

Duplin Times

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Region May Become Nation's Turkey Capital

Southeastern North Carolina will soon become the nation's biggest turkey-producing area, says William Prestage of Clinton, owner of Prestage Farms, which produces swine and turkeys.

Several producers, including Prestage, also predict a large increase in swine production in the region and state.

Current building and future construction plans will sharply increase poultry and swine processing capacity.

Southeastern North Carolina last year produced about 18 million to 20 million turkeys. The turkeys are grown by farmers under contracts with feed companies and processors, who are called program operators.

The region also produces millions of broiler chickens every year.

Duplin County — the leading poultry-producing county in the nation — grossed about \$112 million from poultry and poultry products in 1983. Turkeys accounted for nearly half the total.

By doubling the size of its hog-processing operations, Lundy Packing Co. of Clinton will become one of the largest plants of its kind in the nation. When complete, the plant will be able to process 3 million hogs a year, said Lou Fetterman, company president. That equals 8,219 hogs a day.

Ten years ago the state's annual hog production was about 3 million. Lundy opened in 1950 and processed 15,434 hogs in its first year. By 1960, the firm was slaughtering 1.5 million hogs a year.

The Lundy expansion is coming at a time of rapid change and reorganization among the meat packers and packing plants of the Midwest. The industry is moving from the old

centers such as Chicago to the livestock production centers. This also applies to poultry processing.

Plans are being developed by Carroll's Foods of Warsaw and Goldsboro Milling Co. of Goldsboro for an \$18 million turkey processing plant in Duplin County. David Bray of Wallace, retired manager of the Swift & Co. turkey processing plant at Wallace, is consultant and future general manager of the new plant.

Bray joins Prestage in predicting a sharp rise in North Carolina's turkey production.

Sam Finch, manager of the Swift & Co. turkey plant at Wallace, believes 1985 should be an excellent year for turkey producers. He said the Wallace plant "will play a big part in Swift's future plans. This is the largest turkey plant Swift has."

Finch expects the plant will process 5 million to 6 million turkeys — about 84 million pounds of meat — this year.

Swift & Co. and the House of Raeford of Nash Johnson & Sons Farms are national leaders in developing turkey merchandising to turn turkey from a Thanksgiving-Christmas specialty into a year-

around meal.

James Norris, Columbus County livestock extension agent, said many Columbus County farmers are starting hog enterprises, some of them to replace lost tobacco income. He said Columbus farmers are operating their hog businesses independently. Many Sampson and Duplin hog growers are contracting with program operators, a system similar to that used in broiler and turkey production.

North Carolina has been the top turkey-producing state in the nation for three years. Its 1984 turkey production was estimated at 30 million birds.

The state ranks seventh in hog production, but that ranking is deceptive because North Carolina's production is small compared with that of Iowa, Nebraska and Illinois.

Paced by its huge poultry industry, Duplin County has led all North Carolina counties in gross farm income for most of two decades. Joining Duplin County as a major poultry and swine producer is Sampson. Swine production has become a major agricultural field in Columbus County as well.



Kenansville To Be Featured In Magazine

The town of Kenansville was photographed last week by Southern Living magazine. The pictures and story are to appear as a featured small town in the November edition or prior to that as part of the travel section of the magazine. Photographed for the story were the Cowan Museum, Grove Presbyterian Church, the Graham House Inn and Liberty Hall. Pictured above, left to

right, Southern Living Assistant Travel Editor James T. Black and photographer Bruce Roberts at Liberty Hall. The plantation home, Liberty Hall, was featured in the recent edition of Southern Accents magazine. The Southern Accents magazine is based in Atlanta, Ga., and features both historic and modern homes along with cultural events and artists.

Duplin Asks State To Create Historic Trail

A "historic trail" may be in the making through Duplin County.

The county commissioners last week approved a resolution calling for the state to renumber N.C. 11 through the county to N.C. 903 and designate it a historical route.

The road would be renumbered from the Duplin County line near Albertson to U.S. 74-76 at Freeman in Columbus County, according to the resolution. The change would affect the road in Pender, Bladen and Columbus counties.

Secondary Road 1003 west from N.C. 11 through Magnolia in Duplin County to Delway in Sampson County would be renumbered N.C. 11 and improved with the idea of attracting tourist traffic from Interstate 40 and other major thoroughfares in the area.

It would form a more direct route from I-40 to Kenansville than the present N.C. 11. N.C. 11 passes through Kenansville, which has historic buildings. The route is near Rockfish Battlefield and Moore's Creek National Battlefield near Currie.

"I don't see how it'd hurt anything," Commissioner D.J. Fussell said of the renumbering proposal.

The board also interviewed Richard Johnson of Kinston, the first of several architects scheduled to present plans for a 12,000-square-foot, \$500,000 addition to the

county's social services building.

School Superintendent L.S. Guy received permission to transfer \$20,000 from contingency funds to convert five open classrooms to standard classrooms, and \$300 to complete payment on a service truck.

If teachers are to be held accountable for their students' progress, Guy said, they want to be individually, not jointly responsible. In open classrooms, several teachers

share teaching duties.

The board agreed to pay up to \$10,000 to pave about two blocks of Duplin Street from N.C. 11 past the county jail. The street is lined by various government buildings.

Kenansville town Commissioner Earl Hatcher and Steve Drew, town public works commissioner, made the request.

Kenansville plans to pave Seminary and Hill streets, but the county

is not involved in those projects, they said.

A request to fund a "911" emergency telephone number was tabled. Hiram Brinson, emergency services coordinator, asked the commissioners to fund "911" as the county emergency number to serve Kenansville, Wallace and Faison. Under the plan, residents could get emergency services by dialing the three digits.

If the service is installed under the present telephone system, Warsaw, Beulaville and Rose Hill residents would have to dial 296 before 911. Four lines would be included in the plan.

If one line was busy, a second call could be switched to a free line. The system would cost about \$696 a month, compared with the present cost of \$564 a month for three special lines. The proposed service would increase cost by \$1,608 a year.

Third North Facility Open House, Sunday

Duplin General Hospital Modernizes

Efforts to revive Duplin General Hospital have been successfully underway for several years. Sunday the hospital opens a renovated section of the Lee Brown wing for private medical/surgical care rooms.

Recognition of Duplin General's plan to modernize begins at a public open house for the Third North facility, March 3, from 3-5 p.m. Richard Harrell, Duplin General Hospital administrator, pointed out the open house is only for the renovated Third North floor, not the entire hospital.

The opening of the Third North section of the hospital is part of Duplin General's plan to upgrade

medical care and facilities, Harrell said. The area was originally designed for medical/surgical care rooms but used as office space and a small in-patient psychiatric unit.

The modernization of Duplin General Hospital not only provides private rooms for patients, but upgrades the telephone and television systems. The hospital currently averages a 55 percent occupancy rate, Harrell pointed out, the modernization project results from the demand for in-room telephone and television service as well as private rooms by the citizens in the area.

"We feel there is a demand for

private rooms and in-room telephone services," Harrell said. "Many times these factors enter into the choice of coming to Duplin General or going into another hospital with these services available."

"The existing telephone system is outdated and has such limited capacity that less than 50 percent of our patient rooms have telephone service," Harrell said. "With the completion of this project, 74 percent of our beds will be housed in modern and attractive facilities as compared to the existing 43 percent, and all patient rooms will have telephone service."

The cost of building facilities equal

to the renovation of the existing third north floor would amount to more than \$1 million, Harrell explained. The reorganization of locations for the existing small in-patient psychiatric unit and the medical/surgical rooms makes the best use of existing facilities, at a fraction of new construction costs, he said.

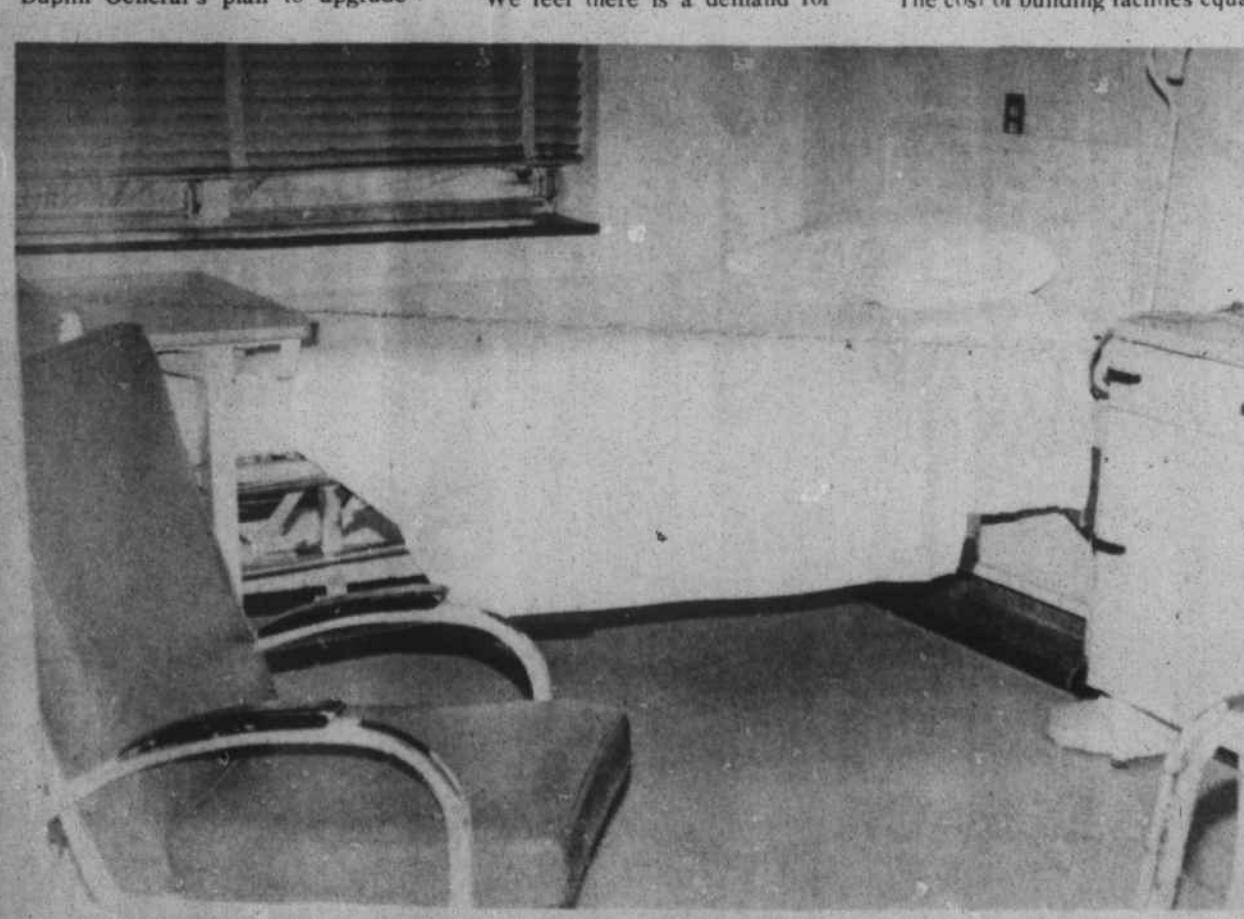
"The Third North floor was constructed to provide 25 private rooms for general medical/surgical care and is identical in design to our existing Second North floor which since construction has been used continuously as a medical/surgical facility," Harrell said.

"The Third North floor, until just recently, housed the area Mental Health Agency and a small in-patient psychiatric unit." Currently the second floors of the original hospital building and the Lee Brown addition serve as the medical/surgical patient facility. The modernization will move all medical/surgical patient rooms, except maternity, into the Lee Brown wing of Duplin General Hospital. The Lee Brown wing was opened in 1971. The in-patient psychiatric unit is to be housed on a portion of the second floor vacated by medical/surgical patient services. Duplin General will have 67 private patient rooms in the medical/surgical area.

According to Harrell, modernization plans will continue in the future at Duplin General Hospital. The maternity floor is the next step in renovation and modernization. Harrell said the third floor, maternity patient rooms would be renovated to include private bath facilities and in-room phone service. Approximately 350 babies are expected to be born at Duplin General Hospital this year.

Even with the expansion of the maternity ward and use of part of the original hospital area as an in-patient psychiatric unit, space will still be unused. Harrell said the hospital plans to utilize the unused rooms on the second and third floors opposite the maternity ward and psychiatric unit for long term health care beds. The hospital is currently in the process of being licensed to provide long-term health care.

"There is a need for long-term care beds in Duplin," Harrell said. "And, a medical facility like this hospital with available space, the transition would be only logical." If licensed, Duplin General would provide up to 30 long-term health care beds.



Duplin General Hospital Renovates Floor

Renovation of Third North floor of the Lee Brown wing of Duplin General opens 25 surgical/medical patient rooms at the hospital. The floor had formerly been occupied by Duplin-Sampson Area Mental Health offices, but was constructed in 1971 to be used for patient rooms. After 13 years of use as office space, communications and medical support systems in each room were reconditioned and along with new paint and furniture, the rooms were made ready by the hospital maintenance staff for use as surgical/medical patient

rooms. According to Duplin General Hospital Administrator Richard Harrell, the floor will be open to the public Sunday from 3 until 5 p.m. The Lee Brown wing will now house all surgical/medical patient rooms, except maternity, on the second and third floors. The hospital had been using Second North floor and Second South floor of the original hospital as surgical/medical patient rooms. Pictured, left, is a newly-furnished room on Third North floor, and, above, a patient room in the south wing of the hospital.