

## Fair Housing Amendments Represents A Vital Step

The Fair Housing Amendments Act of 1988, which took effect March 12, represents a vital step toward stamping out housing discrimination nationwide, according to the National Association of Realtors.

The law, enacted last September, extends anti-discriminatory protection to the handicapped and families with children, and strengthens the enforcement authority of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), the government branch charged with administering federal fair housing laws.

"The new coverage of the law, combined with the new enforcement system, will go a long way toward wiping out housing discrimination in this country. The National Association of Realtors and its members stand ready to carry out the letter and spirit of the new law," said NAR President Ira Gribin.

Gribin noted that stronger enforcement and a quicker process for hearing fair housing complaints were long overdue. Under the fair housing law enacted in 1986, HUD had no authority to pursue fair housing complaints if resolution through the department's conciliation efforts failed. Further recourse was left solely to the aggrieved party.

Now, HUD is authorized to bring fair housing complaints before its own administrative law judge (ALJ). Or, HUD will refer complaints to the Department of Justice (DOJ), if either the aggrieved party, the respondent, or HUD elects a trial in a federal district court. An ALJ hearing must begin with 120 days after HUD issues a charge. Or, if a jury trial is requested, HUD would have to authorize civil action by DOJ within 30 days after the request.

"The law now has the teeth it needs to do the job, and the choices to offer equitable enforcement," Gribin said.

Although both NAR and civil rights groups supported a new system to expedite and strengthen enforcement of the fair housing law, NAR questioned the constitutionality of the ALJ process. The jury trial option was viewed as the compromise that brought NAR and the civil rights groups together in support of the 1988 act, Gribin said.

"We overcame our differences with the civil rights community to push for this law," Gribin said. "We are ready to work for full compliance. Realtors have a responsibility to offer full and equal access to housing."

The full impact of the new law's coverage for families with children and for the physically and mentally impaired cannot be assessed until the law has been in effect for some time, Gribin said. The protection for the handicapped includes specific design requirements for new multifamily dwellings available for first occupancy after March 13, 1991. All units in new buildings with four or more units must be accessible and adaptable to wheelchair users, if the building has an elevator. In buildings with no elevators, only ground floor units are covered by the construction requirements.

Gribin said it will not be permissible to exclude the handicapped or families with children from units on upper floors of high-rise buildings, based on the assertion that such dwellings per se would present health or safety risks. One result of the coverage extended to families with children is the end of "adult-only" communities designed to appeal mainly to young, childless professionals, he noted.

The act does, however, exempt certain types of elderly housing projects from requiring access to families with children. Specifically, exempt projects would be commu-

nities intended for, and solely occupied by, residents aged 62 or older. Other exempt communities are those in which at least 80 percent of the units in a housing facility are occupied by at least one person aged 55 years of age or older, and which provide significant facilities and services designed to meet the needs of the elderly.

"Nothing in the law implies that Congress sought to impose any new liability on building owners or managers," Gribin said. "But they, along with sales agents, are going to be facing entirely new situations in which housing discrimination must be avoided."

Under the 1988 act, persons found guilty of violating fair housing laws could, in some cases, face stiff penalties in addition to liability for damages. An ALJ would be able to award compensatory damages, injunctive and other equitable relief to the aggrieved party, and impose civil penalties ranging from \$10,000 to \$50,000. In jury trial cases, the court could grant compensatory and punitive damages as well as permanent or temporary injunctions and other orders for affirmative action.

The 1988 amendments also strengthened the remedies provided by the 1986 law for fair housing violations, removing a \$1,000 cap on punitive damages awarded in court cases brought by private individuals. Civil penalties ranging from \$50,000 to \$100,000, as well as a monetary damages, could be imposed in pattern of practice cases filed by DOJ.

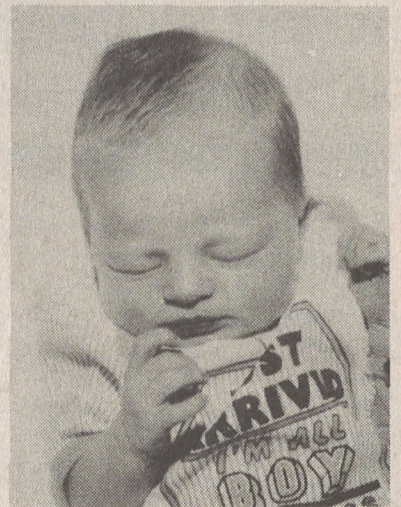
The extent of the changes in the enforcement system and the new remedies underscores the need for Congress to define fair housing, said NAR executive vice president William D. North.

"We believe a clear definition should distinguish equal opportunity from integration maintenance," North said. "We interpret fair housing to mean freedom of choice for everyone. A person's ability to rent or own should be based solely on what they can afford."

NAR will continue to seek legislation prohibiting the use of race-conscious methods to achieve or maintain a certain level of integration, North said. Integration maintenance plans, now used in some localities, actually deprive individuals who are otherwise qualified from renting or buying a unit if they are not of the race necessary to sustain the racial mix sought, he added.

"Integration maintenance contradicts the spirit of the federal fair housing law. To the National Association of Realtors, fair housing is equal access," North said.

The National Association of Realtors, the nation's largest trade association, represents nearly 800,000 members involved in all aspects of the real estate industry.



IT'S A BOY

Danny and Wendy McAbee of Kings Mountain announce the birth of their son, Daniel Lowery McAbee, March 30. The baby weighed seven pounds and 12 ounces at birth. He is the grandson of Millard and Mae Metcalf and the late Russell and Josephine McAbee. His mother is the former Wendy England.



**SPEAKS TO REALTORS** - Cleveland County Tax Supervisor Jim Hendricks is shown speaking at the meeting of the Kings Mountain Board of Realtors Thursday at the Holiday Inn. Hendricks demonstrated the new "compucolor" computerized tax system.

## Billy Joe Royal

Back in 1965 at the age of 19 Billy Joe Royal had his first bit hit. The song was "Down In The Boondocks." He was a pop superstar for the next few years, releasing hits like "Cheery Hill Park," "I Knew You When," and "Hush." In 1970 Billy Joe ran out to luck, the hits stopped. Royal moved to California and began working night clubs. He finally wound up in Las Vegas as a lounge act. When his contract ran out in Vegas, he worked other clubs, releasing a few records that flopped. He did a cover of the Drifters "Under The Boardwalk." It went half-way up the chart in 1978. Royal continued to look for good songs and a label that would take a chance on him. Billy found the song "Burned Like a Rocket." Still, no big label would record him. Royal put the song out on an independent label and pushed it for six months. It became big enough to get him a contract with Atlantic American Records. The song was beginning to climb the charts when space shuttle Challenger exploded in mid air. Radio stations, in respect to the astronauts, dropped the record.

Royal cut another song "Boardwalk Angel." It bombed. His next release "I Miss You



**Jim Arp**  
WKMT  
Music Director

Already" put him back on the charts. Other hits followed, "Old Bridges Burn Slow," "I'll Pin A Note On Your Pillow," and "Out Of Sight And On My Mind." Billy Joe was born in Valdosta, Ga., into a working class family who were also musicians. Royal moved to Marietta, just outside of Atlanta. At age 14 he got a job on a weekly radio show, "The Alabama Jubilee." There, he worked with Ray Stevens and Jerry Reed. When the Jubilee went under a couple of years later, Royal found an unusual job. At age 16 he was the featured singer in a downtown strip joint in Atlanta.

Sometime between 1959 and 1961 I played the Bambo Ranch in Savannah, Georgia. I heard that both Billy Joe and Joe South were working at the club. I don't remember either, and I'm sure they don't remember me. Reckon that makes us even.

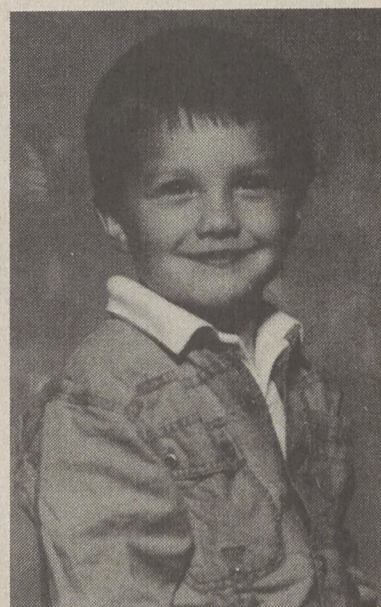
*Wedding*  
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## Tyler Gets Honorable Mention In Showstoppers Competition

Tyler Allen, clogging student of Nancy Riddle, instructor with Jane Campbell Dance Academy, recently performed at Showstopper in Hickory and received honorable mention award for his solo, "Thank God, I'm A Country Boy."

He participated in the six and under category and at four years of age was the youngest clogger.

Tyler is the son of Timmy and Dena Allen and grandson of Bill and Betty Allen and Dean and Judy Bowen, all of Grover.



TYLER ALLEN

He thanks his friends and family for supporting him in the competition.

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Pastor Appreciation Day  
Sunday, April 30, 1989  
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You are invited to attend this special service to help us honor the Reverend and Mrs. James E. Allen for their faithfulness and dedication to our church.  
Sunday School begins at 10:00 a.m. and Morning Worship at 11:45 a.m.

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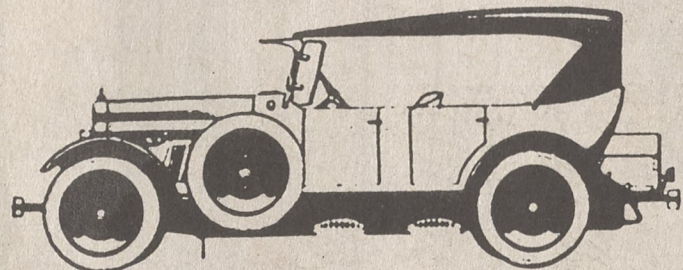
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