

A frontal attack to remedy reading deficiencies has earned Southern Pines the coveted title of All-American City. The National Civic League announced the 14 nationwide winners yesterday in Denver, Colorado. Among those accepting the award for Southern Pines was Library Director Lynn Thompson, who expressed her delight with the designation, but stressed that in her words “The importance of our proposal in support of the campaign for grade-level reading goes far beyond this one award.” The real winners, she said, are the children in our schools who will benefit from a plan that will be implemented in the months and years to come. The National Civic League, which sponsors the annual competition, says more than a hundred cities submitted plans to solve reading problems, and that was whittled to 32. Called “Southern Pines Grows Better Readers,” the campaign dovetails with the school’s slogan “Growing To Greatness.” The committee realized that Southern Pines is above the national average for Third Grade Reading, but falls behind in subsequent grades. The campaign strategy calls for attacking on three fronts, namely, school readiness, attendance and summer learning loss. Southern Pines was the only North Carolina Municipality among the 32 finalists.