting Solicitor W. Lamont Brown with the prosecution were P. H. Wilson and H. F. Seawell, Jr., of the Carthage law firm, Seawell and Wilson.

Daly has lived in Southern Pines for about the past three years and had previously lived in West Virginia, Mississippi and Michigan. His wife sat with him throughout the trial Tuesday. His organization in Southern Pines, consisting of himself and two employees, is known as the Sandhills Institute of Social Adjustment. He recently announced plans for building a clinic off No. 1 highway south of Southern Pines, west of Southern Pines Cottages. His office is now at his home.

To practice as a psychologist in this state requires no professional qualifications and the practice is not regulated by any professional organization or North Carolina statute.

### Here Since 1947

Mrs. Nicholson has worked as a newspaper woman in North Carolina for the past 20 years. She has lived in Southern Pines since 1947 and was assistant editor of The Pilot from 1947 until July, 1953. She is local news correspondent for the News and Observer at Raleigh, The Charlotte Observer, The Greensboro Daily News, The Durham Morning Herald, The Sanford

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### ON WHICH LIBEL ACTION BASED

#### Text Of Letter, Statement

Following are the full texts of a letter and statement which were sent by V. J. Daly last month to editors or publishers of The Pilot, The Sandhill Citizen of Aberdeen, the Raleigh News and Observer and The Charlotte Observer. It was on the basis of these letters and statements that Mrs. S. O. (Valerie) Nicholson had Daly indicted on a charge of criminal libel—an offense of which he was convicted in Moore County Recorder's Court, Tuesday:

The signed letter read:

"I regret the necessity of forwarding the enclosed information. It is done as a last resort in an effort to protect all concerned."

"You might feel that you are obliged to show this material to the person concerned. That is your affair, but I feel it could result in a psychotic episode."

"If you have any doubts, I suggest that you check my file and obtain psychiatric consultation before discussing the matter with the individual."

"This information is forwarded with no malicious intent. It is a very delicate situation and this

was the only way I knew how to handle it."

"Yours, (Signed) V. J. DALY."

The full text of the enclosure that went to each of the four newspapers with the letter was:

"The following facts are presented with no malicious intent, but rather to avoid an unpleasant situation."

"1. Mrs. S. O. Nicholson, a free lance writer of Southern Pines, N. C., came to my office late at night on or about January 13, 1956. She demanded \$1500 and stated that if she was not paid this sum, she would publish a story in THE PILOT, THE SANDHILL CITIZEN, THE CHARLOTTE OBSERVER and THE RALEIGH NEWS AND OBSERVER, which would ruin me."

"2. I have in my possession two sworn statements from witnesses not related to me, verifying the matter stated above. A third person is willing to give such a statement."

"3. Mrs. Nicholson has sought professional advice from me, but I have refused to accept her as a patient. In my opinion she is a paranoid personality. This type is often able to appear normal, but can do a great deal of damage."

"4. Mrs. Nicholson has had contact with the Psychiatric Section of a large hospital in a nearby state, a few years ago."

"5. The incident of demanding money has been reported to both a state and federal agency. I have been told I have sufficient evidence to seek a warrant."

"6. Mrs. Nicholson has to my knowledge been seeking to have a former patient of mine, who was diagnosed as a sexual psychopath, make a statement about me."

"7. I have not secured a warrant to date because in my opinion, based on my personal observation and the history of her past contact with psychiatric facilities, this person is mentally ill. I have always been opposed to criminal actions against persons of this type."

"As stated above, this information is submitted with no intent to be malicious. I am sending it to the highest level obtainable on each newspaper she mentioned. If the person to whom it is sent wishes to see the sworn statements, they will be available in my office with the understanding that they remain confidential. If, on the other hand, my impression of this case is doubted, I suggest the following. Any person to whom this information is sent, may send a psychiatrist certified by the American Board of Examiners to my office and I shall be happy to show him the full file. I feel most psychiatrists will agree with my impression. I will not

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## Moore Fugitive Captured Last Week

A Moore County man who disappeared almost three years ago after the State Supreme Court had upheld an 18-months prison sentence he had received in Superior Court, was captured last week and is now serving his term in a prison camp.

The disappearance, which had the sheriff's office apparently baffled for the three years, was solved when Moore and Randolph County officers arrested Eulis Ritter, of near Robbins, last week as he was hauling pulpwood near Asheboro.

A spokesman in Sheriff McDonald's office said that Ritter was convicted along with several other defendants of assault with a

deadly weapon. All the defendants except Ritter went to prison; Ritter appealed his conviction to the state Supreme Court.

When the Supreme Court sat in the fall of 1953, it upheld the lower court's decision, but Ritter could not be found to begin his sentence.

D. B. Cranford, before he became a member of the Sheriff's department about a year ago, had heard of the case, and since that time, has spent considerable time working on it. He obtained several leads as to Ritter's whereabouts, and last week, together with ABC Officer John K. Sharpe and members of the Randolph County Sheriff's office, they picked up Ritter.

## Scout Camporee To Methodist Church Be Held May 4-6 At McArthur Lake

Between 1,500 and 2,000 Boy Scouts will attend the annual Occaneechee Council camporee at McArthur Lake near Southern Pines May 4, 5 and 6, it was announced today by Brig. Gen. Pearson Menoher, Moore County District Boy Scout chairman and camporee chief.

All scouts and explorers in the Occaneechee Council, which comprises 12 Southeastern North Carolina counties, can participate in the camporee.

Highlight of the three-day activity will be the camp fire ceremony at 8 p.m. Saturday, May 5, at which time the Order of Arrow dance team will be in charge of the program and will conduct an OA Tap-Out. Members of the order will be dressed in authentic Indian costumes for the ceremonies.

During the daytime activities members of the 82nd Airborne Division will stage a demonstration on bridge building and will construct a pontoon bridge across the lake. Members of the division are also working with Gen. Menoher and other members of the council preparing the facilities.

The 82nd Airborne Band, one of the best in the armed forces, will also participate.

Also scheduled are cooking demonstrations by different scout troops, who will demonstrate the various types of cooking which can be used by a troop while on a camping trip. Among the various demonstrations are barbecue, imu cooking, reflector ovens for baking and about 15 other types.

All scouts who hold the God and Country Award will be recognized during sunrise services Sunday morning, which will be conducted by the Chaplains Corps at Fort Bragg. Services will be held for Protestant, Jewish and Catholic faiths.

Frank Yandell, Moore Scout executive (Continued on Page 5)

## Registration To Start Saturday For Primary; Precinct Meetings Set

### Convention Is Slated May 12 At Courthouse

Registration for the Democratic Primary May 26 begins this Saturday, April 28, Sam C. Riddle, chairman of the county Board of Elections, said this week.

The books will be open each Saturday for three Saturdays—April 28, May 5, and May 12. On other days during that time the registrar will have the book at his home or business for the purpose of registering new voters.

For complete details on registration, plus registrars, judges and alternate judges see page 13.

Precinct committee meetings in Moore County in preparation for the May 26 Democratic primary will be held Saturday, May 5, at 2 p. m., according to an announcement made today by W. Lamont Brown, chairman of the Moore Democratic Executive Committee.

At that time precinct committees will be elected to serve the next two years.

The Southern Pines Democratic precinct committee meeting will be held Saturday, May 5, at 2 p. m. in the James Boyd Room of the library, it was announced today by Ward Hill, chairman of the committee.

Hill said that all Democrats in this area are invited to the meeting and urged a large attendance.

New committee members and a new chairman will be elected, he added.

The precinct meetings will precede by one week the county Democratic convention, which will be held at the courthouse in Carthage at 3 p. m. Saturday, May 12. And, one week following, the state convention will be held in Raleigh.

In announcing the meetings Brown said that "problems of great significance and of tremendous importance face the nation today. The Democratic Party has never shirked its responsibility to Moore County, to the State, or to the United States."

Continuing, the chairman said: "I feel that in this important year we need to be stronger than ever before. . . the best way to show our strength is to have a widespread participation in party affairs by as many members of the party as we can possibly get."

Precinct committees, with the chairman named first, are as follows:

Aberdeen—H. Clifton Blue, Mrs. S. L. Windham, W. P. Saun-

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J. N. STEED

## CP & L To Honor Joseph N. Steed

Joseph N. Steed, Jr., of Southern Pines has chalked up 25 years of service with Carolina Power & Light Company and is eligible for membership in the company's Pioneer Club.

Steed will be initiated and receive his diamond centered Pioneer pin when the club holds its annual banquet honoring new Pioneer Club members on May 18, in Raleigh. The organization of 25-year employees now includes over 300 members.

A native of Macon, Ga., Steed attended Lanier High School there and won his B.S. degree in electrical engineering from Georgia Tech. He joined the company in 1927 as a field engineer, serving in this capacity at Raleigh, Spruce Pine, Sanford, Florence, S. C., and Sumter, S. C. He moved to Southern Pines as division engineer and was later promoted to division superintendent.

Steed is a Presbyterian, and is past master and a member of the Southern Pines Masonic Lodge, a member of the Elks Lodge and a director of the Southern Pines Country Club.

Mrs. Steed is the former Julia Criste of Marion, S. C. They have three children, J. N. Steed, III, a student at the Citadel at Charleston, S. C., and Suzanne and Judy.

### HONOR COURT

A Southern Pines Girl Scout court of honor will be held at Brownson Memorial Presbyterian Church at 7:30 p. m. Monday. Parents and friends of the Scouts are invited.

## Methodist Church Building Rising On Midland Road

Construction of the new Methodist Church in Southern Pines was well underway this week as workmen began the difficult task of placing massive steel beams in place.

The new church building, which will be the first Methodist Church ever constructed in Southern Pines, is scheduled to be ready for occupancy November 1, although members of the church hope that enough will be completed by September 15 to allow the congregation to hold special services commemorating the second anniversary of Charter Sunday.

The new building, which will cost \$103,000, is located on Midland Road on a four-acre tract that was purchased by the congregation after learning that the original location on May Street would not be adequate. The May Street land, incidentally, has been placed on the market for sale by church officials.

Paul Van Camp, chairman of the building committee, said this week that local pledges and gifts were not enough to complete the

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## W. A. Leonard Heads Educo Club

W. A. Leonard of the Southern Pines school faculty was elected president of the Moore County Educo Club at the organization's last meeting of the school year, held Monday in the Carthage High School cafeteria.

The club is the professional organization of all male teachers in the schools of the Moore County, Southern Pines and Pinehurst systems.

Other officers elected were: J. C. Phillips, principal of Westmore School, vice-president; and Ralph Foushee, eighth grade teacher here, secretary.

### SOUTHERN PINES RUNNER-UP

#### Aberdeen School Wins Picquet Cup Permanently

The Aberdeen High School glee club won permanent possession of the Charles W. Picquet cup, at Weaver Auditorium Friday night, when, for the second successive year and the third time in all, the choral group won the annual competition for the high school glee clubs of Moore County.

The Southern Pines glee club, directed by Mrs. N. L. Hodgkins, Jr., was runner-up over the Pine-

hurst and Carthage groups. Judges were Dr. Robert Morris and Jess Casey of the Department of Music at Woman's College, Greensboro. Each club sang three songs.

Before the announcement of the verdict by the judges, the four glee clubs sang several numbers in unison, much to the enjoyment of the large crowd. Mr. Picquet, who originated the contest several years ago to promote

group singing in the county's public schools, took a bow during the evening. Presiding over the affair was Dr. C. C. McLean, vice president of the Sandhills Kiwanis Club which sponsors the contest each year, and acting as announcer was Dr. R. Bruce Warlick, chairman of the Kiwanis committee in charge of the event.

A new cup will be provided by Kiwanis when the contest continues next year.



CUP PRESENTED—E. H. Poole, right, director of the Aberdeen High School glee club, is receiving the Picquet Cup from Dr. C. C. Mc-

Lean, vice-president of the Sandhills Kiwanis Club. Members of the glee club are shown in the background. (Photo by Humphrey)

### AN EDITORIAL

#### Truth Shall Prevail

When the libel action in Carthage this week was decided against the defendant, the cause of justice was well served. So, also, was the cause of community and human welfare, and the rights and respect of the individual.

The accusations were palpably absurd. It might have been thought, then, that the accused would have simply ignored them, as the editors, to whom the letters of accusation were addressed, had already done. It would have been infinitely easier to have let the whole thing slide. Why, then, was it taken seriously? Why was this accusation taken up, the challenge accepted, to the point of instigating a suit for criminal libel?

The answer, we believe, and we say it with pride, is applicable to a good deal that happens in the field of journalism: the libel suit was held because there was an over-riding compulsion to kill a lie and to publish the truth. To put it in another way, the suit was instigated for the ultimate good of society: because it is essential to the welfare of society that the truth shall prevail.

There were, of course, several pertinent reasons why it was important that this suit should be held. One: it was important that the public should be alerted that an individual in an apparently responsible position was in fact performing irresponsible acts: it was important, for the sake of others. It was important, too, as a demonstration that illegal action of a potentially damaging nature cannot be tolerated in a civilized society. Perhaps, too, this case will prove important as a step towards the establishment, in the field of psychology, of rules and regulations similar to those governing the practice of medicine and psychiatry in this state. That will be a clear gain.

Perhaps the community itself may take special pride in the result of this suit; for it shows, we believe, that this is essentially a healthy community, one in which the law and the rights of the individual under the law are held in high esteem. It is good to know that here in Moore County, action against the law, injurious to an individual—whether instigated by foolish irresponsibility, maliciousness or by deeper and more evil forces—does not succeed.

That such results shall have been attained through the courage and self-sacrifice of a member of the press and one who has worked on this newspaper is added satisfaction.