

making the news

From Associated Press Reports

SALEM — Persons between the ages of 19 and 21 would be able to drink in bars if they paid \$16 for a permit and took a 10-hour class on the evils of alcohol, under a proposal considered on Thursday by a House Committee.

After Vinita Howard of the Motor Vehicles Division presented a study on the costs of setting up classes and administering the program, the House Legislative Oversight Committee agreed to postpone a decision on the bill HB 2422.

Under the bill, a person still would have to be 21 to purchase alcoholic beverages in a store.

Motor Vehicles Division officials estimated that 166,375 persons, including 18-year-olds, would be eligible to take the classes in the 1979-81 budget period, but that only 125,000 would do so.

To fund a \$2 million program, the permit fee would have to be \$16 per person, Ms. Howard said.

WASHINGTON — Under government pressure, the hair dryer industry said Thursday it will offer free repairs or replacements to millions of consumers owning hair dryers which contain asbestos.

The plans presented to the Consumer Product Safety Commission came from the 11 manufacturers and retailers of hair dryers that the agency staff had said presented an unreasonable cancer risk to consumers.

The staff recommended acceptance of the plans, a step that would eliminate the possibility of commission legal action against the companies.

"There's been such worry on the part of consumers. Our main worry is to alleviate that," commission head Susan King said. She said "a vast number of consumers" have called or written the agency to ask if their hair dryers contain asbestos, which has been found to cause cancer if breathed by humans.

The agency staff has estimated the number of asbestos-containing hand-held hair dryers at 12.5 million.

WASHINGTON — Pres. Carter has finally admitted, albeit tongue in cheek, that he's running for re-election and has spelled out exactly how he is going about it.

His pitch will be: Sure things are tough, but we've come a long way. Stick with us a little longer.

That was the clear campaign strategy spelled out for the first time Wednesday night in the president's traditional speech to the annual Democratic congressional fund-raising dinner.

Carter opened with the usual joke, but this time it wasn't entirely in jest.

He allowed as how he had been seeking speaking opportunities lately and quipped: "I even visited one state that does not have an early primary next year."

He turned serious after that, ticking off the charges he expects the opposition to hurl in the 1980 campaign and the answers he will give.

"The last two years have been years of rebuilding for our country," Carter began. "Working together we have accomplished a great deal, but there is much more that remains to be done."

New gas rationing plan gets legislative support

WASHINGTON (AP) — A proposal that would require motorists to leave their cars home one day a week gained new support Thursday as a possible successor to Pres. Carter's rejected standby gasoline rationing plan.

The new plan, being drafted by a group of House Democrats active on energy issues, also would tentatively limit gasoline sales nationally to at least \$5 per car to keep motorists from "topping off" their tanks.

Under the proposal, car windshields would have to bear stickers displaying a number from one to seven indicating the day of the week the vehicle couldn't be driven. Motorists would pick the day and states would distribute the stickers.

It would be illegal to drive a car on the day of the week indicated by the sticker and motorists doing so could be arrested or ticketed.

The plan would apply nationally.

Rep. Toby Moffett, D-Conn., the main proponent of the proposal, said the plan can be used to ease gasoline shortages this summer.

It isn't nearly as cumbersome as Carter's defeated standby rationing plan, Moffett said. "The beauty of it is it could fly quickly," he said.

"As we saw last week, if you make it too

complicated Congress will do a number on it," Moffett told a reporter.

Moffett also said the plan might give states an option of using their own plans for saving gasoline with conservation targets set for each state. He said states that failed to meet the goals using programs of their own would have no choice but to accept the one-day-per-week driving ban.

The president's domestic adviser, Stuart Eizenstat, met with backers of the proposal Thursday to demonstrate White House interest in the plan and to help with actual drafting.

Backers said the effort also has the blessing of House Speaker Thomas P. O'Neill of Massachusetts and Democratic Leader Jim Wright of Texas.

And Rep. John Dingell, D-Mich., probably the most influential House member on energy issues, told reporters Thursday he thinks the Moffett plan might help ease fuel shortages and appears to have considerable support in Congress.

Dingell, chairman of the House energy and power subcommittee, also said the proposal would not draw the kind of opposition that toppled Carter's coupon-rationing plan.

Venice comes out on top in water fight

VENICE, Italy (AP) — Venice has stopped sinking. In fact, the lagoon city famous for its 10,000 paintings, frescoes and sculptures has actually risen ever so slightly.

That's the conclusion of a team of Italian scientists after years of observation and laboratory tests.

The finding, endorsed by the

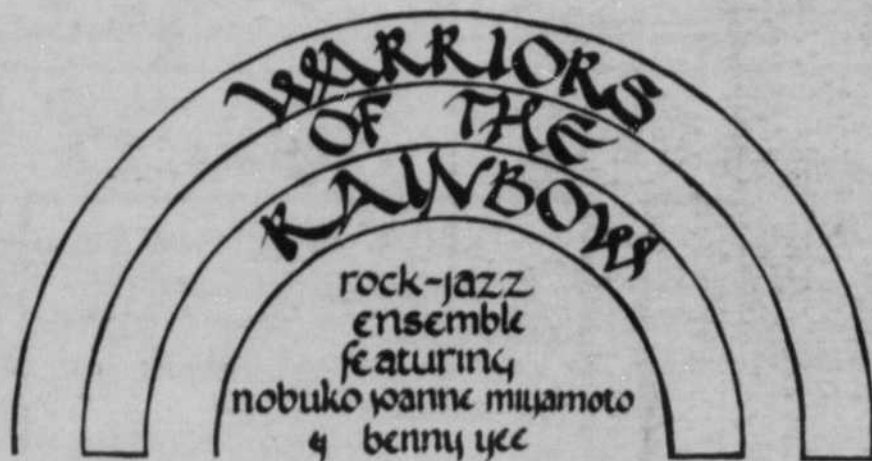
Italian government and laboratories worldwide, is "definitive and final," says Dr. Paolo Gatto, a senior geologist at the state-run National Research Council.

Once considered a doomed victim of industrialization and bureaucratic inertia, Venice now appears to be winning the fight against water and pollution that for decades have

threatened its very existence.

The air is cleaner. An effort is under way to control high tides and process sewage. Restoration and consolidation of art works, bridges, buildings, and canals is in full swing. The population is steady at what a city official calls an "optimum" 100,000. Vitality and optimism prevail in the once "dying" city.

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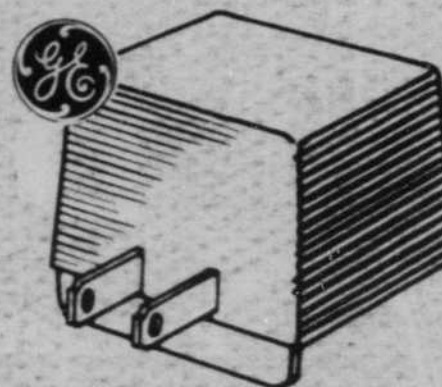
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