

The News-Journal

The Hoke County News - Established 1928

The Hoke County Journal - Established 1905

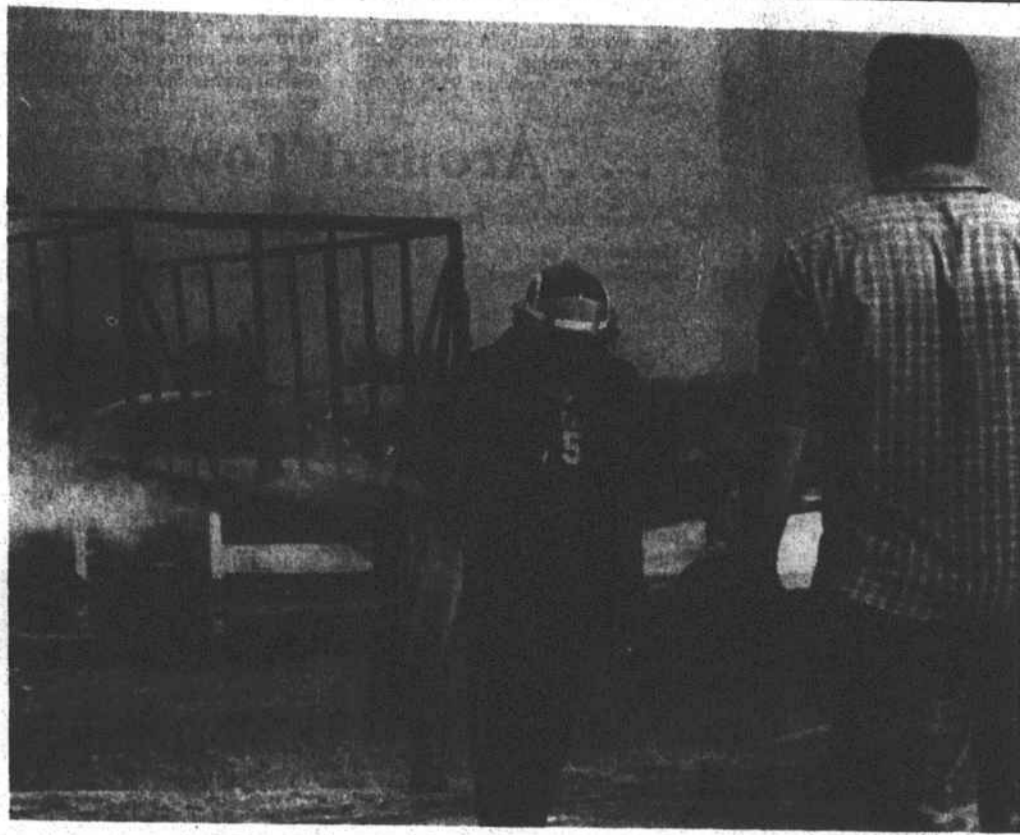
Volume LXXVI Number 9

RAEFORD, HOKE COUNTY, NORTH CAROLINA

\$10 PER YEAR

25 CENTS

Thursday, June 21, 1984



Bringing in the hose

After fighting a blaze which destroyed a two-story dwelling in South Hoke in 90° temperatures on Friday, this volunteer fireman (left) appears ready to go home. Firefighters from seven of the county's volunteer departments were hampered in fighting

the blaze by high winds which followed a thunderstorm. Lightning is a prime suspect as the cause of the fire. North Raeford fireman Frankie Wilson (right) surveys the damage.

Fire destroys South Hoke dwelling

More than 35 volunteer firemen, EMT's and rescue squad members pitched in Friday to fight a blaze which destroyed a dwelling in South Hoke on Friday.

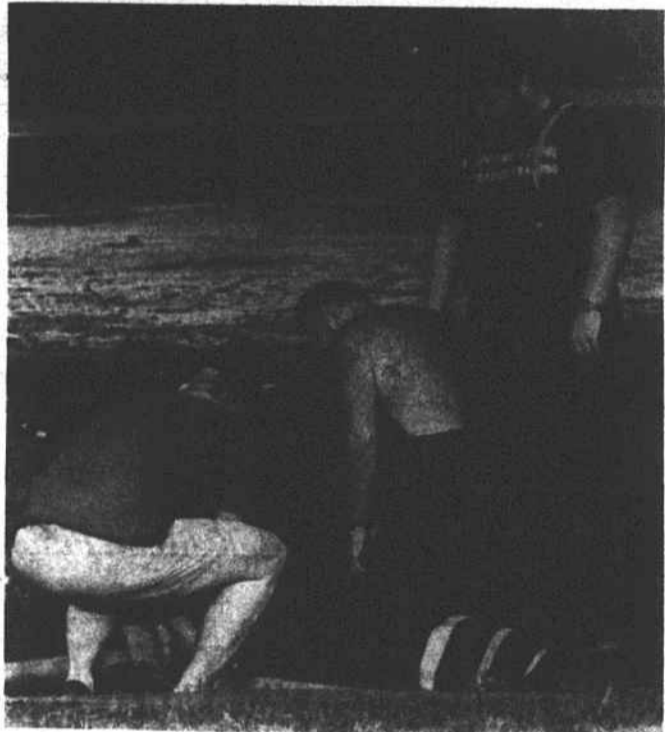
The fire, which broke out around 6:30 p.m. and shortly after a thunderstorm, was fought by firemen from seven of the county's departments for more than an hour before it was brought under control.

Volunteers from North Raeford were first on the scene, and found that the dwelling was totally engulfed in flame, Fire Chief Johnny Baker said.

At the time of the fire, the house was unoccupied, Baker said, noting that residents Gary Axtell, his wife and two children were reported to have gone to the beach for the weekend.

In addition to the two-story frame dwelling, fire fighters, who were hampered by high winds and intense heat, were unable to save a school bus, an automobile and a motorcycle which were parked near the structure.

All of the vehicles are reported to have belonged to Axtell. It is unknown whether (See FIRE, page 2A)



Here, let me help

Fireman Buddy Willis (kneeling right) lends a hand as other volunteers attempt to uncouple a hose during Friday's South Hoke blaze. EMT Jimmy Stewart (right) adds advice.

Airport leases cancelled

By Ed Miller

All leases currently pending at the Raeford-Hoke County Airport will be abolished as of July 1, the newly formed Airport Commission decided in a meeting last Thursday night.

The airport authority passed a motion formalizing the cancellation of leases belonging to parachute jump school owner Gene Paul Thacker and airplane mechanic A. J. Furches.

The renegotiation of the leases will be dependent on whether or not Thacker and Furches agree to new terms.

According to terms of a new lease which was approved to be offered to Furches, the lessee must:

•Be available to pump fuel for

planes during normal operating hours.

•Maintain the terminal including clean-up, opening and closing, during regular operating hours.

•Man a radio watch as a Fixed Base Operator and be able to provide landing instructions and other information vital to pilot safety.

Members of the Airport Commission agreed that "normal operating hours" are from 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m.

In return, the holder of the lease gets the large hangar that belongs to the county and city, eight tie-downs and rent of only \$50 per month.

The tie-downs can be used to generate revenue for the holder of

the lease, said Vice-Chairman Wayne Byrd.

Taxiways headed the list of airport improvement priorities discussed by the commission during the first official meeting.

The first thing to be done at the airport should be to put in a taxiway so pilots do not have to back taxi down the runway before take off, said commission member John Plummer.

"We need to do something even if it is just bringing in some top soil and putting out grass seeds," said Byrd.

There was much discussion among authority members about the costs of the taxiway.

(See AIRPORT, page 2A)

Five-year school plan receives funds setback

By Ed Miller

Members of the Hoke County Commission deadlocked in a 2-2 tie Monday night to kill a resolution that would have allocated 60% of the county's share of the one-half cent sales tax revenues to the schools for a five year period.

The extra funds have been called "essential" for the repaying of a proposed \$2.5 million school rehabilitation bond issue.

However, the schools are expected to receive the funds at least for the coming fiscal year.

County Board of Education members had asked for the formal resolution that called for 60% of the revenues to be given to schools until 1989.

Commissioners James A. Hunt and Neill McPhatter voted for the resolution while Chairman John Balfour and Commissioner Wyatt Upchurch voted no on the resolution.

Commissioner Cleo Bratcher was absent from the meeting. He was just married, Balfour said.

The 60% is presently in the county budget for this year; however, in a previous meeting, commissioners had decided that this percentage should be re-evaluated each year.

"We may not be here in three years, and we should not burden another board with our decisions," said Hunt, even though it was his motion to accept the resolution.

"I feel like this (resolution) is a little premature," Upchurch said. So the resolution would not die completely, a motion was passed to table further action on the resolution until a later meeting.

"I think the commissioners will want to look at this again," said Balfour.

Budget draws 50

In other action, a crowd of

about 50 county residents and employees expressed concern about the commission's plan to increase the budget for the Hoke County Emergency Medical Service by \$231,042 for the coming year.

Much of a proposed nine cent hike in property taxes is due to the county having to fund the new ambulance service, County Manager James Martin told the audience.

Most of the concern centered around the argument that many of those who use the ambulance service do not pay for it.

Former Commissioner Mable Riley said that she does not think the county needs a "Cadillac" ambulance service to "keep up with the Jones" (Cumberland County).

Cape Fear Valley Medical Center requires that a certain number of intermediate level emergency medical technicians (EMT) be hired to man the service as well as having two ambulances on call 24 hours a day with an intermediate EMT on the crew, said Martin.

"We have to work with (Cape Fear)," Balfour said.

"If I were sick, I would rather have a Cadillac than a Ford take care of my needs," Hunt said, adding that he would prefer a very good medical service coming to his aid than one which is understaffed and incompetent.

"I have been agonizing over the Emergency Medical Service (EMS) for 10 years," said Balfour. "What price do we put on human life?"

"If we can cut taxes without cutting service, we will. But, we serve a two-fold purpose, to provide services and to protect tax payers," Balfour said.

Riley also suggested that the county hold a referendum for each precinct to find out whether residents want to pay for the parks



Studying

Former Commissioner Mable Riley (left) spoke in favor of trimming taxes at Monday's Commission meeting. Riley favored cutting the budget for the ambulance service.

and recreation department or whether they want better pay and shorter hours for sheriff's deputies.

"We have deputies whose children don't even know who their daddy is," she said.

Balfour told the group, which included at least three deputies, that commissioners had met with Sheriff Dave Barrington last week to discuss matters concerning his department.

The Sheriff said the department would rather have more help than higher wages, Upchurch said.

Barrington has asked commissioners for five new deputies.

Airport planned

On other matters, a spokesman for the newly formed airport commission told commission members that state matching funds should be used for taxiways.

"The Commission had about decided not to take the state's money if it could only be used for a terminal," said commission Secretary John Plummer.

(See RESIDENTS, page 3A)

Local undertaker receives suspended sentence for selling insurance without having license

A Raeford mortician was given a five-year probationary sentence after pleading "no contest" last week in Hoke County District Court to charges of selling insurance without a license.

Robert Lee Doby, owner of Doby's Funeral Home, was arrested in December and charged with illegally writing insurance policies.

In Thursday's court case, Doby was convicted of selling policies to Cora McKeithan, Alice Beatty and Sara Dobbins, court records say. Doby plead "no contest" to the three charges and received not more or less than two years suspended for five years supervised probation, records show.

The 48-year-old Doby was also ordered by Judge Warren Pate to pay \$7,133.39 in restitution to the complaining witnesses.

Doby also has cases pending in Superior Court.

Also in court last week was local

insurance agent, Carl Virgil.

Virgil was accused of letting Doby sell his insurance while knowing that the funeral director was not licensed to do so.

Virgil was sentenced to one year suspended for two years unsupervised probation and was fined \$100, according to court records.

Virgil also had his insurance license revoked for 60 days beginning June 15 and was ordered by the court not to carry on any insurance business during the period of revocation, the records show.

In an unrelated matter, Luke Sturdivant was in court to show cause for failure to pay the fines connected with 11 counts of employment security law violations.

It was the determination of the court that Sturdivant, of Raeford, could pay his fines.

The 52-year-old Sturdivant was sentenced to 60 days in Hoke County Jail, but "purged" himself

by paying \$1,000 toward his fines last Friday, said a spokesperson for the Clerk of Courts office.

Tyrone McPhatter, of Raeford, made a court appearance last week on charges of communicating threats, simple assault and assault with a deadly weapon.

McPhatter was found guilty and made to pay \$30 restitution to Sammy Henderson.

To go along with the restitution, McPhatter was sentenced to two years supervised probation and fined \$150.

McPhatter was also ordered by the court to stay away from the House of Raeford while on probation.

James Gilchrist was in court last week charged with assault with a deadly weapon, court records say.

The 23-year-old Gilchrist was accused of shooting Jimmy McMillian in the thigh with a small caliber gun, records show.

The Raeford resident was

sentenced to one year supervised probation and ordered to pay \$500 restitution to McMillian.

Earnest T. Jones made a court appearance last Thursday on charges of driving while impaired (DWI) on April 8, 1984.

Because of a prior conviction, Jones, 26, was given one year in jail, suspended for two years special supervised probation, a \$500 fine and seven days in the Hoke County Jail on three and one-half week ends, court records show.

Adam Wayne McIntyre, of Raeford, was also in court last week on charges of DWI.

The 21-year-old man plead not guilty to the charges of March 4 but was found guilty.

According to testimony given in court, McIntyre was made to stand on one leg, as a sobriety test, even though he told the arresting officer

(See DWI, page 3A)



Inside Today

This youth may be too young, but he can still dream of a future opportunity to swim in a large pond on a 4-H outing. We take a look at the contributions and the retirement of one of this county's best 4-H promoters, Ellen Willis, on page one of Section B in today's News-Journal.

Around Town

By Sam Morris

According to Robert Gatlin, local observer for the National Weather Service, we had three inches of rain over the weekend. Other places in the county had more than three inches and some places didn't have that much. But from all reports, we had some rain all over the county. As most folks would say, it was a million dollar rain.

Gatlin also stated that the temperatures for last Friday was 101 degrees. This surprised me because most reports had the high at around 97 degrees. Sam Snead told me Monday that he checked his thermometer in Red Springs last Friday afternoon and it registered 102 degrees. Now this is hot weather even before summer is officially with us.

Don't expect any relief any time soon because the forecast is for the (See AROUND, page 2A)