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20 CENTS

Funeral home mgr. indicted

A Perquimans County grand jury handed down 18-count indictment for embezzlement against the manager of a Hertford funeral home last week.

The grand jury indictment accuses Dennis J. Stallings, of 819 West Way, Elizabeth City, of embezzling about \$20,000 from Mr. and Mrs. Isaac Wood Lowe, the owners of Lowe's Funeral Home.

The charges follow a three-month investigation by Hertford Police Capt. Robert Morris and State Bureau of Investigations Special Agent Walter L. House.

The indictment charges that Stallings, the manager of the funeral home, intentionally misrecorded the amounts he received from funeral home customers, pocketing the difference, or recorded correct amounts and simply never turned them over to the Lowes.

As the manager of the funeral home, Stallings was in charge of both collecting accounts and keeping the books, according to Morris. Though Stallings has been an employee of the Lowes for about eight years, the investigation only covers the period of service from early 1980 to May, 1982.

The investigation began after the Lowes told police here that they suspected Stallings of taking their money.

Stallings is also the owner of Lowe and Stallings Funeral Home in Elizabeth City, which the Lowes are not connected with beyond the use of their name.

Stallings was arrested Wednesday of last week following the grand jury decision. He was released on \$18,000 bond, and the trial date has been set for the December 19 in Perquimans County Superior Court. The maximum jail term for embezzlement is 10 years for each count, though it is unlikely that Stallings, if found guilty, would receive that heavy a sentence.

According to Morris, the case is still under investigation, and "there's a good possibility" that further charges will be brought against Stallings.

Woman charged in assault

The Hertford Police Department arrested a Hertford woman last Sunday on charges of throwing a corrosive chemical at a man during an argument.

Courtney Alice Falkins, 61, of Wynfork Court, was charged with maliciously throwing a corrosive, a felony, after her arrest at about 8 that evening.

According to Capt. Robert Morris of the HPD, Falkins allegedly threw some drain cleaner at Richard Edward Morris, no relation, following a domestic argument at her residence. Morris was taken to a hospital by the county rescue squad.

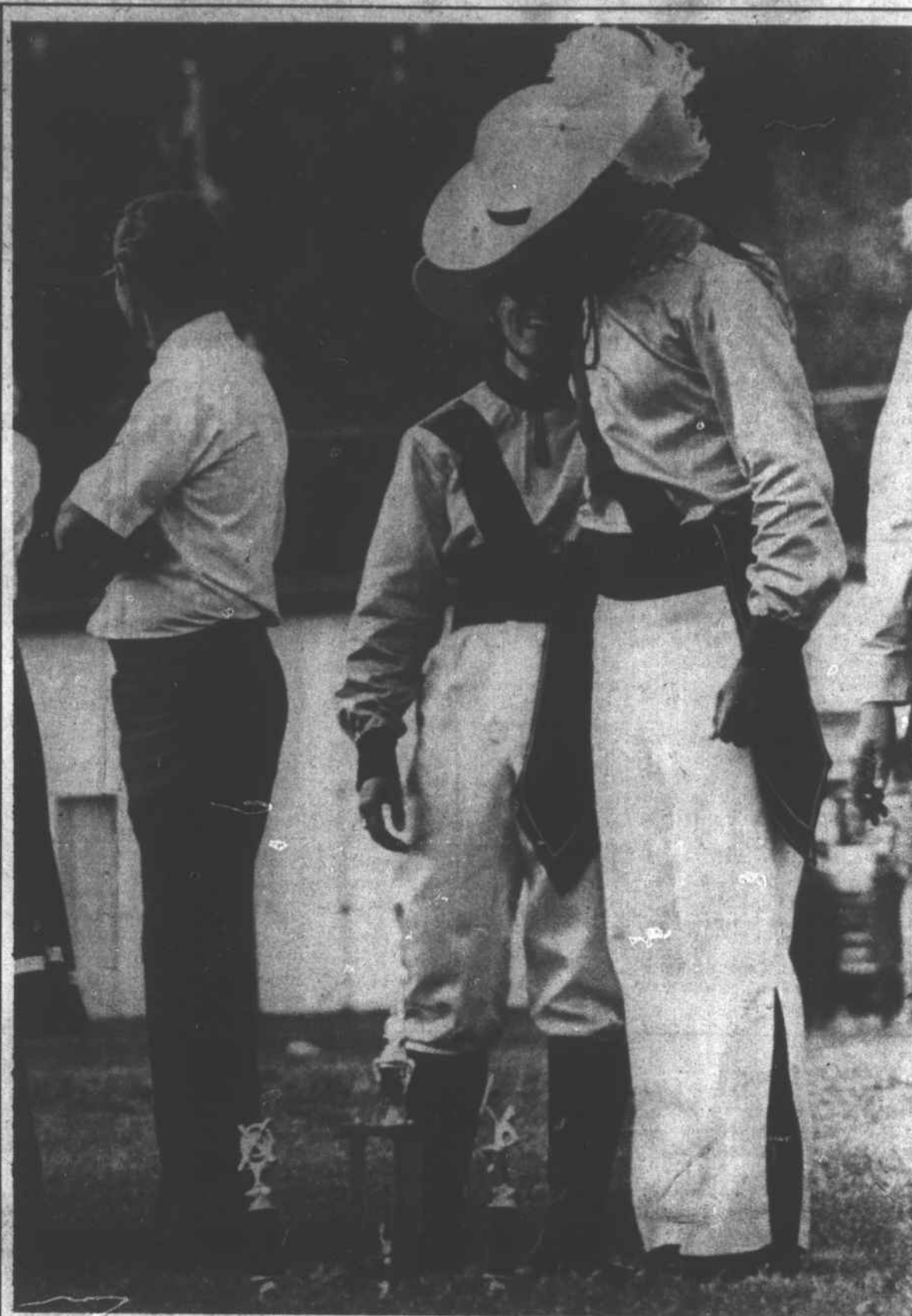
Falkins is being held in Albemarle District Jail on \$1,000 bond, with her preliminary hearing date set October 20.

This week

The Pirates face a must-win game tomorrow against Murfreesboro. Turn to page eight.

Weather

Chance of showers today, with fair weather through the weekend. Highs in the mid- to upper-70s, lows in the upper 50s.



Perquimans High School Marching Band drum major Shiela Perry gives junior drum major Eric

Skinner a hug as the band receives three trophies (sitting at their feet) during last Saturday's

band competition at the Edenton Peanut Festival. For more, turn to page three.

County reverses property tax schedule vote

By TOM OSTROSKY

The Perquimans County Board of Commissioners, at their regular meeting Monday morning, readopted the county's property assessment schedule for the 1984 tax year, eliminating the reduction in taxable value for cropland fronting a state road, a reduction that they had made when they first adopted the schedule two weeks ago.

The board rescinded the reduction, which would have valued cropland more than 420 feet from a state road the same as land with no road access, after the county's contracted appraisers said that it would be impossible to accurately estimate the amount of land covered by the 420-foot rule without detailed property line identification maps of the county.

Perquimans County, like many small counties, doesn't have property identification maps.

In order to keep with the county's original intention — which was to avoid overvaluing large fields with relatively little road frontage — the board granted the appraisal service, Pearson's Appraisal Service, the permission to lower property values as much as 15 percent if the appraisers believe there is very little road frontage on a very large field. Small fields with a large amount of road frontage could be increased in value as much as 15 percent.

All voted in favor of readopting the schedule except for Commissioner Marshall Caddy, who had supported the 420-foot rule in the earlier proposal.

The representatives of the appraisers, Robert and Fred Pearson, were accompanied to the meeting by Bill Connally of the state Department of Revenue.

Connally said that without property identification maps — rather than the aerial photos they use now — if the county were to use the 420-foot rule, they "are not in a position to defend" the taxable value they put on land if the property owner objects to the value.

"There would be a tremendous amount of guessing," said Robert Pearson.

Caddy argued that without the 420-foot rule, farmers with large fields with little road frontage would pay taxes on overvalued fields. Pearson admitted that "it is not fair, but it's the best way we've got."

In past reassessments, all cropland fronting a state road, regardless of how far from the road, would be assessed at a much higher value than land with no road frontage.

The proposal first adopted by the board would have reduced the taxable value of land 420 feet from the road by 25 percent. For example, good land on a paved road is assessed at \$1,200, while the same kind of land with no access to a state road is assessed at \$900.

In other action, the board:

- Appointed Commissioner Joe Nowell and Walter Leigh to the Albemarle Regional Planning and Development Commission board.

- Approved the replacement of storm windows and furnace at the District Health Department Building.

- Heard from state representative Vernon James, who is meeting with all the boards in his district to tell them about the state's budget situation.

- Voted to pass on to the state transportation board a petition from New Hope residents requesting the widening and paving of SR 1333.

Perquimans resident remembers years of service

In the annals of modern history in Perquimans County, there are few people who have had more to do with this county's welfare than Archie Lane, Sr. of Bear Swamp.

The list of accomplishments of Mr. Lane, now 82, is long, but not so long that they can't be put down here.

He served four years on the county ASC board, four years as chairman of the county Farm Bureau, 14 years as a county commissioner, eight of them as chairman, two years on the FHA board, eight years on the District Health Department Board, member and past chairman of the district Tuberculosis Association and director of the state Tuberculosis Association, member of the Tidewater Council of the Boy Scouts, first chairman of the Albemarle Soil

Conservation District, master of the county Masonic Lodge, charter member of the Hertford Lions Club, as well as past president and deputy district governor, deacon and adult Sunday school teacher at Great Hope Baptist Church, and finally, member of the state House of Representative for three terms and sergeant-at-arms in the House for three terms.

Mr. Lane keeps all the memorabilia of those 50-odd years of work in a leather-bound scrapbook four inches thick.

But one of the most important duties he has performed — and with this Saturday's meeting of the Albemarle Electric Membership Corporation, one we all need to be reminded of — is his years as 19 years as this area's booster for rural

electric cooperatives.

He first served as coordinator for AEMC, and then as its first manager for three years, and then 14 years as the president of the board of directors, as well as two terms as the president of the Tarheel Electric Membership Cooperative, the state rural electrification association.

It's hard, particularly for young people, to imagine that about 35 years ago most of this area outside of the towns received no electricity. Public utilities serving the area claimed that it was too expensive to stretch lines to rural customers.

Working with the federal government's rural electrification program,

farmers in this area formed a cooperative following World War II, electing Mr. Lane as secretary, then later giving him the coordinator's duties, and then when they needed a manager to start up the first substation, Mr. Lane got the nod.

Dedicated to bringing cheap electricity to farmers, Mr. Lane constructed most of the AEMC system in his three years as manager.

He stepped down from that post — "I was always trying to advance to something else," he said — and later took up the fight at the state level.

And it was indeed a fight. Once the rural cooperatives were in place,

public utilities began to lobby the legislature for the right to take them over. "I went from local problems to state problems," Mr. Lane said. With the TEMA and in the state House, he pressed to keep local control over rural cooperatives, and won.

His scrapbook is loaded with commendations from rural cooperative directors and many of his fellow legislators, as well as a 1977 state resolution recognizing his work as a legislator.

Though he remains with the AEMC, Mr. Lane spends most of his time now keeping up with the family farm.

School board discusses renovation proposals

By VAL SHORT

Consultants from the North Carolina Board of Education estimate that it will take approximately \$67,000 to replace the windows at Perquimans Union School.

Marshall Mauney, Consulting Engineer with the Division of Plant Operations and Chuck Reed, Consulting Architect with the Division of School Planning told members of the Perquimans County School Board Monday night that from 4,000 to 4,500 square feet of glass needed replacing at Union. Current costs for replacement are about \$15 per square foot, Reed said.

According to school superintendent Pat Harrell, the board has budgeted \$40,000 this year for the school window replacement project.

The consultants recommended only replacing the bottom half of the windows with glass and closing in the top halves with steel studs, insulation

and panels.

"This works well and is fairly easy to do and it would be cheaper than replacing all the glass," Reed told the Board.

Reed and Mauney recommended a "handyman approach" at Perquimans County High School by replacing the windows that need replacing — then scraping, putting, reglazing, priming and painting the old windows.

"I think the building warrants some high pressure work on the windows. If left as they are, they will be gone in five years," Reed said.

The Board authorized the Superintendent to follow up on repairing the windows in the high school and to contact an architect about the Perquimans Union project.

In other action:

•Harrell told the board the state had allocated the county one additional teacher and several aide positions.



Defense, they say, is the name of the game, and the Perquimans Pirates' defense did pile it on the Edenton-

Holmes Aces last Friday, but not before the Aces had scored 28 points to beat

Perquimans, 26-6, before a standing-room-only crowd in Edenton.