

Odd-Even System Eases Woes in Northern Virginia

By Will Marshall

Times-Dispatch Staff Writer

ALEXANDRIA — Motorists here and throughout Northern Virginia awoke yesterday to be reminded by radio and newspapers that it was an "odd" day for buying gasoline.

Yet, oddly missing from area gasoline stations were the long lines that have plagued drivers, forced stations to drastically cut back their hours and led to the system of alternate-day rationing.

Energy officials in Northern Virginia said yesterday that odd-even rationing apparently is responsible for a measurable easing of the area's gasoline plight in the past week.

"It seems to be working pretty well," said Alexandria energy coordinator Eric Mayer. "The lines were shorter today than at any time since this whole thing started."

Energy officials in Prince William and Fairfax counties agreed that gasoline lines have grown shorter and ser-

vice stations have gradually extended their hours since Gov. John Dalton ordered the odd-even system started June 22.

"The gas situation in Northern Virginia has been critical for the last three weeks," said Prince William energy spokesman Garnett C. Ball Jr. Yet, "there was real improvement today. We hope it's going to last."

Other officials, like Fairfax County's David Watkins, said other factors, besides odd-even rationing, have con-

tributed to the improving fuel picture. The state recently agreed to channel to Northern Virginia between 3.5 million and 4 million gallons of gasoline from its emergency fuel reserve.

Watkins said. He called that "the most significant development we've seen."

Mayer said the odd-even system seems to have brought a sense of order to Northern Virginia's fuel woes. "I think the people are becoming acclimated" to shortages. He estimated that area stations are

receiving an average of 30 percent less gasoline than at the same point last year.

Mayer said that panic buying has subsided and that the \$5 minimum on purchases has prevented motorists from "topping off" their tanks.

There have been few reports of abuses and no one in Alexandria has been charged with violating the governor's order, he continued. Conviction carries a \$100 fine. Gasoline dealers in the four counties

and five cities affected by the odd-even order welcome the respite it has given them.

"We like it. It's simple and it's easy," declared Roy Page, president of the Northern Virginia Retail Station Operators Association. The association represents 400 dealers, he said.

Despite its apparent success in easing the gasoline plight, the odd-even system has its troublesome aspects. One is the

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Center's Deficit Worries W&M

By Joseph Gatins

Times-Dispatch Staff Writer

Projected deficits of about \$2 million or more at the Virginia Institute of Marine Science have become a matter of "profound concern" to the College of William and Mary, which recently took over the administration of the marine research center.

The deficit problem, unmentioned in earlier merger discussions, came up yesterday at

a meeting of the state's Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission.

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The details of the fiscal merger problem were contained in a letter from William and Mary's provost and vice president for academic affairs, George R. Healy, to J. Wade Gilley Jr., secretary of education.

State auditors anticipate a deficit of about \$2.9 million, the letter said. Healy's own auditors are pegging it at around \$2 million. "Whatever the precise amount is determined to be," he continued, "it understandably would be a matter of profound concern for everyone associated with [the college]."

Healy's letter of June 28, dated but three days before the merger took place, sought Gilley's help in forging a plan to have the state "forgive or otherwise assume these obligations so that the William and Mary board of visitors accepts its new responsibilities without crippling limitations." Healy pledged to work diligently to reduce the deficits. "However, we do feel strongly," he wrote, "that we should not be considered accountable for the success of such collection effort...."

The provost hoped for a "mutually agreeable

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Charles McDowell

Aunt Gertrude Feels Left Out

WASHINGTON — Aunt Gertrude, who keeps me posted on public affairs in her rural community, has written a letter that I am glad to share with others interested in the energy crisis.

My dear nephew,

The gasoline situation is getting serious out here in the boon-docks. We still don't have any gas lines. The local people are beginning to take it pretty hard.

Imagine what it's like to read about gas lines every day in the newspaper, to see gas lines every night on TV, and to realize that most people in the United States apparently can't talk about anything else.

At first, we felt lucky not to have gas lines. Then it got a little embarrassing. Now it's downright depressing.

There are a lot of advantages to living in an out-of-the-way, rural community. But now we are up against the old danger of feeling provincial, left out, skipped over. This gas crisis, unless the government can figure out a way to spread it around better, is going to give rural America a really bad inferiority complex.

How can we feel like part of the mainstream? How can we understand the politics of our time? How can we prevent our children from feeling alienated when they have never seen a gas line?

TOM FROWZER, who runs our only filling station, has done what he could to keep us in touch with the real world. Mainly, he and his oil company have raised prices 23 cents a gallon since the first of the year.

I don't know whether staying in step with city prices has improved local morale. There's been some minor controversy about it, but nothing like a good, feisty hassle in a gas line.

Tom has tried several things to build up lines. For instance, he asked the oil company to join him in giving away dishes to anyone who would fill up.

The oil company told him it was a crazy and un-American idea — and, your Uncle Frazier hears, punished him for his impertinence by increasing his gas allocation.

Now Tom, on his own, is giving a free Dr. Pepper to anyone who will stop by the station. You can drive over to the station any time you want and get a cold drink, and also gas if you should need it. It's pleasant enough, but, of course, it's discouraging in terms of the mainstream of American life.

Tom's boldest effort to promote a gas line was to close his self-service pumps. On the first day, Miss Philly Murkley drove in, surveyed the situation, and began to serve herself from the full-service pump. When Tom rushed out of the station and told her he would have to pump the gas for her, Miss Philly pointed the nozzle at him and waved him away.

After she filled up, she carefully paid three cents a gallon less than the full-service price, requested a cup for her Dr. Pepper, and drove away.

That evening, at a meeting at which the Ladies' Fourth Friday Club passed a resolution calling for "a spirit of sacrifice evenly distributed across the nation," Miss Philly announced that she would be quite willing to wait in line for gasoline. But she said she would not pay extra for the privilege.

Tom reopened his self-service pumps the next morning and started giving out paper cups of ice with the Dr. Peppers. He also raised prices two cents a gallon to sustain the spirit of sacrifice.

THIS COMMUNITY reminds me of the old joke about the town that was too small to have a town drunk — everyone had to take turns.

Your Uncle Frazier, Fred Cagle, Sam McClanny and some of the others who hang around the back room of the feed store drew up a roster the other day to create gas lines of at least three cars at Tom Frowzer's opening time, at noon and in the late afternoon. The three assigned drivers would park in a row at the pumps and at least look like a line, in hope of attracting passing tourists or somebody.

So who was the first (and only) person to be suckered? G. Murkley Barge, our politician. He got in line, topped off his tank and then went straight to a telephone.

He called his connections in Richmond and Washington, and told them there were shocking gas lines in this community, and agricultural productivity was in danger, and all that.

The result was that Tom Frowzer got a special allocation of gasoline and a truckload of diesel fuel that he had no storage for. Oh, well, we can still dream.

Sincerely,
Aunt Gertrude

Downtown Dog Patrols Curtailed

Police dogs will not patrol the city's downtown area or the business section of Hull Street in South Richmond during daylight hours, effective today, City Manager Manuel Deese said yesterday.

Deese said that he has directed Public Safety Director Jack Fulton to stop using the dogs because their presence connotes intimidation and fear to people.

Use of dogs in the downtown area was begun several years ago when merchants, alarmed by a sharp rise in the incidence of major crime, asked that steps be taken.

But Deese said use of dogs in the downtown area is not conducive to good public relations.

Dogs now will be kept in cars and dispatched to areas where they might be needed, Deese

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Supervisors Vote For Brewery

Times-Dispatch State Staff

HARRISONBURG — The Rockingham County Board of Supervisors last night overwhelmingly approved the rezoning of 236 acres near Elkton for a Coors brewery.

The 4-1 vote paves the way for the Golden, Colo. company to locate an East Coast brewery in Virginia if it chooses.

Henry Clark, a Harrisonburg attorney representing Coors, praised the supervisors after the vote and thanked them for their confidence in the company.

He said he planned to call Lowell Sund, senior vice president of the Adolph Coors Co., and inform him of the favorable decision on the rezoning.

Meanwhile, a leader of groups opposing the brewery indicated that the rezoning might be fought in the courts, although a decision hasn't been made.

Fred Smith said he was disappointed with the vote and was surprised it took such a pro-Coors turn.

On June 27 the Rockingham Planning Commission voted 4-2 to recommend that the supervisors disapprove the company's rezoning request. But the board flatly rejected that recommendation.

Ever since the Coors Company announced in mid-

Workmen Tear Down Stage Amid Debris Left by the 50,000 to 70,000 Who Attended Festival

County to Frown on Big Festivals

By Ray Lovenbury

Times-Dispatch Staff Writer

Henrico County is likely to try to limit large gatherings at the state fairgrounds similar to the weekend's black-oriented music festival after the panic there Sunday night that sent at least 94 persons to hospitals.

County Manager Frank A. Faison said yesterday that Henrico "will discourage that type of activity in the future." Sunday night's still-unexplained panic and stampede is not the only reason for the county's disenchantment with such activities, he said, reporting that he received a lot of complaints from fairgrounds area residents of the long hours of the concert and traffic conditions.

"I will have the police chief and fair officials review the situation and let them know our [the county's] concern," Faison said.

Police had yet to determine yesterday why the two-day Mardi Gras Festival ended on a down note. The panic apparently began when someone shouted a phrase with the word "gun" in it, touching off a panic among the 50,000 to 70,000 persons at the festival.

With one apparent exception, the injured were treated for bruises, cuts and other minor injuries

and released from the four hospitals to which they were taken.

The exception was Henrico policeman R.A. Kepple, who was admitted to St. Mary's Hospital with a broken rib and concussion after a parked police car in which he was sitting was struck in the rear by a car driven by a juvenile who was carrying two persons to a hospital.

Police said a woman who was in the car had a miscarriage.

Capt. R.L. Foster, commander of the Henrico police uniformed patrol, said police had received reports of someone shouting, "man with a gun" or "he's got a gun." Foster said he did not know whether the shout was a "planned prank or someone actually saw a gun."

"We'll probably never know," he said. "Until that time, the crowd had been orderly."

"IT WAS A PEACEFUL EVENT until the panic," Foster said. "We had only seven or eight minor incidents and one strong-arm robbery until then." The festival, a showcase for black-oriented rock and disco acts, began Saturday night, and thousands stayed on the grounds overnight awaiting Sunday's activities.

When the "gun" cry went up on the perimeter of the crowd, the crowd surged forward toward the stage. Those close to a 6-foot-high plywood barricade were pushed through it, police said.

The dust raised by the surge reflected in stage lights and apparently appeared to some to be smoke. Police said those in the front of the crowd, fearing fire, turned around and headed the other way, colliding with those pushing forward.

"There was no firebomb, no guns that we found and no police in the area of the panic," Foster said. He said that the 26 men on duty at the time were on the perimeter of the crowd, except for a few who were backstage for security purposes.

Foster said fair officials were cooperative in resolving matters.

Capt. John Harding of the Henrico Volunteer Rescue Squad said the crowd was "in panic, in shock and unable to coordinate" when he arrived to set up a command post.

"People were scattered over a wide area, far from where the panic actually took place," he said.

Harding said he received the call about 11 p.m. and coordinated the efforts of the Henrico squad and

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Let Skylab Fall; Richmond's Ready

By Virginia Munsch

Times-Dispatch Staff Writer

On a front yard off Cherokee Road, a small patch of grass is roped off. In the middle is a handmade black and white bull's-eye target, and next to the patch are two signs: "Skylab Target Site," and below that, "Five Pounds and Under."

With the 77.5-ton space station expected to plunge to Earth sometime between 3:21 a.m. and 9:21 p.m. tomorrow, some Richmonders are taking humorous and a few serious precautions, even though the probability that a Skylab chunk will fall on any one person is about 600 billion to one.

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For those who just don't feel comfortable with the idea that Skylab's 5,100-pound titanium protective shroud or 3,900-pound lead safe might land too close for comfort, some enterprising merchants are selling Skylab helmets.

And if a helmet doesn't quash the pre-crash jitters, Richmond residents can at least rest assured that, if hit, their survivors will be taken care of by Lloyd's of London, thanks to WLEE.

The radio station yesterday obtained a \$500,000 life insurance policy that covers anyone who lives in the Richmond metropolitan area and is killed by a piece of Skylab, said Ken Curtis, program director.

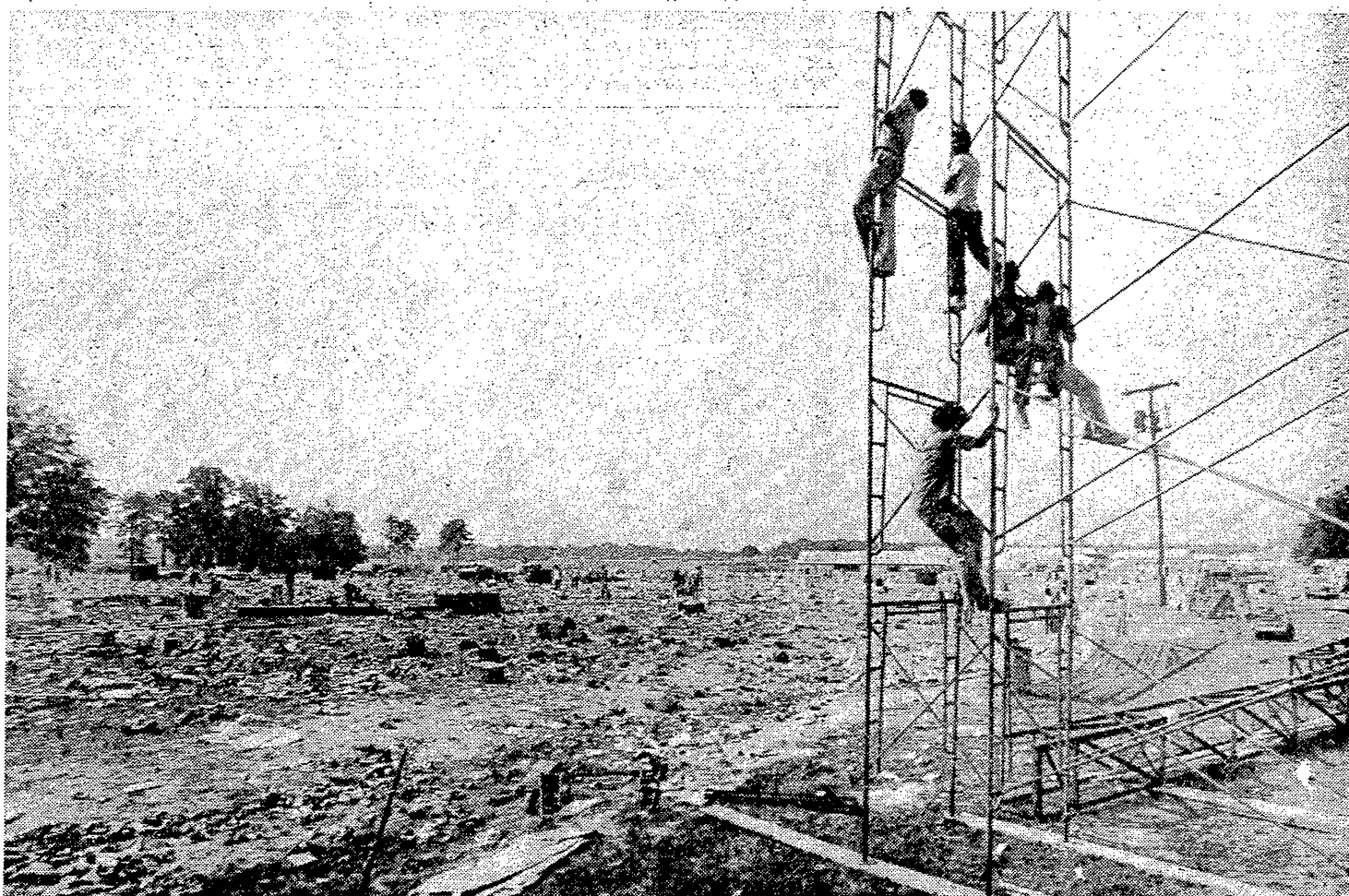
"JUST CONTACT US, and we'll put the gears in motion," Curtis said. The policy covers 602,000 people, he said, and was purchased for \$100.

WLEE also is sponsoring a Skylab sweepstakes. The first person in WLEE's listening area who brings in a piece of Skylab within 48 hours of its descent will win a trip either to Houston or to Cape Canaveral, Fla., to tour the space centers, "where they can ask why the damn thing fell in the first place," Curtis said.

Skylab finders and keepers in Virginia also can turn in their prize to the University of Richmond for four lifetime season passes to the Spiders' home football games, said John Averett, director of promotions.

On the serious side of Skylab precautions, the state Office of

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Staff Photo by Wallace Clark



McDowell



AP Laserphoto

Tom the Hampton Cat Didn't Want to Take Chances Humans Are Buying Helmets, Insurance Against Skylab