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Court Date Reminds Farmers Of Grain Facility's Collapse

Eleven years after it failed and went into receivership, the seemingly endless legal affairs of the former Southeastern Farmers Grain Association at Warsaw will come up in Duplin County Superior Court again.

The receiver, Vance Gavin of Kenansville, will seek a final order of distribution of assets and discharge of the receiver at 10 a.m. March 9 in Duplin County Superior Court in Kenansville.

Failure of the grain association in 1970 left a bitter feeling among scores of Duplin county farmers who believed they were left "holding the bag" after it had been emptied of both grain and money. Creditors listed \$1.4 million in claims against the grain association, including three mortgages on the property along U.S. 117 a short distance south of Warsaw, at the request of the receivership in 1971.

Odell Wood, a Warsaw farmer who lost money in the collapse, said this past week he believes the state should tighten regulations and increase bonds for grain facilities to prevent such happenings. His opinion has been stated repeatedly by farmers throughout eastern North Carolina in the past year as three private grain-dealing firms have gone out of business, leaving many farmers without their grain or money.

"Any time priorities are set up in something like this, the farmer always winds up at the bottom end of the totem pole holding the bag," he declared, adding, "I feel bitter about it. I'd have been better off with a bad crop that year. At least I wouldn't have had to pay for the harvest."

John Godbold of Warsaw is another farmer who lost about \$7,000 in the collapse. He strongly believes measures providing farmers

better protection from such events should be approved. Both farmers say they are highly skeptical of grain facilities today, that such events as the association's failure harm all grain dealerships. Both Wood and Godbold now store their grain in facilities they have installed on their farms.

An operating loss of about \$400,000 was reported for the Southeastern Association's fiscal year ending May 11, 1970. A shortage of 300,000 to 400,000 bushels of grain was reported following inspections of the grain elevator by federal inspectors.

Inspectors found 34,147 bushels of grain valued at \$48,042.50 in the elevator, according to records in the clerk of court's office.

The February 1981 notice to creditors stated \$51,607.88 is now available for distribution.

Gavin recommended payment of \$628.30 for preparation of tax returns with the remainder to be divided among the Internal Revenue Service, the Commodity Credit Corp. and Appalachian Insurance Co. The notice also stated the receiver has filed an application for final receiver's fees totaling \$7,500.

Appalachian of Providence, R.I. was the bonding company for Commodity Credit which held warehouse receipts of Southeastern Farmers Grain totaling \$77,000. Branch Banking & Trust Co. of Wilson reported holding \$314,354 worth of warehouse tickets. The tickets and receipts had been issued by the co-op to farmers who had left grain with it for storage and later sale. Many farmers used the tickets as loan collateral or as checks.

Numerous hearings and receiver's reports have created a mountainous file of

papers in the Duplin clerk of court's office as well as files in the state Supreme Court, state Court of Appeals and U.S. District Court.

The physical property of the co-op was ordered sold in 1972 by the Superior Court to satisfy claims of Farmers Home Administration, Branch Banking & Trust Co. and others.

Claims filed as of March 17, 1972 totaled \$1,405,922 according to records of Joe Cash of the state FmHA office in Raleigh. His record shows \$770,021.99 was owed by Southeastern Farmers Grain to FmHA, \$389,402.82 to Branch Banking & Trust, \$80,800.74 to farmers, \$155,958.08 to corporations or individual grain dealers, and \$2,658.09 to suppliers. He said FmHA had made loans totaling \$800,000 in 1966 and the bank \$100,000 in 1968 to finance construction of the grain facility in 1966 and an addition two years later. The Southeastern Farmers Grain Association was organized in 1965 and 1966 as a farmers co-operative to build a grain elevator and operate as a grain-dealing facility. The FmHA and bank loans were the only secured claims, he noted. They were secured by deeds of trust.

At that time, FmHA records showed the receivers had \$33,000 in assets other than the physical property.

The court authorized leasing of the facility in 1970 for two years with the proceeds to go to the receiver. Nash Johnson & Sons Farms of Rose Hill won the lease bidding at \$64,000 a year. After the court ordered sale of the property in mid-1972, the Johnson firm submitted the successful bid to purchase the elevator, which it currently owns. As part of the sale agreement, it agreed to pay the secured loans of FmHA and the bank.



4-H BANQUET - Left to right, Cece Williams, Lois Britt, Arthur Hall, Ralph Sasser, Laurie Swain, Mark Dearman, Wanda Costin and Ray Rhinehart.

(Photo by Joni Nethercutt)

Duplin County 4-H'ers Receive Recognition During Annual Banquet

By Joni Nethercutt

"Duplin County is recognized for its agriculture, but the most important crop Duplin County grows is our young 4-H'ers," stated District Extension Chairman Ralph Sasser at the annual 4-H recognition banquet Monday, Feb. 23 at The Country Squire.

The 4-H recognition banquet is hosted by the Duplin County Board of Commis-

sioners to pay tribute to those 4-H'ers for outstanding achievement in projects, activities and demonstrations.

Members of Duplin's 4-H organization who received special recognition included: Laurie Swain and Arthur Hall -- Outstanding Junior 4-Hers, Wanda Costin and Glenn Brinson -- Outstanding Senior 4-H'ers. Glenn Brinson was also recognized by the county and state for having been inducted into

the North Carolina 4-H Honor Club. Karen Kornegay was recognized as a National 4-H Conference delegate. Gregg Swain was recognized as a 4-H scholarship fund recipient.

Mark Dearman of N.C. State University presented a 12-projector slide program, Interesting Opportunities Unlimited. The program had been put together with the help of 4-H club members. After the presentation, man recorded the Duplin

4-H'ers as they said the 4-H pledge in unison. He hopes to use their recorded pledge on the program.

Ray Rhinehart, 4-H extension agent of Duplin County, said "All of Duplin

County's 4-H'ers are winners."

"All of you (4-H'ers) are winners when you became a 4-H member," C. C. Turner of the Board of Commissioners concluded.

Health Center Enters Old Building

The Greenview Plainview Rural Health Center occupied its new quarters, Jerry Teachey's "Old Store" early in February.

Purchase of the land and renovation of the building cost \$229,000. Prior to moving, the center occupied a mobile unit at the town hall.

The health center was organized in May 1977. The first physician arrived in 1978. Dr. Ada Fisher spent two years in the center under auspices of the National Health Corps. She left in July 1980. Her replacement is Dr. Frank Fisher, a native of Richlands.

Dr. Fisher plans to practice in the community after his term of government service ends, he said last week.

Patients are coming to the center from a wide area of central Duplin County, he said.

In addition to the physician, the clinic is staffed by administrator Norman Sandlin, laboratory technician James Guyer, assistant technician Jacqueline Lisane, accounting clerk Beverly Crossland, and secretary-receptionist Peggy Carr.

The renovation included resurfacing the outside walls with brick and installing new heating and air conditioning equipment, electrical wiring and plumbing. Interior partitions were re-arranged.

The building includes 3,230 square feet divided into five examining rooms, laboratory, trauma room, pharmacy room and dentist's office, audio-visual room, X-ray room, film developing room, employees lounge, waiting room and office and records rooms.

The health center is located on State Road 1102, one mile east of N.C. 11 at Charity Crossroads.

The center is open from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Mondays, Tuesdays and Wednesdays, from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. Thursdays and from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. Fridays. It is closed weekends.

Dr. Fisher said the late hours Thursdays are well attended by patients who find it difficult to take time off from work or from school to come to the clinic.

Center services are not free, he emphasized. Fees vary, based on ability of patients to pay. The center works with Medicaid and Medicare as well as most health insurance firms, he added.

Miss Duplin County Saturday March 7 In Kenansville

The Warsaw Jaycees will sponsor the Miss Duplin County Scholarship Pageant on Saturday night, March 7 at 8 p.m. in Kenan Auditorium in Kenansville. The pageant is being held to select Miss Duplin County 1981 who will represent the county in the Miss North Carolina Pageant in Raleigh the last week in June.

The pageant theme, "A Little Bit of Country," will feature the talents of guest performers Bridgette Brayboy who is the reigning Miss Lumbree; Lisa Swift, the current Miss North Carolina - U.S.A.; and Shari Jones, Miss Duplin County 1980.

Emcee for the pageant will be the well-known entertainer Janet Hogan from Norman. Janet is a former talent winner in the Miss North Carolina pageant and performs at many pageants and civic events across the state.

Seven contestants will vie for the Miss Duplin County crown. They are: Angela Norman, Penny James, Alice Ann Pate, Jerriane Inscow, Sherry Rogers, Gina Powell, Wendy Rivenbark and Julia Spicer. The contestants represent various parts of the county. All will compete in talent, gown, swimsuit and interview phases required by the Miss America Pageant.

Judges will include Mr. and Mrs. Al Gudger of Asheville, Mr. and Mrs. Ed Wallace from Denton, and

Mrs. Mary E. Strickland from Southport. All of the judges are on the list of recommended pageant judges provided by the Miss North Carolina Pageant.

Sam Garner, business manager for Miss Duplin County and pageant-staging chairman, recommends that all former Miss Warsaws and Miss Duplin Counties attend the pageant and plan to be introduced on stage during the evening. Garner has suggested that former queens should identify themselves at the door and admission will be provided for them and one guest.

"The Warsaw Jaycees work all year on this project and others, and it would be really great if the folks of Duplin County would come to the pageant and support the Jaycees and the new queen."

Tickets will be available at the door of the auditorium on the evening of the pageant.

Wheels For Life Bike-A-Thon In Kenansville

Phil Hardy and Mike Outlaw, both of Kenansville, have been appointed chairpersons for the annual "Wheels for Life" Bike-A-Thon in Kenansville, scheduled for April 4 with a rain date of April 11. The event will benefit St. Jude Children's Research Hospital.

St. Jude Hospital is devoted to painstaking medical research and treatment of children stricken with catastrophic diseases, including leukemia, Hodgkins disease and other forms of cancer. The Memphis facility was founded by Danny Thomas in 1962. It is non-sectarian, interracial and completely

free of charge to patients whose disease is under study and who are referred by a physician. The hospital provides transportation and lodging for the child and parent.

St. Jude Children's Research Hospital is the largest childhood cancer research center in the world. Doctors and scientists have been brought together from all over the world to conquer death-dealing illnesses striking children. The results of this research are shared with physicians and scientists worldwide so that children everywhere are helped by the hospital. Everyone can share in the optimism of

a growing "cure rate" for cancer because of the work at St. Jude.

The hospital receives assistance from federal grants and is supported by voluntary contributions raised through such events as the "Wheels for Life" Bike-A-Thon. This year, healthy children participating in the event will wear a hospital identification bracelet bearing the name of a patient at St. Jude. Thus, they will be tangibly riding for another child. They will also be helping children across the country and throughout the world since the money raised will benefit research



WARSAW'S NEW 300,000-GALLON WATER STORAGE TANK TAKING SHAPE

The new tank is part of a \$1.3 water improvement project which is scheduled to be completed in September of 1981. The tank is located on the south side of town, also on the site of one of the two new wells for the

system. When completed, Warsaw will have three above-ground storage tanks with a capacity of 675,000 gallons, and five pumping wells. The average daily water billing is 265,000. Thus the town will have in storage a three-day supply once the project is completed. (Photo by Donna Lanier)