

# Viewpoints

## Plan for US 401 shows ingenuity

The plan to set aside money earmarked for construction of aprons on US Highway 401 and to use the funds for building another two lanes, shows ingenuity and a spirit to get things done that has not been evident in Hoke County for a number of years.

Local officials hope to use the \$187,000 targeted for the aprons to obtain additional state and federal funds and construct at least one mile of four lane highway.

However, the flaw is that the state Department of Transportation is not accustomed to saving money and would gladly use the funds in another county if Hoke County does not want the aprons.

District DOT board member Bennie Hollers, state Rep. Danny DeVane and other members of the local Legislative Delegation are combining forces to make the plan work and to get the additional money needed for the road.

Hollers is hoping to convince other DOT board members that saving money is not a bad idea, and that putting the apron funds in escrow could be vital to getting some quick relief for the narrow and dangerous Hoke County portion of the highway.

The officials pulling to make the 401 plan work are dealing with a

group of stubborn DOT bureaucrats, who are set in their ways. It will be difficult to persuade them that there is an alternative to funding highway improvements the conventional way.

Whether the plan to reserve the funds and to pave one mile works or not, by trying it, local officials and Hollers are showing they are willing to break with conventional thinking to accomplish a goal.

We applaud the effort, and encourage those who want the improvements made to Highway 401 to keep trying.

## School board should start facing public

Members of the Board of Education are now saying they are concerned about students living in Hoke County sneaking off to attend schools in the surrounding area.

Apparently a number of students prefer the schools which are closer to their homes and which have a reputation for providing quality education.

Although solid improvements are being made to improve this county's schools, unfortunately the image of education here is not the highest.

Local educators are making an effort to put the word out about

what is happening in the schools and to build better public participation by encouraging active PTA's.

However, the responsibility of waging a campaign to improve the quality and reputation of the Hoke County schools should come from members of the Board of Education, who have failed in their roles as ambassadors to the public.

Board members should be facing teachers, taxpayers, parents and students on a regular basis to determine what needs to be done to upgrade the system and the image of this county's schools.

One plan might be to change the site of the board's meetings each month to a different school in the county.

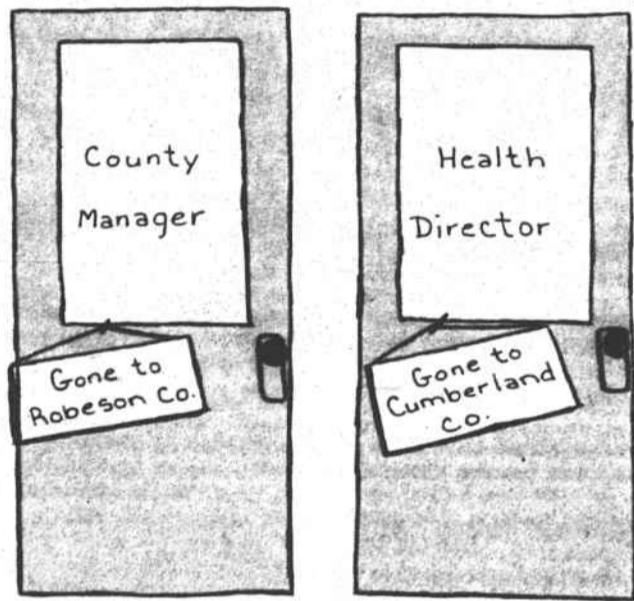
The meetings should be publicized in advance and a public forum of questions and answers could be included as a portion of the regular session.

Currently the school board members sequester themselves in the county office building and give the impression that they prefer to meet without the public in attendance.

The result is that the public feels shut out of the system, and that board members are not responsive to ideas for making education better.

If members of the Board of Education are concerned about local students seeking a "better" education in other counties and about the reputation of the Hoke County schools, then they should start facing the public and trying to make improvements.

After all, that is the job they are elected to do.



You think maybe we should change deodorant or something?



Madilyn

## Letters To The Editor

### Oxendine served this county well

To the Editor

It was a sad occasion for me to read that Earle Oxendine was retiring from the Hoke County School system because of medical reasons. I know from personal experience that the system is losing a talented faithful professional educator.

I was privileged to have worked with Earle for seventeen years. In all of those years I found him to be a man dedicated to children and a professional in every sense of the word.

Earle has a rare quality few individuals possess. When he made the statement,

"I work at the will and pleasure of the superintendent and the Board," he meant it.

Many of the assignments the Board gave him were difficult and demanding. He never complained. His approach to them was made with vigor and understanding of the job at hand. Sadly, I doubt if collectively he has ever been thanked for a job well done.

I was privileged to call him friend. He never betrayed the trust I placed in him.

The citizens of the county will never fully appreciate the great part he played in the smooth consolidation of the schools.

My prayers shall be for his full recovery. Knowing Earle like I do he will give it his best shot. Good luck, my friend. I thank God for letting me pass your way.

Raz Autry

### If you like Reagan, you will like Blake

To the Editor:

Please allow me to introduce a friend of mine whose future may indirectly affect your own. My friend is Harris Blake who many of you already know through his work in the Fayetteville Presbytery and in the Kiwanis Club. For those

of you who have ever "vacationed" at Moore Memorial Hospital, Harris is a member of the Board of Trustees. He is a successful businessman in Pinehurst; however, his achievements in business, as in other areas, came as a result of hard work and not because he was born rich.

Like most of us, Harris loves this country and like many of us, he is concerned about its leaders. Ronald Reagan proved to be the man who captured the ideals of Harris Blake. Harris saw that inflation was 13.5% and the prime rate 21.5% at the beginning of the Reagan Administration. Now it is 4.5% and 12.5% respectively, and this seems to him to be no coincidence. Harris wants to do all he can to help the President in his battle for economic recovery. Consequently, in February of this year, Harris Blake declared his candidacy for our district.

In addition to his support of the present economic program, Harris

believes that our best deterrent against war is a strong defense. As a Korean War Veteran, he has a great respect for our Armed Forces.

Like so many of us, Harris feels that the federal government has become too large and too domineering. He favors more control at the state and local levels.

Closer to home, Harris is adamant to protect our textile industry and would never have supported the bill granting "Most Favored Nation" status to Red China which led to the closing of textile mills throughout North Carolina.

Raised on a farm himself, Harris supports our district's tobacco and agricultural industries. He is very aware of Hoke County and its people and is looking for opportunities to meet many of you.

On November 6, Harris Blake's name will appear on your ballot. If President Reagan is your choice, Harris is your man for Congress.

Sincerely,  
Mary Neil King

## Trade still vital to farmers

By John Sledge  
N.C. Farm Bureau Federation  
American farmers continue to have a vital interest in international trade.

Farmers note with alarm the general decline in world agricultural trade and the loss in overseas sales of U.S. agricultural exports since fiscal year 1981.

For 13 years in a row, U.S. agricultural exports broke the record of the preceding year. This string of successes in export markets was broken in fiscal year 1982 when the value of U.S. farm exports dropped from \$44 billion to \$39 billion. Exports declined further in 1983 to less than \$35 billion, although prospects for 1984 offer some improvement, with a forecast of \$37.5 billion.

Some of the factors producing this sluggish export picture are: oversupply on a market weakened by a severe worldwide recession, shrinking world trade, increasing foreign production, international currency relationships that result in overpricing of U.S. exports, shifting trade patterns because of the use of U.S. food exports as an instrument of foreign policy, and increase in protectionism and unfair trade practices.

Many developing countries benefit from favorite tariff treatment under the Generalized System of Preferences (GSP) and receive U.S. economic assistance. These countries must be made to realize that their reliance on trade restrictions, quotas, tariffs and

non-tariff barriers invites similar actions from other countries and, therefore, works against their economic development.

The U.S. must fight even harder to gain better access to markets such as Japan and counter unfair trade practices such as the European Community's export subsidies in third world country markets.

Because of the current export situation, the need has become more acute for actions that stimulate exports such as increased use of Commodity Credit Corporation export credit, PL 480 programs, trade missions and other market development activities and private sector trade innovations.

## Weather alerts make for disastrous night

The parcel service man was at the front door. He handed me a medium sized box wrapped in brown paper and wished me a happy birthday. It was June.

"If we had only known then, I'd have given it back to him," I told my wife last week.

Inside the box was a weather radio with an alarm to warn listeners of "possible" impending violent conditions. There was a note, which read: "We are concerned about you keeping up with the elements. Living where you do, it's important to know what is going on." The note was signed: "A loving relative."

We were delighted to get the device. "We won't have to rely on our instincts anymore," I said enthusiastically.

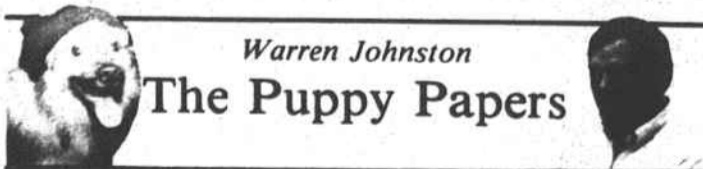
Last spring when devastating tornadoes struck, our instincts had failed. The only clue we had the world was being ripped apart 12 miles from us was when the cable television went out. The new radio would change that.

We could push a button at anytime and hear the latest National Weather Service report on climatic conditions. If violent storms were in the forecasts, the alarm would sound, night or day. A battery pack would keep the radio working during power failures, the instruction booklet said.

Everything worked fine until last week, Hurricane Diana and Tornado Advisory number 354.

We were asleep. Our instincts had told us the sky was clear. Before we went to bed, we had seen the stars, a red sky at night and had watched the full moon.

"What time is it?" my wife shouted when the piercing siren sounded. Both of us were wide awake. Our pupils were larger than saucers. Our hearts were pounding, and our breathing was erratic.



Warren Johnston

### The Puppy Papers

"There is a tornado watch for the area. An updated advisory is being prepared," the recorded voice from the Weather Service said following the 3 a.m. siren.

We listened intently from the closet where we had taken shelter. "An updated advisory is being prepared," the voice continued at 3:45 a.m. when we turned the radio off.

I let Calhoun in the house. He had been in the yard, watching an occasional small cloud drift across the full moon.

He is sort of a stay-at-home dog. I knew he had no interest in a trip to Oz on the wings of a tornado. The cat, who has similar feelings about traveling, crawled into the bed beside us.

"Here it comes. Everybody back in the closet," I said a few minutes later when I heard a distant rumbling.

We grabbed the animals and piled in under the hanging clothes. Calhoun and the cat had a slight altercation. I sat on the cat. Things calmed down, and the distant roar blew its whistle. It was the 4 a.m. train passing.

We returned to bed and drifted back to sleep.

"What time is it," my wife shouted after the alarm sounded again at 4:30 a.m.

"There is a tornado watch for the area. An updated advisory will be prepared momentarily. Thirty minutes later, when we were still

waiting in the closet for the precise word, I unplugged the radio.

Our pulse rates slowed. We went back to sleep.

"What time is it," I shouted at 5:20 a.m. when the alarm sounded for the third time. We had forgotten to remove the batteries.

"This is Tornado Advisory 354. The following counties are under a tornado watch....," the voice said.

After noting that the closest county under the watch was more than 150 miles from our house, we removed the batteries, submerged the radio in a bathtub full of water and went back to bed. It was 5:30 a.m.

At 5:45 a.m., the cat decided my arm needed remodeling and began to affectionally mold it with his claws.

I decided the cat needed to learn to fly and lovingly tossed him across the room.

He landed 10 feet away on top of Calhoun, who decided the cat needed to improve his physical conditioning. The two of them started on a 10 kilometer race down the hall.

The cat won the event when Calhoun wiped out making a turn on a throw rug and crashed into the china cabinet.

Diana is gone now. Most of the victims are saying that "it could have been worse."

The broken dishes have been removed, and we are back to relying on our instincts for weather forecasts. Had it not been for my wife's intervention, both Calhoun and the cat would have been on their way to Oz, but instead we put them back in the yard.

There were no tree limbs broken. The power did not go out. The wind or rain did no damage to our house, but as far as I am concerned the night Diana struck was a disaster.

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