

HOSPITALIZATION COSTS PROBLEM OF INDIVIDUALS AND HOSPITAL OPERATORS

by Jack Rider

Lenoir Countians like their cousins in all counties in which county-owned hospitals operate are alarmed by the prices they have to pay when they use the services of their hospitals and as taxpayers they are generally concerned by the sky-rocketing costs of these health facilities.

If it is any small consolation, at least to the taxpayers of Lenoir County, they are relatively much better off than the vast majority of the counties in the state that are in the hospital business.

The Duke Endowment's annual reports include a summary of hospital use and percentages of free hospital days provided by all the hospitals in North and South Carolina, where funds of the Endowment are allocated each year to help underwrite a small part of that staggering cost.

The 12-month period from October 1, 1967 through September 30, 1968 shows 129 hospitals in operation in North Carolina which included 17,327 beds, excluding bassinets. These 129 hospitals were operated in 109 towns in 83 of the state's 100 counties.

For the year 13.6 per cent of the patient days in those hospitals were classified as "free days", or days for which the hospital did not receive pay for one reason or another.

While the per cent of free-days statewide was running at 13.6 per cent Lenoir County's publicly-owned hospital was suffering only 5.6 per cent.

This Kinston hospital reported for that 12-month period 42,728 patient days for its 124 beds, of which 2,385 were free-days.

For the same period the privately operated Parrott Memorial Hospital reported 10,181 patient days for its 50 beds and only .5 per cent of free days for a total of 54 free days.

But with a private hospital operated in a community with a publicly owned hospital it is inevitable that the free-day work will be dumped in the lap of the publicly owned hospital, which, of course, is what happened in Kinston.

Comparisons with other publicly-owned hospitals in the area shows the following:

Duplin General Hospital reported 5,226 free-days out of 26,495 patient-days in its 81-bed hospital, for 19.7 per cent free-days.

Onslow Memorial Hospital reported 5,846 free-days out of 32,626 patient-days in its 95-bed hospital for 17.9 per cent free-days.

Carteret General Hospital reported 3,182 free-days out of 30,021 patient-days in its 100-bed hospital for 10.6 per cent free-days.

Pitt County Memorial Hospital reported 8,725 free-days out of 68,699 patient-days in its 200-bed hospital for 12.7 per cent free-days.

Wayne County Memorial Hospital reported 8,079 free-days out of 74,712 patient-days in its 214-bed hospital for 10.8 per cent free-days.

Wilson Memorial Hospital reported 10,622 free-days out of 88,901 patient-days in its 254-bed hospital for 11.9 per cent free-days.

Beaufort County Hospital reported 3,749 free-days out of 34,966 patient-days in its 50-bed hospital for 10.7 per cent free-days.

So Lenoir County's hospital picture, although far from good is not nearly so bad as the state average and about half as bad as the best record of any neighboring county-owned hospital.

Who Doesn't Pay?

A perfectly bonafide question

from any taxpayer in any county where there is a county-owned hospital is: Who doesn't pay?

The majority of those for whom the hospital, and the taxpayers are left holding this expensive bag are emergency cases; wreck victims, shooting and cutting and assault victims.

Smaller county hospitals make every effort to transfer these types as quickly as they can to major teaching hospitals, which results in those major hospitals carrying the major burden of free-day service for the entire state.

The North Carolina Memorial Hospital of the University of

North Carolina reported 71,353 free-days out of 128,406 patient-days in its 407-bed hospital for 55.6 per cent free-days.

Duke University Medical Center reported 91,644 free-days out of 223,262 patient-days in its 684-bed hospital for 41.1 per cent free-days.

North Carolina Baptist Hospital at Winston-Salem of Wake Forest University reported 71,353 free-days out of 166,430 patient days in its 500-bed hospital for 36.5 per cent free-days.

Also in Winston-Salem Forsyth Memorial Hospital reported just 9,354 free-days out of 177,482 patient days in its 551-bed

hospital for just 5.2 per cent free-days.

Charlotte operates two major hospitals. Its Community Hospital reported 22,216 free-days out of 36,932 patient-days in its 108 beds for 60.3 per cent free-days and in its 766-bed Memorial Hospital out of 240,162 patient-days there were 61,534 free-days for 25.6 per cent free-days.

The Asheville Orthopedic Hospital had the highest free-day rate in the state with 13,703 free-days out of 14,144 patient-days in its 50 beds for 96.9 per cent free-days.

If hospital administrators attempt to establish a sufficiently

stringent system to eliminate the deadhead types that constitute the majority of these free-days they are caught in a political crossfire and if they relax they are caught by fire from the other direction.

It is a constant battle, never won and never lost. These Duke Endowment figures indicate that some hospitals do a much better job than others, and over the year these figures have reflected that in spite of constant criticism the administration of Lenoir Memorial Hospital is far better than the state and national averages for publicly-owned hospitals.

Couple in Trouble

Last week in Lenoir County Superior Court Dorothy Briggs Faison of Hookerton route 1 was convicted of a second drunken driving offense after which a bench warrant was issued for her husband Moses for lying under oath in the trial of the case. Monday she was tried in district court for a third drunken driving offense and was given six months in prison. Moses still must face the perjury charge in superior court, which carries a possible 10-year prison term.

Airman Franks Now On Vietnam Duty

Airman First Class John R. Franks, son of Mr. and Mrs. Odell W. Franks of Route 1, Pollockville, is on duty at Cam Ranh Bay AB, Vietnam.

Airman Franks, a supply inventory specialist, is assigned to the 12th Supply Squadron, a unit of the Pacific Air Forces, headquarters for air operations in Southeast Asia, the Far East and the Pacific area.

The airman is a 1968 graduate of Jones High School.

RUTLEDGE IN VIETNAM

Private First Class William Rutledge Jr., whose parents live in Maysville, was assigned Oct. 13 to the Aviation Electronic Support Company North in Vietnam, as an aircraft navigation equipment repairman.

Senator Blasts Integration Methods; Proposes New 'Freedom of Choice' Law

By U. S. Senator Sam Ervin

There is deep concern in our nation about what is happening to our public schools, and nowhere is this concern more evident than in those school districts where parents are forced to send their children to non-neighborhood schools simply to achieve "racial balance."

Last week, I introduced a very broad bill dealing with all aspects of the school desegregation controversy. I did so because I am mindful of the damage we are doing to the public school system when we let HEW officials and Federal judges take over the function of local school boards and administrators.

Recently I received a letter from a father which puts this matter in perspective. The Raleigh School Board was coerced by HEW into adopting a new geographical zoning by the threat of cutting off Federal funds otherwise available to it. Under the rezoning, the Board has to deny numerous children, black and white, of the right to attend neighborhood schools. His sons, the father said, resided four blocks from their neighborhood high school and were assigned under the rezoning to a distant high school.

When the father requested

permission to send his sons to the nearby school, he received this reply: "I regret to inform you that your request for transfer of school assignment . . . for your child has been denied . . . Honoring your request would have resulted in exposing your child to fewer students of a different race than he would be exposed to in the school to which he has been assigned for the next year."

The two boys were compelled to walk nine miles (instead of four blocks) to go to school. The father then put this question to me: Why should children "be herded around like cattle and shifted like pawns in a chess game?"

The question cuts through a maze of bureaucratic and legal language which is stymieing our public school system in its effort to educate our youth. It

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calls for a better answer than to trust the HEW and federal judges will eventually become better school administrators. The fact is that the situation is growing progressively worse because HEW officials and federal judges are not equipped to operate our schools even though they are trying to do so.

The policies that now sur-

College Supporters In Jones County to Hold Dinner

Free Will Baptists in Jones County will hold their Fellowship Dinner for Mount Olive College on Saturday, November 8, at 7 p.m. at King's Barbecue Restaurant, Kinston. The dinner is one of a series of 17 being held throughout North Carolina as a means of providing financial support to the College located in Mount Olive and sponsored by the N. C. State Convention of Original Free Will Baptists.

A county steering committee for the dinner has been appointed. Members of the committee are Miss Margaret Carol Banks of Trenton, Chairman; Delmus Brown of Dover; and James Batchelor of Richlands.

Local church chairman include Miss Banks, Friendship Church; Mrs. Mary Hood of Dover, Pilgrim's Home Church; and Mrs. Irene T. Batchelor of Richlands, Whaley's Chapel Church.

Woman Shoots Man She Says Made an Indecent Proposal Saturday Afternoon

Fifty eight year-old Willie Ray Out of Kinston was pronounced

dead upon arrival at Lenoir Memorial Hospital at 4:15 Saturday afternoon from a single .38 caliber pistol wound in the neck.

Sheriff Fred Boyd says his officers who investigated the shooting which took place at the Sunoco Filling Station at the intersection of Highways 70 and 258 just south of Kinston told him the shooting was done by 42-year-old Christine S. Moore of 106 East Second Street in the Rivermont section, who was working at the filling station.

Miss Moore told investigating officers that Outlaw made an insulting remark to her, and advanced upon her as she retreated behind a counter. When he kept coming she said she grabbed a pistol kept in the station and fired it once in his direction.

The bullet struck Outlaw in the throat and he bled to death before help could be reached.

Following a preliminary hearing in district court Tuesday morning Miss Moore was bound over to superior court under \$1,500 bond on a second degree murder charge.

Local Principals Attend Seminar

A seminar for elementary school principals was held at East Carolina University Thursday, Oct. 23.

Teaching strategies, individual instruction, school reorganization and other innovations to prevent alienation of individual students were the main topics discussed by the group.

According to Dr. William C. Sanderson, director of the seminar: "Contrary to popular opinion, drop-outs begin in the elementary school, not in the high school. We are trying to reach the 'budding drop-outs.'"

This seminar is one in a series of meetings for public school administrators sponsored by the ECU School of Education and the Division of Continuing Education.

Participants' names and the schools with which they are affiliated follow:

Jones County — Maysville, James Wynn, Maysville Elementary; Pollockville, John Simmons, J. W. Willie School.

Lenoir County — Kinston, James A. Harper, J. A. Sampson, Elementary.

Jerry Jones to Seymour-Johnson

Airman Jerry S. Jones, son of Mr. and Mrs. William J. Jones, Route 2, Trenton, has graduated at Chanute AFB, Ill., from the Air Force aircraft mechanics course.

The airman, now trained to maintain and service reciprocating engine aircraft and aircraft systems, is being assigned to Seymour - Johnson AFB, for duty with the Tactical Air Command which provides combat air support for ground forces.

round Federal controls over education fail to recognize that parents have more stake in the lives and education of their children than anyone else. My bill recognizes this and would grant to parents of all races the freedom to choose the public schools their children attend. It would deprive federal judges and the Department of Health, Education and Welfare of the power to deny to any child of any race

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Revival Services



Revival services are continuing through Sunday at Faith Baptist Church which is located 3 miles east of Trenton on U. S. 58. The Reverend Mel Rutter, pictured above, is the speaker. Rev. Rutter is the founder and President of Marantha Baptist Missions, Natchez, Miss. The public is cordially invited to the 7:30 p.m. services each night.