

Viewpoints

ROTC program needs financial ceiling

The one-year-old Hoke High ROTC program has been praised by the U.S. Army and called "excellent" by local school officials. The unit is one which parents, students and the taxpayers can be proud. However, the program has been placed on probation by the Army, and from the point of view of some of those directly involved, ROTC at Hoke High needs additional funds to survive.

School authorities maintain that the ROTC unit is adequately funded for 150 students and have plans to cut those participating in the program to that figure next year. We believe the plan is a good one.

In the past this newspaper has strongly supported ROTC at Hoke High and will continue to do so, but we agree with the school administration that spending ceilings must be placed on all programs in order to come within the limits of what this county can afford.

As all of the supporters of the program expected a year ago, Hoke County students have benefited greatly from being part of ROTC.

The ROTC program is not only giving pupils an opportunity to work for a team effort, but participants are also learning to be leaders, good citizens and to be self-disciplined. It is difficult to put a dollar value on the worth of that type of training.

Had it not been for the ROTC, many of those lessons might never have been learned by some of those taking part in the program.

As a vocational course, the ROTC program is also graduating winners. Last year a number of Hoke High students joined the military after graduating and are being paid on a higher scale because of ROTC training.

At least three county students also received \$20,000 each in college scholarships as a result of the ROTC program.

Hoke High ROTC is so successful that too many students have signed up. To keep the participants at a level above the 150 mark, another instructor would have to be hired and another \$11,000 in local money put into the program.

Because of the limited resources of Hoke County, the additional money would have to come from some other school program to fund the new ROTC instructor. School administrators cannot justify the sacrifices, and neither can we.

When the program was funded one year ago, school officials set the goal of establishing a solid ROTC unit with two instructors. That goal has been achieved.

Once the unit is trimmed to 150 students, Hoke High ROTC will be off of Army probation and will undoubtedly be rated as one of the best units in the state.

Unfortunately, competition to qualify for the program will be stiff. Some students will be washed out of ROTC, but it is hoped that they will be able to transfer their enthusiasm to other offerings of the curriculum of Hoke High and will not be lost in the system.

Hoke County has much to be thankful for

Although there is far to go and much to achieve, Hoke County residents can count their blessings this Thanksgiving for what has been accomplished in recent months to make this a better community in which to live.

Residents can be thankful that during the last few months, county and city officials are beginning to look at the future and appear to be working towards developing a plan of survival.

During the past election, not only was a hometown man re-elected as a state representative, but several other statewide candidates with close ties to Hoke County were put in office. We can be thankful that at least some of the political leaders in Raleigh will now know where we are located when we ask them for help.

In addition, the old stigma which surrounded the Hoke County school system is being removed, and administrators, teachers and students are working to upgrade the level of education offerings.

Because of the positive steps being taken by many in this community, we can probably look to future expansions of the local workforce, an improved local economy and better services.

There are many good things going on in Hoke County, and the chance of a better life here now looks brighter than it has in many years.

We have a great deal to be thankful for, but one of the most important is that we live in Hoke County, which is a blessing to be remembered not just on Thursday, but all year.

"Bubba, we've had this turkey for six years. now. Don't you think it's time?"



Letters To The Editor

Thanks offered

To The Editor:

As Thanksgiving is a time to count your blessings rather than belabor your woes, Hoke County Reading/Literacy Council would like to extend a sincere thank you to those and for those who make our existence possible.

Our first thank you goes to Hoke County Commissioners for being the first in North Carolina to support and continue to support a literacy council.

We also give thanks for Raeford City Council, for United Way and for the churches, organizations, businesses and individuals who have kept us financially afloat.

Let us not forget our state senator and representatives. We are indeed thankful that they had the vision to realize that one of Hoke County's greatest needs is education for its adult citizens.

Without caring volunteers all the above efforts would have been wasted. We can never express our gratitude to them or for them.

Our biggest thank you goes to the adult students who participate in our program. Only through their participation will Hoke County become literate.

And for the dream of a literate Hoke County, we give thanks. Sincerely, Barbara J. Buie

OPEC leaders need to face human nature

Dear editor:

According to an article I read the other day, if the 13 OPEC countries can't stick together on the price they charge for oil, the world price will plummet and the

oil market will face chaos and disaster.

That's the kind of chaos and disaster I could use more of. I know it will take courage, but I believe I could call up my strength and face the prospect of cheaper gasoline without feeling chaotic and disastrous.

The article said the 13 OPEC leaders called an emergency meeting because one of them broke their solemn compact and cut the price of oil. Naturally oil buyers started buying from the price-cutter, leaving the others with more oil than their storage tanks will hold.

I understand their problem. Except for the fact the word wasn't spread around, a parallel situation with a different product could have existed in the United States. Had hardware stores around the country known that one store was getting \$500 for a screwdriver from the Pentagon, don't you know they'd have cut their price way under that, even if it did cause chaos and disaster in the screwdriver market.

The OPEC leaders may know a little something about oil, after somebody comes along and discovers it under their land, but they don't know much about human nature. It's pretty much the same, whether it's under a 10-gallon hat or a turban.

Trying to get 13 countries to get together and agree on what they'll charge for oil, and then expecting all 13 to stick with it, is like two candidates for the same office agreeing to tell nothing but the truth during their campaign and sticking with it. In fact, sometimes it's impossible to get even one to stick with it.

Competition in oil, screwdrivers and lies will break out every time. Yours faithfully, J.A.

Grateful for support

To the Editor:

I am deeply grateful to the people of Hoke County who supported me in the congressional race on Nov. 6.

My opponent and I each carried six of the 12 counties in the Eighth District - and although Hoke was not in my column, every person's vote I received is greatly appreciated.

Even though I lost this very close race, I can't help feeling that I was also a winner to have had the privilege of meeting and making so many new friends, as well as renewing old friendships, in Hoke County and throughout the district. The people were a source of strength during the long days and weeks of campaigning.

Early on November 7, I telephoned Congressman Hefner to offer my congratulations and best wishes.

Sincerely, Harris Blake

Letters Policy

Letters to the editor are encouraged and welcomed. Writers should keep letters as short as possible. Names, addresses and telephone numbers should be included and all letters must be signed. Names will be printed, however, other information will be kept confidential. We reserve the right to edit letters for good taste and brevity. Letters should be received by *The News-Journal* by noon on the Monday of the publication week.



Letter sparks coffee spewing

The fleas will run with the dog, my mother always used to say. I never knew what she meant until last week when the newspaper received a letter to the editor that caused me to burn my tongue on the hot coffee I was drinking and to spew the beverage all over the wall.

It wasn't the first time the editor's office had been stained brown by coffee too hot to drink which was spat out in a moment of passion.

The same sort of eruption had happened three times before when previous editors received similar letters and had burned their tongues on morning coffee.

One stain, a small dribble on the right side of the office, dates back to '56. That's when a letter came in shortly after Ike Eisenhower put Adlai Stevenson down for the count a second and final time.

Another letter was delivered in 1972 when Nixon topped George McGovern. That stain covers a large portion of the left wall.

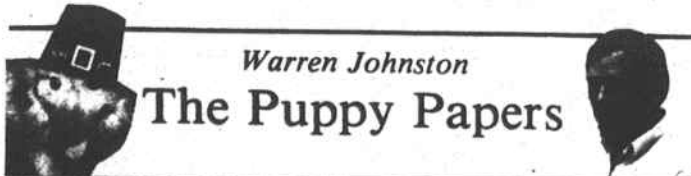
Then there was the 1980 letter. It resulted in small spots all over the ceiling following the Ronald Reagan roll over Jimmy Carter.

I'm not sure of the policy of previous editors, but mine is to publish letters without comment. It is my belief that a writer will either excel or hang by his own words.

I believe the reader is smart enough to see this letter writer swinging without me pointing it out in an "Editor's Note."

Readers can see the fleas hopping along, like little soldiers, with the dog, without me insulting their intelligence by doling out labels.

However, I would encourage you not to drink anything while reading this letter, which obviously was written by some overweight, meat-eating, cigar-smoking, misguided nouveau robber baron in a



milk-toasted effort to rub salt in the wounds of the Democratic Party:

November 15

Dear Mr. Editor:

The November 1, 1984 issue of your paper had the *Puppy Papers* dealing with the *Politics Awareness Workshop* recently held at Holden Beach.

Upon reading the liberally slanted comments, our immediate urge was to jump to the defense of Sadie Louise. However, being ever so confident of the election outcome, we decided to wait until after November 6, 1984, to write.

Indeed we applaud Sadie Louise for standing up for her conservative causes. She obviously realizes we're better off now than four years ago and we're getting better all the time. Even though Sadie is surrounded by liberals, she's oh so strong.

Reminds me of our President.

Wish we had more time, but our tee time is approaching. It'll be a dangerous trip on the way out of town. Lots of Democrats jumping out of the highrise state office building. Have to dodge those suckers.

Elephantly Yours, The Raleigh Contingent of Itinerate Republicans

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