

# Hard Times Hit Local Car Dealers

One Duplin dealer has given up his new car dealership and another was considering dropping his, but had not come to a decision last Wednesday.

Both businessmen said they were losing money because of the high cost of loans and the weak demand for new cars. They believe their problems typify those faced by dealers across the country.

Ray Bell of Bell Motors in Kenansville said he has dropped the American Motors Co. dealership—the only new-car dealership in Kenansville. He said he expects dealers to go out of business right and left, while conditions are as they are at the present.

Bell owns the property on which the business is located and can pay for any used cars he has for sale, but he says he can't afford to borrow money to maintain a supply of new cars.

Billy Phelps of Phelps Ford

of Warsaw, one of the county's largest dealerships, said he might drop the Ford dealership. However, he added, "we're dickering now and they've given in some. My mind is not made up right now, but I expect to make a decision soon. They (Ford) don't want me to drop the franchise."

"I'm in a small town and even so, interest on my new cars cost \$8,000 last month at 20 percent," Phelps added. "They (the manufacturers) draft my bank account for my new cars before they are even delivered to me."

Phelps said he had to order cars 60 to 90 days in advance of delivery. "There's a lot of guess work in this business and you can really end up with a bunch of stuff you don't want," he commented. "I used to sell 20 to 25 pick-ups a month, mostly to farmers, but that's dried up now and those pick-ups are just sitting out there."

In addition to other economic problems, Phelps noted farmers have had two bad years in his trade area and "just aren't buying right now."

Phelps said he also carries \$80,000 in spare parts for servicing his customers' cars and trucks.

"I've been here 19 years and have four other businesses that make a profit, and I'm not going to sit here and lose it all. Car dealerships are very risky. You are at the mercy of the manufacturer and he takes little risk, the dealer takes it all," he added.

"I've seen a lot of ups and downs in the car business but I don't see any real change in this downer until at least March," commented Bell. Bell said he and his father had been American Motors dealers here 21 years, but the bottom had fallen out of it lately. AMC dealers also have to pay for their cars prior to delivery,

and Bell said that amounted to \$1,500 in interest on the cars last month. The company is buying back the last three new cars on the lot, he said, as well as a portion of the parts stock.

"I'll continue in the repair and service and used car

business and maintain a parts stock to service my customers," he added.

Bell said his father, Elmore Bell, now 71, started the business in 1948 as a Chrysler-Plymouth dealer. That dealership was dropped 25 years ago, he added.

## Changes In Kenansville Job Service Office

Mrs. Elizabeth H. Grant, Manager of the Kenansville Job Service office, made the following announcement, "The Kenansville Job Service office of the North Carolina Employment Security Commission is constantly striving to serve the people of Duplin County to the best of their ability. We urge all employers to cooperate to make the services we offer more beneficial to you. Use our services, let us recruit your employees and test for you. We feel that we need to emphasize our first priority of placement and service to employers and applicants. To accomplish this goal the Kenansville office staff will work in E.S. Services with job referral and placement goals for our applicants Monday through Friday. Starting the week of June 1, 1980, new claims will be taken in the Kenansville Job Service office on Wednesday only. Scotty Lockamy is the super-

visor in charge of placement in the Kenansville office. We urge all applicants to continue to use the placement services of the office Monday through Friday from 8:30 A.M. to 5:00 P.M.

If a person is unemployed and seeking work they should continue to come to the Kenansville E.S.C. office the first day they are available for work. The Kenansville staff will make all effort to find this person work, if work can not be found immediately an appointment will be made to the nearest Wednesday to take an unemployment insurance claim, if the applicant is eligible. No time will be lost as we are on calendar weeks, and if necessary and legal, a claim can be backdated. It is requested that all employers please send their employees with temporary lay-off forms (form 501) into the Kenansville office on Wednesday only. If you, as an employer, have as many as twenty new temporary lay-off claims (form 501) to be taken on your personnel we will make arrangements to come to your plant. Send only less than twenty new temporary lay-off claims (form 501) to our office. Continued partial or temporary lay-off claims can be taken at your industry or company in conjunction with your office staff. Call Dennis Kirby, supervisor in charge of claims in the Kenansville office for further information regarding claims."

Mrs. Grant further stated, "Help us to help all of the citizens of Duplin County better and emphasize the positive in our service which is helping our people find jobs."

## Board Approves Reading, Math Program

The Duplin County Board of Education approved a \$1,121,371 budget for a special program aimed at educationally disadvantaged children at its second meeting held in May.

All money for the program comes from federal funds allocated under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act.

The program serves 2,450 students in the county, according to Anne Jackson, ESEA program supervisor. She said it pays for 32 reading and math teachers, 30 aides and six support personnel.

Board Member Graham Phillips voted against the budget, saying he did not believe the board knew enough about the program and that more aides should be hired and fewer teachers. Voting for the program were Jimmy Strickland, Pat Broadrick and E.L. Boyette.

ESEA provides special

help for students in seventh, eighth and ninth grade math classes and for students in 4th through 11th grades in reading. The program supplements the regular educational schedule. Teachers in the program cannot be used to replace teachers in the regular classrooms, said C. H. Yelverton, county superintendent.

In other business: — A pilot eye-testing program at B.F. Grady found that 114 of its 443 students failed to meet normal visual requirements, according to the report of two optometrists, Dan Robinson of Wallace and John Moore of Kenansville.

Boyette called the eye test one of the most important features of the school program saying, "If a student can't see, he can't do the work."

— Because of reduced enrollment, the number of state-assigned teaching slots

in the system will decline from 307 at present to 296.5 for the next school year.

L.S. Guy, assistant superintendent in charge of personnel, said enrollment has been declining for the past seven years. At present, Duplin schools have about 9,600 students enrolled.

## N.C. Dental Auxiliary Elect Officers

Officers installed at the State Dental Auxiliary meeting in Winston Salem on May 12, 1980 were Mrs. James Howell of Greensboro as President; Mrs. J.M. Korney of Warsaw as President-Elect; Mrs. Robert Shankle of Chapel Hill as Vice President; Mrs. Robert Litton, Greensboro as Recording

Secretary. Mrs. Thomas Sifers, Rural Hall, Corresponding Secretary and Mrs. Stuart Fountain of Greensboro as Treasurer.

A Luncheon at the Forsythe County Club was one of the activities scheduled for the ladies. Mrs. Strom Thurmond was guest speaker, using excerpts from her book "Mother's Medicine".

At the Dental Society's Banquet Monday night, the Auxiliary presented a check for \$49,500.60 to Dr. Robert Shankle, University of North Carolina Dental School, to be used by The Dental Foundation of North Carolina. The Auxiliary had made this money during the past year from a special project and was the largest amount they had ever given to the Foundation.

## Duplin Seniors Earn Advanced Credit At JSTC

In the first two weeks in May, eight-seven Duplin County high school seniors took competency tests in automotive mechanics and business education. The tests given annually at James Sprunt Technical College are a part of the Duplin County Articulation Project, a cooperative program between JSTC and the Duplin County Public Schools. This multi-agency state and local project has received national recognition.

In the area of auto mechanics, thirty-three seniors were tested: seventeen from East Duplin; eight from Wallace-Rose Hill; five from North Duplin; and three from James Kenan. Thirty-one of the seniors earned some advanced credit towards a diploma in auto mechanics from JSTC, twenty-three earned credit for two courses, and eight earned credit for one course.

In the area of business education, fifty-four were tested: sixteen from East Duplin; twenty-two from James Kenan; and sixteen from Wallace-Rose Hill. These fifty-four seniors earned credit for a total of 132 JSTC courses that are applicable toward a degree in

Business Education. Earning advanced credit means that these graduating seniors will not enroll in courses in which they are already competent, and they can probably complete diploma requirements in less than the normally required time should they elect to enroll at James Sprunt Technical College. This reduced time to complete diploma requirements results in personal savings to the students and a saving of state and county tax dollars.

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## Deaths — Funerals

**CHARLIE GRAHAM RICH**  
WALLACE - Charlie Graham Rich, 76, died Friday. Funeral, Edgerton Funeral Chapel, Burial, Rockfish Memorial Cemetery.

Surviving: sister, Mrs. George O. Powell of Wallace; brother, Fred Rich of Wallace.

**ELERY PENNY GUTHRIE**  
KENANSVILLE - Mrs. Elery Penney Guthrie, 73, died Friday. Funeral and graveside services, Golden Grove Cemetery.

Surviving: son, C.B. Guthrie, Jr. of Decatur, Ga.; brother, J.B. Penney of Rose Hill; sister, Mrs. A.A. Kafer.

Jr. of New Bern; two grandchildren.

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## John Phillips Receives Eagle Scout Award

John Thomas Phillips, Jr. of Warsaw received the Eagle Scout award Sunday morning, June 1, during ceremonies at Johnson Baptist Church where he is a member.

Phillips, age 17, is the son of Mr. and Mrs. Tommie Phillips. John, a junior at James Kenan High School, is a member of Troop 20 that is sponsored by the Warsaw Rotary Club. Since becoming a Cub Scout at the age of nine, he has been active in scouting and has served as scribe, assistant patrol leader, and patrol leader.

John has attended Boy Scout camp for three years and in 1976 he hiked the 200-mile pilgrimage from Fremont to Halifax in celebration of the nation's Bicentennial. In 1977 he made the 100-mile canoe trip on the Cape Fear River from Elizabethtown to Carolina Beach.

John was a page for the N.C. House of Representatives during the spring session of 1979. He also attended Youth Legislative Assembly in Raleigh in March, 1980. This summer John will serve as a senate

page for the 1980 session of the General Assembly, and will attend Boys' State at Wake Forest University in Winston-Salem. Also on his schedule in July is the Presidential Classroom in Washington, D.C. and the 7th annual North Carolina Youth Seminar on Law, Leadership and Government at Chapel Hill.

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