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Want of smoke ends in charge

By Ed Miller

A 24-year-old Raeford man was in jail Tuesday after being arrested on November 2 and charged with first degree burglary.

Tommy Lee Brunson also known as "Babyboy" is under \$5,000 bond in Hoke County Jail, according to a spokesman at the Sheriff's Department.

Brunson, of Rt. 1, Box 582, was charged after allegedly being caught standing in the bedroom of Ola Mae Peterson.

According to sheriff's reports, Mrs. Peterson awoke at about 4:30 a.m. to find Brunson standing in her bedroom.

Peterson rushed past the alleged intruder and stood in the doorway and would not allow him to leave until her husband got home, reports say, adding that there was a large knife atop a floor cabinet near the door.

In a statement to arresting officers, Brunson said he entered the house in search of a cigarette and saw a light on before entering.

(See BURGLARY, page 3A)



Nothin' to it

Just hanging out, was the feeling gotten from this horse as he walked in a Hoke County pasture nibbling on the grass that surrounded him. With the breeze gently blowing his tail in the warm Tuesday

afternoon sun, no one would have guessed that the weather had become so beautiful just hours after the thermometer plunged into the upper 20's.

General supports US 401 widening

By Ed Miller

A recent letter from the commanding general of Ft. Bragg may have an effect on the proposed widening of U.S. Highway 401, county officials hope.

In a letter to the Secretary of the North Carolina Department of Transportation (DOT), Lieutenant General James J. Lindsay cited safety as a major reason to "strongly endorse" the widening of 401.

"The Fort Bragg community places utmost importance on the safety of its civilian and military personnel. The upgrading of Highway 401 would greatly enhance safety," Lindsay said in his letter to DOT Secretary William R. Roberson.

Lindsay "recommended that Highway 401 from the 71st Elementary School to Raeford be expanded to a four-lane highway."

The letter from Lindsay came in response to a letter sent him by the

Executive Director of the North Carolina Wildlife Resources Foundation, Inc., Clyde Upchurch.

"I just thought that since Ft. Bragg plays a big part in the economy of Hoke County, the Army might be interested in making it a safer highway," Upchurch said.

According to Upchurch, both Lindsay and Assistant Commanding Officer General Jack Farris have expressed a desire to have the road widened.

"They both said they would do anything they could to get the road widened," Upchurch said.

In conversations before the letter was sent, Lindsay said that Hoke County had contributed more to Ft. Bragg than anyone else, but had benefitted the least from it, Upchurch said.

"We feel the same way the people in Raeford feel," Public Relations Officer Lieutenant Colonel Thomas R. Gravette said.

"Emphasis should be put on (See ROAD BACKED, page 2A)

Hoke High ROTC program suffering financial woes

By Ed Miller

Despite "excellent" reviews by local school officials and by U.S. Army evaluators, the one-year-old Hoke High ROTC program remains on probation because the unit is under-funded for the number of students enrolled.

Currently about 185 students are enrolled in the program, but that figure will be cut to 150 next year to avoid the cost of hiring another instructor, Hoke High Principal Dr. Linwood Simpson said.

Over 200 students were on the rolls of the unit, but those numbers have dropped to about 185, the school principal said.

The Hoke ROTC unit was placed on probation by the Army

because of the lack of a permanent classroom, but that shortage has been corrected.

Now, the lack of a third instructor is keeping the unit on probation, Simpson said.

"I think it is an excellent program. It is teaching the students leadership and self-discipline," he said.

A third instructor would cost local taxpayers about \$11,000, and would bring the total cost of the program to around \$33,000, Simpson said.

"Failure to support the unit" is the reason for the probation, according to Hoke High ROTC Instructor Major Carlton L. McGuire.

"I'm trying to run a program with no budget," McGuire said.

According to McGuire, if the unit had not been on probation and had been eligible for a ranking along with other units, the Hoke group would have been classified as an "Army Unit with Distinction," which is the highest ranking, McGuire said.

"This unit has been compared with units in existence for several years," he said.

Right now, McGuire is having to ask Ft. Bragg to give him the equipment and training needed to run the unit, he said.

On Friday, November 16, the Army will be putting on a show for

the members of the Hoke High unit.

At about 8:45 a.m., soldiers from Bragg will rappel out of helicopters onto campus before the student body.

The ROTC problem lies in state regulations for class sizes, according to Superintendent Dr. Robert Nelson.

"He's got to reduce the numbers of kids in class," Nelson said.

According to Nelson, the vast majority of the money funded to the ROTC program by the Board of Education is used to pay instructor salaries.

For the program at Hoke High to maintain the present number of students now enrolled, the addi-

tion of another teacher would be a must, Nelson said.

"I don't think the possibility is realistic" for the Board of Education to go to the County Commission and ask for a near 50% increase in the ROTC budget, Nelson said.

"I think the rational, reasonable thing to do is bring enrollment down," the Superintendent said.

Nelson said he is not unfamiliar with the problems accompanying ROTC programs.

"It's a program that is challenging," he said, adding that it is very popular with students.

"Every program I've been involved with was big," he said.

He added that every program he

has been involved with has had to have restrictions put on the number of students enrolled.

When students cannot get into the ROTC program because of limited enrollment, they have to be treated just as any student who has been closed out of any class, said Nelson.

All students are required to list a second choice class during registration, he said.

The fact that the ROTC instructors got a salary increase this year may be the cause of the funding problems, County Commission Chairman John Balfour said.

The Board of Education requested an increase for two instructors, Balfour said.

Around Town

By Sam Morris

The weather was nice over the weekend and it was a beautiful football day in Chapel Hill. The outcome of the game made it even better. According to reports it seems that winter will be coming in this week. This is being written Monday afternoon and the forecast is for the temperature to drop into the 20s. Now this is real winter.

The weather has been good for the cotton farmers and according to W.J. Coates, most of the cotton should be picked this week. I forgot to ask him how the yield was this year. It seems that the price is good.

The people in Hoke County turned out for the election last Tuesday and most races went as would be expected in Hoke County. The Democrats have too many voters for the GOP in this county. The only surprise, maybe, was the defeat of Ruth McNair.

The real surprise in the state was the election of Jim Martin for governor. Even though the polls predicted his victory, few people here believed it could happen.

The Hoke High football team had a fine year. We believe that at this point in the season, they are the best team in the conference. They improved each week of the season and we offer our congratulations to the coaching staff and the players.

Last Saturday afternoon when I returned from the Georgia Tech-Carolina football game and opened the den door at my house, I found a letter in the door. The letter is from a Raeford native and during the past six months has experienced some trying times in her life. Her mother died in May and recently her father had a stroke. (See AROUND TOWN, page 2A)



Making sure

Two days after the elections last week, the Hoke County Board of Elections met to verify the vote. Above, Board of Elections Chairman William Poole double checks a ballot count sheet with Mary Matherly. Every ballot sheet from every precinct in the county was gone over and checked against other sheets turned in the night of the election, Poole said. The meeting Thursday was the time to file complaints with any ballots, Poole said. None were filed.

County vote made official

By Ed Miller

Members of the Board of Elections declared the vote in Hoke County official Thursday morning after no ballots were contested and one counting irregularity corrected.

There were no major problems found in the Hoke County voter returns, Board of Elections Chairman Scott Poole said.

One mistake was found in the race for Eighth Judicial District Court Judge.

The total number of ballots cast for Paul Wright had been listed as four; however, the number of straight ticket votes was left out, according to Sturgeon.

When they were added in, Wright finished with a total of over 300 votes.

According to Poole, there is not nearly the cheating actually hap-

pening during elections as is alleged by politicians.

"With all the checks we have to run on the counts, there is no way to cheat," Poole said.

When there is cheating, it is almost always found, said Poole.

In the past, the only kind of election fraud that may get past the check and balance system is that which may occur with absentee ballots, Poole said.

All ballots must be left locked in the boxes for at least 120 days, according to the chairman.

"We usually leave them in until the next election just to make sure," Poole said.

In a disagreement a number of years ago, the number of ballots in the box was questioned after the allotted time-period was up.

Although the discrepancy would have had no effect on the outcome

of the election, Poole went back and recounted the ballots to satisfy his own curiosity.

The number of ballots in the box matched the number recorded perfectly, he said.

Registrars and judges from each of the county's 13 precincts brought in ballot counts and checked them off with other counts turned in the night of the election, according to Board Supervisor Rose Sturgeon.

The time to officially contest a ballot was Thursday morning.

On the night of the election, registrars took one copy of the returns to the Board of Elections office but kept another copy, Sturgeon said.

Ashley Heights dognapping investigated

A rash of missing dogs has spurred one Hoke County resident to allege her pet "dognapped," according to sheriff's reports.

Brenda Appel reported her dog "Lady" missing on November 1, according to Sheriff's reports.

There have been eight other dogs reported missing from the Ashley Heights area of the county in the past six months, reports say.

Appel speculated that someone has been taking the dogs for experimental purposes, reports say.

In other crime, there were four break-ins reported last week in Hoke County.

According to reports, in two of the break-ins, there were very small amounts of private goods taken, but guns were apparently stolen.

Last Monday, Chason's Store in Shannon was broken into, reports say.

Harold Chason reported that about \$30 in change was taken from a jar in the store and that his .22 calibre rifle was also stolen.

There was also about \$100 damage done to the store, reports say. Investigation is continuing in the matter, reports say.

Joel Dial reported a break-in at The Tire Shack after which about \$15 in change was found missing.

Along with the money, a .22 calibre rifle valued at about \$100 was discovered missing, reports say.

A rear door was broken open to gain access to the building, but a window screen had to be broken out to get the gun, reports say.

On November 2, Richard Glenn McInnis reported that his storage shed was broken into and about \$35 in fishing gear was taken.

To accompany the loss of the fishing gear, about \$200 in damage was reported to the door of the shed.

There was a door jam broken in the locking assembly, reports say.

A break-in was reported into the residence of Ronald Odom.

In that alleged robbery, about \$120 in cash and a microwave oven valued at \$700 were taken, reports say.

A stolen bicycle was reported stolen to Raeford Police last Monday, according to Chief Leonard Wiggins.

Ronnie Strickland told police that the bike was parked in the yard at the time of the apparent theft.

The bike was valued at \$140, reports say.



Inside Today

Because of its proximity to Ft. Bragg, pleasant surroundings and friendly residents, Hoke County is becoming an international community. We take a look at three residents, who hailed from foreign lands, on page one of Section B in today's News-Journal.