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Oliver North is scheduled to take the witness stand today and break his silence on the Iran-arms deal.

Good Morning!

WARM

Sunny and hot. High around 95. Low near 70. More data, Page 11-B.

Page 6-A

While defenders say pit bulls are misunderstood, calls to ban the dogs increase with every reported attack.



THE FAYETTEVILLE TIMES

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Staff Photos By CINDY BURNHAM

Sentence Reaction

'That's legal murder,' screams Huff's sister, Deborah, while Huff, right, beside attorney John Britt, hangs his head.

Jury Sentences Double Slayer Huff To Death

By JOHN BRAY
Of The Times Staff

A Cumberland County Superior Court jury sentenced Everett Randolph Huff to death on Monday for the murder three years ago of his 9-month-old son, who the prosecution contended was buried alive.

The jury of seven women and five men convicted Huff, 28, on Wednesday of two counts of first-degree murder in the October 1984 death of his son, Crigger, and the fatal shooting of his mother-in-law, 46-year-old Gail Alderson Strickland at her Montclair subdivision home.

Huff, who had pleaded not guilty by reason of



insanity, was sentenced to life imprisonment in the death of Mrs. Strickland.

Members of Huff's family, including his parents, were present for the sentencing and wept for several minutes when the death sentence was announced.

Afterward, Huff's father, Everett Randolph Huff Sr., said: "I would like to see the Supreme Court overturn the decision and see him committed to an appropriate institution to treat his mental sickness...."

"After hearing all the psychiatric testimony I found out how really sick his mind is at this

time," he said in an interview outside the courtroom.

Bill Strickland, one of Mrs. Strickland's two sons, said: "I'm glad it was the death penalty. I really wouldn't have minded if it was life. But I was afraid that he might get out on parole and murder somebody again."

The jury, picked from Bladen County because of pre-trial publicity, presented the sentencing verdicts at 10:55 a.m.

Jurors apparently deadlocked on Friday about imposing a death sentence, but decided the

See HUFF, Page 5-A

Farm Aid End Sought By Reagan

WASHINGTON (AP) — The United States urged its trading partners on Monday to join in a worldwide elimination of agricultural subsidies over the next 10 years, a move Reagan administration officials agreed could end close to \$30 billion in popular U.S. farm-support programs if adopted.

Following through on a proposal he made last month at the seven-nation economic summit in Venice, Reagan said such a pact is needed to end costly trade distortions. But he conceded it would not be easy to negotiate and "will not be painless."

European officials, in particular, have voiced skepticism with setting such a timetable and Reagan's proposal was condemned by some U.S. farm interests.

"If the president were successful, it would basically put American agriculture probably back in the same condition we were prior to the Great Depression, in which we had the constant boom and bust — more years of bust — in agriculture," said Bob Denman, a spokesman for the National Farmers' Union.

U.S. representatives to trade-liberalization talks under the 93-nation General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) formally made the proposal in Geneva, Switzerland, as administration officials outlined it in Washington.

Senate Agriculture Committee Chairman Patrick J. Leahy, D-Vt., said the administration "has raised the stakes in the complex game of world agricultural trade. What we need to do is see whether other countries put their subsidies on the table."

"I have faith in the ability of our farmers to compete in the world market. Now we'll see if our trading partners have similar faith in their farmers."

Agriculture Secretary Richard Lyng said that nearly all U.S. farm-support programs could be affected. But he said the administration would not ask Congress to terminate these programs in the absence of an international agreement.

"We are not going to do this unilaterally," Lyng said. "We obviously would have a lot of trouble doing it unilaterally in this country."

Lyng said some farm groups, including the American Farm Bureau Federation, did support the concept. The plan is in the best interest of U.S. farmers, he added.

"U.S. farmers can compete with farmers around the world. They know they can. But they know they cannot compete by themselves with the treasuries of foreign governments," he added.

Direct government income supplements to farmers that are not related to production levels would not be affected, nor would disaster relief or foreign aid subsidies such as the Food For Peace program providing food for some of the world's poorest nations.

U.S. commodity programs, including price supports for crops and dairy products, totaled a record \$26 billion last year, a figure equivalent to more than 10 percent of the nation's annual budget deficit.

The Reagan administration has

See REAGAN, Page 5-A



Tomorrow

The heroics of Jonah Umstead, who saved his Army sergeant's life 43 years ago, are recognized.

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Check These

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- Enraged Korean students battle police in retaliation for a comrade's death. Page 9-A.
- N.C. House OKs \$830 million school financing package. Senate enactment is expected. Page 1-B.
- Hope Mills American Legion baseball players regret their team is ineligible for playoffs. Page 2-B.

Trees Cause Acid Rain, Study Says

WASHINGTON (AP) — Trees emit substantial amounts of the pollutants that help form acid rain, according to new research.

Just how important these emissions are in the acid rain problem remains to be determined.

Laurence Kulp, scientific director of the National Acid Precipitation Assessment Program, agreed that urban ozone-reducing measures "may have a small effect" on acid rain production.

In the 1980 campaign, President Reagan's observation that trees pollute prompted jokes about "killer trees." Kulp was asked if the new finding meant that Reagan was correct and the jokesters wrong to scoff.

Chuckling, he replied, "You don't want me to answer that one."

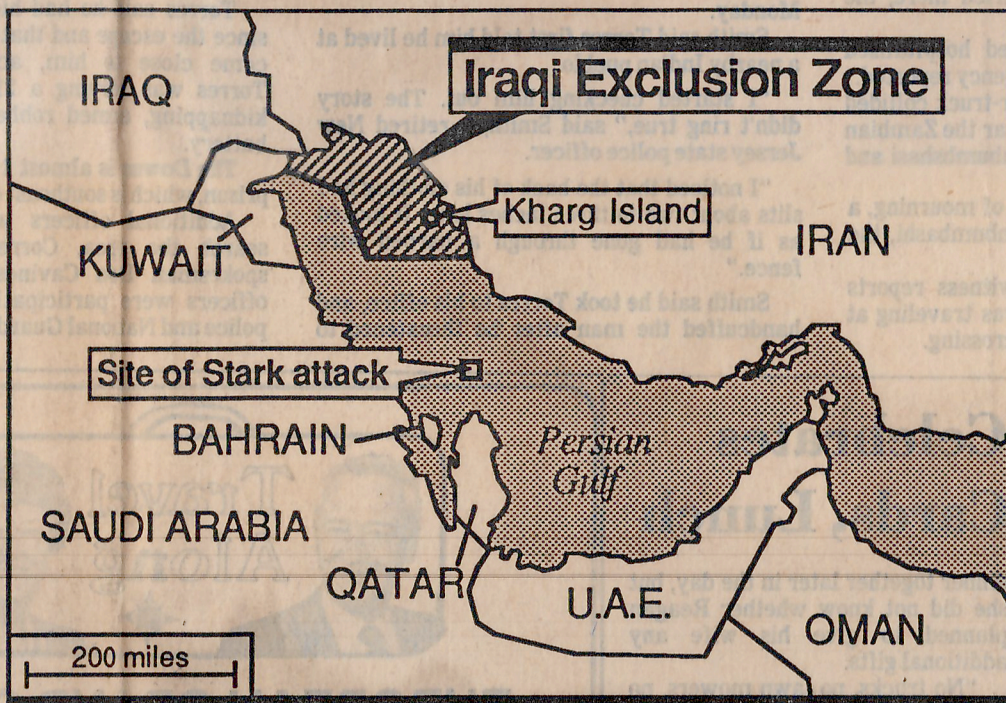
The annual report for 1986 of the National Acid Precipitation Assessment Program distributed last week gave the first numerical estimates of volatile organic compounds from natural sources.

The program is the government's supervisory arm for \$84 million worth of annual acid rain research by several agencies.

Volatile organics react in sunlight with nitrogen oxides produced by combustion to form ozone, an important ground-level pollutant although at high altitude it is a shield against the sun's harmful ultraviolet rays.

Volatile organics also form other oxidizing compounds such as hydrogen peroxide. Scientists believe hydrogen peroxide in summer is responsible for 70 percent to 80 percent of the transformation of sulfur dioxide from power plants

See TREES, Page 5-A



AP Wirephoto

Reports: U.S. Ships Sail Off Limits In Persian Gulf

MANAMA, Bahrain (AP) — U.S. Navy ships are cruising the whole Persian Gulf, including the northern off-limits zone declared by Iraq, as they prepare to protect 11 Kuwaiti tankers flying the American flag, shipping officials report.

The exclusion area extends 70 miles from Kharg Island, Iran's main export oil terminal and a regular target of Iraqi air raids in the war that began in September 1980.

Iran has threatened to attack the American warships and U.S. officials will not say where they are patrolling. A shipping official based in the area, who like the others spoke anonymously, said: "They're everywhere in the gulf."

Lt. Cmdr. Stephen Honda, a Navy spokesman, said only that the warships "operate in the gulf and the Gulf of Oman in international waters." The fleet is called the Middle East Force and now includes nine vessels.

One U.S. vessel seen inside the exclusion zone, where Iraq's air force also has concentrated its attacks on tankers, is the missile frigate Reid, sister ship of the USS Stark.

An Iraqi warplane hit the Stark with missiles May 17 about 40 miles south of the exclusion zone, killing 37 American sailors.

Iraq apologized, saying the Iraqi pilot mistook the Stark for an Iranian warship.

"We sighted the Reid inside the war zone and each of us was asking the sailor next to him, 'Am I seeing things?'" said a seaman whose tanker was carrying Iranian oil from Kharg to the Far East.

"We saw the Reid through binoculars and then with the naked eye when it drew closer: an Oliver Hazard Perry-class guided-missile frigate stabbing through the no-go zone," said

See GULF, Page 5-A

Crash Victims Honored At Pope

By ELLEN SCARBOROUGH
Of The Times Staff

"We pray mishaps won't occur, but we know they will," Brig. Gen. John F. Siebertson said Monday at a private memorial service for four airmen killed last week in the crash of a C-130 at Ft. Bragg. "It's part of the price we must pay to keep the nation strong and free."

The Pope Air Force Base theater where the service was held is within sight of the runway from which the airmen took off Wednesday in a C-130 Hercules cargo plane, crashing minutes later before more than 4,000 spectators during a military exercise at Fort Bragg's Sicily Drop zone.

Joining Siebertson, vice commander of the 21st Air Force at McGuire Air Force Base, N.J., as a speaker at the ceremony was Col. Edward N. Brya, commander of the 317th Tactical Airlift Wing at Pope.

"No single event in Air Force life unites and touches the hearts of all of us as does the loss of a flying crew," Brya told almost 500 relatives and friends who gathered for the service.

"We are saddened and stunned by their departure from our lives. It is the nature of our profession that such losses are sudden and untimely."

Killed in the crash were: Capt. Barry M. Bardo Jr., 31, the pilot, of Bloomsburg, Pa.; 1st Lt. John B.

See SERVICE, Page 5-A

News Digest
From Wire Reports

CBS Cancels Its Contract With TV Rating Company

NEW YORK — CBS canceled its contract with the A.C. Nielsen Co. on Monday, saying the network is not satisfied with the new "people-meter" ratings system set to go into operation this fall.

David Poltrack, CBS vice president for research, said the network might still sign with Nielsen before the new television season starts in September, but the notification of cancellation was necessary to avoid automatic renewal of the contract.

"We believe there is still time to rectify the system, and we will still work with Nielsen to that end," said Poltrack. "But it is certainly possible that we will not be a client of Nielsen come the fall."

Nielsen spokeswoman Jo LaVerde said the company would not comment because the negotiations are continuing.

The Chicago-based Nielsen company sells its detailed research statistics on audience size to both advertisers and broadcasters for use in negotiating advertising rates. If one or more networks does not subscribe to Nielsen in the fall, it could complicate the negotiations.

Connecticut Killer Sentenced To Die

BRIDGEPORT, Conn. — A 27-year-old man became the first person sentenced to death in Connecticut in more than a decade Monday, drawing the penalty for the slayings of four young women.

Michael B. Ross is the first person sentenced to death in Connecticut since the U.S. Supreme Court upheld the death penalty in 1976. The state's electric chair hasn't been used since Joseph "Mad Dog" Taborsky, who admitted killing seven people in a robbery, was executed on May 17, 1960.

State officials said last week that the electric chair has never been hooked up since it was moved to Somers State Prison in 1942.

Superior Court Judge G. Sarsfield Ford imposed the sentence selected by a jury 10 days earlier and set the execution date for Aug. 14, or within five days of that date.

But public defender Joette Katz said an appeal of the guilty verdict and the penalty will be filed within 20 days, automatically staying the execution. She predicted that it will take at least two years for the state Supreme Court to rule on the appeal.

Bid To Recall Arizona Chief Begins

PHOENIX, Ariz. — Opponents of Republican Gov. Evan Mecham kicked off a petition drive for a recall election Monday, saying Mecham "has embarrassed Arizonans nationally" with his statements and appointments.

Arizona's Democratic Party opposes the recall movement, saying it hopes Mecham's continued presence will drive voters to elect a Democratic Legislature next year.

State Republican Party Chairman Burton Kruglick described the movement's organizers as a "band of homosexual agitators" and accused its founder, acknowledged homosexual Ed Buck, of lying.

Organizers of the drive filed papers formally launching the drive Monday and plan to begin seeking voter signatures Friday. They must gather at least 216,746 by Nov. 13 in order to force a recall election.

The movement has spent about \$60,000 to date and will auction off the right to sign the first petition at a party Friday. Buck said about 5,000 people have volunteered to circulate petitions.

"This is not a situation where we have to convince people," he added. "It's been our experience that we get mobbed with crowds" whenever information tables are set up.

Nancy Reagan Celebrates Birthday With Cards, Lunch

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Reagan decorated Nancy Reagan's breakfast table with "a ton of birthday cards" and her staff treated her to lunch at a restaurant with a panoramic view, her spokeswoman said Monday.

The issue of the first lady's age did not come up at the luncheon, since there was "no numerical decoration" on her birthday cake, said spokeswoman Elaine Crispin.

Mrs. Reagan's college records show that she was born on July 6, 1921, but records from her acting days have listed her birth year as 1923. Asked once about the discrepancy, Mrs. Reagan said she had not decided which birthday to pick.

Mrs. Crispin said the president and first lady planned to have dinner together later in the day, but she did not know whether Reagan planned to give his wife any additional gifts.

"No trucks, no lawn mowers, no manure spreaders — yet," said Mrs. Crispin, referring to the couple's penchant for purchasing farm equipment as presents.

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HEADLINER
Chrysler Fined \$1.5 Million By OSHA

WASHINGTON (AP) — In the largest penalty ever assessed for job health and safety violations, the Labor Department fined the Chrysler Corp. more than \$1.5 million Monday for 811 infractions, including willfully exposing auto workers to lead and arsenic.

Chrysler said it will not contest the fine, but it called most of the alleged violations "relatively minor ... discrepancies."

All of the violations — including 338 classified as "willful" or knowing defiance of the law — were found during an inspection of the company's Newark, Del., auto assembly plant in January by the department's Occupational Safety and Health Administration.

Since then OSHA also has conducted wall-to-wall inspections at two other Chrysler facilities — an auto assembly line in Belvidere, Ill., and a stamping plant at Twinsburg, Ohio — but the results have not been announced yet.

"Those are still pending cases," said OSHA spokesman Terry Mikelson. "There should be something pretty soon on Belvidere."

More than one-fourth — 225 — of the willful violations were for instances in which workers in the Delaware plant's paint and soldering shops were exposed to hazardous levels of lead or arsenic.

Penalties of \$8,000 each — or a total of \$1,048,000 — were levied for only 131 of those violations, based on the number of employees exposed, Mikelson said. The Newark plant has about 4,000 workers.

Overexposure to lead can damage the central nervous system and, in sufficient quantities, cause death. Arsenic also is a lethal chemical and a potential carcinogen.

OSHA Administrator John A. Pendergrass called the fine "the only possible response to a totally unacceptable situation" where Chrysler "put workers in jeopardy seriously threatening their health and safety."

"Lack of adequate safeguards and protection for workers dealing with substances as dangerous as lead and arsenic cannot be tolerated," Pendergrass said. He said the fines should be seen as "clear signal to all employers."

Gerald Greenwald, chairman of Chrysler's

Chrysler Motors Corp. subsidiary, said his company had been caught up in "a new vigor" by OSHA in enforcing the law and its focus on Chrysler as one of its first targets.

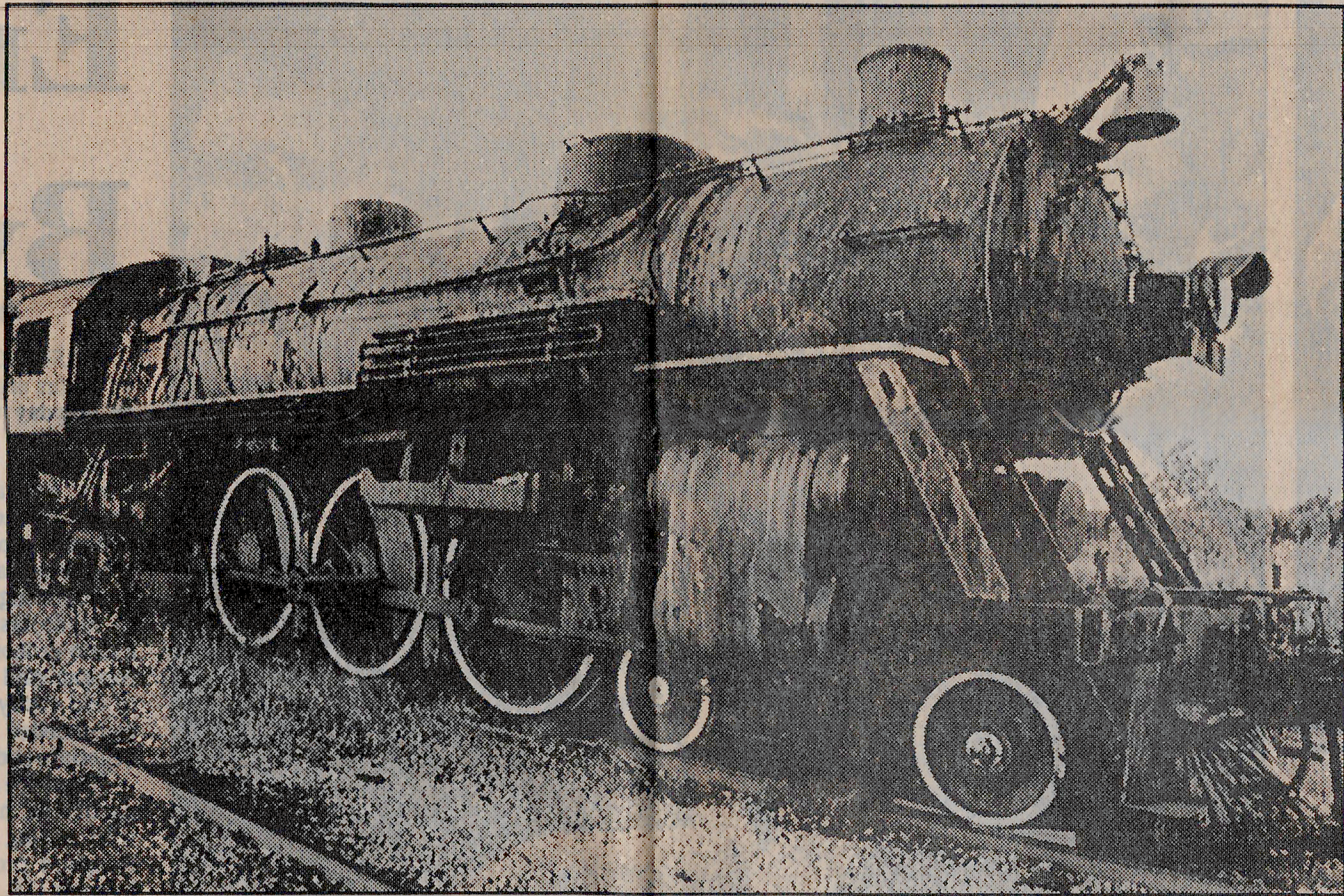
"You might say that it's our time in the barrel," Greenwald said.

"We know that OSHA discovered high lead levels in blood samples of two employees at Newark and we have taken steps to improve the monitoring of the soldering and paint booths and the employees that work there," he said.

Greenwald called most of the violations "relatively minor electrical and mechanical safeguarding discrepancies" and said "a majority have been addressed."

He maintained that Chrysler's working conditions "have been the safest in the auto industry and better than heavy industry in general."

In January, Chrysler agreed to pay OSHA a fine of \$284,830 — until Monday the largest ever collected by the agency — for health and safety record violations at the Newark, Belvidere and Twinsburg plants.



AP Wirephoto

Rail Buffs Steamed

This 1924 locomotive, which has been stored for years in a Chicago rail yard, will be headed for the scrap heap if a local transit authority's plans are carried out. The decision has angered railroad buffs who believe the engine is a piece of railroad history and should be preserved.

One Of Seven Escapees Caught In New Mexico

SANTA FE, N.M. (AP) — A prison escapee was recaptured near a racetrack by a security officer less than two miles from the penitentiary Monday, while hundreds of police officers under shoot-to-kill orders hunted six inmates who remained on the run.

George E. Smith, security director at The Downs at Santa Fe, said Hector B. Torres Jr. was tired and thirsty when he found the man walking around at the track, which was closed Monday.

Smith said Torres first told him he lived at a nearby Indian pueblo.

"I started checking him out. The story didn't ring true," said Smith, a retired New Jersey state police officer.

"I noticed that the back of his clothing had slits about two to three inches long. It looked as if he had gone through a barbed wire fence."

Smith said he took Torres to his office, and handcuffed the man after he threatened to

sue. Smith said Torres did not resist, and later admitted he was an escapee.

Torres was returned to the Penitentiary of New Mexico, from which he escaped Saturday night with two convicted killers and four other inmates, officials said.

"He'd been hiding in the local area since the escape," said state police Capt. John Denko. "He doesn't admit to being with any other inmates that escaped."

Torres said he had hidden in pinon trees since the escape and that searchers once had come close to him, according to Denko. Torres was serving a 21-year sentence for kidnapping, armed robbery and aggravated battery.

The Downs is almost 1 1/2 miles west of the prison, which is southeast of Santa Fe.

Additional officers were dispatched to search the area, Corrections Department spokesman Don Caviness said. About 200 officers were participating, aided by state police and National Guard helicopters.

Smiles
From Wire Reports

But, Can She Run The Ship?

CHARLESTON, S.C. (AP) — The purchase order was for \$200 worth of spare parts for a submarine. But the package that was delivered to the Charleston Naval Base contained a Andy Warhol painting of Queen Elizabeth II, worth \$100,000.

The freight box that arrived at the Navy base this weekend was from Equinox Gallery in Vancouver, British Columbia, Navy officials said Monday.

The painting and the spare parts apparently were mistakenly switched in transit from a Seattle, Wash., freight holding center, the officials said.

Pop artist Warhol, who died Feb. 22, wrote in a 1968 exhibition catalog that "in the future, everyone will be world-famous for 15 minutes."

"Maybe we'll be famous for 15 minutes," said Commodore Jerry B. Manley, commander of Mine Squadron Two, where the painting, mistakenly was shipped.

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Best wishes for a happy birthday to Margaret Johnson, Gary Ciccone, Thornton Rose, Jr., Jim Pharr, Lou Buil, and Mr. Fayetteville Kiwanian George Vossler. We also wish George well from a recent eye surgery operation.

George is only 49 years young this week, even though his eyes have had 79 years of use.

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'They're the most loving dogs that you can imagine.'
— Kim King

'I'll never get rid of the impression that that dog was trying to eat my baby. He was having fun.'
— Linda Hodges

Pit Bulls

Friend Or Foe?

By RODGER MULLEN
Of The Times Staff

Buddy the pit bull has been a part of the King family for eight years now. He's in all the family photographs. Four-year-old Jonathan King learned to walk by holding on to the dog's collar.

Jonathan's parents Jerry and Kim King love Buddy, and they also love the 21 other pit bulls they keep in the back yard of their Dublin home. They raise the dogs for breeding purposes and enter them in shows and competitions.

So it makes the Kings a little angry when they read reports about pit bulls attacking, mauling and even killing people, and when they hear about people who want to ban the breed.

"They're the most loving dogs that you can imagine," Mrs. King said. "They're just the scapegoats of the year."

Linda Hodges of Hamlet would disagree. She will never forget the sight of a neighbor's pit bull with its jaws clamped around her 4-year-old daughter's bloody head.

The morning of June 26, Mrs. Hodges' daughter Ann Marie asked to go out on the porch of the family's home and play. Mrs. Hodges told her she could.

Minutes later she answered the faint, muffled cries for help.

"I heard her calling," Mrs. Hodges said recently in a telephone interview from her room at North Carolina Memorial Hospital in Chapel Hill. "The dog had her face in its mouth and she was all covered in blood."

"It was like he had a rag or something, just shaking her," Mrs. Hodges said. "Next thing I knew, I was down on one knee, trying to pry the dog away from my daughter's head."

Mrs. Hodges and Ann Marie survived that pit bull attack, but others haven't been so lucky. As more and more reports of death by pit bull surface, calls to ban the dogs increase. So do the impassioned objections of pit bull owners and breeders, who say such an action would solve nothing.

Here are some recent instances of pit bull attacks:

- October 1986: A 3-year-old boy is attacked and killed by a pit bull terrier in Denver while its owner is inside watching television.

- June 1987: In Morgan Hill, Calif., a 2-year-old boy who strays from his house is killed by a pit bull that its owner had allegedly been using to guard marijuana. The owner is charged with murder.

- June 1987: The owner of a 55-pound pit bull is arrested and charged with assault with a deadly weapon after the dog mauls a 7-year-old girl and two other people.

- June 1987: A pit bull-German Shepherd mix attacks a woman and her daughter in San Francisco, sending both to the hospital with serious wounds.

- June 1987: A pit bull is shot and killed by a police officer in Hamlet when it charges at him after attacking and injuring a mother and her 4-year-old daughter.

"In a way," said a researcher with the Humane Society of the United States, "they're like having a loaded gun in the house."

According to the Humane Society, there have been five human fatalities as a result of dog attacks in the country so far this year, all of them involving pit bulls. In 1986, there were 13 dog attack fatalities, including seven involving pit bulls.

From 1983-85 there were from 10-12 fatalities each year. About three of the deaths each year were pit bull-related, according to the Humane Society.

Behind the statistics are victims like the Hodges.

Acting on "pure instinct," Mrs. Hodges lunged for the dog and pried its mouth away from Ann Marie's head. She screamed at her daughter to run inside the house, but the dog escaped and bit her and her daughter again. Mrs. Hodges said she grabbed the dog around the neck and tried to choke it to death.

"I guess the whole time I was in shock," Mrs. Hodges said. "I thought we were dying. I thought (Ann Marie) was bleeding to death."

Once she managed to get inside the house with her daughter, Mrs. Hodges grabbed a shotgun. The dog was circling the house, trying to get inside, she said.

Mrs. Hodges pointed the gun through a

screen door and fired. The blast struck the dog and it limped into a nearby garage.

There was no telephone in the house, so Mrs. Hodges — daughter in one hand, shotgun in the other — walked to a nearby convenience store, she said. Workers at the store saw the shotgun and the blood that covered the two, and immediately thought the woman had shot the little girl, Mrs. Hodges said.

When police arrived at the Hodges' neighborhood, they found the dog about to attack another child. The dog turned and charged a police officer, who shot and killed it.

Police said later the dog was apparently chained in the neighbor's back yard, but slipped its collar and escaped. No charges will be brought against the owner, police said.

Mrs. Hodges and Ann Marie were taken to Hamlet Hospital and later transferred to North Carolina Memorial. They're recovering, but Mrs. Hodges said they may require plastic surgery to repair the damage done by the pit bull.

"The whole time, the dog never growled," Mrs. Hodges said. "It was like he was having a good time."

"I'll never get rid of the impression that that dog was trying to eat my baby," Mrs. Hodges said. "He was having fun."

Short and squat, pit bulls hardly look like the blood-thirsty canines many have come to view them as. Much bigger German Shepherds and Rotweilers, for instance, can be more intimidating.

The lovable, loyal Pete of "Our Gang" fame was a pit bull, and so is the cute pooch who peers inquisitively at a photograph on the RCA-Victor logo.

But there's plenty of bite behind the pit bulls' bark. Unlike some other breeds which quickly back off after biting, reports of pit bull attacks are too often horror stories of the dogs clamping their jaws around a victim's arm or leg and refusing to let go until they are pried loose or the victim is dead.

"When they bite they do a tremendous amount of tearing. They literally rip the flesh off," said the Humane Society researcher, who did not want to be named. "That's part of what makes them a little frightening."

Cumberland County Animal Control Director Carlton Person says the only serious pit bull attack in the county he recalls involved a woman who was bitten by one of the dogs last year.

"The dog held on until someone took a .22-caliber rifle and killed it to get it loose," he said. "It just crushed the bone in her arm."

The Kings say while the dogs are undeniably strong, any large-headed dog has as much jaw strength as the pit bull.

"Their jaws do not lock," Mrs. King said. "That's a fallacy."

The term pit bull is used to describe a wide variety of animals, according to a "Pit Bull Report" compiled by The Humane Society. The classification commonly includes the American Pit Bull Terrier, the American Staffordshire Terrier and mixtures of those breeds with others.

The ancestry of the Pit Bull Terrier and Staffordshire Terrier goes back to the bulldogs of 19th century England. In an activity called "bullbaiting," two or three bulldogs were released in arenas to attack bulls, usually seizing it by the nose, tail, groin or other unprotected spot. Prizes went to the most persistent dogs.

After bullbaiting was made illegal in England in 1835, organized dogfighting became popular, especially in urban coal-mining areas. As the activity became more widespread, more attention was paid to breeding in order to produce smaller, faster, more aggressive dogs, according to the report.

Introduced to the United States around the time of the Civil War, the dogs were used in fighting or as guard dogs, keeping frontier homes safe from coyotes and other would-be intruders.

"Over a century of breeding for bull-baiting and fighting have had a profound effect on the genetics of many of these breeds," the report states.

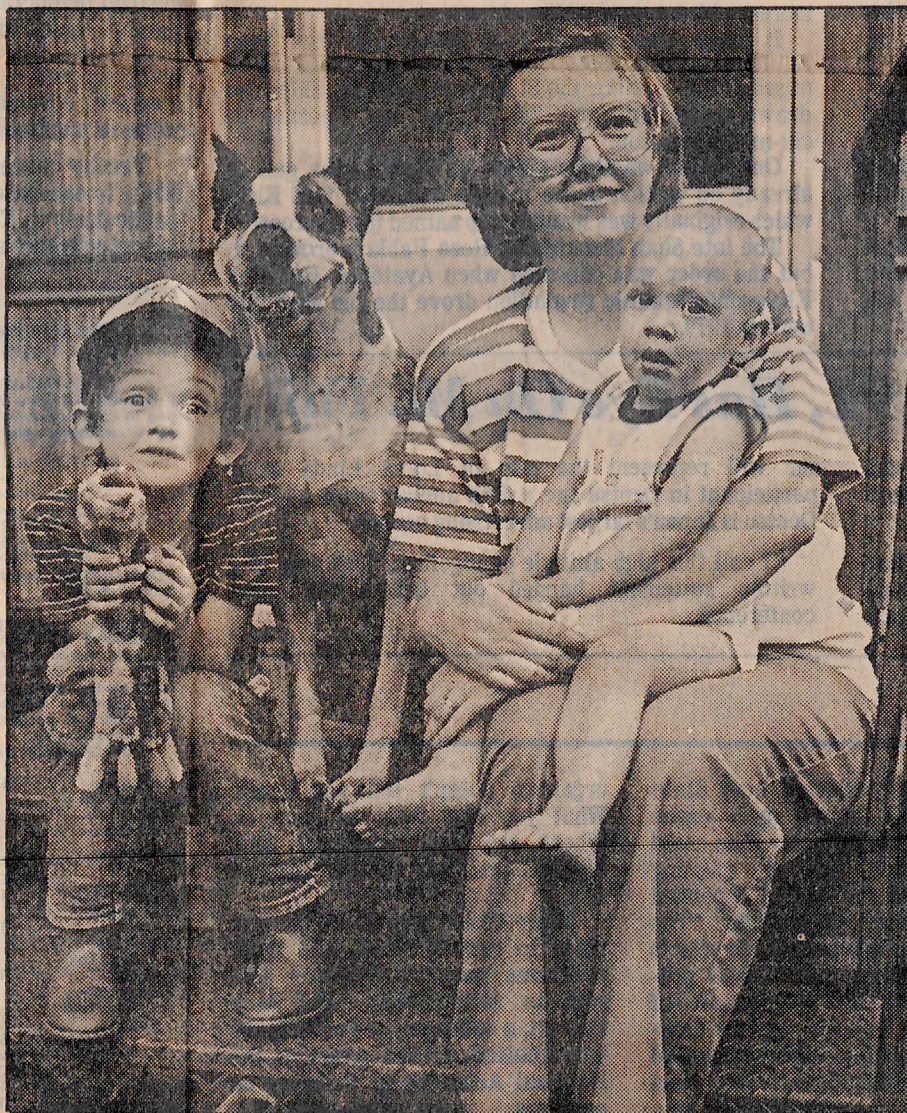
Some of the traits that have been bred into the dogs are "gameness" — a readiness to fight other animals and an unwillingness to yield in a battle. The Humane Society study also said the quality of gameness also includes an apparent decreased sensitivity to pain.

Another apparent result of the



File Photo

As Calls To Ban The Dog Increase So Do The Impassioned Pleas Of Pit Bull Owners And Breeders



Staff Photo by STEVE ALDRIDGE

Kim King With Sons Jonathan, Left, Ross And Pit Bull Buddy

selective breeding, according to the study: Pit bulls often offer little or no indication that they are about to attack. Dispensing with growls, barks or fighting stances, they often attack without warning.

While the fighting dogs of the 19th century generally posed little threat to people, the study said the practice of mixing different breeds of the dogs can produce animals of volatile temperament.

"Even pit bulls with no prior history of aggression have been known to become highly aggressive when at large, when in a pack, when confronted by any aggressive dog or under other unpredictable situations," the study said.

While many people claim they make good pets or house dogs, the pit bull continues to be a popular breed — particularly in large cities — with people who train them to fight and then wager money on the outcome. A recent issue of Rolling Stone magazine contained a

harrowing article about Philadelphia ghetto youths who train their pit bulls to fight each other as a kind of test of manhood and power.

But dogfighting is not exclusively a big city activity. Last year, eight people were arrested in Hoke County on charges of fighting pit bulls after police received a tip from an anonymous informant.

Person said he recalls no instances of pit bull fighting in Cumberland County.

A Humane Society official said pit bulls who attack humans often have shown no previous tendency toward violence.

The Kings aren't made uneasy by those dire warnings. They couldn't feel more comfortable with the way their sons Jonathan and 15-month-old Ross play with Buddy.

Founders of the North Carolina Pit Bull Club and publishers of the Pit Bull Advisor, the Kings said media reports of

pit bull attacks are self-perpetuating.

"The bad publicity, rather than cutting the problem out, makes it worse," Mrs. King said. "I feel for the existence of the breed itself."

And the Kings also complain that attacks by mixed breed dogs that are part pit bull are classified in the media as "pit bull attacks."

"Anytime a pit bites somebody the news gets it," King said. "If a Doberman or a shepherd bites somebody, you don't hear about it."

Throughout the country, cities and counties are considering regulations on the ownership of pit bulls. About 40 jurisdictions have enacted such legislation, ranging from outright bans to insurance requirements of owners to requirements that the animals be muzzled.

Person said pit bulls are not subject to any laws in Cumberland County other than the leash laws that apply to all dogs.

"I don't like to pick out any particular breed to put restrictions on," Person said. "They're just considered another dog under the law right now."

Pit bull breeders and Humane Society officials agree that irresponsible care and raising of the dogs creates a potentially tragic situation. They also agree that media coverage of pit bull attacks creates a demand for the dogs among disreputable people.

"The dog is not to blame," King said. "The person is to blame."

Humane Society officials don't claim that all pit bulls are bad or that all pit bull owners are irresponsible. But they do say that the percentage of responsible pit bull owners is declining.

The Humane Society favors stringent vicious dog ordinances, like one in the state of Washington under which owners of any dog that severely injures or kills a human can be charged with a felony. Some other ordinances that banned only pit bulls have been challenged in court.

The Kings favor strong punishments for pit bull owners whose dogs attack humans, but they don't think that banning the breed is the way to solve the problem.

"If you ban pit bulls now, in a year they'll be wanting to ban dobermans, rottweilers, things like that," King said. "The owners should be liable, not the dog."

Mrs. Hodges agreed that owners should be liable for their dogs. But the best means of control, she said, is a ban.

"I'll never to the day I die get that dog out of my mind," she said. "That's one breed of dog, I think, that should be eliminated."