

Louisa's Ex-Chairman Lauds Kleppe on Mining

By JAY STRAFFORD
News Leader Staff Writer
LOUISA — A request by Secretary of the Interior Thomas S. Kleppe that plans for mining vermiculite here be reconsidered has been praised by the immediate past chairman of the county's board of supervisors.

"At a time when our great nation is celebrating its 200th birthday and trying to preserve our historic values, it would not be in the best interests of anyone to deface this beautiful area (Green Springs) of Louisa County," said John Q. Butler, who left office Jan. 1.

Butler's comments were contained in a letter mailed earlier this week to Kleppe. His letter came about a week after A.G. Johnson, current supervisors chairman, wrote to tell the interior secretary to mind his own business in regard to the controversial strip mining proposal.

MIXED OPINIONS

At issue are plans by W.R. Grace and Co. to mine vermiculite in the Green Springs area. The plans have been approved by county supervisors but are opposed by some county residents, including a group known as Historic Green Springs, Inc.

Butler said today he was not

Youth Is Held In Store Holdup

Special to The News Leader

LUNENBURG — A 17-year-old youth was being held in jail today on a charge of armed robbery in connection with a holdup at a grocery store on State Rt. 49 in Lunenburg County.

Sheriff E.C. Kardy said Halloween's Grocery was held up Tuesday about 12:20 p.m. and \$90 was taken.

Hardy said the youth also is charged with the use of a firearm in the commission of a felony. The youth is being held in the Mecklenburg County jail without bond because his parents are out of town, authorities said.

No date has been set for the youth's appearance in Lunenburg Juvenile and Domestic Relations Court.

U.Va. Coordinator

CHARLOTTESVILLE — Ms. Sharon S. Merdek has been appointed off-grounds housing coordinator at the University of Virginia to help students find places to live.

Agreement Set On Van Service

The last obstacle apparently has been overcome and



THOMAS S. KLEPPE
U.S. Interior Secretary



JOHN Q. BUTLER
Letter of Support

aware of Johnson's earlier letter to Kleppe and added his own letter was not intended as a countermessage.

"I did it purely on my own," Butler said. "The way I feel, I don't mind telling people."

Butler, who did not seek reelection to the board of supervisors, was one of three members of the former board who consistently voted against the Grace company's requests to rezone acreage in the Green Springs area from agricultural to industrial use.

NEW BOARD'S VOTE

However, the new board, elected last November, has voted 5 to 1 to rezone 1,467 acres to permit the mining. Grace officials say the mining won't start until 1980.

Kleppe's request to J. Peter Grace, chairman of the board of Grace, asked him to reassess the mining plans because the Interior Department has designated the Green Springs area a national historic landmark. Kleppe said the mining would be "incompatible with the cultural scenic values of the area."

Johnson's letter stinging rebuked Kleppe for interfering in the mining issue, which the board chairman said is a matter "that can and should properly be handled by local governing bodies."

Butler told Kleppe "I share your views completely, since it is a known fact that Grace and Co. has unlimited supplies of vermiculite deposits to rely on."

Grace also mines ver-

miculite — an insulation material — in Montana and South Carolina.

"I have talked with many people in Louisa County who are much opposed to this type of destruction coming into our county," wrote Butler, "and who appreciate your concern."

The former chairman said, "I hope you never waver in your efforts to preserve this beautiful section of Louisa County and our mother state, Virginia."

Like Johnson, Butler mailed copies of his letter to Sens. Harry F. Byrd, Ind.-Va., William L. Scott, R-Va., and Rep. J. Kenneth Robinson, R-Va.

Grace officials said earlier this week the firm will send a full reply to Kleppe within several weeks. Grace already has acknowledged receiving the interior secretary's request, but a company spokesman in New York gave no indication that the mining plans will be abandoned.

project delayed. If it did this would allow time for a decision whether administrative action by Kleppe would stop construction of the project which includes two dams to be built near Galax, Va.

RECHARD NEWS LEADER APCO IS PLEASED

Meanwhile, in Roanoke, Va., Appalachian Power Co. officials expressed delight at the court decision.

"Apco is delighted with the decision and hopes to go forward with the work under the license as expeditiously as possible," said John W. Vaughan, Apco executive vice president.

R. Joseph Dowd, general counsel for American Electric Power Co., Apco's parent firm, said simply, "We intend to build the project."

In another development, Rep. Ken Hechler, D-W. Va., called the Appeals Court decision "ridiculous."

LONGTIME FOE

Hechler, a longtime opponent of the twin-dam project, said, "The United States Court of Appeals decision is a severe blow to all the citizens who worked so long and hard to save the New River."

Hechler, in whose state a portion of the river also flows, said he would "push immediately" for congressional action to invalidate the Federal Power Commission's licensing of the power project.

The appeals court concentrated on two issues raised by the State of North Carolina and found them without merit.

RELOCATION COSTS

One was the FPC's alleged failure to consider energy conservation as an alternative. The other was the commission's alleged failure to consider one of the social costs of the dams and reservoir, the relocation of persons who would be displaced.

Some 40,000 acres of land and a segment of the river in North Carolina's Ashe and Alleghany counties and Virginia's Grayson County would be inundated by water backed up by the dams to be erected for the power project.

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A full-size house is Spotsylvania Co. on an adjacent purchased by

Victim

FALLS CHURCH — young kidnap victim company of an esc Maryland mental directed police to a near here where the nude body of another Arthur Frederick 21, of Hyattsville, a history of sex offenses, withheld without charges in the state of Ar. Dawson, Church. The boy has ing since Saturday mother had dropped nearby shopping.

The debris cover discovered behind several hours after Coode and the Billy Arthes, 10, Md., at a Falls C where they had been small cleaning job immediately are extradition on charges in Maryland.

After Goode's Arthes boy described how he had watched strangled with directed them to scene. Ten official helicopters combed till they discovered covered with two logs.

Maryland authorities been searching for boy since March vanished while papers for delinquent from his home healthy and unharmed was found and buried.

State Pushes 'Rescue Of Tangier Airport'

Special to The News Leader

TANGIER ISLAND — State officials hope to begin this summer the second phase of their fight to save this small island's airport from being washed into the Chesapeake Bay.

About 13,000 tons of riprap has been laid as an outline to replace some of the shoreline and airport runway lost to erosion, according to Willard G. Plentl, director of the State Division of Aeronautics.

Plentl said the Virginia Airport Authority, which owns and operates Tangier's Airport, currently is preparing an application for federal funds to help fill the built-up area.

"We would hope it would be completed this summer," Plentl said yesterday.

about a mile wide and two miles

Ashbury Pruitt, a civilian employee of the Navy's Tangier Target Range, is keeping track of erosion levels. 180 feet of the shoreline near the washed into the bay during the past year, three of the airport lights were lost and the south end of also was beginning to erode, he said.

Plentl said the riprap laying is "a tremendous job" in stemming the tide and protecting the runway and officials have checked out several times the material was laid last month.

CHESAPEAKE FIRM

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Louisa, Kleppe To Confer

By Allen Short
Times-Dispatch Staff

LOUISA — A meeting between Louisa County officials and Secretary of the Interior Thomas S. Kleppe has been arranged by Rep. J. Kenneth Robinson, R-7th, in an apparent effort to sway Kleppe's opposition to proposed strip mining operations in the Green Springs area.

The meeting, which is scheduled to take place in Washington Tuesday, will include about 8 Louisa County officials and "concerned citizens," among them Board of Supervisors Chairman A.C. Johnson, Supervisor R. Earl Oeg and Louisa Circuit Court Clerk Dean P. Agee, sources said.

Also expected at the meeting, according to a spokesman for Robinson, are the congressman or one of his top aides, and several Interior Department administrators.

The idea for the meeting, which was arranged by members of Robinson's staff earlier this week, followed a telephone call in which Agee told staff members of a March 1 letter from Kleppe to J. Peter Grace, chairman of the Board of W.R. Grace and Co.

In the letter, Kleppe asked Grace officials to abandon their plan to strip mine vermiculite deposits on about 1,500 acres in or near Green Springs, which has been designated by the Interior Department as a National Historic Landmark.

Agee said Thursday that he called Robinson's office to ask for the meeting because he and other "concerned citizens of this county" — including several supervisors — were upset by "the federal government interfering in local affairs without first talking to local officials."

Asked about the legality of the meeting, which at least three supervisors are expected to attend, Agee continued, "This is in no way, shape or form being promoted by the Board of Supervisors."

"We're going to Washington merely as concerned citizens," Agee said, "not as local officials." Agee said that, in his opinion, the meeting would not conflict with the Virginia Freedom of Information Act, which requires advance public notice whenever several or more elected members of a local government meet to discuss official business.

"I saw no reason to announce the meeting," Agee said. "I still don't."

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Ten days ago, the Louisa County Board of Supervisors approved a letter to Kleppe in which Johnson denounced the Interior Department's intervention in the two-year strip mining controversy.

Johnson characterized the department as having "too much money and its officials too much time to spend on matters that can and should properly be handled by local governing bodies."

Rezoning Petitions

Within the past three months, the supervisors have overwhelmingly approved several rezoning petitions to allow the proposed strip mining operations in the northwestern quadrant of the county.

About a week after Johnson mailed the letter to Kleppe, John Q. Butler, immediate past chairman of the Board of Supervisors, wrote to the secretary printing his concern for the preservation of the Green Springs area.

In his letter, Kleppe asked Grace to rely on existing vermiculite deposits in Leeby, Monks, and in Laurens County, S.C., as sources of the strip mining.

"I share your vision completely," Butler told Kleppe, "since it is a known fact that Grace and Co. has unilaterally

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preferential primary, the other major option permitted by the national party.

Louisa Officials, Kleppe to Talk About Mining

Continued From First Page

supplies of vermiculite deposits to rely on."

A spokesman for Robinson said Thursday that the congressman "is concerned" about the Kleppe letter. "Ken Robinson believes in local determination of important issues," the aide said. "This is not what you'd call local determination."

Asked whether Robinson had expressed any sympathy for the apparent local effort to neutralize Kleppe's announcing stance, Agee said, "I think the congressman and members of his group have reached an understanding. That's all I can say."