

Viewpoints

Downtown college is good planning

One of the brightest movements now being made in Hoke County is the effort to locate a community college satellite in downtown Raeford.

The Chamber of Commerce, along with a group of community leaders, is working with Sandhills Community College officials to locate a branch of the school on Main Street and to restore one of this county's most significant buildings.

As of last week the college was eyeing the old Bank of Raeford building for housing the school, and those backing the effort seem optimistic that the location will be satisfactory.

Although there is some opposition to the college locating in the downtown area, we believe that the school would have a positive impact and could save the inter-city commercial district.

Downtown Raeford is now dying rapidly, and the removal of the United Carolina Bank branch from the corner of Elwood Avenue and Main Street could be the final nail in the coffin.

Once UCB consolidates its operations in the main branch, those customers who in the past had been cashing checks and shopping downtown in nearby stores may be gone.

Each day more and more merchants are finding that making a living in downtown is difficult. Once the bank closes, staying in business on Main Street could become impossible.

A college in the downtown area would reverse the trend.

Raeford needs to keep its downtown area viable, as a sign of community strength to those

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considering this county as a place to live and work.

We endorse the effort of the Chamber and others to locate the college in the UCB building.

Happy 60th

During the last 60 years, the Raeford Kiwanis Club has made a significant contribution to the building of Hoke County.

The club has a tradition of leadership, and its members have taken active roles in efforts to improve the quality of life in this community.

In addition to starting the scouting program in the county, Kiwanians have led the fight to improve the local schools, pave roads, construct

parcs and civic buildings, build the 4-H program and to help the disadvantaged.

Although the worth of the contributions made by the club is impossible to price, Kiwanis probably raises and puts to use an average of \$10,000 each year in this county. In addition, members have donated millions of dollars of manhours in service to the community.

When one considers that throughout its history the club has maintained a roll of only about 50 members, the obvious sacrifices made by the Kiwanians to move this county forward is amazing.

We commend the Kiwanis Club for the work they have accomplished, and support the efforts of present members to keep the tradition going.

Happy 60th Anniversary Kiwanis. Because of the work you have done, Hoke County is a better place to live.

Letters To The Editor

Fire story filled with 'half-truths'

To the Editor:

The story in your February 16th edition, "Child Dies in Trailer Blaze", under a Sherry Matthews byline is a classic collection of half-truths, misinformation, distortion of the facts, as well as out-and-out irresponsible journalism.

In fact, some of your readers who are familiar with the actual events by having been on the scene express considerable doubt that the reporter was present at or reporting on the same event.

Some statements are much closer to fiction than fact.

The facts are: One; at approximately 8:35 a call was received at the sheriff's office from an unidentified person wishing to report a structure fire at Carolina Country Mobile Home Park.

The person calling was highly excited and was difficult to understand.

However, the dispatcher was able to elicit the necessary information and alerted the Puppy Creek Fire Department.

By chance, three Puppy Creek firemen were standing at their vehicles only 700 yards (this has since been measured) from the fire station.

Two trucks left the station enroute to the fire an estimated minute and a half after the alert. (The sheriff's dispatcher estimated "about a minute or so").

There was complete and early radio communication between the trucks and the dispatcher and the performance of the dispatcher was exemplary.

Two; There was absolutely no confusion over backup fire-fighting equipment.

The Hillcrest department was alerted a matter of several seconds after Puppy Creek, responded according to standard mutual aid agreements, were on the fire scene well before their backup was needed, and performed in an excellent and professional manner.

Immediately after alerting the fire departments the dispatcher contacted the Rescue Squad.

Before he could dispatch the Emergency Medical Service they informed him that they had monitored the radio transmissions and were responding.

Three; all firemen are aware of the excellent job done by the Rescue Squad and EMS personnel.

However, contrary to your article, these individuals neither

"played a key role in getting the child out of the burning building" -- nor should they.

Two members of the Puppy Creek Fire Dept., using emergency breathing apparatus, went into the burning, smoke-filled building, searched for and found the child and passed her out through a window opening.

Four; the wording of your article implies that the search for the child was lengthy. Example... "fought the blaze for nearly an hour while rescue workers attempted to free the trapped child".

In fact, the fire was reported at approximately 8:35 a.m. and the ambulance arrived at Cape Fear Valley Hospital at 9:15 -- 40 minutes later -- and this was after the response to the fire alarm, rescue of the child, on-the-scene revival procedures, and transportation of approximately 12-13 miles to the hospital.

The times are taken from official reports and were available to your reporter if she had attempted to acquire them.

Five; no member of the Puppy Creek Fire Dept., the primary emergency agency involved in this event, has been interviewed to this date although the article quotes statements which could have come only from the Puppy Creek personnel involved in the search for the child.

It should be understood that there is only one reason for this letter.

The residents of Puppy Creek and of all Hoke County deserve to know the truth about the service provided by their volunteer firemen and inaccurate, irresponsible reporting does not lead to this end.

We know that a lot of people in the Rescue Squad, those in the sheriff's department who volunteer extra work, the fire departments, and the county-funded EMS personnel work hard to provide a valuable service and feel that your newspaper should strive to tell all of the story and to tell it accurately.

Thank you,
J. David Willis, Chief,
Puppy Creek FD

Mental health program raises some questions

Dear editor:

It's 1984, and, yes Big Brother is very much alive.

In celebration of George Orwell's coming of age, the Hoke County School Board and administration have instituted what is called the "Employees' Assistance Program," fondly referred to as the EAP by its founders.

In a half hour or so indoctrination session, which included a 10 minute film, Dr. John McBryde from Sandhills Mental Health Center, discussed the positive aspects of the program with the employees. We heard in about 30 different ways what a fine program our "generous" supervisors and school board have presented to us.

"This program is to help you," said McBryde.

"This program is to help you," echoed the film.

"This program is for your benefit," said McBryde.

"This program is for your benefit," repeated the film.

"If you have a problem, just call EAP. It's free. No questions asked," said both.

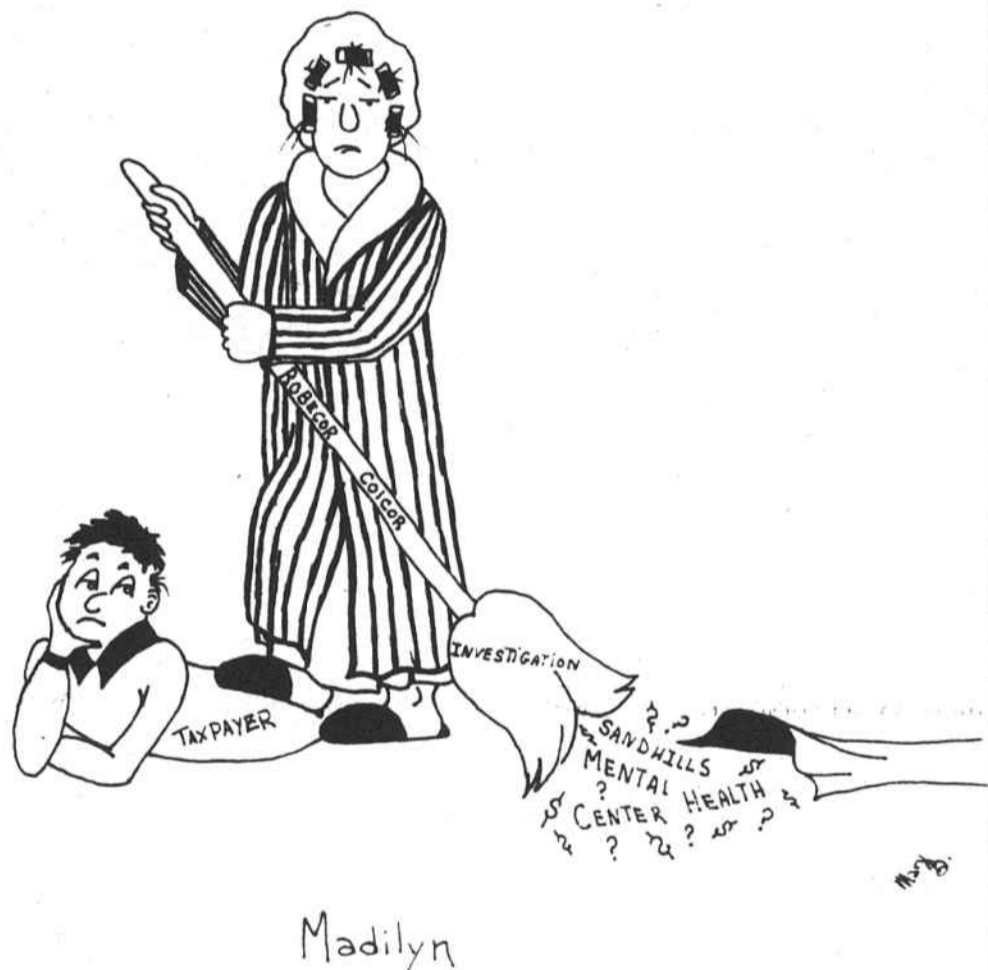
The only thing that is free is the first consultation.

Any "further" consultations or treatment must be worked out between the employee and Mental Health.

If employees check their state employee insurance benefit booklet, they will find that they have 80% coverage of out-patient psychiatric care up to 50 visits and 100% for up to a month (or more if necessary) of hospitalized care.

So why all the hoopla about the 20% of the initial consultation that we are being given?

The six one-hour sessions for the supervisors were quite different (Continued on page 3A)



Chemicals should be in perspective

By John Sledge

N.C. Farm Bureau Federation

The Environmental Protection Agency recently issued a cancellation order for the chemical EDB, which has agricultural uses as a fumigant against plant diseases and insects. Another important pesticide is lost because of concern that it might cause serious illness.

What perhaps is overlooked in the whole matter of disease and pesticides is that plants quite naturally synthesize toxic chemicals as a defense mechanism against diseases, insects and even animal predators. Dr. Bruce Ames, chairman of the Department of Biochemistry, University

of California at Berkeley, says the variety of these toxic chemicals that occur naturally in plants is so great that organic chemists have been classifying them for over 100 years and still are finding new ones.

Ames, in an article in *Science* magazine, details 16 naturally occurring substances that can cause cancer or birth defects. In one instance, birth defects in a baby boy, goat kids and a litter of puppies were all traced to goat's milk. The goats had been foraging on lupine, a plant which Ames says contains very potent birth defect causing agents. Ironically, at first the abnormalities were blamed on the spray-

ing of 2,4-D, a much maligned herbicide.

Putting this issue into perspective, Ames notes that our knowledge of man-made pesticides is extensive and public exposure very low. But our knowledge of most plant toxins is limited and we may be exposed to "large doses," in Ames words.

Maybe we should realize that man-made chemicals are no more risky than the chemicals nature has exposed us to everyday. No diet or environment can be without risk. But Ames points out we are making progress in separating the really hazardous risks from the minor ones.

Sore thumb could lead to theatrical career

By Warren Johnston

A while back, my boss hit his thumb with a hammer.

He had been putting up crown molding in his house at the time of the accident.

I hit my thumb a few weeks earlier. I was trying to nail trim on bookshelves.

Last week we compared injuries.

Of course, there were the usual stories about the "Pain," and some "my thumb is bluer than your thumb" quips, but in the end we agreed that there were few things which allowed life to continue that hurt as bad as a busted thumb.

Getting one's nose caught in a pencil sharpener is probably no fun either; however, we had not had that experience so it was difficult to compare the Pain.

Unlike spells of unpleasant weather which I can remember clearly, I tend to forget past painful injuries.

"This is the coldest I've ever been," somebody will say.

"Oh sure, this is cold, but do you remember the winter of '73. That was cold," I say, recounting the time my right earlobe froze and refused to thaw until late April.

On the other hand, when the head of a 16-ounce claw hammer

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comes smashing down on my thumb, the pain is so perfect that no other more excruciating event could have existed, and even if it did, I could not possibly remember it.

During those occasions when I bust my thumb, I never say things like: "Gosh, this hurts, but it's not nearly as bad as the time I stumped my toe on the playground at R.L. Hope School."

Normally all I remember as my thumb begins to glow is my mother's advice.

"Think about something else, and it will stop hurting," she used to say when I returned from the school yard with a mangled big toe.

Being an obedient son, I would immediately attempt to recall the starting lineup for the 1952 Brooklyn Dodgers. When that failed, I turned to a loud version of "Camptown Races" and hopped around on one foot.

The remedy never seemed to help my toe, and after the second verse, one of my older brothers would threaten me with worse bodily harm if I didn't stop singing.

I resurrected the cure following the recent thumb smashing inci-

dent. I figured I was safe because all my brothers live miles away.

When my wife came in to investigate the noise, I was getting through my third set of "doo-dahs" and was hopping on one foot shaking my hand.

"If you're practicing to get on the stage, I don't think you're going to make it.

"That routine went out with the minstrel shows 25 years ago," she said, leaving me to my unremitting agony.

Days after as I sported my blue thumb around town, several friends suggested other remedies to ease the pain the next time.

"I always drink a quart of scotch," one said, noting that when he awakens the ache in his head replaces the pain in the thumb.

"It works every time," he said.

Another suggested drilling a hole in the finger with a hot needle. "That lets the pressure out, but it always makes me sick at my stomach," he added.

None of the suggestions sounded appealing. I have decided to stick to "Camptown Races."

Who knows, if I keep hitting my thumb, I might be ready when they revive the minstrel shows.

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