

The News-Journal

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County approves college, eyeing state funds

Members of the Hoke County Commission approved a measure Monday which could put a local community college in line for state funding.

A satellite branch of Sandhills Community College in Hoke County was approved in "principal" by the commission following a request from the school's President Raymond A. Stone.

Stone had also suggested in a letter to the commission that a request for state funds be made for a new Hoke County facility.

However, the commissioners

took no action on proposing a budget for the school, but did assign County Manager James Martin to the task.

According to a spokesman for the state Department of Community Colleges, the next move is up to Sandhills.

In an interview last week, Public Information Coordinator Mark Van Sciver said once a group of concerned citizens or the County Commissioners have approached Sandhills endorsing the school, that a proposal for the school would then need to be presented to

the Department of Community Colleges.

"We were waiting to see what the County Commissioners might do," Sandhills President Raymond A. Stone said last week.

During their last meeting, commissioners turned down the old Bank of Raeford building as a possible site for the college. The building had been offered by United Carolina Bank.

An architectural study conducted by a Southern Pines firm estimated the cost of renovating the structure at more than \$60 per square foot to make it suitable for the school.

According to Stone, he was told last week that legislators are presently funding projects for community colleges and will continue doing so next year, but that applications for next year's money needed to be made soon.

"This is the first time that the Assembly has put money into satellites," said Stone.

According to Stone, \$386,000 was given to a Harnett County satellite of Central Carolina Tech., \$700,000 was given to satellites in Vance and Granville counties and \$400,000 was given to Polk County on a matching basis.

Between \$150,000 and \$200,000 is needed to initially revamp the old armory building in Hoke County to make it suitable for classroom occupancy, according to the architect's study.

"If we can get the County Commissioners to look favorably on the project, maybe we can get some money in 1985, but we need to hurry," said Stone.

"I'll follow up and talk to Mr. Martin within a few days," Stone said.

To get funding for the college, Hoke County is going to "need

strong legislative support," Stone said, adding that all of the counties that got money this year had legislators in favorable positions with the exception of Polk County, who is getting matching funds.

Legislators who have influence on the Budget Commission would be an asset to the cause, said Stone.

"The county needs to endorse a plan for the college," Stone had said before Monday's meeting.

The action is not be a commitment of funds, the President added.

Around Town

By Sam Morris

The weather has been true to its season, summer. The temperatures have been in the 80's during the day and in the 60's at night. This is better than the hot days and nights of early June.

I looked for Robert Gatlin, local observer of the National Weather Service, Friday, but was told that he was at the beach for a few days. I wanted to get from him the rainfall and average temperature for June. Hope to obtain it for next week's column.

Since this paper will be read in the city on Tuesday, I will again remind golfers of the Annual American Legion Golf tournament to be held Wednesday, July 4 at Arabia Golf Course.

The day will start with a breakfast at Edinborough restaurant at seven a.m. and tee-off time is at eight p.m. So contact Earl McDuffie, chairman of the tournament, if you want to play.

Most businesses and offices will be closed in Raeford on Wednesday, July 4. Of course most folks know that July 4th is Independence Day and is one of the holidays that the government hasn't changed to Monday to give everyone a long weekend.

Holidays are not celebrated now like they were when I was growing up. Now they are just another day off for most workers. Years ago the 4th would have been a day of fireworks, speakings, and other events that would go along with summertime. Even a baseball game would have been played in the afternoon. (No lighted ball parks in those days.) Of course the way of travel today makes it easy to go to the mountains or beaches.

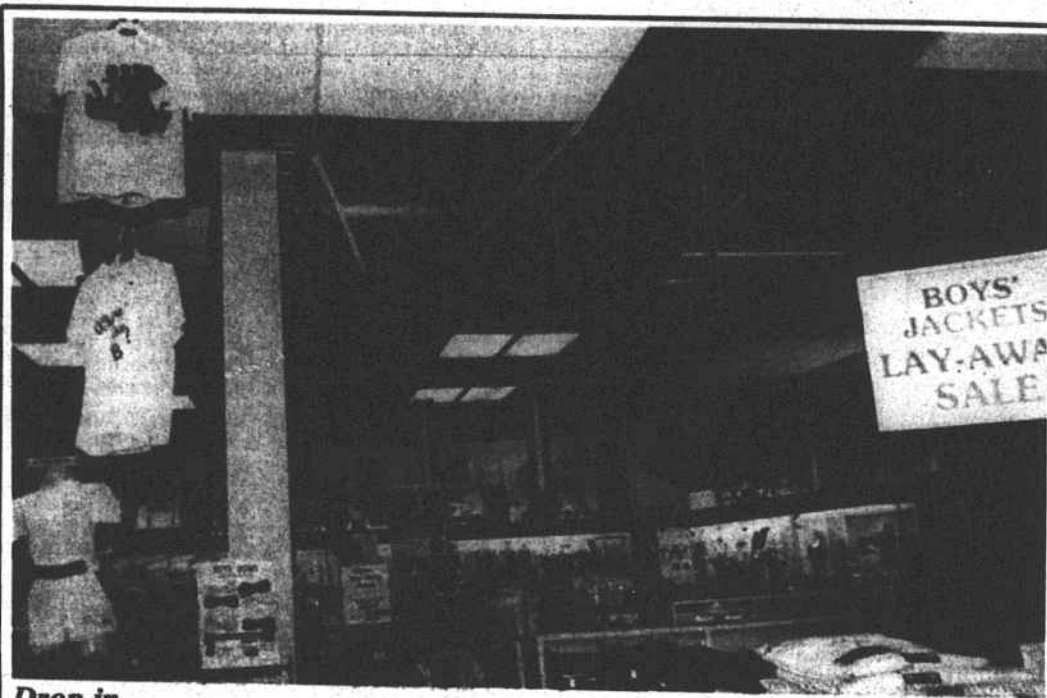
Times have changed and as we progress, that should be the rule, but do we still think about why we are having the day off? There is usually a good reason for a holiday.

I was saddened last week to hear of the death of George Pittman, an employee of the City of Raeford. George was in charge of the landfill and he was very much concerned about how things were being run at that facility.

These days and times it is hard to find a person that puts his job first, and is proud of it. Some of us just punch the clock and make eight hours. George Pittman would ask you to come by the landfill and see the job you were paying for there. Yes, he will be missed.

Budget time usually finds the commissioners or the Council Members looking for money to provide services to taxpayers and keep the tax rates at the lowest possible figures.

This year the county has passed an interim budget awaiting the outcome of money from Raleigh at the conclusion of the meeting of the General Assembly. Now on the opposite side is the Council who has come up with more money (See AROUND, page 11)



Drop-in

Thieves, who broke into Moore's Department Store last week and made off with over \$2,000 worth of merchandise, caused additional damage to the store

by falling through the ceiling, according to Raeford Police Chief Leonard Wiggins.

Thieves drop in at Moore's

By Ed Miller

An estimated \$2,025 worth of merchandise was taken from Moore's Department Store in Raeford after thieves broke into the building through the roof last Tuesday night.

According to Raeford Police Chief Leonard Wiggins, there was another \$2,000 damage done to the building during the break-in.

The Edenborough Shopping

Center department store was apparently entered through an air-conditioning vent in the roof, Wiggins said.

Investigators believe that at least one of the culprits apparently accidentally fell through the ceiling, the chief added.

The alleged thieves exited the building through the rear door and are believed to have made their escape on foot, Wiggins said.

Investigators were seen Wednesday taking plaster casts of footprints in the mud behind the store.

There was also some merchandise found behind the department store near a railroad tracks, Wiggins said.

The investigation into the break-in was continuing on Tuesday. No arrests had been made by press time.

Jump school owner reports to Florida on cocaine charges

By Ed Miller

The owner of parachute jump school, wanted for alleged cocaine trafficking, has apparently turned himself in to Florida authorities.

Raeford Jump School owner Gene Paul Thacker has gone to Florida to face charges that he assisted in bringing over \$12 million cocaine into the Raeford-Hoke County Airport, Assistant District Attorney Jean Powell said Monday.

Powell received a letter on July 2

saying that the 52-year-old former Golden Knight had gone to West Palm Beach and tuned himself over to officials in that state.

Thacker's bond was set in Florida at \$25,000, Powell said. "I assume they are in the process of working out a deal," said Powell.

Thacker was a relatively low man on the ladder in the overall scheme of the apparent billion dollar drug ring and there is a good chance that his appearance in court

will assist authorities in the prosecution of others in the alleged ring, Powell said.

Thacker is charged in Florida with trafficking and conspiracy to traffic in cocaine, Powell said.

According to Powell, if Thacker is found guilty of both charges, and if the sentences are "stacked", the Raeford resident could receive up to 30 years in jail.

Powell speculated that Thacker probably would not have volun-

tarily gone to Florida in the first place if there was not some sort of deal in the making for a lessening of his sentence.

Both of the charges pending against Thacker carry a minimum 15-year sentence if convicted, Powell said.

As far as Hoke County is concerned, the case is closed on Thacker, said Powell adding that governor's warrants which had been applied for ordering the ex-

tradition of Thacker are obviously no longer needed.

Although it could not be confirmed with Clerk of Court, Juanita Edmund, it is believed that Thacker's appearance in Florida will relieve local residents of obligation who pledged property in an effort to help the jump school owner raise a \$250,000 bond.

A spokesman for the clerk's office said Tuesday official word from Florida would have to be received to release the bonds.

New stiffer garbage ordinance given green light by Hoke

By Ed Miller

An ordinance, which would give the county enforcement powers to prosecute persons who are improperly using bulk trash collection boxes and the public landfill was approved Wednesday by members of the Hoke County Board of Health.

Although the ordinance was passed by the health board, the measure must still be refined by County Attorney Duncan McFadyen and before being presented to the Hoke County Commission for final approval, county Health Director Lloyd Horne said.

The new ordinance clarifies rules and regulations governing the uses of bulk containers, solid waste disposal facilities and provides for waste collector permits. The

proposed law will also give the county enforcement powers which were not included in earlier ordinances.

Littering, penalties and rewards are also included in the proposed law.

"Trash is everybody's problem, and it is a daily problem," Lloyd Horne said.

The new ordinance says all persons in Hoke County may use bulk containers for the disposal of solid household wastes and that all containers will be open for use around the clock.

Trash will be put directly into the container and not around it and any items too big to be put into a container cannot be placed there, the ordinance says.

Prohibited by the ordinance are

scavenging from containers and allowing domesticated animals to roam among the containers.

Six cubic yards per week of trash are allowed to be generated by each person in the county, but persons making more trash than that per week must take the garbage to the sanitary landfill and have in his possession a permit to transport garbage, the ordinance requires.

According to the ordinance, bulk containers will continue to be placed outside the landfill for residential use.

These materials are prohibited from being put into any bulk containers:

*Tree limbs more than one inch in diameter and over three feet long.

(See GARBAGE, page 10)

Councilman backs industrial park

By Ed Miller

An industrial park should be developed and considered for construction before the city or county makes an obligation to hire an industrial developer, a Raeford City Councilman suggested Monday.

Following Councilman Bob Gentry's suggestions, other members of the city council discussed, but took no action, on what should be done about the lack of industry in the county.

Gentry suggested that the park be developed with water and sewer lines running to the city system and that possible industries wishing to

locate there be offered a tax break of some sort.

"It's my personal feeling that until we develop an industrial park, we're going to be making a poor damn attempt at attracting industry," Gentry said.

"Once we develop an industrial park, we should go get a good, qualified industrial recruiter," said Gentry.

Mayor John K. McNeill said that perhaps the area needs someone like an industrial specialist to develop the park.

During the discussion, almost all (See INDUSTRIAL, page 10)

Commission adjusts ambulance policies

By Ed Miller

A new ambulance policy requiring cash payments from persons wishing to be transported by ambulance to or from hospital facilities other than those located in Fayetteville, Fort Bragg, Laurinburg, Lumberton or Pinehurs was given approval by members of the Hoke County Commission Monday.

The policy says cash payments will be made in cases when a written statement cannot be obtained from a doctor saying why the transportation is needed.

Along with being on a cash basis, a spare ambulance and a

third crew will be used to make the trips, the policy says.

Ambulance Service Director William Niven told commissioners that often times patients will request this sort of transportation and a doctor will not be available.

"This policy is not intended to deny a person of immediate transport in emergency situations when the injury or illness can only be handled at the distant designation," the policy says.

If, when a person arrives at an area hospital and doctors there direct the patient elsewhere, it will (See SHELTER, page 10)



Considering garbage

Members of the Hoke County Board of Health consider the provisions of a new garbage ordinance during a meeting last week. The ordinance, which was recommended by the board, was approved by the County Commission on Monday.