

Around Town

By Sam C. Morris

A couple of weeks ago I mentioned in this column that the only complaints heard about school was the dress code. Last week a lady called and said she would like for me to put a letter in my column, that she would write to me. She asked that her name be withheld, but she did sign the letter, and I am withholding the name for good reason. The letter follows:

May I speak to the parents, teachers, principals, Board of Education, and Superintendent of Hoke County Schools?

My first concern is for the students. I have watched bright-eyed blithe-spirited children go into our public schools looking forward to a new year.

What's the first thing a boy hears? "Go home! Your hair is too long!" A little sparkle goes out of his eyes. So, he goes home and gets a haircut. Next day - "Sorry, it's not short enough." A little more sparkle goes out of his eyes. Funny thing is, different teachers see hair cuts in different lights.

A boy begins to wonder if educators are more concerned about what comes off his head instead of what goes into it.

Our girls and teachers at the high school must see other school people dressed in stylish pants suits, which people are wearing everywhere these days. At the same time, back at Hoke High, another worry on top of so many worries is "Wonder if I'll get sent to the office because my skirt might be too short today?"

Can students really learn when they're worried about the faculty, which unwittingly has been turned into informers turning them in?

Breathes there a family in Hoke County who enjoys a family crisis brought on by these outdated rules?

I challenge those in authority to relax, roll with the times and enjoy their roles as educators. Someday some lucky teacher might get a letter addressed - "To sir, with love."

I believe our students would still be clean, neat and well brushed. Maybe then we'll have students with sparkle in their eyes, being able to say, "Look, I can be me!"

Thank you.

Labor Day has come and gone, and as far as I could see, Monday, everything was peaceful in the City of Raeford. Some stores were open and others closed. Of course, we did have a little rain, but this is nothing new these days.

I am waiting for the weather chart to be brought in to see how many days it rained in August. I hope that September doesn't have continuing rainfall like last month.

Don't forget that the Hoke High Bucks have their first game of the season Friday night at Hoke High stadium against Red Springs. Go out and be a booster for the Bucks! Remember, you can buy a season ticket this year that will save you money over a game-at-the-time deal!

The Attic

Women's Clubs Open

Thrift Store Saturday

Toys, clothing, shoes, household goods...the Raeford Women's Clubs hopes to sell it all at The Attic, a thrift shop opening Saturday on Main Street above the McLaughlin Company.

A grand opening and ribbon-cutting ceremony attended by city officials is planned. The shop will be open on Saturdays only, from 9 - 5.

Members of the Raeford Woman's Club and the Raeford Junior Woman's Club have worked the past two weeks stocking three rooms with donated clothing and accessories.

Kay Thomas, RWC president, said

Kickoff: Bucks At Home JV's Travel

Hoke High football teams kickoff the '74 season Thursday and Friday nights with games against Red Springs.

The junior varsity meets Red Springs on their opponents territory Thursday with kickoff scheduled at 7:30 p.m.

The Hoke High Bucks host Red Springs on home ground Friday night at Bucks stadium. The game starts at 8:00 p.m.



FIRE - Blackened ruins and relics of a Rockfish home stand abandoned after a blaze gutted the home of Mr. and Mrs. Preston Lee last Thursday.

All Lost

Fire Engulfs Home

Fire swept through a Rockfish home early last Thursday evening, demolishing the house and destroying nearly everything in it.

The fire was first discovered about 5:45 p.m. in the master bedroom of the old Sonny Turner homeplace, now owned by Mr. and Mrs. Preston Lee. Mrs. Lee is the former Ruby Turner of Rockfish.

According to Mrs. Lee's daughter, Mrs. Billie Holland, Jr., the fire was first noticed by Nancy Turner, 11. Investigating, the girl discovered flames coming from the electrical outlets and saw that the bed was on fire. She first tried to put out the flames, then ran for help to a nearby home where her mother and small brother were visiting.

Firetrucks from Puppy Creek and Rockfish responded to the call, fighting the blaze for more than two hours before the fire was brought under control. By then, the home was gutted and little more than the outside walls remained.

Nearly everything was lost. Mrs. Holland said. The only possessions that survived the fire, were the canned goods, food in the freezer and her

mother's china and crystal in the dining room.

Mrs. Holland said that for the next few weeks, her mother and stepfather, younger brother and sister will share a mobile home with her and her husband.

Lightning is believed to have started the blaze, Mrs. Holland said.

Have News? Please Tell Us

Do you have some information you think ought to be printed in The News-Journal? Then tell us about it.

Call 875-2121 or come by the Elwood Avenue office. The N-J Box number is 550, Raeford, N.C. 28376.

News of coming events such as club meetings, or recitals should be phoned or brought to the N-J office by Friday to appear in the next Thursday's edition.

Hospital news, personals, and other social news should be called or brought to the office by Tuesday morning for that week's edition.

News that's happening now, tips for future stories or pictures, information for death notices and similar information will be taken anytime. Remember, however, that only items of great importance will be taken on Wednesday morning for that week's edition. Other news contributed on Wednesday will be held for the following week.

Eden's Forfeits Contract Bond

Eden's Electrical Service of Rockfish Road forfeited his bond on the electrical contract for the city garage and office building when he failed to appear for a construction conference Tuesday.

John Gaddy, city manager, said he had no idea how the disruption would affect construction now beginning behind the Knit-Away property. He said he did not know why the contract was forfeited.

The city re-advertised the project this week.

Bond Hearing

A public hearing on the school bond issue will be held Tuesday at 8 p.m. at the courthouse. The board of education will meet following the hearing.

Inspection Gripes Spark Action By County Board

In the opening of a three hour meeting of the county commissioners Tuesday, the board instituted a procedure to meet complaints centering around electrical inspections.

Jimmy Baxley, county electrical inspector, met with the board to answer complaints about the difficulty in arranging for inspections. Commissioners said they had received numerous calls from people who said they were unable to reach Baxley, who teaches school.

The board agreed to a suggestion from T.B. Lester, county accountant, to accept calls for inspection at Lester's office during the day. Baxley is to continue to take requests at his home at night.

A full-time inspector for heating, air conditioning, plumbing and electrical work was discussed by the board, who agreed with Baxley that the county would have to provide a full-time inspector eventually.

Commissioner John Balfour said "I'd like to see a full-time inspection program instituted very shortly. But the problem is finding a person to do it."

It is difficult to find an electrician meeting state qualifications who is willing to become an inspector, Baxley said.

Discussion over the Bicentennial centered on a letter from Ruth McEachern concerning a grant the committee might apply for. Mrs. McEachern, who has resigned as chairman of Bicentennial committee, urged the board to take action to insure that the grant application reach the Z. Smith Reynolds Foundation by the Sept. 15 deadline.

Commissioner Ralph Barnhart moved that the board ask librarian Miss Frances Edwards and R.B. Lewis, chairman of the library fund drive, to investigate and prepare the application. The board agreed to endorse the application.

According to Mrs. McEachern's letter,

the foundation has already been notified that the committee is seeking \$20,000.

The commissioners appointed Mr. and Mrs. Carson Davis, Jr. to head the Bicentennial committee, subject to their acceptance.

Sheriff D.M. Barrington met with the board was at the commissioner's request to discuss using funds available to the county under public employment program to hire more deputies. No decision was reached.

The sheriff notified the board that he had had to transport two patients to hospitals in the area in the past week because they couldn't secure ambulance service.

Sheriff Barrington said he had had to dispatch a squad car to Laurinburg to take a woman in labor to the hospital. Barrington said he was told by the husband that ambulance service was refused because they did not have the fare.

"I'm wondering if that \$12,000 subsidy the county pays isn't supposed to keep things like this from happening," he said.

County attorney Charles Hostetler, said, in an inopportune legal opinion, that service was not supposed to be refused in an emergency but that pregnancy probably isn't considered an emergency.

William Niven, county civil preparedness coordinator, introduced Tom Lamar of the state civil defense office. Lamar read a 37-page evaluation of the county preparedness capabilities and presented recommendations to correct deficiencies.

The board tabled a request from Niven to purchase stretchers.

Also appearing before the board were county farm and home agents.

In routine business, the commissioners approved the appointment of Bob Gentry as the Chamber of Commerce representative to the Tri-County Community Action, Inc. board and approved the attendance to a Charlotte conference of county health department personnel.

They agreed to investigate costs to get stickers for the 80 garbage containers in the county, listing materials that may not be dumped, and changed the ceiling on purchases allowed without a purchase order from \$15 to \$25.

The board agreed to buy radio equipment formerly leased from General Electric for \$89. They also approved a motion to ask traffic engineers to study the intersection of Rockfish road and Business 401.

The county approved their portion of the police information network, which will be installed for both the city and county law enforcement departments. The board instructed Hostetler to draw up a contract between the two governments. The city approved its share last month. The commissioners also approved a resolution designating the city of Raeford as the primary agency in a proposed waste water study.

They approved expenditures by Lester to meet requirements at the courthouse of the Occupational Safety and Health Act. Lester said that railing would have to be installed at the courthouse steps and more fire extinguishers would have to be purchased.

Also the board agreed to ask the county firemen's association to appoint a member to act on a liaison between county government and the volunteer fire departments.

Autry: Bus Loads Are Being Reduced

More students than school officials anticipated are riding the buses this year and the result is overcrowding on some buses, school superintendent Raz Autry said.

Steps are being taken now to correct the situation, he said. Autry said he has assigned Joe Soles to work on the problem fulltime until the bus loads have been reduced to a satisfactory level.

"We very definitely have a problem and we're getting it worked out. If we don't have the loads down in the next week, we'll see about putting on some spare buses," Autry said. "We know a

child can't go to school fulltime and then stand up for an hour on the way home."

Routes have been changed to relieve crowding on the Rockfish route, and changes have been made on a South Hoke bus to reduce the number of riders, Autry said.

According to Autry, school officials were unprepared for the number of riders this year.

"Because of the price of gas, lots of people who used to drive their kids to school are letting them ride the bus," he said.

Sheriff Says:

Drugs Are Here In Hoke

"Narcotics are here... and nobody believes it," Sheriff D.M. Barrington told the county commissioners Tuesday.

While the narcotics situation is getting better in other areas of the county, it is getting worse in Hoke County, the Sheriff said.

"We were late in getting in on it but we have a serious narcotic problem now," he said.

"We're getting out of the marijuana now," he told the board. "Now we've got uppers, downers, cocaine. There's been no evidence of heroin but it'll come."

"We've had eight or nine cases of kids

under twelve with marijuana cigarettes. The schools have found it.

"And we've had four or five kids all under fourteen. The school called me and said they found a boy with five marijuana cigarettes in a Winston package. It turned out to be four or five boys in on it."

"That's what we're facing," Barrington told the commissioners that drugs could be obtained within a block of where they were meeting by the right person.

The sheriff said he hopes to add a detective division to his department to handle narcotics and serious crimes.

County Will Cut Oak Tree On Office Construction Site

An oak tree is scheduled to be cut down on the construction site of the new county office building on Magnolia Street, county manager T.B. Lester confirmed Wednesday.

A caller who did not identify himself had phoned The News-Journal earlier that day protesting the planned felling of the tree.

Lester said the tree has been struck by lightning and will probably have to be removed at a later date if it isn't cut now.

"We studied that tree carefully. The architects looked at it, and they said we could save it if we wanted to, but that it

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Forecast Good For County Crops

On the whole, crops in the county have held up well through the wet weather, farm agent Wendell Young reports, although insect damage is becoming a problem.

Growers are still harvesting tobacco in the north end of the county, he said. The yield this season is expected to be similar to that last year, averaging 1900 pounds per acre, Young said, but the quality is not as high this year.

"The quality has been off a little bit this year due to the excess rain," he explained. "We have a lot of leaf diseases that hit and that causes the quality to drop. Then too the rain causes the tobacco to come off when it really is not mature and it doesn't cure as well."

Soybean growers are now having problems with insects, Young said. The crop won't be ready, for the most part, for harvest before the end of October.

"Cotton looks pretty good so far," he said. "It's not going to be as good this year as it was last year, though. Last year we had the prettiest cotton we've seen in ages and the highest yield."

However, Young said that this year's cotton crops will be better than most others in the past four or five years.

However, Young said he was concerned about prices. In the past week the price dropped from about 50 cents a pound to around 46 cents. This compares to the 60 to 80 cent prices cotton brought a year ago, he said.

"With costs and all up, farmers are about going to have to have 50 cents a pound to make any profit," he predicted.

The corn harvest in the county began this week, he said.

"They're getting ready for dove season. They always like to cut a few fields before the hunting season."

Yield on corn will be poor this year, Young said.

"The corn got hurt earlier this year and it never came out of it."

Income from livestock, which dropped sharply last year, will be even lower this year, Young said.

Last year, income from livestock amounted to \$4 million of a total farm income of \$18 million for the county, Young said.

Since last year, the poultry industry has shut down in the county, he said.

Except for the hatching, turkeys aren't being grown here, and broiler and egg production has stopped in the county, he said.

Hog feeding is off sharply also, he said. Last year there were 40,000 hogs fed in the county; 25,000 of these belonged to one grower, who has cut this year to perhaps 5,000 hogs, Young said.

The reduction will continue, he said, unless prices get better.

The forecasts now are that hogs will bring \$50 on the market by the end of the year, he said. Prices this last week were about \$38 a head.

Cattle prices are predicted to rise slightly to \$46 to \$48 a hundred weight from the \$43 to \$44 they brought last week, Young said.

There are from 10 to 15 herds in the county, Young said. Most of these are feeder cattle that are sold at the feeder calf sales which begin in early September.