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## Ma Bell Is Going Up Again

Your telephone bill's going up Aug. 16 from \$11.67 to \$14.00 a month, an increase of \$2.33.

Southern Bell's residential customers here and throughout North Carolina will see a 20 percent hike in the price of their basic telephone service, according to Ray Thornburg of the Gastonia office.

Southern Bell today notified the North Carolina Utilities Commission that it will increase its rates for telephone service in the state on August 16.

The new rates will raise the company's North Carolina revenues by \$51 million. The new revenues are subject to refund pending the outcome of the company's \$121 million rate case filed in January. Hearings for Southern Bell's general rate case are scheduled to begin September 13.

Under North Carolina law, a public utility can apply new rates six months after the date they were proposed to go into effect. No rates put into effect under the law can result in an increase of more than 20 percent of any existing rate classification.

Jere A. Drummond, Southern Bell's vice president for North Carolina, said this was the first time since 1975 that the company had increased its rates under the provision. He cited divestiture as the primary reason for the Commission's delay in hearing Bell's current rate request.

"In February, the public staff filed a motion with the Commission proposing that hearings on the case be deferred while Southern Bell filed actual revenue, expense and rate base information for the first three months and the first six months of this year," Drummond said. 'They wanted to see information that actually reflected our operations after the breakup of the Bell System. Divestiture has caused extensive changes, both directly and indirectly, in our business. In its motion, the public staff acknowledged that Southern Bell might have to put rates into effect under bond, and recognized that it could be a necessary consequence of its motion. The Commission approved the public staff's motion



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"We don't like to raise our rates for phone service," Drummon said. "We have no choice. Since January, we've operated in the competitive world, a world filled with risks and becoming void of the subsidies once used to support basic local phone service. We simply cannot continue to offer this basic product at a price less than half of its actual cost. No business can.

"We will continue to work with the Commission, the public staff and our customers to resolve these issues resulting from the dramatic changes in the telephone industry," Drummond said.

## **Carpenters** Set Reunion

The second annual family reunion of descendants, relatives and friends of Charles P. and Bright McClure Carpenter will be held Aug. 19th at 1 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall of Oak Grove Baptist Church.

Bring a well filled basket and enjoy a time of good food and fellowship.

Call Bertie Stewart at 739-5104 for additional information.

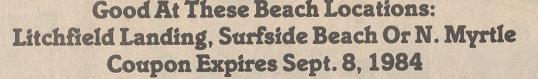
## Circle Groups Meeting

Circles of Central United Methodist Church held regular meetings this week.

Circle 4 met Monday evening at the home of Peggy Vaughan. The Tuesday morning circle met with Mrs. Mae Tesseneer.



In ancient Greece, women counted their age from the date on which they were married, not the day they were born.







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