

Son Of A Gun

by Joe Lanier

As Doug Clark refuses even to adhere to the request of the Duplin Democratic Party, I am at a loss as to what title should be attached to his name. I have never called him my representative because his actions, in my opinion, do not favor Duplin County's average citizenry. I have called him your representative, but now I am not sure that is even right. I have also called him Duplin's representative. Here again, it seems his only interest is his — not Duplin's. He continues to support the so-called "super district" which puts Duplin County in with Columbus, Brunswick, Bladen, Pender and Sampson counties — a six-county district in which Duplin could very easily become lost. These districts will be set for a 10-year period — thus Duplin could be without a representative for ten years. . . The only bright side of this is that we at least would not think we had a representative for as it is now. Few folks who get into politics and are successfully elected are able to remember their roots. They get all caught up in important things happening around them and begin to think and soon believe they can better make decisions than those they promised not to forget — the voters. They are so sure they know what is best for the folks back home because it may be, at that moment, best for them. . . In case you might not know, the Democratic Convention recently held in Duplin County voted against this six-county district that Clark supports. . . The only reason something different is not in the line-up for Duplin is due to Clark's signed statement insisting Duplin be put in this six-county district. Those folks in Raleigh falsely believe Mr. Clark represents Duplin County. . . (See story elsewhere).

It was a vote of three to two last Tuesday night that cut the county workers down and upped the highly paid positions even higher. . . There was a motion on the floor to give each county worker a set amount salary increase, and another motion to give a 5% across-the-board increase. . . (Both were called a cost-of-living increase). . . The 5% won and the set increase lost. . . Now the high-paid county manager and finance officer will receive a salary increase of over \$1,200 while the lowly worker will pocket only about \$350. . . And the difference between the workers and the administrative salaries grows farther and farther apart. An example given to support percent increases by Judy Casteen. . . This may be a little further than she did, but her point is the same. . . Two salaries, one at \$1,000, the other at \$6,032. After taxes they are \$9,404.80 and \$6,032. . . They are on a family of four. . . So, the \$6,032 pays no taxes to begin with. . . This is a bunch of baloney. . . A family of four can't live on \$6,032, so the husband is working someplace else and chances are the low salary is cut by \$1,000. . . But back to the weighted figures. . . There is a difference of about \$3,350 between the top and lower salary after taxes. . . This separation apparently was believed to be correct by those setting up responsibilities. . . Eight years later, after a series of equal percent raises, the higher salary is now, after taxes, at \$20,475.83. . . The lower salary is now at \$13,218.74 after taxes — a difference of over \$7,000. . . In the beginning, the responsibilities were only worth a difference of \$3,500. . . Were the responsibilities incorrectly set in the beginning? . . . But, Judy's point was — at the beginning, the difference between the salaries was 64.14% and at the end of eight years, it was 64.56%. We all know percents are misleading. . . Ten percent of 1,000 is 100, while 10% of 100,000 is 10,000. . . Still 10% but quite a difference. In case you were wondering, voting for the % increase were Bill Costin, Franklin Williams and Calvin Turner. Voting for the set amount were D.J. Fussell and Allen Nethercutt. . . At last year's budget there was talk of eliminating a position this year. . . It might be interesting to note that this position has not come up except to talk of merit increases. . . That position being the instigator of the increase — that's right, not cut, but given a raise. There was great jubilation about a new way of collecting taxes — combining the tax attorney and the county attorney. . . Save much money. . . Guess what. . . Now someone is needed to serve the papers. . . It appears to have all ended up costing the same — or more. . . If there has been any problems about this new method of collecting taxes, it has been handled behind closed doors (executive session) just like other things. . . I think they might as well change their names from the county commissioners to Ralph's behind-the-closed-doors boys. . . Son-of-a-Gun. . .

Health Officials Present Scientific Exhibit

Dr. Ian C. Wilson, clinical director, and Dr. E. J. Raman, area director of the Duplin-Sampson Area Mental Health and Mental Retardation Services, presented a scientific exhibit entitled "Prevention of Suicide in the Depressed Patient" at the 134th annual meeting of the American Psychiatric Association held in New Orleans, La., May 9-15.

The purpose of the exhibit was to stress the importance of suicide as a leading factor in depression. Suicide is an important medical and psychiatric challenge. In the U.S., the latest public health statistics show 26,832 suicides in a year. The action number may be twice as high. Suicide is one of the leading causes of death. For every successful suicide, it is estimated that there are up to 50 unsuccessful attempts. Women attempt suicide more often than men, but men successfully complete the act more often. Of those who commit suicide, it is estimated that up to 42% have attempted it previously. Of those who unsuccessfully attempt suicide, ten percent will subsequently commit suicide.

A clear association exists between depression and suicide. About 15% of those with depressive illness are likely to commit suicide. Symptoms of depressive illness are present in 70% of those who commit suicide. Depression in seriously ill or dying patients lead many to consider suicide. Suicide risks are not necessarily directly related to severity of depression, often it is greater when the patient is beginning to improve.

Treatment of depression. The antidepressant drug therapy in the treatment of depressed individuals aim to reduce the intensity of depressive symptoms as rapidly as possible and lessen the suicide intent in those predisposed to this action. The scientific exhibit showed the rapid onset of therapeutic action and efficacy of amoxapine as compared to those of imipramine or amitriptyline in three controlled clinical investigations of hospitalized patients and outpatients with symptoms of moderate to severe depressive illness. The relatively slow onset of therapeutic action is a disadvantage of traditional tricyclic antidepressants in that depressive symptoms usually

show very little improvement before the third week. Depressed patients need to have the intensity of those symptoms reduced rapidly to lessen the danger of suicide. In present studies, amoxapine shows an earlier onset of action than imipramine or amitriptyline as reflected by relative improvements under several objective and subjective depression rating scales within the first week of treatment. In caring for the patients who are a potential

suicide, the family should consider all threats of suicide seriously and take measures to help the patients seek appropriate treatment through their physician or mental health center.

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