

THE JONES COUNTY JOURNAL

Lenoir, Jones, Duplin, Wayne, Greene
Onslow, Pamlico Favor One-Cent Tax

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Mistrial Declared in Effort to Break Will of Mrs. Henry Gray by Relatives

The effort made last week in Jones County Superior Court to break the will of Mrs. Henry Gray resulted in a mistrial being declared when the jury said it was unable to reach a unanimous verdict.

Mrs. Gray left the bulk of her estate in trust to provide scholarships for deserving Jones students to colleges and universities.

Several of her relatives are attempting to have the will declared void, alleging that Mrs. Gray was not of sound mind at the time she made the will and that undue influence was exerted on her.

Under the stupid laws of North Carolina in such cases lawyers on both sides are paid out of the estate, whether they win or lose and no matter what the jury decides the estate winds up the loser.

Since this case will have to be tried again the slice taken from the estate by the lawyers is expected to be even more exorbitant than in other recent

LAND TRANSFERS

Jones County Register of Deeds Bill Parker reports refers in his office during the past week the following land transactions:

From C. E. Willie to Chauncey Strayhorn and Bertha Strayhorn a tract in Pollocksville Township.

From Walter H. Bray and Audrey P. Bray to John and Dorothy Moore 4.52 acres in Pollocksville Township.

From Nelson S. Barker to Charles C. Jones Jr. 170 acres in Trenton Township.

instances of this kind in Jones County.

Three Jones Arrests

Jones County Sheriff Brown Yates reports three persons being booked at the county jail during the past week: David L. Barfield of Trenton route 1 was accused of drunken driving, and E. W. Potter and Randy Meadows of Trenton were charged with drunken walking.

Damage Suit from May 31st Wreck is Asking for \$5,000

The only suit filed in the office of Jones County Court Clerk Rogers Pollock during the past week was one growing out of an automobile accident on May 31, 1969.

James Edward Taylor is suing Thomas Mackay Jenkins for \$5,000 for personal injuries, as well as recovery of damages to his car from an accident on that date which he alleges to have been Jenkins's fault.

North Carolina Birthrate Continues Falling; Now at Lowest Point Ever

The North Carolina State Board of Health reports a continuing drop in the state's birthrate being recorded in the past year, bringing the rate to the lowest point ever recorded: 18.7 per thousand of population.

Although the drop was slight from that of 1967 it continues a trend that began with the advent of "The Pill". The '67 rate was 18.8.

The all-time high birthrate for North Carolina was recorded in 1921, when it hit 33.4 per thousand.

During the depression years the rate fell, hitting 22.4 in 1936 and bouncing back up to 30.4 at the end of World War Two in 1947.

Then after that first big crop of post-war babies the birthrate was fairly stable, running in the 26-per-thousand area from '50 through '56.

The dramatic drop began in '61 when the rate was 24.2 and in the period since it fell to the '68 all-time low of 18.7.

In '68 the white birthrate was 17.4, a notch higher than the year before when it stood at 17.3.

The Negro birthrate, however, continued its rapid decline, falling from 23.4 in '67 to 22.6 last year.

The all-time recorded high Negro birthrate was 1954 when it hit 34.4, and for that to have fallen to 22.6 in such a brief period is considered remarkable by demographic experts.

In '61 when "The Pill" arrived Continued page 8

Pitt Countian Dies In Lenoir County's 12th 1969 Fatality

Richard Mitchell White of Greenville became the 12th traffic fatality for 1969 in Lenoir County last Wednesday morning.

White, a 56 year-old federal employee, lost control of his

Although 75 of North Carolina's 100 counties vetoed a county-option one-cent sales tax Lenoir and a majority of its sister counties approved by considerable margins this new approach to paying for local governmental services.

Lenoir County voted strongest of any county among the 25 voting for the program by a vote of 4401 to 1248.

Jones County's margin was also decisive 662-to-336, Greene Countians said Yes at the rate of 823-to-499.

Large Wayne County also decisively embraced the new concept 3495-to-2101.

Duplin County also said yes but by a thinner margin: 2038-to-1607, and Pamlico County's yes-vote was even thinner: 823-to-761.

Onslow County had a very light vote but said Yes by a goodly margin: 2863-to-1773.

In Pitt County the vote was

very closely against the new system of local taxation: 3749-to-3134.

Craven Countians also said No and by a heavier margin than in Pitt, voting No 3104-to-1731.

Viewed from the perspective of sales tax collections in fiscal 1968-69 it is likely that Lenoir County will be at about the midpoint, getting back under the system just about what it pays in.

Jones, Greene, Pamlico and Duplin are likely to get back slightly more than is collected by this new tax in their respective counties.

Among the larger counties that approved the vote were Durham, Buncombe, Cumberland, New Hanover, Wayne and Onslow.

The first half of the collections from this new tax will be returned to the county in which it is collected, and divided between the county and all corporate communities on the basis of their respective tax listed valuations.

The second half of the collections will be put into a pool and divided on the basis of population between the 25 counties that approved the tax on Tuesday.

Those 25 counties approving the new tax had a 1960 population of 947,944. The present estimated population of these 25 counties is 1,061,322.

This indicates a pretty fair fourth of the total state population in that the estimated state population at present is 4,963,895 and one-fourth of that is 1,240,974.

Mecklenburg County which already has a four-cent sales tax with the entire fourth cent going to the county voted down the additional tax, and its fourth cent will not be shared by those 25 counties that approved the new tax this week.

Adding Mecklenburg's population to the 25 approving a four-cent sales tax Tuesday puts well over a fourth of the state's population in counties that will have such a sales tax.

Biggest Rain in Months Hits Area Saturday Night

After unusually dry weather in September and October the skies opened up Saturday night and dumped 4.81 inches of rain on the Kinston area. Fairly high winds also accompanied the young flood but no serious damage was reported in the Kinston area.

Weather Observer Douglas Rouse said his rain gauge in Southwest Township recorded the 4.81 and the gauge at Radio Stations WFTC and WRNS in Falling Creek Township in Lenoir County registered 4.56 inches.

Neuse River was falling Saturday at 3.61 feet but at 8 Monday morning it had hit 8.04 and was still rising.

car in the curve just north of Kinston on State Highway NC 91.

DEPARTMENT FOR VETERANS AFFAIRS JOB IS TO HELP VETERANS AND THEIR FAMILIES

By Jack Rider

The 1967 session of the General Assembly among other things changed the name of the North Carolina Veterans Commission to the Department of Veterans Affairs.

But the job of the state agency remains what it has been since it was founded in 1931: To aid veterans and their families in getting benefits available to them through the federal Veterans Administration and to administer the scholarship program for children of veterans in North Carolina.

To accomplish this two-part job the department has two principle offices, in Raleigh where the administrative head Colin McKinne and his staff are quartered, and the State Service Office in Winston-Salem, where a much larger staff is maintained under the supervision of State Service Officer Lloyd Bialock.

The service office is located in the same building with the regional offices of the Veterans Administration and its task is to expedite the flow of work from the field through the VA office and to protect the rights of all veterans whose claims and complaints are processed through this VA office.

The Raleigh, Winston-Salem, and district offices are paid entirely by the state but county service officers are largely paid

by the county government in which they serve with the state allocating \$1,000 per year as a matching fund in those counties that do have a county service officer.

The policies of the department are set by a five-member board, each appointed to a five year term by the governor, with one appointment being made each year. The current membership of this statutory board includes Chairman Wesley Cullipher of Elizabeth City, Vice-Chairman Jack Bass of Hickory, Secretary Jack Rider of Kinston, Dudley Robbins of Willard, and John Dickerson of Monroe.

The State Commanders of the six active veterans' organizations in the state are ex-officio members of the board. They may make motions, take part in discussions but only the statutory board members are allowed to vote.

The present ex-officio members include American Legion Commander C. E. Thompson Jr. of Wilmington, AMVETS Commander Otha Day of Roxboro, Veterans of Foreign Wars Commander Fred Moore Jr. of Salisbury, Veterans of World War One Commander C. D. Howell of Asheville and the commander ship of the United Spanish American War Veterans is vacant since the death of its longtime Commander Leighton Brown of Kannapolis in September of this

year. The department has an annual budget (1969-70) of \$722,164. This does not include funds appropriated by the general assembly for scholarships.

Under this scholarship program something near \$1 million per year is being spent at present. In the past four years the board has approved 1,429 full four-year scholarships.

Until the 1969 session of the general assembly these scholarships were restricted to state supported institutions of higher education, but this year the scholarships were made available to any accredited North Carolina college or university, with payments made in line with the cost of attending state institutions.

This year 390 scholarships were approved, last year 360, in 1967 there were 353 and in '66 there were 326.

These scholarships go automatically to children of North Carolina veterans killed in combat; those who died from combat injuries and veterans who suffered a 100 per cent disability in combat. All any child of such a veteran needs do to qualify for a full four-year scholarship is be accepted in an accredited school in the state and prove the parental relationship.

Under some circumstances children whose mother is a

North Carolinian and married an out-of-state veteran may qualify if they have not been constantly away from the state and if North Carolina is the legal residence of the veteran at the time of his death or injury. To keep the scholarship once it is awarded the student must maintain passing grades and not be involved in campus disorders.

Class 11 Scholarships are limited to 100 for each calendar year and they go to children of veterans who have less than a 100 per cent service connected disability and at least a 30 per cent disability.

Class Scholarships are limited also to 100 for each calendar year and children of any war time veteran are eligible for these.

Both Class II and Class III Scholarships are awarded on the basis of the family's financial need and the overall aptitude of the student in each case.

These are all full four-year scholarships, including room and school fees with one exception. Under Class I Scholarships the children of veterans with a 100 per cent service connected disability already are getting monetary payments as dependents of that veteran so the scholarships for these do not include room and board, but do cover all tuition and school fees. If the disabled parent of such a child dies during the period of

his scholarship the room and board fees are added, since the family would no longer be getting as liberal allocations for children with the father dead.

This year the 99 scholarships given under Class 111 went into just 53 counties, indicating that county service officers and guidance counsellors in some areas were doing much better than those in other areas, since these are given on the basis of financial need and it is to be presumed that there are needy veterans families in every part of the state. An ideal arrangement would be an award to the neediest student from each of the 100 counties, but there are many counties from which there are seldom if ever applications.

At present The State Department of Veterans Affairs, being one of the smallest departments of state government, is anxious about a constitutional referendum that is to be held in November 1970 which, if passed, would give the governor and general assembly power to combine all branches of the state government into just 25 departments.

The Department of Veterans Affairs neither wants to become a part of the welfare or educational apparatus. It is likely all veterans organizations share this view and will fight to kill this proposed Constitutional Amendment.