

Editorials

Fixing the pound

Good news is showing these days at the Hoke County-Raeford dog and cat pound near the eastern edge of Raeford Cemetery in a very simple thing: transparent vinyl covering.

The covering shields the rear ends of the animal pens. Now the County Health Department, which had the work done with the approval of the county commissioners, is planning to add more simple improvements -- put wooden floors in the boxes in the pens.

Both materials will make the pens warmer in winter for the animals. The vinyl covering will cut down the cold from the wind that has been blowing through the kennels.

The simple floors in the boxes will allow the animals to sleep much warmer.

They have been having to use the concrete floor or the roofs of the boxes, and the concrete when wet can't be used for a bed.

The improvements also will prevent the animals' drinking water from freezing in the cold days of winter.

All these improvements are costing the county only a few hundred dollars in cash outlay. The cost originally was estimated at about \$2,000, but the switch from tarpaper covering to vinyl, and the use of county and city workers to do the labor, brought the savings.

Much of the work of installing the vinyl was done by the County Dog Warden William Hales and City Dog Warden John Riley.

Incidentally, the switch from tarpaper to vinyl was made out of consideration for the animals as well as the mechanical difficulties in using the tar material.

The tarpaper would not allow sunlight through, to provide extra warmth, and the vinyl does.

Now the hopes are that a new pound with a building of its own will be built possibly by next summer.

The commissioners are considering with the city administration plans to provide a new building, part of which would be used for the pound and the rest for sheltering the city-county landfill equipment.

--BL

Step in growth

The first opening of a major store in the new Raeford-Hoke Village shopping center, with two more to follow soon, marks a significant step in the growth of Raeford and Hoke County.

The new businesses will cut into the retail businesses of downtown Raeford, but this disadvantage will be offset largely by the new customers it will bring to the Raeford area.

These new customers include the many Hoke County people who have been shopping in the centers outside the county, such as in Fayetteville and Aberdeen.

At the same time, the new stores offer a broader choice for the shopping public than the people have had these many years.

Then, too, the center will contribute considerably to the county and city tax revenues money that hasn't been here before.

--BL

What shapes intellect?

Research takes a step forward with every finding that intellectual ability need not depend on heredity. But individuals have to be no less alert to alternative theories that could limit their freedom of thought as surely as the acceptance of political tyranny. Here is a challenge beyond the current controversy over the "Profile of American Youth" commissioned by the Pentagon from University of Chicago researchers.

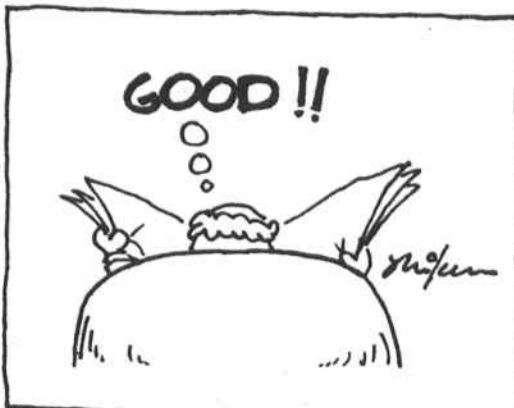
The study of almost 12,000 young men and women had been seized on to support racial genetic theories when black and Hispanic participants got lower average scores than whites on an armed services vocational aptitude test. Now Chicago researchers have countered the heredity assumptions by attributing the differences to the ethnic minorities' "cultural isolation" and social and educational disadvantages.

One of the researchers reportedly suggested that tests like the armed services test favor aptitudes and skills learned in the prevailing white culture. Another generalized that one's human mind is the result of experience, of "everything that the culture you live in has put into it." He went so far as to say that "it's not your own personal mind; it is your piece of the communal mind -- the words, the mathematical tools, the habits, the diagrams of your culture."

By this reasoning, society -- from the family to the federal government -- ought to be aware of the cultural climate it provides. It should offer susceptible intellects the highest standards of thought, education, morality. It should recognize the potential influence of bad examples, of wrong information, of harmful attitudes.

At the same time, here is reason for the individual to guard against susceptibility to the lower standards so blatantly displayed right now. No one's intellect has to be a prisoner of circumstances any more than of heredity. No one's intellect has to be a "piece of the communal mind."

--The Christian Monitor



Letters To The Editor

Exception Taken

To The Editor:

As a concerned citizen of Hoke County and the director of the Hoke/Raeford Humane Society I feel compelled to respond to the recent article concerning conditions at the City-County Dog Pound.

I would like to address my comments to two city councilmen in particular, Robert Gentry and Graham Clark.

First, I think Mr. Gentry had a good idea when he suggested an "Open House at the Dog Pound so all the citizens can see it."

Great - let's have it on a cold, wintry, bleak day, perhaps with a little rain for good measure.

Because these are the conditions we're concerned about, and from late November to April, we have plenty of days and nights just like this.

We, who care about the animals, are not fanatics or people to be ridiculed.

Rather, we're just people who ask for a little humanity and compassion towards the animals who have the great misfortune of being unwanted and unloved in this world.

As people continue to let their pets breed indiscriminately, we shall, unfortunately, be forced to continually deal with this problem, but hopefully we're intelligent enough to deal with this in a caring way.

I strongly object to the sarcasm displayed by Mr. Gentry and Mr. Clark in responding to citizens' complaints about the pound.

Mr. Gentry states, "I told them that we had plenty of dogs for them to adopt."

Not everyone who is concerned with animals' welfare has the room or resources to adopt a pet.

But that doesn't mean that they're callous or uncaring towards the unfortunates who are incarcerated in our pound.

Furthermore regarding rest rooms being installed in the proposed new building at the landfill, Mr. Gentry's remark, "What for, the dogs?" was absurd, to say the least.

As I stated earlier we're not fanatics but we are compassionate.

After reading Mr. Gentry's comment that "the pens he keeps his own dogs in are WORSE than the ones at the pound," I can see why conditions at the pound are as bad and have remained as bad as they are for so long.

Mr. Clark's comment that "County health officials probably want the pound heated and air-conditioned," only matches Mr. Gentry's comments as absurdity.

I really believe these comments were made only half seriously, but still they are telling signs of these two men's true feelings, and that is the very crux of the problem.

We have some elected officials who are completely dispassionate towards this problem and therefore this impedes any real progress attempted by the concerned citizens of Hoke County.

We, at the Hoke/Raeford Humane Society will just have to work a little harder from now on to prevent as many animals as possible from being turned in to the Dog Pound.

Also, we shall continue in our efforts to make the incarceration of dogs and cats as humane as possible.

We would like to thank those officials who are earnestly trying to

do something about this situation.

We are grateful for your concern. Once again we're not asking for "air conditioners" or "rest rooms" etc., but just a little compassion and caring - in short, some comfort.

Is that really such a lot to ask for those homeless cats and "Man's Best Friend"?

Sincerely,
Sheryl McGinnis, Director
HOKE/RAEFORD
Humane Society

Compassion Needed

To The Editor:

I've always considered myself a good judge of character.

Usually, if I felt a person was kind, warm, compassionate and humane, it proved in time that I was right.

But, this time I was wrong about a man I've known ever since I moved to Raeford.

When I read the bold print in last week's New Journal that Gentry says dog pound O.K., I thought, thank God he's on our side.

Then, when I read the small print, I knew I was wrong.

Can Bob search his heart and really believe that we don't need a new dog pound?

These poor animals are so helpless and dependent. They hurt and bleed just as we do.

When they're hungry or thirsty, it doesn't just go away because they're animals.

Their needs are the same as ours. The only difference is we can ask for what we need and somehow, somewhere, our needs will be met.

These poor little animals are completely dependent on us.

Please, Bob, remember, they can't tell us why they're suffering. They can't talk to us. They depend on our love and humane feelings.

Too, they can't choose where they want to be.

However, if Mr. Gentry's personal dog pens are as bad as he says, the pound dogs probably wouldn't choose his place either.

In fact, the SPCA might be interested.

As for the other chuckles about the restrooms, heating and air-conditioning, etc., this sounded like a bunch of school boys trying to get a laugh.

Well, I didn't laugh; and I know several other people in Raeford who found no humor in these statements.

We do need a new dog pound, and I plan to put all my spare time and energy into fighting for one.

I have many friends who plan to help.

I hope, when we finally get the new pound, that I can say "Bob Gentry helped us too."

Margaret Thaggard
Hoke County

Organization Urged

To The Editor:

It would be nice to start some kind of organization for separated or divorced people here in Hoke County.

Quite a few of us, who have had a spouse to help out, in one way or another, suddenly find ourselves alone, scared & financially unstable.

This causes strain and tension that is sometimes released on people we love, our children, family members and friends.

I'm sure quite a few people here

in the county would benefit from it.

How can more information be obtained about how one could be organized?

By banning together, people with similar problems can possibly give each other helpful answers and everyone involved would benefit.

People with a deceased spouse would also be welcomed.

That way we could get together maybe once a week or once a month, whichever worked out best for all involved; to share ways to help each other cope.

I'm sure the response would be overwhelming because sharing is caring.

I've talked to other people and most of them seem quite interested.

A lot of people I know would be reluctant to talk to a psychiatrist, but probably would feel more comfortable in a group with others that have had similar experiences.

Any and all help that concerned readers have would be appreciated.

Thank you,
Ashley Bruster

Nominees A Question

To the editor:

Last week the Hoke County Democratic Party discharged what it believed was its duty and nominated three persons to fill the vacated county commission seat.

These nominations have caused some to wonder aloud if it is not a trifle irresponsible to appoint to the County Board individuals who have twice been rejected by the voters in the past 120 days.

Although my personal knowledge of each nominee's qualification and ability to serve is limited, I strongly feel that each could serve as commissioner.

However voters with elephant memories may feel a need in two or four years for reprisals against those who accept appointments as well as those who appoint.

The commissioners could be playing a game, not Pac-Man, checkers, chess or a host of others, but a new game.

The strategy may be to form commissioners and nominees and to block voters.

The argument could be raised that a two year appointment could give one time to prove himself.

To this I say Bal-der-dash!
Bob Warren
Hoke County

Letters Policy

Letters to the editor are encouraged and welcomed.

Writers should keep letters as short as possible. Names, addresses and telephone numbers should be included and all letters must be signed. Names will be printed, however, other information will be kept confidential. We reserve the right to edit letters for good taste and brevity. Letters should be received by the News-Journal by 5 p.m. on the Monday of the publication week.

It's a Small World

by Bill Linden

One of the Republican people demanded and got a recount of the November 2 general election returns in Moore County except for the sheriff's race, which he didn't include in his demand, and which the Republican sheriff won.

In the years I've been doing business on elections -- about 40 years of them, take or give a few -- I've not seen a recent changing the originally reported results. Another guy in Southern Pines who's been around about as long as I have says the same thing.

The closest a recount came, in my experience, to changing a loser to a winner, happened about five years ago in another county. That was in a primary for sheriff. The incumbent sheriff finished second in a three-way contest, and he called for a recount.

The recount, however backfired: the new count showed the third man tied with the sheriff.

In the case of a tie for second place, the state election law at the time said, one of the two in the tie has to withdraw before a runoff primary can be called and set.

But the third man stubbornly refused to withdraw.

The result was the leader in the contest was declared winner of the nomination and didn't have to go through a runoff primary campaign. He was unopposed in the general election the following November, incidentally.

The time finally arrived that I'd been dreading for months -- starting to apply for Social Security payments. I'd been advised by Social Security office news reports to start the machinery going at least three months before I become eligible, on my 65th birthday.

"Normal" people, however, don't need that much time. I was told by the lady I got to be interviewed by in Carthage a couple of days after the November general election. She said the reason is the Social Security system has cut down on the time, even a year ago, by installing a new computerized system.

However, I'd been dreading starting the process because I'm not one of those "normal" people. A "normal" person has all his/her papers in order, like his/her birth certificate. My birth certificate got loused up 65 years ago less three months. So supporting evidence I'm the right age to qualify for full SS benefits has to be obtained, from Trenton, N.J.

I've got this faith, though, that the proper staff will come through before the money runs out.

Being a pessimist, however, I have impulses to think that the word will come back: "Sorry, pal, but your parents ran away from home right after you were born and joined a monastery on top of Mt. Everest. Apply to the register of deeds, Mt. Everest, for records. They may have them."

Incidentally, I also was informed that Social Security doesn't accept copies, Xeroxed or other, of necessary documents, as these could be forged: the applicant must show the true documents.

Funny thing, though: nobody asked me to show documents proving I was eligible to give some of my pay to the Social Security pot when I started working in 1940.

To change the subject, here's a story out of the early days of Army training in World War II.

Paratroops were new then, and many civilians hadn't even heard of them. One of these was a farmer working his fields far out in the country one morning, when down from the sky came a paratrooper.

The farmer was paralyzed with wonder. But he recovered quickly after arriving at the only logical explanation for this phenomenon.

"Good morning, Mister Jesus," he addressed the trooper politely. "And how's your Daddy this fine morning?"

Smokey Says:



Smokey's friends don't play with matches!

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