

PRIMARY SOURCES FOR EDUCATORS AND STUDENTS

# Evelyn Butts Challenged the Poll Tax, Virginian-Pilot (Norfolk), 1966

Fair and Colder  
High Today 50  
Low Tonight 33  
NW, 15-25 in p.m.  
The normal range call 88-92

## The Virginian-Pilot

Norfolk, Portsmouth, Virginia Beach and Chesapeake, Virginia, Friday, March 25, 1966

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• Death of the Poll Tax  
• Appeal to the French  
• Reverse Performance  
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# Va. Poll Tax Killed by Court

*A person . . . shall have the right to vote for all officers elective by the people, subject to the following conditions:*

*That . . . he shall, on a prerequisite to the right to vote, personally pay, at least six months prior to the election, all state poll taxes assessed or assessable against him, under this Constitution, during the three years next preceding that in which he offers to vote . . .*

—Article II, Section II, Constitution of Virginia



Justice Douglas

*"We conclude that a state violates the equal protection clause of the 14th Amendment whenever it makes the affluence of the voter or payment of any fee an electoral standard."*

—The United States Supreme Court

## 6-3 Decision Cites Equality

By JOHN L. BRADSHAW  
Washington Bureau Writer

WASHINGTON—Virginia may not use her 1901 poll tax as a prerequisite to voting in any election, the U. S. Supreme Court ruled Thursday in a 6-3 decision. The court majority held that the tax violates the principle of the 14th Amendment to the U. S. Constitution guaranteeing citizens equal protection of the laws.

The court's decision is a landmark in the history of the poll tax because it is the first time the Supreme Court has ruled against the tax as a barrier to voting in federal elections.

Two dissenters in the majority opinion were Chief Justice Warren and Justice Tom Clark. Justice William O. Douglas wrote the majority opinion.

The majority decided the case 6-3, with Justice Warren writing the majority opinion. Justice Tom Clark and Justice William O. Douglas dissented.

The majority opinion states that the poll tax is a "burden on the exercise of the right of citizens to vote in federal elections." It also states that the poll tax is a "qualification for voting" which is not permitted by the 14th Amendment.

The majority opinion also states that the poll tax is a "discrimination on the basis of race" which is also prohibited by the 14th Amendment.

The majority opinion concludes that the poll tax is unconstitutional and that it is therefore void.

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## State May Request Rights Act Exclusion

### Voting Law Changes, Illiteracy Ban Possible

By GEORGE M. KELLEY  
Norfolk Bureau Writer

REICHENBACH—Virginia may try to capitalize on the U. S. Supreme Court's decision, which ended the poll tax in state and local elections, by using it as a basis for having voting restricted from the federal Voting Rights Act of 1965. An act of only seven days after the Supreme Court's decision, the state may request that the act be excluded from the Voting Rights Act.

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## Victor Expects Another Fight

By BILL MULLIGAN  
Norfolk Bureau Writer

NOVAPOLE—For attorney Joseph J. Jordan, Jr., a champion of the rights of the poor, the fight against the poll tax is far from over. He expects another fight against the U. S. Supreme Court's decision, which ended the poll tax in state and local elections.

Mr. Jordan, who has been appointed as a special attorney for the state, said he expects to file a lawsuit with the U. S. Supreme Court to challenge the state's decision to request that the poll tax be excluded from the Voting Rights Act.

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## Ramsey, Paul Split On Family

By BILL MULLIGAN  
Norfolk Bureau Writer

NOVAPOLE—The divorce of Ramsey and Paul is a bitter one. The two men, who were once close friends, are now bitter enemies. The divorce was finalized last week.

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## Registars Confused By Ruling

By STACEY B. BLACKFORD  
Norfolk Bureau Writer

NOVAPOLE—While the Supreme Court's decision Thursday ended the poll tax in state and local elections, it has caused confusion among the registrars. The registrars are not sure what to do about the decision.

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## Gunman Holds 2, Kills Himself

By BILL MULLIGAN  
Norfolk Bureau Writer

SPRINGFIELD—The police in Springfield are still looking for a gunman who held two women captive for three hours and then killed himself. The police are still looking for the gunman.

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## It Was in His Heart

### Boy and His Rocket Recovered

By BILL MULLIGAN  
Norfolk Bureau Writer

TWIN FALLS, Idaho (AP)—A 12-year-old boy who thought he had lost his heart to a rocket engine, has recovered. The boy, who was found in a hospital, is now home.

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## Red Attack Falls 2 Miles From Saigon

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Norfolk Bureau Writer

HO CHI MINH CITY—A Red attack on a U. S. military base in South Vietnam has failed. The attack was repelled by the U. S. forces.

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Citation: Virginian-Pilot (Norfolk) 25 March 1966. Library of Virginia