

THE YORK TOWN CRIER

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SERVING YORK COUNTY AND POQUOSON

20¢

WHAT IS YORK COUNTY?

by Angela Taormina

YORKTOWN — York County is unlike any other.

This drumstick of land is nationally renowned in history, it has a living museum as its capitol, an impressive school system, and a per-family income far larger than anyplace else on the Peninsula except Williamsburg. (It's within \$100 of Williamsburg, too.)

And yet York County has always been disinherited, resting in the shadows of everything around it.

That is partly because many York residents, refugees from urban careers, like it that way. And it is

partly because the whole midsection of the drumstick called York is federal property.

Five military bases, and the National Park Service restoration of Yorktown's Revolutionary battlefield, in effect cut the county in two.

The separation tends to isolate all of York's communities.

The county has never until now had a newspaper of its own in 344 years, despite a current population (32,000) that would normally support two weeklies or even a daily. (More on April 7.)

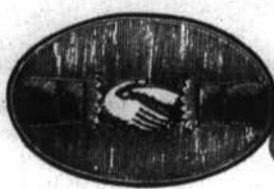
Fowl Play

NEWPORT NEWS — Eggs, shmeggs! You can get two ducklings for Easter.

The Peninsula Nature and Science Center will rent you a pair of three-day-old baby Mallards for \$7. Your children watch them burst into adulthood — it takes five weeks — and then you drive them back to the Center at 524 J. Clyde Morris Blvd. (Rt. 17).

Rent-a-Duck is first-come first-serve, and only on Friday, March 24, 1-6pm, and Saturday, March 25, 10am-3pm.

Go early — the supply ran out fast last Easter. Further information: telephone 595-1900. □



Voter Registration

POQUOSON — April 1 is the deadline for voter registration for the May 2 Poquoson City Council election. The Registrar's office at the municipal building will be open from 9am to 5pm that day. Frances Freeman, William Bunting Jr., and Henry M. (Bubba) Forrest Jr., the incumbents, are running uncontested. □

TOWN MEETING TIMES

YORKTOWN — York County's leaders are trying to grapple with the strains of robust growth by launching Town Meetings, New England Style.

The idea is to get more people informed on the issues and to promote decisions by consensus, instead of continuing the bumping of heads and building of factions that the traditional aristocratic politics of Virginia is said to promote.

Each of the five county supervisors is holding an experimental town meeting in the district he

represents. The first, March 21, was at Yorktown. The others:

— All start at 7:30pm —
TABB High School . . . 3/27
GRATON Bethel Sch. . . 3/28
BRUTON High School . . . 3/29
SEAFORD School . . . 3/30
"York County needs YOU to guide its future!" is the headline on an announcement of the plan made in unison by the League of Women Voters, the supervisors, and the Co-operative Extension Service.

Extension agent W. O. Holland Jr. was worried that the launching of town meetings might become confused in some Yorkers' minds with the nearly simultaneous issue of whether to build a new County governmental center.

Voters go to the polls April 11 on a \$1.2 million bond issue that would help finance two buildings to alleviate critical overcrowding of the County Courthouse.

The Courthouse is struggling to cope with three courts, a registrar, taxes, commonwealth's attorney, etc., and records dating back to 1633, for a population that tripled in 35 years, to 32,000.

Holland emphasized that bond issue and Town Meeting are two distinct developments. Town meetings, he said, have been cropping up nationwide to inform and involve people in the newer complexities of public issues. (Williamsburg held its second annual town meeting just last week.)

York used town meetings once before, in 1968-1971, when county growth was racing at five percent a year. Latest projections suggest the problem is almost over: York's growth is expected to taper off to 1½ percent a year after 1980, and to .7 percent a year after 1990. □



by the historians at Colonial National Historical Park

1. Where was the first county seat of York located?
2. Who was the earliest American ancestor of George Washington?
3. One of the first American "tourist traps" is on Water St., Yorktown. What is it?

(Answers on page 4)

Fly 50 Flags in '81 — Mrs. Fine

YORKTOWN — Mrs. Edith Fine, who has been wrestling with Congress and the Postal Service for three years on her ideas for nationally celebrating the British surrender at Yorktown, had a new approach this week.

"Let's fly 50 flags over our Courthouse in 1981," she said, "and we can send one to each state Capitol for the bicentennial of Lord Cornwallis' surrender. Then every state can celebrate the victory" of Oct. 19, 1781, that won the Revolutionary War, she said.

Mrs. Fine and her husband Herbert run the little Yorktown Department Store on Water Street. Two years ago she gathered exactly 1781 signatures on a petition for her first request: a special U. S. postal souvenir sheet of Turnbull's famous painting of the British surrender. (Bureaucracy has left the issue still in doubt.)

Since then her campaign has burgeoned to fill a stationary box with letters to Washington seeking the stamp sheet, a commemorative coin, and an annual Oct. 19 "Yorktown Day" for the country.

The bill introduced by Congressman Paul Trible (R-Tappahannock) for a giant 200th Anniversary celebration does not satisfy her demands. "That's a one-time thing," she said, and she went back to her typewriter. □

YORKTOWN — Hang on to your breakfast table or your steering wheel — it's "Murphy in the Morning" at the mike, "up with the cows to milk the people."

It's 7am and disc jockey Pat Murphy is jolting his listeners



awake over WYVA-FM with 50,000 watts worth of editorial commentary-and-expetive on social questions.

"Sure Vepco wastes millions of dollars out of our pockets, but it's only because we don't use the system to stop 'em," Murphy bursts out amid the station's otherwise round-the-clock diet of country-western music.

"A fellow called me a couple of weeks ago bragging that he steals electricity from Vepco. I told him he was no better than any other

damned thief. The way to beat Vepco is not to stoop to their level, it's to go to your legislators with your demands."

Murphy-in-the-Morning is at the WYVA console in jeans, print shirt and headphones. Armed with facts, figures and coffee, he'll take on government, politicians and his favorite target, Vepco and its "puppet regulator," the State Corporation Commission (SCC) — all through the morning traffic hour.

"The SCC can control over half of a person's paycheck," he says, though its three judges are appointed in closed caucus. "They're not protecting the consumer when they function as a puppet and grant any rate hike request put before them."

Vepco is doing its job effectively when it makes windfall profits for its stockholders, Murphy says.

The next country-western tune spins, and Murphy tells *The York Town Crier* that the media are to blame for failing to tell the people how to use their power.

Apathy is characteristic of Virginians, he says, and is spawned by its "aristocratic" government. Fifty-nine percent of the General Assembly is composed of lawyers, and "the Code of Virginia is larger than the Encyclopedia Britannica."

"To do something about a law the average citizen of Virginia has to get a lawyer to interpret it."

Murphy, born in Virginia himself (in Arlington), is 28. He attended the University of Hawaii and American University. As a

Marine in Vietnam he won nine decorations, including two Bronze Stars and the Silver Star.

It's "a great and workable system of government we have" and people should contact their elected officials to make it work, Murphy says.

A phone call is more effective than a letter, he says: "Many times a phone call can make the difference in a vote."

Murphy developed his controversial style as a disc jockey at stations in Washington, Hawaii, San Francisco and Richmond. He and his wife Dolores moved to Jamestown last summer when he became part-owner at WYVA. "Radio can do a lot of good when used ethically," he says. "People don't realize that the power lies with them. They must exercise it."

The tune is over and Murphy-in-the-Morning turns from *The Crier* back to 94.1 on the FM dial: "Poor old Bruton! They're the last to get police protection, the last to get fire protection, the last to get sewers, and the first to be volunteered for a race track. The politicians are making asses of themselves over horses. . . ." □

COMING . . .

Beginning with the next York Town Crier, April 7th, "Murphy in the Morning" will have another lance for his jousting. Murphy has agreed to become our Don Quixote, tilting in print with Vepco's windmills and other lush scenery. □

Proposed Govt. Center: Two brick buildings joined by archway would house two courts (left) and County administration. Design is called compromise between austere and Colonial. If York approves in April 11 vote, Center may open mid-1980. (VVK&R)

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