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Long Sought Water Contracts To Be Let In July

The first construction contracts for the long-planned Limestone and Muddy Creek Small Watershed Projects of eastern Duplin County will be let in July if surveys and detailed work plans can be carried out on schedule.

The projects, sought by land owners of the area for nearly 20 years, will improve drainage and enable owners to put a large acreage of land back in crops and timber, Kenneth Futreal, Duplin Soil Conservation District conservationist, said last week.

Natural drainage channels have become silted and debris-strewn from more than 200 years of timber and farm operations, which in the past were conducted with little thought of conservation. The resulting waterlogging of the soil has ruined crops and reduced timber production in the region.

"I remember when it started in the late 1950s," said George Cowan of Cedar Fork, one of the original promoters of the projects. "We had just built our community building in 1958 and our first meeting in it had to be cancelled because it (the building) was

flooded." The building is located on land where excess water stagnates for lack of uncluttered channels to remove it.

The two watersheds include about 72,000 acres of level, potentially productive land, drained by the two streams which flow into the Northeast River near Hallsville and Chinquapin.

Total cash outlay for the projects is estimated at just under \$2 million. The value of easements and rights-of-way is estimated at another \$2 million, Futreal reported.

The local sponsors' share of the total cash outlay will be about \$700,000, he added. Local sponsors are the Watershed Conservation District, the Duplin County Soil and Water Conservation District and the county commissioners. Prior to the letting of work contracts, the local sponsors must sign financial agreements with the Soil Conservation Service, Futreal observed.

The work will be divided into phases, Futreal said, with the contracts for the first phase scheduled to be let about July. This phase will include six or seven

miles of channel work from the outlet of Muddy Creek back to N.C. 41 and from the outlet of Limestone Creek back to N.C. 111. Cost is estimated at \$90,000 to \$100,000 of which the local sponsors' share will be 19 percent or about \$27,000.

Also planned for this year is the purchase of about 130 acres of land for the planned recreation project, although actual work on that phase will not begin until 1983, Futreal said. Cost of the land is estimated at \$101,000. The local share of the recreational project cost is 50 percent — \$50,500 in this instance, he added.

Contracts on the second phase of the projects will be let in April 1982, according to present plans. This phase will include the remainder of the channel restoration and lateral drainage ditch work in both watersheds at an estimated cost of \$1.5 million of which the local share will be about \$300,000.

The projects include 45.4 miles of channel restoration (clearing and snagging, removal of debris and sandbars) and 56 miles of excavation of laterals to provide

outlets for farm drainage systems. Also included is establishment of a 50-acre lake and recreation facilities on about another 60 acres.

Final phase of the projects will be construction of the dam to create the lake and development of the recreation facilities. Cost is estimated at about \$300,000 to be divided equally between the local sponsors and the Soil Conservation Service. Letting of contracts for this phase is now scheduled for September 1983. Completion of all the projects is scheduled for the spring of 1984.

"One reason for the seemingly slow progress of the work is the fact that we can only work on these projects from July to December each year because of environmental considerations," Futreal said.

In preparation for the work, 800 easements for use of land along the streams and channels had to be obtained from landowners. "About 95 percent have signed agreements," Futreal said, "and several others will when titles to some estate lands have been settled."



FIVE SEVENTH GRADERS TAKE SAT - Five 7th grade students from E.E. Smith Jr. High qualified to participate in the Duke University Talent Identification program. The students took the College Boards Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) on Jan. 24 at James Sprunt Technical Institute along with 11th and 12th graders. Their scores will be evaluated and interpreted by Duke University and students will receive information on their academic strengths and weaknesses and suggestions for making educational plans

during high school and college. To qualify, students had to score at the 97th percentile or above on the California Achievement Test (CAT) in either the math or verbal section of the test. Approximately 50 seventh graders from Duplin County schools will be participating in the program this year. Students from E.E. Smith were, left to right, Joseph Brown, Michael Brinson, Dilaine Hall, Darla Brock and Doris Williams.

AGRIBUSINESS COUNCIL MEETING

How To Put On A County Fair

By Joni Nethercutt

"Acquire land that is well drained — the sandiest piece of land you can find," suggested Olen Peele, general manager of the Wayne County Fair at the annual Agribusiness Council meeting on Jan. 21 in Kenansville. Peele spoke to the council on "How to Put on a County Fair."

Lois Britt, advisor to the council, explained that the response of the community with the many displays and cooperation during Farm City week last year has brought scattered discussion on the possibility of Duplin County again having a county fair. There was a Duplin County fair in the 60s. "Promoting cooperation

and community participation between the elements is a main purpose of the agribusiness extension," Britt said. "We (the council) thought it would be a good time to acquire information on how to put on our own county fair."

Peele, she noted, has served as general manager in Goldsboro for 30 years. He volunteered to share information through his experience in all aspects of working with a county fair.

Land being number one on Peele's first four suggestions, the next three included having a fence, putting up buildings (if not possible at first, tents would be fine) and having water and electricity with bathroom facilities. "The biggest drawing card

at a fair is a carnival," said Peele. "If you're going to have a fair, you've got to have a carnival."

"Have a purpose for beginning a fair," Peele advised. He pointed out that the Wayne County fair began to promote and increase the livestock industry in Wayne County.

"Try to involve group contests and livestock competition to involve young people," Peele said.

Involving local talent, women's exhibits, FHA, FFA, etc., was a main focus of Peele. "Let people know that the fair is for the benefit of Duplin County," he said. County fairs are tax-free, non-profit organizations free of county funds and most people involved with a fair are volunteers, he noted.

"The best time to hold a county fair is between that last week in August through the second week in October," he said. One good reason for this time period, Peele explained, is that school has begun and it would give school organizations time to prepare displays and projects.

Peele advised the group to go ahead with plans now in order to have a county fair in Duplin County by 1982.

He suggested the Duplin County Agribusiness Council talk with Columbus County who had their first county fair in several years this past year and were very successful.

Mrs. Britt told the Duplin Times that this would be the council's next move.

Teachers Ask Reading Criteria

A group of teachers wants the Duplin County Board of Education to expand guidelines to help teachers determine the reading abilities of students.

The school system already uses a set of guidelines for advanced students that teachers said has been successful in classrooms. Now teachers from the four county high schools say they would like similar guidelines for students with average or below-average reading skills.

They compared the guidelines to road maps, allowing teachers to quickly determine a student's reading skills and making it easier for teachers to determine what reading subjects need to be addressed in class.

The teachers at the meeting last week were Mary Dixon Brown of James Kenan High School, LeWanda Brown of East Duplin, Margaret Glasgow of

Wallace-Rose Hill and Mrs. Eddie Williams of North Duplin.

Board members received an explanation of the existing guidelines from Iris Hunsinger of Wilson, a retired Guilford County teacher who put together the first advanced placement English

and honors English courses for Duplin County high schools two years ago.

The advanced placement English courses are for 12th-grade students with above-average reading skills. The honors English classes are for above-average students in all high school grades.

The board also agreed to consider giving the advanced English placement tests a week or two earlier than in the past, when the tests have been given during the last weeks of school. The teachers said the students' concentration will be greater if the tests are given earlier.

County Finds Home For New Cowan Tool Museum

The Cowan Museum will be located on the ground floor of the county agricultural building in Kenansville when the area is vacated by the Duplin County-Dorothy Wightman Library.

The current schedule calls for the library to move into its new quarters in Kenansville early in April.

Mr. and Mrs. George Cowan of the Cedar Fork community have assembled a collection of 2,200 work-a-day tools and appliances used by rural people during

the 18th, 19th and early 20th centuries. They recently donated the collection to the county on condition it be suitably displayed in a satisfactory site.

A committee composed of the Cowans, Extension Chairman Lois Britt and Liberty Hall manager Rich Boyd worked with county officials to obtain a suitable location.

The committee received permission to use the present library as a working and display headquarters temporarily until a permanent site can be found.

The board of commissioners appropriated \$7,500 for costs of moving the collection, for temporary help and utilities for the museum. The county insured the collection for \$75,000.

The committee reported Cowan has recorded descriptions for each item and where it came from. Plans are to set up these recordings for the public. The Cowans would like to have the collection set up as a demonstration-type display.

Duplin Raises County Mileage Rate

The rising price of gasoline prompted the county commissioners to increase the mileage rate paid for use of personal vehicles on county business to 22 cents a mile at their meeting last week.

The rate had been 19 cents since February 1980. During this period, County Manager Ralph Cottle said gasoline prices had increased 12 percent. If the mileage rate had been figured at 12 percent, he said it would come out at 21.3 cents a mile. He said the total county budget will not be increased, however, and emphasized that the number of miles driven will have to be reduced accordingly. He did not have any mileage totals for county business at the meeting.

Cottle said Wayne County is paying 23 cents a mile and will probably increase this to 25 cents. He said Onslow County is paying 19 cents a mile and considering an increase. Lenoir pays 23 cents. Sampson is paying 20 cents a mile and Pender County 21 cents a mile, he added.

Social Services Director Millie Brown told the board that she has 16 employees who drive out into the county every day and 18 others who get out. Because they carry passengers, she said, they must pay extra insurance premiums and need relief.

Emergency Services Coordinator Hiram Brinson

reported 2,577 rescue squad calls during 1980. He said \$72,836.70 was billed users of the rescue services. Collections amounted to \$41,103.35. Brinson said the collection rate is about the same as in past years.

The board agreed to provide meals for the aged in Jones County at a price of \$1.46 per meal with the Jones program scheduled to

pick up the food at the kitchen in the old jail building in Kenansville.

By a 4-1 vote, the board agreed that county employees will be paid for time lost when Cottle and Commission Chairman Allen Nethercutt determine weather conditions are such that county offices should be closed. Commissioner D.J. Fussell

Fussell voted against the move. Commissioner W.J. Costin made the motion, which was seconded by S. Franklin Williams. Also voting for it were Commissioners Calvin Turner and Nethercutt.

The board turned over to County Attorney Russell Lanier Jr. the request of Gerald Michaux, representing Clear-Tell of Hope Mills, for a county cable television

franchise. Lanier was directed to review the proposal and report to the board at a future meeting. Michaux said the system would have a 35-channel capability but would provide 18 channels when it went on the air. Thirteen channels would be provided for the base price of \$9.50 per month. Five other channels would require additional fees.

Wells Named To Kinston Post



P. Everett Wells

N.C. School of Banking at Chapel Hill.

Wells is past president of the Wallace Chamber of Commerce, Wallace Lions Club, Wallace town board of adjustments, NC Bankers

Association, and the Wallace Presbyterian Church. He and his wife, Dianne, also a Kinstonian, will reside in Kinston. He is the son of Mrs. Mary Wells of Kinston.

Whitley's Mobile Office To Visit County

Congressman Charlie Whitley's Third District mobile office will be in Duplin County Thursday, Feb. 19 and will make stops at the following times and locations:

Wallace - 9:30-10:30 a.m., parking lot at Rockfish Plaza.
Kenansville - 11-12 noon, parking area at the old

Kenansville Elementary School.

Rodney Knowles will be manning the office and will be available to anyone having matters they wish brought to the attention of the Congressman.

All schedules are subject to prevailing weather conditions affecting travel.

Shopping Spree Jubilee

This Saturday, Valentine's Day, Feb. 14, at 10 a.m. at Jackson's IGA in Kenansville some lucky winner will get the opportunity to spend three minutes on a shopping spree at Jackson's IGA and carry out all the groceries that he or she can. The event is sponsored by the Kenansville Jaycees and tickets are

on sale now for \$1.

The rules are as follows: 1.) No substitutions allowed. 2.) No beer, wine or cigarettes can be taken. 3.) All you can carry out in your arms in three minutes. The drawing will be held on Friday, Feb. 13. Purchase a ticket and help support the Kenansville Jaycees.

Delinquent Tax Collection Nets Beulaville \$9,100

An effort to collect delinquent property taxes has resulted in collection of \$9,100 since July, Police Chief Audrey Murphy reported to the town board in Beulaville last week.

The board had directed the chief to follow up its letters warning recipients to pay back taxes by serving tax warrants authorizing seizure of personal property in lieu of tax payments. The project began in July.

Murphy said he served 31 tax warrants in January and collected \$3,000.

The town's tax rate is 60

cents per \$100 assessed valuation and has remained constant since 1974.

In other action, Gerald Batts and Vernon Hall complained Avon Sharpe had accumulated debris on his property that created a health hazard and public nuisance. The board turned the complaint over to the town attorney, Russell Lanier Jr.

The board agreed to hire Paul Lanier, currently a Comprehensive Employment and Training worker in the maintenance department,

upon completion of his CETA eligibility Feb. 13 at a pay rate of \$3.51 per hour.

The board planned an executive session with the three maintenance department employees last week. Reasons for the session were not announced.

Dan Whaley, who built a house one-eighth of a mile out of town, received permission to hook on to the city water and sewer lines which run on the opposite side of the road from his houses. He will be charged double the normal rate for the service

KENANSVILLE TOWN TAGS

As a reminder to residents of Kenansville, your 1981 Town Tags should be purchased and displayed on your vehicles by Feb. 15.