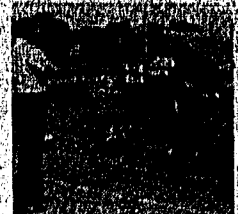




**Shepherd's Robinson
Selected As County's
Fireman Of The Year**

**Pro Wrestling
Card Features
Hometown Hulk**

**Area Special Olympians
Make Day In The Sun
Worth Waiting For**



Mooresville Tribune

"Although I Disagree With Everything You Say I Will Defend Unto Death Your Right To Say It"

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LEE SULLIVAN

Hey, you Mooresville taxpayers who have been waiting for the other shoe to drop; don't look now but here it comes. And it could be a doozy.

We're talking a size 22, triple D, steel-toed workboot with a diamond-studded spiked heel falling all the way from Raleigh with enough momentum to leave gaping, smoking holes in all wallets and checking accounts in its path. You've been warned and, if you like, you can run. But so you'll know, it's going to be tough finding a place in this state to hide.

The gloomy forecast was delivered to town officials Monday night by Mayor Joe Knox and Town Manager Rick McLean. They had been to Raleigh to get a first-hand look at cuts coming down the pipe. And they got it, right upside the head.

The first blow was a 99.9-percent confirmation that \$40,903 in state reimbursements owed to the town would be "withheld" forever. Poof! There goes budgeted funds equaling two police officer salaries. Regaining those funds would require a 1.5-cent increase in the town's tax rate.

I know. The town just raised the tax rate five cents last year. And the year before the rate went up eight cents. Well, returning to the shoe world, a 1.5-cent increase is a ballet slipper compared to the boot that is closing in on every throat in every municipality and county in North Carolina.

While Knox and McLean were in Raleigh, they sat in on a frightening presentation by Rep. Joe Mavretic (D-Edgecombe), past speaker of the House. Mavretic's comments sent chills through the officials in attendance.

His basic message, according to Knox, was that towns and counties have the state-granted authority to set a tax rate of up to \$1.50 per \$100 valuation. And until they use that authority — all of it — towns and counties shouldn't come crawling to the General Assembly for help.

Thud. Talk about a lead balloon. That should make Mavretic as welcome at a League of Municipalities meeting as Dr. Hannibal Lecter at a nudist colony.

\$1.50 per \$100 valuation would do for extra spending money what Jack the Ripper did for London nightlife. It would make town and county officials almost as popular in their home towns as Frank Lorenzo at an Eastern Airlines reunion.

But the scenario Mavretic painted may not be that far-fetched. Next year, the town is expecting \$815,942 in tax reimbursements from the state. As the state lawmakers strive to get the state budget back under control, the reimbursement funds keep popping up as the most likely place to start cutting.

To replace the \$815,942 in the town's budget, the tax rate would have to be raised 31 cents. Add that to the current 64 cents per \$100 rate, and don't forget the 1.5 cents needed to make up for this year.

Also, additional state-mandated changes are expected to cost the town money equaling another 6.29 cents on the tax rate. All together, that's \$102.79 cents per \$100 valuation.

Of course, the town could cut services, thereby cutting costs in order to break-even with less money. But that's something town board members and ad-

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Board Targets Downtown Eyesore

A nuisance, an eyesore, a health hazard. To adjacent property owners, the abandoned A & P grocery store on North Main Street fits all of those descriptions.

Monday night, owners of neighboring businesses went to the town board to air their complaints and to see what the board can do to eliminate what they described as a "serious, growing

problem."

"It's getting worse," Bobby Leagon, owner/operator of Headquarters in Oak Tree Plaza located behind the building, told the board. "It has become a

nuisance and I hope something can be done."

"It's an eyesore for the whole town," Bill Koury, owner/operator of the Side Door Restaurant beside the building,

said. "It's being used as a trash dump and a toilet."

Both Leagon and Koury told the board that the building is being used as a meeting, drinking and, sometimes, sleeping place. And both said their patience with the building is growing thin.

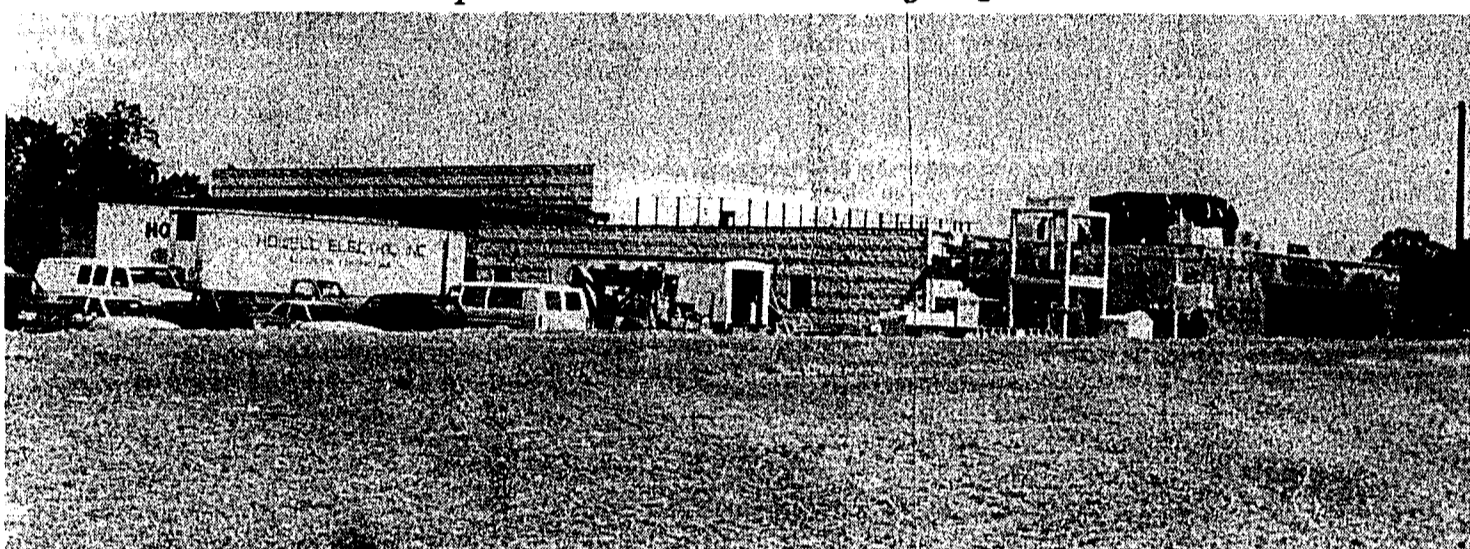
"It is becoming a threat to my business," Leagon said. "There are drinking parties there on a regular basis and some elderly people are afraid to park near there because of the things that are going on."

"And it stinks," Koury said. "The man who owns it has no pride in the property. He hasn't done a damn thing to make it better."

The board has heard similar comments before about the

See NUISANCE Page 18

Duke Power's Operations Center Going Up On Talbert Road



Attention N.C. 150 motorists: in answer to your frequent question, this is that "big thing" you see as you pass Talbert Road just west of town. It is Duke Power Co.'s soon-to-be Mooresville District Operations Center. The facility being built on 20 acres will be ready for use by August. It will

house engineering, construction and operations services that outgrew, long since, accommodations on Oak Street at North Broad. Duke will maintain its customer-services office on Oak.

DARE Officer Selection Process Begins

Mooresville has taken the DARE.

Monday night, the Town Board authorized the police department to establish a local Drug Abuse

Resistance Education program in the local schools.

The board's action was required to formalize the program, which has already been awarded

financial backing through the Lowrance Hospital Fund.

The DARE program, which is already operating in many school systems in the state including Iredell County, puts a police officer in the schools to educate students about the dangers of drug use.

The Mooresville program will receive \$100,000 over a three-and-a-half year period from the Lowrance sale monies, according to an arrangement okayed by the Iredell County Board of Commissioners.

The legal papers for the financing are still being finalized, but

the board moved ahead with its decision to give the local police department time to evaluate candidates and select an officer for the DARE position.

A law enforcement officer — one with at least two years experience — will be selected for the local DARE post by June 1.

After selection, the officer must undergo DARE training in August. The town board and the Mooresville Graded School System hope to have the DARE program in place by the start of

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Committee Presents New Road Proposals To DOT

A five-lane Plaza Drive is in the works, but that doesn't mean the Mooresville-South Iredell Chamber of Commerce's Highway Committee is relaxing. Far from it.

In fact, the committee is using the current work on Plaza Drive as a springboard to bounce other ideas for local road additions and improvements before the Department of Transportation.

Tuesday, committee and town representatives met with DOT officials in Gastonia. The primary reason for attending the meeting was to present an updated list of road projects suggested by the committee and endorsed by the town board.

Harriett Smith, the Chamber's vice president of community development, appeared before the board Monday night to outline the committee's latest package of projects. Her assignment was to obtain the board's backing for the proposals as the committee prepared for the DOT meeting. She succeeded.

The board voted unanimously to support the committee's plans, which were delivered to the DOT

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Iredell Is 'Crossroads For Future'

"Crossroads for the Future." Hold that thought. Think it when you think Iredell County. That's county government's new slogan.

And think of David Spearman. He thought of it first.

Tuesday night during their meeting in Statesville, county commissioners commended Spearman, an East Iredell Elementary fourth grader, for submitting the winning entry. His class, taught by Patsy Holpp, will

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Zone Change For Plaza Drive; Others Delayed

Plaza Drive's zoning is set, but town officials are taking another look at West McLelland Avenue.

Monday night, the Mooresville Town Board okayed a zoning

change for Plaza Drive that marks most of the 1.5-mile stretch for commercial instead of industrial development.

But requests from property owners delayed the plan to change West McLelland from an industrial to a strictly residential zone.

The Plaza Drive rezoning involved the most area. The proposal before the board was to change the zoning designation of Plaza Drive property — extending from West McLelland Avenue to North Broad Street, including the end of West Iredell Avenue — from General Industrial to Highway Business.

The change was proposed because town officials believe the existing industrial parks offer enough industrial-zoned property to satisfy future needs.

But prior to and at Monday's meeting, the board heard from representatives of existing Plaza Drive industries who requested that their properties remain General Industrial. L.B. Plastics and Draymore Manufacturing and Sipaba Print Works, as well as the owners of the Thompson Spinning Mill property, opposed

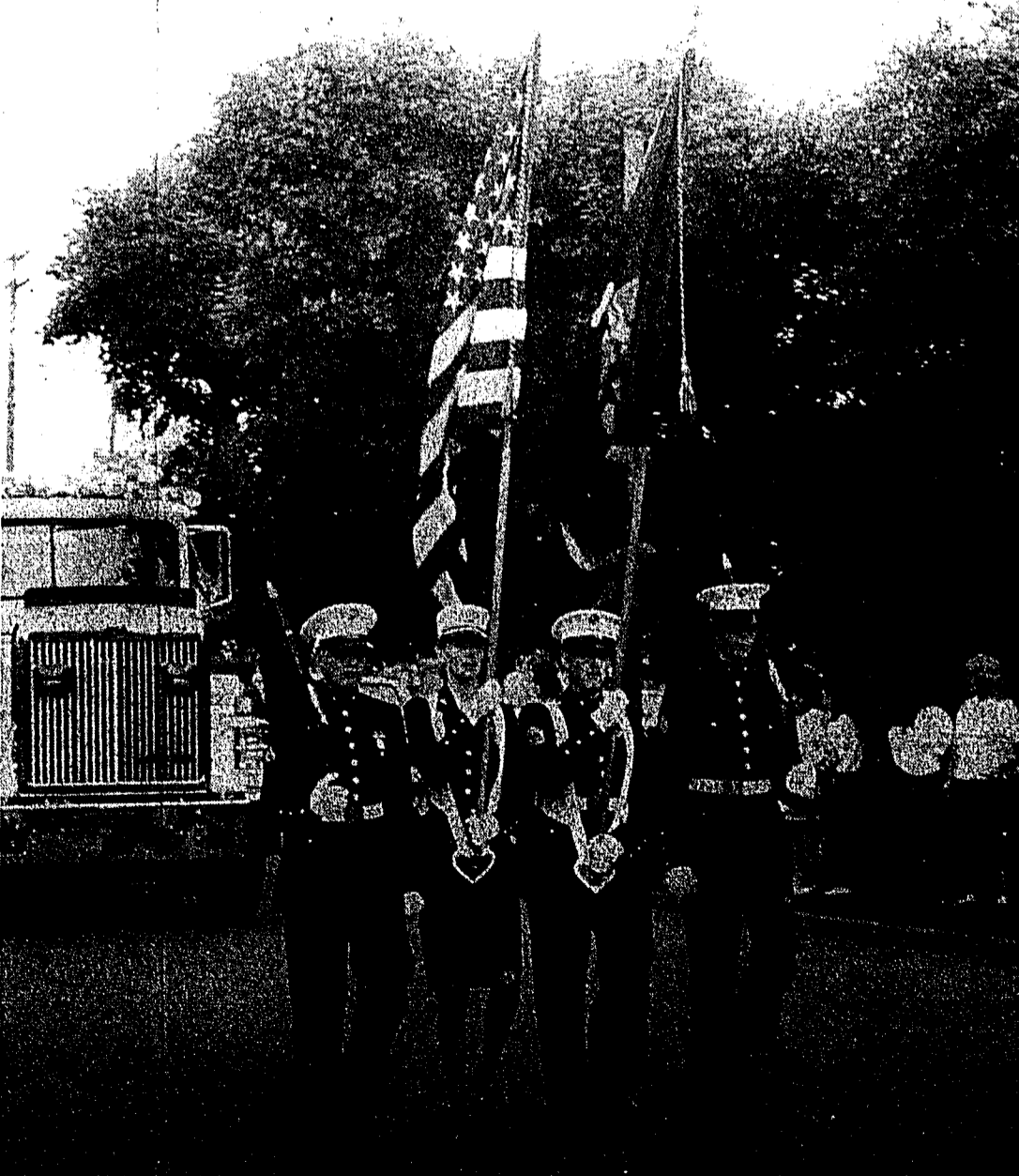
Historian Stonestreet Among Best

In the opinion of Daughters of the American Revolution, O.C. Stonestreet 3rd of Mooresville is one of the very best teachers of American history in America.

Stonestreet was among history teachers recently recognized nationally by the DAR in its "Outstanding Teacher of American History" annual competition. First place was won by a teacher in DeKalb County, Ga., and Stonestreet was one of three who received honorable mention.

Stonestreet, 42, won the North Carolina competition to become eligible for national consideration. A teacher for 16 years, he is a member of the Bradley Middle School faculty.

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Tomorrow's Defenders Lead Salute To Today's

Sunday was set aside especially to honor and welcome home Mooresville area veterans. So it seemed only fitting that those who may someday fill their shoes helped lead the way. South Iredell High School's Marine Corps Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps color guard, consisting of Bradley Procter, Dawn Hall, Marty Lanier and Jimmy Moore, marched in step, leading the Welcome Home Rally parade down Center Avenue towards the Mooresville Stadium site of additional ceremonies honoring all veterans. Several hundred attended the rally, made possible through the efforts of the United Veterans of World War II, with the support of the Mooresville-South Iredell Chamber of Commerce.