



Staff photo by Dan Sears

Prickly heat

It was so hot that even the cactuses were thirsty Monday. Robble Nurnberger watered the plants in front of his Oleander Drive home in Wilmington.

Heat wave keeps area at 100° plus

By Beth Newsome and Leslie Gruber

- 107°** Fayetteville
- 103°** Kenansville
- 101°** Whiteville
- 100°** Wilmington

Pigs in Chinquapin fought for space in a tree-shaded mudhole, youngsters in Pender and Duplin counties ended their first day of school early and demand for electricity peaked Monday as 100-degree temperatures persisted for the third straight day across Southeastern North Carolina.

In Pender County, students will remain in classrooms only through noon each day this week because of the heat, according to R.J. Claybrook, acting superintendent of schools. Students will be fed cold cuts, he said, instead of the usual hot cafeteria fare.

Duplin County students got out at 11 a.m. Monday and will not be in school today at all. It will be a work day for teachers, however.

Bill Taylor, principal at James Kenan High School, said no decision has been made on whether class will be in session the rest of the week. Temperatures in classrooms at his school hit 97 degrees Monday, he said.

The heat reached 100 degrees about 3:20 p.m. at the New Hanover County Airport north of Wilmington, said Harold Miller of the National Weather Service office there. Monday was the third day of record-

setting temperatures, he said. The old record for Aug. 22 — 98 degrees — was set in 1968, he said.

Still, North Carolina's coast apparently got the cooler end of the heat wave. Temperatures reached 107 degrees in Fayetteville, 104 in Greensboro and 101 at the Border Belt Tobacco Research Station north of Whiteville.

Miller said there is little hope for the heat to break before Wednesday or Thursday. Even a respite then is uncertain, he said.

For the second time this summer, Carolina Power & Light Co. broke its record for power demand. At 5 p.m. Monday, the utility was delivering 6,926 megawatts to its customers in North and South Carolina, spokesman Mac Harris said. That figure broke the earlier record

Please see HOT, 5A

Hot

Continued from 1A of 6,698 megawatts set July 21.

... A megawatt is equal to a million watts.

... High temperatures sustained over several days are pushing up the demand for electricity, Harris said. Still, CP&L was able to meet the demand, he said.

The local chapter of the American Red Cross did its part to make life bearable for those without air conditioning. It set up a shelter late Monday afternoon after a survey showed a need for such a facility to serve the sick and elderly. The shelter closed about 6 p.m., however, after no one showed up.

Doris Pessmeg, director of disaster services for the local chapter, said apparently some of those who needed the shelter either had no transportation or were unaware the facility was open.

The shelter may open again sometime today, officials said.

Despite the heat, striking members of the Communications Workers of America local continued to picket in front of the Southern Bell Telephone Co. office at Fourth and Princess streets in Wilmington.

... "With the end in sight, we can hold out a few more days," said Susan Turner of 5217 Carolina Beach Road.

Stripped down to a tube top and shorts, Mrs. Turner shared picket duty with her husband, Tim. They

took turns bringing ice to each other. Both are maintenance administrators for Southern Bell.

During the hotter parts of the day, the picketers took 2½-hour shifts marching with placards on the hot sidewalk. Early in the mornings and late in the afternoons, the shifts stretched to 3½ hours.

Most citizens apparently heeded N.C. Labor Commissioner John C. Brooks' advice on warding off heat-induced illnesses. Symptoms of heat stroke are temperatures 106 degrees or higher, inability to sweat, hot, dry skin, rapid pulse and possible loss of consciousness.

"A person suffering from heat stroke must be cooled immediately by any available means," Brooks said, "even before emergency medical personnel reach the scene." Try removing the victim's clothing, sponging him with water or alcohol, applying ice packs or spraying with a garden hose.

Spokesmen for the emergency rooms at New Hanover Memorial and Cape Fear Memorial hospitals in Wilmington reported no instances of patients stricken with heat-related illnesses Sunday or Monday.

Spokesmen for Pender Memorial Hospital in Burgaw, Doshier Memorial Hospital in Southport and Brunswick County Hospital in Supply said they knew of no patients made ill by the heat.

Columbus County Hospital's emergency staff treated a tractor driver Saturday who suffered from exhaustion and mild dehydration.

Arthur Walter Feck, 66, of Clinton, died after he collapsed while riding his motorcycle Sunday. He apparently passed out and fell from his vehicle about 8 miles from his hometown.

A spokesman at Greensboro's Humana Hospital said a 54-year-old man admitted Monday with a 107-degree body temperature was placed in intensive care.

Tobacco croppers coming out of the fields looked as if they had just come out of the river. Buyers and warehouse crews looked equally wet.

"If chickens can just stay alive that's all they can do," said Duplin Agricultural Agent Snodie B. Wilson.

"I've heard of losses of 5,000 or more birds on farms, birds ready to go to market," he added. "That's when the heat stress is worst on the birds as the houses are the most crowded at this time."

Bladen County Extension Chairman M. Keith Dennis said he heard of some hog loss in Bladen from the heat. Hogs won't breed in hot weather, Dennis said, which could delay farrowing. That could upset hog producers' marketing strategies.

"At 100, like it was yesterday and today," Wilson said Monday, "all the birds do is crowd around the water fountain."

Beth Newsome is a staff writer; Leslie Gruber is regional editor. Star-News Correspondent Joe Lanier contributed to this report.