

# Duplin Times

PROGRESS SENTINEL

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## Duplin To Cut School Cost

The Duplin County Board of Education will hire a technician as soon as possible to maintain typewriters and possibly computers in a cost-cutting move.

Superintendent L.S. Guy told the board during a special meeting last week that the cost of maintaining this equipment will be less if the school system hires a technician rather than contracting the work out as it has done.

The board also agreed to choose an architectural firm at its Aug. 6 meeting for improvements at James Kenan High School east of Warsaw on N.C. 24-50.

It heard presentations from Herb McKim, a partner in the Wilmington firm of Ballard, McKim and Sawyer; Wes McClure of McClure NBBJ Inc. of Raleigh; and Leslie N. Boney of Boney Architects of Wilmington.

The board approved use of 1,520 square feet of property at the North

Duplin schools by the state Department of Transportation for a bridge over Crow Goshen Creek.

Guy told the board the school system owns 636 typewriters and 264 computers. At least 382 typewriters must be operating in classrooms during the school year and 126 in administrative offices, he said.

He said the system has been contracting for maintenance at \$15,000 to \$16,000 a year plus parts. He said Commercial Office Machines of Clinton had bid \$16,000 for the work but last month announced it was dropping its bid and quitting the service business.

Guy said the system has several makes of typewriters and each company will service only its products. Another problem, he said, is that the equipment is at 17 sites, creating mileage and time problems.

Service contracts covering individual machines would range from \$60

to \$150 each per year, he said. The cost at the lowest figure would be \$30,480 per year and at the highest, \$76,200.

He said a technician could be hired for \$16,618 per year in salary plus Social Security and fringe benefits — a total of \$20,520 per year. He estimated the job would require driving 235 miles a week at 20.5 cents a mile or \$2,505 a year. Repair parts would cost about \$3,000. The total annual investment would be \$26,025.

Guy said the technician could be taught to maintain the computers.

The board received a high bid of \$28,000 from Bill English of Wallace for the house built by vocational class students of Wallace-Rose Hill High School. The house, built on the school campus, must be moved. Upset bids may be made at the law office of Phillips and Phillips in Kenansville for 10 days.



Celebrates 10 Years & A Permanent Home

The Duplin County Arts Council is in its 10th year and Monday the organization began operation in its new permanent home. Pictured above is the Duplin County Arts Council building on Hill Street in Kenansville. After more than a week of moving from the courthouse annex, Arts Council Secretary Carol Kleen and Director Merle Creech will be unpacking and arranging work

areas at the new office through the coming weeks. The Arts Council phone will remain the same, 296-1922, Carol said, and in the future the office will display art work of Duplin residents. The building is the former law office of Attorney George Kornegay of Mount Olive.

## Poison Gas At Wallace Plant

State Labor Department investigators spent most of Thursday hunting the source of toxic gas that sickened some 35 workers at the Beatrice Meats Inc. turkey processing plant in Wallace.

Duplin County Emergency Services Director Hiram Brinson said officials had not found the source. Investigators still do not know for certain what kind of gas escaped, but Brinson said it was probably chlorine or ammonia.

Early Thursday, the Beatrice corporate office in Chicago issued a statement that said the incident posed no danger to the plant or community.

The statement acknowledged that at about 2 p.m. Wednesday, workers "complained of runny noses, eye irritation and tightness in the chest."

The employees, all working in one of the plant's cut-up rooms, also suffered nausea, vomiting, headaches, coughing, dizziness and sleepiness, hospital officials said.

Soon after the ailments were reported, plant managers evacuated 50 to 60 workers from the area of the cut-up room. County rescue squads were called to transport victims to hospitals in Duplin and Pender counties.

The Wallace Fire Department was summoned. Chief Thomas Townsend said firefighters are trained to handle toxic gas leaks. He said a team wearing protective clothing entered the cut-up room Wednesday but found no traces of chlorine or ammonia gas.

Townsend said he was prepared to evacuate the plant and anyone living

nearby rather than attempt to contain the leak if it spread. No houses are next to the facility, Brinson said.

At least 35 employees were treated and hospitalized for overnight observation at Duplin County General and Pender Memorial hospitals. All of the 15 people admitted at Pender Memorial Wednesday were discharged Thursday, Administrator James Hatcher said.

Most of the 19 workers admitted at Duplin County General were discharged Thursday, said supervisor Barbara Pulley. However, two more employees were admitted Thursday. She said they apparently didn't develop symptoms until several hours after the incident.

Only the cut-up room where the injuries occurred was isolated Wednesday while emergency teams moved in. The rest of the plant's operation continued; employees arriving for the late shift were allowed to work, plant officials said.

Though the investigation is not over, chlorine and ammonia are

suspected in the leak because they are the only two substances known to be used at the plant that could cause the symptoms workers suffered, Brinson said.

He said a chlorine leak is more likely because ammonia has a distinctive odor that was not detected.

Brinson said chlorine is used in the water supply to purify birds during processing. He said it is also used for cleaning. Brinson theorized that strong vapors may have been released from a chlorine and water mixture that had too much chlorine.

Chlorine, however, is not in constant use during the plant's routine operation, he said. An outdoor valve on the chlorine supply line to the cut-up room where workers were injured had been closed Wednesday morning, he said.

Chlorine containers are outside the building, he said. The chemical enters the cut-up room through a small supply line. Brinson said no leaks have been detected along the line.

## Foul Gas At Wallace Plant Was Chlorine

Chlorine gas sent workers at the Beatrice Foods turkey plant at Wallace to hospitals last Wednesday, Duplin County Emergency Services Coordinator Hiram Brinson reported Monday.

He told the Duplin County Commissioners that how the gas leaked into the affected section of the plant had not been determined. He said 16 people were carried to Duplin

General Hospital in Kenansville and 12 to Pender Memorial Hospital in Burgaw in 63 minutes.

In all, he said, 39 people were treated at hospitals and all but three had been released.

The day the leak occurred, plant officials and emergency workers were not certain whether chlorine or ammonia was responsible for the problem. Both gases are used in the plant.

## Financial Aid Programs At JSTC

If you are interested in a college education, don't let a limited budget keep you from looking into the

educational opportunities awaiting you at James Sprunt Technical College.

### Liberty Cart Preshow Entertainment

Tina Long, the reigning Miss Liberty, and several of her dance students, will present the pre-show entertainment at THE LIBERTY CART on Saturday night, July 27th.

Please make plans to attend the outdoor drama and the pre-show activities at 7:30 p.m. Pictured above is Tina Long and a group of the Clog-A-Longs.



There are several financial aid programs available to qualifying students through James Sprunt's financial aid office to help pay costs of tuition, books and other education-related expenses.

According to Ms. Joyce Thomas, financial aid officer at JSTC, the major need-based programs available to students are:

**Pell Grant:** Pell Grant awards range from \$200 to \$1,350 per academic year, and do not require repayment unless the student withdraws from college.

**College Work-Study:** Work-Study programs provide part-time employment to students on campus for 10-15 hours per week. Students are paid minimum wage.

**Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant:** SEOG awards range from \$200 to \$500 per academic year, and do not require repayment unless the student withdraws from college.

**N.C. Insured Student Loan:** Insured student loans provide educational funds to a maximum of \$2,500 per academic year, depending on eligibility. Loans are available at 8% interest to new borrowers, 8-9% to renewal borrowers, and do not require repayment until six to nine months after the student leaves school.

To apply for financial aid, students must have already completed an enrollment application to JSTC and must complete a family financial statement available from the financial aid office.

For detailed information and financial aid applications, contact the Financial Aid Office, James Sprunt Technical College, P.O. Box 398, Kenansville, NC 28349 or call 296-1341, extension 237.

Your college education may not cost as much as you think. Contact JSTC about financial aid for your education today.

## Program Offers Youths Summer Art Alternatives

"No one wanted to stop! Merle Creech, director of the Duplin County Arts Council, said.

A targeted group of youth are offered participation in the Duplin County Arts Council community based alternatives program each summer.

The program is in its third week in Duplin and meets each day of the week at a different location and with different participants. At the conclusion of the first week, the CBA program had an attendance of 130. Each weekly session is allotted four hours.

"The goal of the program is to involve the participants in a minimum of 16 hours of positive, group and individual art therapy," Merle said. "Through art, the participants are expected to foster a more positive self-image and enhance peer and group relations." The program was designed to provide ways to involve youths with alternative activities and challenges within their own neighborhood, Merle explained. The statewide program is coordinated by the Department of Human Resources through agencies such as the Duplin County Arts Council.

"The summer program was one that made its contributors become appreciators of each other's art," Merle said about the 1984 CBA

program. "And, made all the people involved appreciative of the new energy, change, life and hope that was brought out."

"All of the 32 students remained with the program and were present at each session, last year, and there were requests from brothers and sisters and friends to join," Merle said. "There were no behavioral problems. And, throughout the school year, the youth have shown high interest in a program for this summer."

Art works produced last year were exhibited and Merle says an exhibition is planned for this year's CBA art at the new Arts Council office on Front Street in Kenansville. The theme for the 1985 program is the 'Duplin Beach' and students have practiced basic drawing exercises, made shell necklaces, designed swimsuits, mixed and made colors, studies textures and safety, and to complete the four-week program is a field trip to the ocean.

"Our workers are extremely capable, mature and obviously love children," Merle said. "Shirley McIver of Wallace has worked with youth of all ages. Rhonda Lane Miller is presently employed at Rose Hill-Magnolia Elementary School and says her hobby is kids!"

"This year our real honest-to-

business professional artist is Tom Bradford. He's good — but mostly, he likes children and can teach them," Merle said. "Sibyl Thearling is working one week with the program. She is an artist and this year's graduate of UNC-W."

Participants for the CBA program are selected from direct referrals of school administrators, school guidance counselors, social services, mental health services, JTPA services, juvenile courts and the migrant school. Transportation to CBA sites is provided. The 1985 sites are at the Wallace Recreation Department, Rose Hill town square, Warsaw United Methodist Church, E.E. Smith Jr. high school, North Duplin Elementary School and Chinquapin Primary School.

The program operates on a budget of \$3,075 from the Neuse River Council of Governments and \$750 from community schools. Transportation and facilities along with some materials and supplies have been donated by Duplin agencies and local businesses.

"At the end of the second week we are indeed very grateful and appreciative of the support and cooperation of so many," Merle said. "The program is an instantly rewarding one indeed! And, the long-range impact can be counted upon."

## Duplin Won't Count Tobacco Quota In Tax Valuation

Tobacco production poundage quotas will not be included as taxable valuation when the 1986 revaluation of Duplin property for tax purposes becomes effective.

The board of commissioners voted unanimously Monday to remove the quotas from taxation and to reduce by five percent the valuation schedule established by Pearson's Appraisal Service of Goldsboro.

For 1985, the county's tax schedule will be based on the 1978 appraisal. The new appraisal, required by law every eight years, will go into effect Jan. 1, 1986, and will be reflected on the tax bills property owners receive in late 1986.

John Rudd, the appraiser, said tobacco quotas were valued at \$1 per pound. The county has a 1985 quota of 16,344,000 pounds. The present 75 cents per \$100 property valuation would have brought in \$164,916 in property tax next year.

Removal of the tobacco valuation from the tax base means that amount of money must be raised from other sources.

Rudd said the value of residential property in the county has increased about 80 percent since 1978. He said \$10,000 an acre is the

highest valuation on land in the county. This is for industrial sites. The lowest valuation is \$38 per acre for waste and swamp land.

Good farm land on a paved road will be appraised in 1986 at \$1,345 per acre, up from \$810; fair land on a paved road will be \$893, up from \$540; poor land on a paved road will be \$532, up from \$320.

Rudd said about 80 percent of the land will be appraised at \$627 to \$893 per acre under the new valuation.

The valuation for 1986 and beyond for fair pine land will be \$323 per acre, up from \$170; poor pine land \$242, up from \$130; good hardwood land \$190, up from \$100, and poor hardwood land \$162, up from \$80.

Rudd said that eight years ago bulk tobacco curing barns were selling from \$6,000 to \$13,000. The 1986 values will be down, to between \$2,000 and \$4,500. Old conventional tobacco barns have virtually no value.

Rudd said land valuation is determined on the price of land sold in the county. He noted that farm land has decreased 30 percent in value since 1983, based on sale prices.

Commissioner Calvin Turner commented: "Tobacco's going to be cut

again. No one knows where it stands now."

Commissioners Allen Nethercutt and W.J. Costin noted that an acre of cucumbers can bring as much money as an acre of tobacco, but it isn't taxed on the basis of cucumber production.

In other action, the board: • Adopted a fire prevention code for the county, which allows the fire marshal to inspect a site where arson is suspected as well as obvious problem sites. The code was presented by Hiram Brinson, emergency services coordinator.

• Approved use of \$1,500 of a Library Service and Construction grant of \$6,087 to the Duplin County Library for equipment and \$4,500 for books. Included will be a typewriter for public use.

• Hired N.F. McColman, mayor of Faison, as part-time Duplin County veterans' service officer for 24 hours a week with an annual salary of \$7,000.

• Appointed Allen Williams of Wallace to succeed J.W. Hoffer of Wallace on the James Sprunt Technical College board of trustees. Hoffer had been a member since the school was created in the 1960s.