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Kenansville's Liquor By The Drink....

The Quiet Referendum

By Sharon Overton
Staff Writer

In less than a week, the citizens of Kenansville will decide what should be one of the most controversial questions in the town's history. The people will vote on a referendum to determine whether or not mixed drinks and malt beverages can be sold in restaurants, hotels, private clubs and convention centers within the city limits.

The referendum should be controversial, considering that the town voted down a similar state proposal in 1973 and narrowly approved the A.B.C. store here in November, 1965. However, as of last week, the town has been relatively quiet on the subject. Debate has been

minimal and the man's who's talking the least, perhaps, is the very one who sponsored the petition calling for a referendum.

Jesse (Bill) Brown, a Kenansville resident, merchant and former restaurant owner, began circulating a petition four months ago calling for a town vote for or against mixed drinks and the sale of on-premises malt beverages. According to law, the petition must carry the names of at least 25 percent of the town's voting population before it becomes a referendum. Brown collected over 130 signatures out of 452.

Brown has declined several times to comment on his efforts to bring liquor by the drink to Kenansville, saying on one occasion that he

"didn't really know much about it." The same reaction came from local restaurateur Dixon Hall, part owner of the Graham House Inn. Hall, who now has a brown bagging license, did say that he "probably would vote for it, since it would increase the tax receipts needed to finance social programs in town." Hall added that mixed beverages would probably increase his establishment's sales as well.

Although Mayor Donald Suttles has not yet officially stated that he supports or opposes the sale of mixed beverages in Kenansville, he admits that the idea has several advantages.

"As long as liquor and beer are being sold in the town and county, someone is going to derive money from

it," said Suttles. "I think Kenansville would benefit from the tax revenue and profit from sales of mixed beverages. It might help defray personal taxes as well."

According to Benny Prince, chairman of the Alcoholic Control Board, the town would benefit from a \$10.00 per gallon state tax which is levied on alcohol used for mixed beverages. Of the \$10.00, 25 percent goes to the state and 45 percent of the remainder to the county and 55 percent to the town. This means that Kenansville would receive \$4.13 from each gallon of liquor sold for mixed drink purposes. This is in addition to whatever tax revenue Kenansville realizes from increased sales.

Prince said he cannot estimate by how much sales will

increase if liquor by the drink is approved. The local A.B.C. Store now records yearly sales of approximately \$275,000, \$3,300 of which goes to the town.

Suttles also said that he feels liquor by the drink "will create no more drinking problems, probably fewer." He explained that "studies prove" that the high cost of buying drinks individually as compared to purchasing an entire bottle and brown bagging tend to deter heavy drinking. He added that establishments serving mixed drinks would be "well supervised by law enforcement officials."

Ellie Zackheim is the owner of the General Store, one of the two restaurants in town expected to be influenced by the mixed drink vote. Mrs. Zackheim agrees with Suttles that liquor by the drink would probably decrease public drinking, but says the issue doesn't affect her business one way or the other.

"As far as the restaurant is concerned, I don't care if it passes," she said. "I don't believe I would ever want mixed beverages on the premises here... it just isn't conducive to that sort of thing. I might possibly apply for brown bagging or beer, but that's all."

When asked why she felt debate concerning the referendum has been so limited, Mrs. Zackheim said, "People here are very touchy about this subject. The people who are trying to put mixed beverages through are also keeping it quiet for that same reason."



LIQUOR BY THE DRINK - The sale of liquor at the Kenansville A.B.C. Store currently brings the town about \$3,300 annually. If Kenansville voters approve the sale of mixed beverages in the August 31st referendum, the town could gross \$4.13 off of every gallon sold to restaurant and hotel owners within the city limits who obtain a mixed beverage license.

Duplin Board Sticks By Familiar Firm

The Duplin County Board of Commissioners awarded a heavy equipment contract to the second lowest bidder last week because of past experience with service and parts from the firm.

The board accepted the \$51,245 bid of Simpson Equipment Co. of Wilson for a new industrial waste-hauling truck, although the bid was \$473.35 higher than the low bid of \$50,771.65 from Specialty Waste Equipment Inc. of Greenville, S.C.

David Underhill, county landfill supervisor, recommended the Simpson company. He told the board that over the 10-year anticipated life of the truck, the county would spend more than the \$473.35 difference in the bids in telephone calls to Greenville for parts and service.

County Attorney Russell

Lanier Jr. said service and parts availability nearby was a valid reason for accepting the Simpson bid.

Industries served by the county waste pick-up pay for the service, including the cost of equipment.

The board delayed action on a heavy-duty front end loader, North Carolina Equipment Co. spokesman complained that the way the bid specifications were written, no one but Gregory Poole Co. could bid on the equipment. However, North Carolina Equipment bid \$107,900, \$32,166 less than the Gregory Poole bid of \$139,734. The two pieces of equipment are dissimilar, however, Underhill said the equipment offered by Gregory Poole would outlast the other company's unit. Commissioner, Franklin

Williams said, "Personally, I'm confused and I wouldn't buy either one of them today. I'd just have to use a shovel for a while if I didn't have anything else."

The board plans to study the matter and make a decision at its next meeting. Jimmy Summerlin of Route 1, Kenansville said that while he listed his taxes on time the county had filed to include a truck he purchased a year ago. He was charged a \$2.17 penalty for late listing of the truck. The board agreed to remove the penalty.

Social services director Millie Brown received permission to accept about 9,000 pounds of surplus cheese and 1,600 pounds of butter from the U.S. Department of Agriculture for distribution in the county. The Board of

Education has agreed to store the butter in school refrigerators. Ms. Brown said 18 people will require two days working time to make the distribution.

Russell Tucker, county finance officer, told the board he will seek \$9,990.38 from the state as partial replacement of the state's increasing the property tax exemption for the elderly. He said the total exemption in the county amounts to a \$66,602.50 reduction in county tax collections.

The county Municipal Association met last Thursday at the Rose Hill Restaurant in Rose Hill.

The commissioners will hold their next meeting at 9 a.m. Sept. 7, the first Tuesday of September, because of the Labor Day holiday on the preceding Monday, the regular meeting date.

Charlie Whitley Day In Duplin

Friday, Aug. 27, is Charlie Whitley Appreciation Day in Duplin County, and Whitley campaigners invite the public to attend the rally at James Sprunt Technical College in Kenansville at 6:30 p.m.

Duplin County Democrats have lined up a program of distinguished speakers headed by the guest of honor who is seeking his fourth term in Congress. Music and "down-home" style entertainment will be provided by Charlie Albertson and his band and other local musicians.

Tickets are \$5 each and barbecue dinners will be served. Roy Barwick, one of many Whitley supporters who has worked to make the rally a success, urged a "huge demonstration of support" at the rally. "Charlie Whitley has just finished taking the lead in Washington to save our tobacco program," Barwick said. "Now, let's show him we appreciate it."

Duplin To Raise Ambulance Fees

Duplin County's ambulance fees for out-of-county runs will increase sharply Sept. 1 because of high costs of maintaining the service.

The \$25 fee for ambulance runs within the county will remain unchanged. Duplin County furnishes ambulances for the community rescue squads and retains ownership of the equipment.

The board of commissioners adopted a schedule for out-of-county ambulance runs providing for a minimum charge of \$50 plus \$1.50 per mile for the distance between the Duplin County line and the ambulance's destination. The present fee is \$35 plus \$1.25 per mile from the county line to the destination.

Hiram Brinson, county emergency services coordinator, said a trip to Carolina Memorial Hospital in Chapel Hill takes 40-45 gallons of

gas and six hours. "We easily have \$100 invested in the trip after figuring the cost of gas, the wages of two people at \$3.35 an hour and their meals," he said.

The county now charges \$148.75 for the trip. "If you figure any depreciation on vehicles and equipment you simply go in the hole," he told the board. The new fee for this trip will be \$191.

The fees cover mileage for one way of the round trip. An ambulance charge can only be applied while an ambulance is actually occupied by a patient.

The current charge for a trip to Duke Memorial Hospital in Durham is \$147.50. After Sept. 1 the fee will be \$185.

The fee for transportation to New Hanover Memorial Hospital in Wilmington will increase from \$85 to \$110.

Fees to other area hospitals and the increased fees

after Sept. 1 are: Pitt Memorial Hospital, Greenville, \$103.75 to \$131; Sampson County Hospital, Clinton, \$48.75 to \$66.50; Onslow Memorial Hospital, Jacksonville, and Lenoir Memorial Hospital, Kinston, \$66.25 to \$87.50; and Pender Memorial Hospital, Burgaw, \$51.25 to \$69.50.

Brinson said last year 551 patients were transported to hospitals outside Duplin County.

The collection rate on the \$72,836.70 billed to ambulance customers in 1981 was less than 60 percent, he added. The county collected \$43,103.35.

During December 1981, the Wallace Rescue Squad made 11 out-of-county ambulance trips; the Warsaw, Rose Hill and Chinquapin squads, five each; Beulaville, seven; Magnolia, three, and the Duplin County Hospital ambulance, 31.

Wallace Marks Site For Rescue Squad Building

WALLACE - The Wallace city property lines on the west side of the city hall block were being surveyed last week in preparation for construction of a rescue squad building on a portion of the property.

The surveyor, Charles Brooks of Wallace, also will establish corner positions for the proposed 3,400-square-

foot rescue squad building.

The building will face East Murray Street, the street in front of the town hall. The building will be set back 20 feet from the street, according to present plans. It will have three bays opening on to the street to house squad vehicles.

Initial planning called for a metal building. After inves-

tigating costs, the town board and squad members found the cost of a brick veneer structure would be only slightly higher than a metal building. Town Manager Steve Routh said plans now call for use of brick.

Cost is now estimated at about \$80,000. The rescue squad has \$30,000 on hand.

Town Attorney Richard Burrows is drawing up a lease agreement between the town and the squad. Burrows told the board towns can give land to a fire department but not to rescue squads. However, towns can ask rescue squads to donate services under a contract or franchise agreement, according to Routh. The lease will be drawn for one year.

According to the squad charter, the captain or chief executive officer will sign the lease. Dulan Murray is the current squad captain.

The Wallace town board also negotiated with East Coast Construction Co. of Jacksonville to eliminate \$5,411 from the pump and pump house project for the new city well near the city hall.

The board awarded the contract to the company for \$43,008.50. The original bid was \$48,420.50. The town will supply a pump motor valued at \$1,650, chlorination equipment valued at \$3,224 and eliminated 25 feet of drainage pipe valued at \$537.50.

A test pump for the new well is expected this week. Construction of the pump house and installation of equipment can begin as soon as water samples are found satisfactory.

Malpractice Charged By Duplin Man

A Duplin County man has filed a malpractice suit against a doctor he claims performed dangerous and unnecessary surgery that resulted in severe complications.

Jon Sikes charges that Horace G. Moore Jr., a New Hanover County physician, improperly treated him in 1979 for gastro-intestinal problems.

The suit says Moore told Sikes he had a peptic ulcer that would require surgery and said there should be no serious after-effects. In fact, the suit claims, this type of operation has a history of producing painful complications, which Sikes later suffered. There were also other

methods not involving surgery that could have been used, the suit says.

In addition to surgery on the ulcer, the suit says, Moore performed an operation used to correct hernias. Sikes did not have a hernia.

When Sikes complained of complications after the operation — including nausea, vomiting and dramatic weight loss — Moore told him he would have to "learn to live with the condition" and "let nature take

its course," the suit says. Sikes, who is seeking an undisclosed amount over \$10,000, says in the suit his condition has improved since undergoing corrective surgery performed by another doctor.

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McDaniels Wife To Tour Beulaville Aug. 27

Dorothy McDaniel, wife of Third District Congressional challenger Red McDaniel, will tour Beulaville Aug. 27 as part of McDaniel's Fall Kick-Off Day. She will arrive in Beulaville at approximately 3:30 p.m. by a special

campaign van. The van will be parked beside the newspaper building behind the EZ Mart.

Mrs. McDaniel will tour the town, meeting Beulaville citizens and giving out copies of "Scars and Stripes," a book about McDaniel's civ-

years in a communist prison in North Vietnam.

"I am honored to have the chance to meet the fine people who are helping Beulaville grow and prosper," Mrs. McDaniel remarked.

VOCATIONAL AWARD WINNER - Robert Tart, vocational director for Duplin County schools, presents the Greenhorn Award to Janet Jones for her accomplishment as the Health Occupations Instructor at Extended Day. The award is presented annually by the

state to a vocational educator exhibiting outstanding teaching ability. Ms. Jones was a District II HOSA advisor in 1981-82 and was named Nurse of the Week in February, 1975.

