

Along The Way

By Emily Kilette

Southern Duplin County was well known during the early 1900s for its production of strawberries and Wallace held an annual Strawberry Festival. In the heart of strawberry



Charles E. Sharpe Jr.

Sharpe Elected To NCNB Board

Charles E. Sharpe Jr., administrator of Guardian Care of Kenansville, has been elected to the city board of directors for Kenansville, according to Thomas C. Rouse, NCNB city executive.

Sharpe has served as administrator of Guardian Care since 1979 and was previously administrator of Guardian Care of Gastonia and Walnut Grove and administrator of Health Care Management, Inc.

He is a member of the standards and ethics and education committees of the North Carolina Health Care Facilities Association, and holds both an associate degree and a bachelor of science degree in business administration.

Sharpe is president of the Kenansville Area Chamber of Commerce and is also chaplain for the Kenansville Jaycees. He is past-president of the Kenansville Jaycees and a lay leader, Sunday school teacher, youth leader and choir member of the Wesleyan Church.

Sharpe was named Jaycee of the Year in 1982 and has also received the Faith in God award (1980-81 and 1982), Chairman of the Year (1982) and Spar; Plug of the Year (1982).

Sharpe is married to the former Sylvia Golding.

Analogies Test To Be Given At JSTC

The Miller Analogies Test of information and verbal reasoning ability used in the admission of students to graduate school will be given by East Carolina University at James Sprunt Technical College on May 30 at 6 p.m. in room 107 of the McGowan Building.

The testing fee for the MAT is \$25 which is payable at test time.

All interested persons should pre-register before May 29 by calling or writing George Hill, Continuing Education Department, James Sprunt Technical College, P.O. Box 398, Kenansville, NC 28349, or phone 296-1341, ext. 263.

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DUPLIN TIMES - PROGRESS SENTINEL
Published Weekly by
DUPLIN PUBLISHING CO., INC.
Ike Riddick, Publisher
P.O. Box 68
Kenansville, NC 28349

Second Class Postage Paid at
Kenansville, NC 28349

SUBSCRIPTION PRICES

Single Copy	11 Cents
In Duplin and adjoining Counties	6 Mos. — \$1.83
Outside of Duplin and Adjoining Counties	1 Yr. — \$3.66
6 Mos. — \$2.35	1 Yr. — \$4.70
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country bloomed a new crop in the 1940s — turkeys.

Nash Johnson and A.B. Wells of Rose Hill both wanted to supplement their income from tobacco production. After government controls were lifted from tobacco in 1939, Johnson and Wells seriously sought another source of income. Noting the constant market for the turkeys Mrs. Nash Johnson raised each year on the yard, the men decided to "kinda feel their way" into the turkey industry, Wells said in a May 24, 1946 article published in the DUPLIN TIMES.

The first year several broad-

breasted bronze turkeys were imported from Florida at a price of \$25 for some of the gobblers. To start the production, 60 hens were set. After one year of tending moody, temperamental "setting" hens, Nash and Wells purchased an 800-egg incubator.

"Everyone seemed to want to buy turkeys — never seen anything like it — so we decided to let them have turkeys," Johnson in the May 24, 1946 article, "Rose Hill Farmers Pioneer Turkey Growing As Major Crop." And he explained that the income from the turkey venture began to far exceed cash from

tobacco production.

The men would begin work in the hatchery during January and run the incubator until late May. The single incubator could not keep up with the demand for poults by 1942. Additional incubators were purchased in the next few years and by 1946 the hatchery had a 65,000 capacity. The hatchery was wired to alarm if one or all the incubators became too cool or warm, and it was located behind Johnson's home.

A turkey house 200 ft. x 55 ft. was located on the Johnson farm to grow out poults to supply eggs for the hatchery. The turkey house was said

to be the largest in the state east of Union County, a well-known turkey producing county. The men grew out 7,500 poults each year and selected only the best 2,500 hens and toms to supply eggs for the hatchery. At the time of the 1946 article, the Johnson-Wells hatchery was valued at \$10,000 and sold more than 8,500 poults each year in 12 southern states. However, the majority of the poults were sold in Duplin and surrounding counties. Growing turkeys from purchased poults decreased work more than 50 percent, Mrs. Johnson commented in the article.

The hatchery employed eight full-time people in 1946 and the men planned to open a turkey processing plant in the fall. At that time the nearest processing plant for turkeys was in Siler City. With the construction of the processing plant in Rose Hill, Johnson and Wells expected to provide full-time jobs for up to 45 individuals.

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