

The Pamlico News

15¢ per copy

Vol. II No. 17

Serving Pamlico County and Richland Township

Thursday, April 27, 1978



Two of the five Cattleya orchids grown by Mrs. Selma Morris. Mrs. Morris operates a flower shop in Oriental.

Ferry Schedule Concern Of Chamber Of Commerce

Joe Thomas, Department of Transportation Commissioner; Jeanette Carl, Commissioner at large and Chairperson of the Ferry Committee; Charlie Snell, Division Engineer; Gary Collier of Cherry Point, and Mary Kirkman, Director of Housing at Cherry Point, were guests at the April 18 Chamber of Commerce meeting.

the shortage of housing at Cherry Point. She estimated that they are some 500 units short for Company Grade and Field Grade officers and need both residences for purchase and for rent. She noted that the base is just 7 miles across the Neuse River and that Pamlico County is a highly desirable place to live. She said that there is plenty of room and plenty of

odd hours are hard to keep up with.

Mr. Thomas was informed that the last ferry in the summer is 1:15 a.m.

Mr. Hardison said that the last shift at Cherry Point needs to be taken into consideration, and asked about serving the seafood people better.

County Coordinator Ross Boyer said that the Economic Development Committee has been looking into this and believes that a steady dependable schedule extended to full hours of operation would help the County not only with the building but the seafood industry.

Mr. Hardison said that there are seven crab houses in Pamlico County and none in Carteret County so that crabs are brought to Pamlico by ferry. He added that when there is a glut of any kind of fish in one area or another, the ferry is used to transport them from place to place.

Mr. Thomas said to add all this information in a resolution: restaurant industry, seafood processing, civilian and military personnel needs.

Mrs. Kirkman said that there are personnel living in the County now.

Mrs. Carl spoke, saying she was glad to be in Pamlico County and that she is interested in the problem. She said that no one in State government is more concerned than DOT and its Board with the needs of the County. She believed that the Chamber is justified in asking for a change in schedule. She added that Don Overman, who is head of the Ferries Division, will be interested in the changes that have taken place and the different situation existing because of housing and seafood needs, and all of it should be put in a resolution.

Joe Gwaltney said he hoped that DOT has a receptive group of ears to hear what is needed in Pamlico County and asked what the Chamber can do to help DOT.

Mr. Thomas said that the Department is experiencing some problems with secondary roads. The main problem right now is with the Kershaw Road and there will be a public hearing in the Courthouse during the first part of May to discuss the situation. He expects and hopes that more interested people will attend. He said that one meeting had already been held with the



Discussion of ferry schedule needs is held at Chamber of Commerce meeting.

Chamber President, Jim Ragan, stated that the Chamber feels that the ferry schedule should be extended to operate the same hours in the winter as in the summer. He noted the change in housing policy at Cherry Point as being one reason for making the request.

Garvin Hardison gave some background for the request. He said that when the ferry was first operating, there was a good traffic count. The second year, the summer ferry schedule was extended through December as a trial run and the statistics were not too good. He felt the extended hours had not been advertised sufficiently and that the operation needed time to get built up. The summer before last, he noted that the Minnesota ferry carried more cars than any other ferry except the Hatteras run, 60,000 vehicles in August of 1976. He believed that last summer was even better.

Mrs. Kirkman said that the Housing Department at Cherry Point had met recently with realtors from the 5 counties surrounding the base to explain

builders. However, in the winter, the last ferry leaves Cherry Branch at 5:45 p.m.

Mr. Hardison said there are no vacant rental units in the County but there are people who will invest if the need is proven. Mr. Thomas prefaced his remarks by saying that he hated to say the words, but he suggested that the Chamber of Commerce send another resolution to DOT. He said that it is a new Board and that the new information concerning the housing situation, ferry information past and present, and what the County hopes to accomplish may make a difference.

Gordon Keller, local builder, said that he saw two problems with the ferry operation at the present. One, that the schedule is seasonal and two, that it does not operate enough hours. He noted that there are two hours in the middle of the day when the ferry does not operate while the men have lunch. He said that this wastes, essentially, a half a day for people having business on one side or the other. He would like to see it run every hour on the hour since the

The mid-monthly meeting of the Pamlico County Commissioners was held on April 17 at 7:30 p.m. The Commissioners voted to go into Executive Session as soon as the minutes were approved to discuss the 4-D program with Grady Simpson. Mr. Simpson works three days a week with 4-D under the Social Services Department and as Assistant Tax Collector and Supervisor for the County two days a week.

Although the Director of the Social Services Department, Willie Sutton, and the 4-D program Supervisor, Jim Baluss were scheduled to speak at 8 p.m., the Executive Session with Mr. Baluss lasted until 9:45.

Mr. Baluss said that the figures he had hoped to get from the State comparing State operated as opposed to County operated programs, were not available. The position will cost \$12,816.50 during the fiscal year 1977-78. The Federal Government pays 75%, the County pays 25% or \$3,204 of the total cost. 15% of total monies collected are returned to the County as incentive money and will amount to \$3,724, which gives the County a balance of \$520 for the year.

The reasons for keeping the program under the County are as follows, according to Mr. Baluss and concurred in by Miss Sutton: 1. The incentive money is paid to the County only if the County operates the program. 2. The State doesn't really want it. Mr. Baluss showed a memorandum with an opinion from the Attorney General stating that the contract entered into by the County with the State in November, 1975, is binding. 3. The County administrators, supervisors, managers, and plans the program. 4. Hiring local personnel, with insight into Pamlico County is more desirable than having an agency outside the County administering the program. 5.

The Department of Social Services handling the paper work and files gives easier access to records. 6. The Clerk of Court and the 4-D worker can work together conveniently. 7. The Department does not view the program as a headache, but as a service - that it is pleasing to have a good program with the support of the public, paying its own way.

Commissioner John Bond asked if the 75% Federal funds match maintenance payments, which are the continuing payments for child support after the initial payment. He noted that initially the program had the problem of chasing down parents, but that it is mainly maintenance now.

Miss Sutton answered that incentive payments are 25% the first year, 15% the second year and each year thereafter.

Mr. Baluss said it is necessary to keep after some parents so the payments do not get too far in arrears, even to the point of contacting employers.

Mr. Bond noted that the comments he has heard on 4-D have been favorable in that it makes an effort to get aid from people who weren't giving it before and forcing them to assume responsibility.

Chairman Robert Paul said that there was some indication that the Clerk of Court wishes to discontinue collecting the funds and would like Social Services to take over.

Miss Sutton answered that Social Services shouldn't be a collection agency and she wouldn't like to see it happen. She added that the Clerks of Court had tried to get this through the last Legislative session and were unsuccessful.

Mr. Paul said he understood some 4-D programs have more than one employee. If this were necessary, he asked if the 75% Federal funds would be paid for the additional employee. The answer was that the funds

would be paid.

Mr. Bond asked if more legal aid becomes necessary, would the Federal government help with that.

Miss Sutton said that this too would be reimbursed 75%, adding that she hopes a replacement for Grady Simpson will be hired when he leaves the Program July 1.

Commissioner Charles Alexander said he would like to see the State take the program over. He noted the \$500 surplus incentive money this year is not enough to operate an office. He said it would be a way to get rid of a program since adding employees and space to County Government seems to be a constant discussion.

Mr. Alexander moved that a letter be written to the State asking if it would be willing to assign the 4-D program to the District office in New Bern. Commissioner Jimmy Spencer seconded the motion.

Mr. Bond and Commissioner Patsy Sadler opposed the motion. Mrs. Sadler said she didn't want to see the program go in the hole financially, but that as long as it pays its way, she didn't see the point in getting rid of an employee. She added that she supports the program completely.

Mr. Alexander and Mr. Spencer said that they supported the program too, but wish the State would take it over.

Chairman Robert Paul voted to break the tie and ask the State to take over the 4-D program.

After the meeting was adjourned other items considered are reported on elsewhere in this issue. Meg Gunkle of Reelsboro, reporter for the Sun Journal, pointed out to the Commissioners that the 4-D program and the previous meeting's discussion of a classification and pay plan, do not qualify as Executive Sessions under the Open

Meetings Act. The Act allows closed sessions when discussion negotiations between public employers and their employees or representatives thereof as to employment." Employment, discipline, dismissal and complaints against employees can also be talked about in closed sessions as long as final action is taken in public session.

County Finance Officer Bill Rice responded, "I don't really think the Commissioners need any education."

Mr. Hollowell added that the Commissioners had been talking about specific employees and that someone who isn't in the meetings couldn't know what the discussion in-

cluded and couldn't judge.

(In these two cases and on several other occasions, the reporters covering the meetings have asked individuals who have been present in the Executive Sessions what was discussed and have been informed on the items that have been brought up that do not qualify under the Act. In the case of the 4-D closed session, even the Director of Social Services and the Supervisor of the program were not allowed to hear the discussion on the program for which they are responsible. A participant in the closed session said no employees were specifically discussed nor the employment of specific personnel.)

4-D Program And Executive Sessions Questioned

Correction On CETA Funds

A headline in an area newspaper on April 14, stated "Pamlico CETA may unheeded". The story went on to say that "A Neuse River Council of Governments (COG) aging coordinator will remain on the job even though Pamlico County commissioners, who were funding the position, voted to terminate the salary." The story continues that "COG voted to use \$3,882 from an aging planning and administration grant to fund the job through the end of the fiscal year...Using the aging grant, COG can continue the position through June 30, the end of the fiscal year. The Federal aging grant will provide \$3,384 towards the position and \$498 in COG contingency funds."

In checking with COG, it was learned that the funds above mentioned are for the administrative costs of the position, designated Senior Citizen's Employment Program Administrator for Region P. The Federal money was matched by the \$498 local cash grant.

Bill Rice, Pamlico County Finance and Budget Officer, had informed the County Commissioners at their April

meeting that although commitments had been agreed to between Pamlico County and the CTEA program administrators for one employee under Title II and two employees under Title VI in 1977, the funds had never been added to the amount received by CETA in the County, creating a deficit in the program of \$15,419. There are 40 CTEA employees in the County. The Commissioners at that time did not feel that they could continue to fund the positions, which included the Senior Citizens Administrator employed by COG, with County funds.

Mr. Rice contacted CETA officials, was told not to terminate any participants at this time and duly received the necessary monies to keep them employed. COG was so advised immediately. The employees were not terminated and Pamlico County is still providing the entire salary for the position at COG from its CETA funds and will continue to do so through this fiscal year. CETA officials have commended Pamlico County for their operation of the program on several occasions.



Mrs. Ida Brantly Now 98 Years Young

On April 16, Mrs. Ida Brantly celebrated her 98 birthday. Many friends and relatives helped her celebrate this event. Mrs. Brantly's daughter held a luncheon for all. Some of the out-of-town visitors were: Leon

Sherin of Rocky Mount; Mr. and Mrs. Robert Brantly of Williamston; Ms. Eva Edwards of Washington; and Mr. and Mrs. Freddie Lewis of Hobucken. The birthday cake was in the

shape of a Bible and the inscription was John 3:16 in black icing.

Mrs. Brantly had about 25-30 people to visit her on her birthday and she appreciates all gifts received.

Late Events Mesic & Florence Chosen

The towns of Mesic and Florence were chosen in application for Community Block Grant Funding by the Pamlico Housing Committee on April 24 after visiting 11 towns in the county. Look for complete details in the next issue of The Pamlico News.

Tucker To Head County Water System

The Pamlico County Commissioners hired Lonnie G. Tucker of New Bern, as superintendent of the County Water System. Mr. Tucker is 45, married and has four children. He is currently the supervisor of credit and accounts receivable at Craven County Hospital. He has 68 hours credit towards his associated degree in the business department at PTI. He is also the pastor at the Free Will Baptist Church in Trent.

Mr. Tucker will begin his duties on June 1, 1978, with an annual salary of \$10,000.

(Continued on page 10)