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Efforts renewed to launch college satellite

Efforts are underway to establish a satellite branch of Sandhills Community College in Hoke County before the coming school year.

A new satellite would be located initially on the campus of Hoke High School and would use the facility from 4 p.m. to 10 p.m., according to recommendations made last week by members of a non-profit corporation who have organized to get the college started.

The Hoke County College Foundation is a citizens' group incorporated in December to raise

private donations that would underwrite the satellite and insure that it would be a lasting institution, the group's bylaws say.

According to the Foundation's recommendations, the satellite would operate at the high school until it becomes feasible to purchase land and construct buildings to house the college.

Under the plan, a fulltime Hoke County director and secretary would be hired to oversee the daily operations of the school.

Currently, Sandhills provides a Moore County-based part-time

employee to oversee a limited number of Hoke County classes.

The new plan calls for the director to hold regular office hours and to be accessible to the public.

For an expanded college to operate in the high school, the Hoke County Commission will have to cover the costs of utilities and maintenance for the time the facility is used, a spokesman for the Foundation said.

Plans call for funds to pay the salaries of the director and the secretary through private sources for the first year.

After the college is in operation

for one year, salaries and operating expenses for the director will be picked up by the state through the community college system.

The Raeford-Hoke Chamber of Commerce sponsored an effort to get a satellite established in the county a year ago.

Members of the Hoke County Commission endorsed the plan and OK'd a funding plan for an architectural study of the old Bank of Raeford Building and the old National Guard Armory, which were both considered possible initial sites for the school.

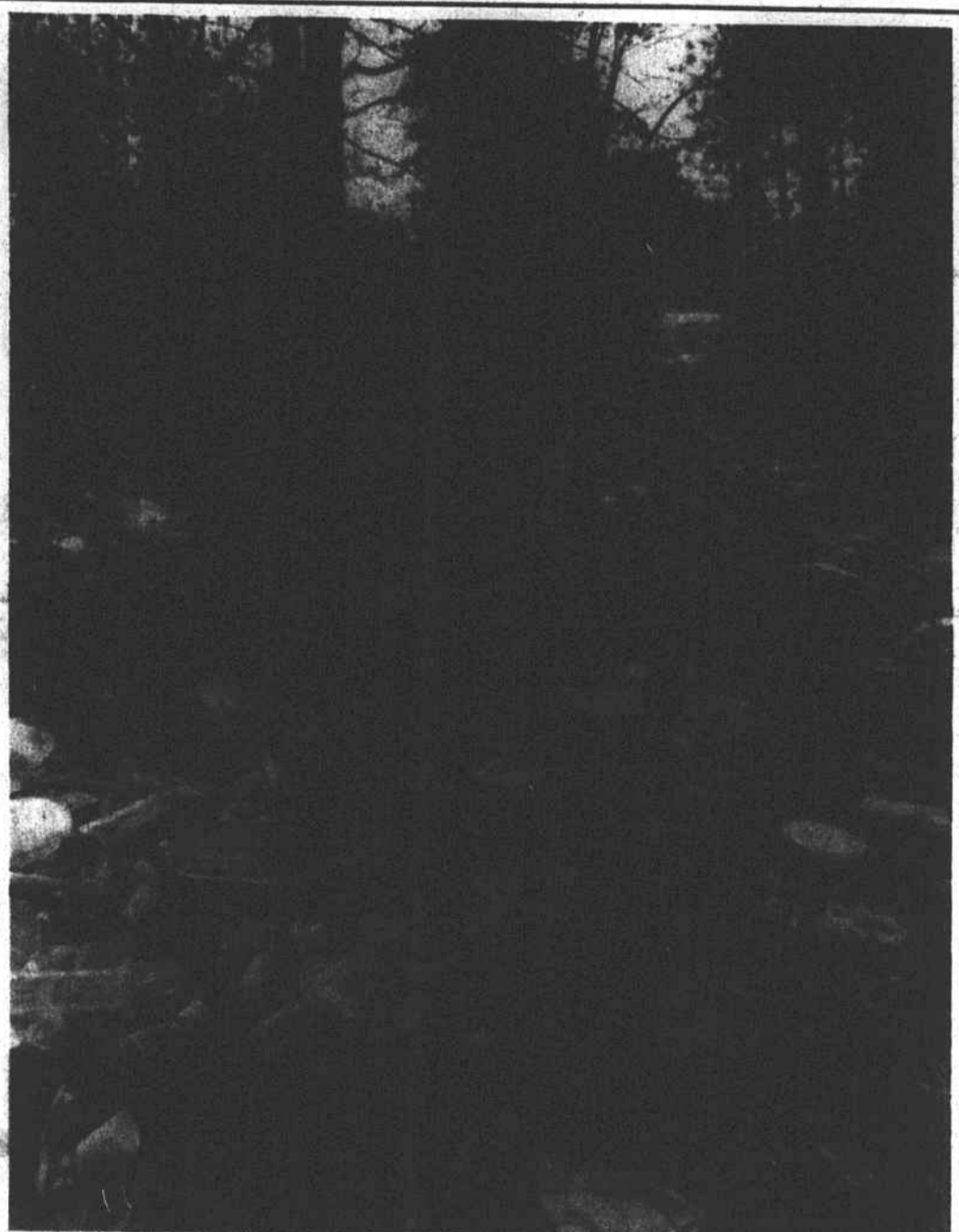
When the Southern Pines architectural firm estimated the renovations on the bank building could run as high as \$700,000 and the Armory more, the sites were dropped and the college was placed on the back burner.

In December the Foundation was organized and incorporation expenses were paid by the Chamber.

Foundation members began working on the project in January, and committees have met with college officials from Fayetteville Tech and Sandhills.

Burlington Industries Plant Manager William Archer was elected President of the Foundation Board of Directors; J.H. Blue Jr., vice president, Southern National Bank Manager Steve Parker, treasurer and Chamber Executive Secretary Beverly Pasternak, secretary.

Other board members are: Duncan McFadyen, Daniel DeVane, Betty Barnart, Gene Carter, Barbara Buie, Warren Johnston, Charlotte Howell, John D. McAllister, Kay Thomas and Harold Gillis.



Trashed

Someone apparently illegally dumped a load or so of garbage off this rural Hoke County road. The dirt road is just past the Tylertown Community. Not only is the dumping unsightly and devastating to the landscape, it poses a potential health hazard

to nearby residents. The dumping has been reported to the Hoke County Sheriff's Department. The matter is under investigation, a spokesman said Tuesday.

Hoke school officials vexed by new state payroll laws

By Ed Miller

Hoke County school administrators are more than unhappy with a new state law which requires all local school payrolls to be centralized by the state.

"That would be putting it politely," said School Superintendent Robert Nelson.

In fact, some state school officials even think the move would be regressive in Hoke County, a local administrator says.

According to School Business Manager Don Steed, assistant state school board controller Joyce Baffi said the move, which takes effect on July 1, would be a backward step for Hoke County.

Baffi was on vacation and could not be reached for comment this week.

According to Steed, the Hoke County school system has spent \$80,000 to update a computer system to accommodate payroll data and make paying school employees efficient.

Now the Hoke County Board of Education will have to come up with another \$6,000 to buy a new

computer terminal so they can tap into the state system, said Steed.

The state will give school administrators one terminal free of charge for every 500 employees in the school system, but Hoke County does not have that many, said Steed, adding that taxpayers will have to buy the terminal, Steed said.

According to the business manager, the new payroll system will not even delete any work for employees of the Hoke schools.

"It will create more work," said Steed.

The present computer system will post amounts in ledgers automatically, said Steed.

"The state system will not," he said.

According to Dr. Nelson, the move to the centralized payroll system is not a proposal.

Hoke County, as a part of the state Region 4, will go on the line July 1, he said.

The plan has already been passed by the state Legislature, Nelson said.

A part of the payroll plan that

really has school officials upset is the possibility that the state will make payment of all checks mandatory direct deposit, said Nelson.

That means that checks will not be issued to teachers, aides, substitutes, custodians or bus drivers, he said, adding that all money will be wired directly from the state into local bank accounts.

"The move will affect everyone that gets a payroll check," said Steed.

According to a guess by Steed, 15% of the school system's employees do not have a bank account.

"What has been stated to us is that the direct deposit part of it may be made optional," said the Director of Local Education Agency Central Payroll System, Lisa Miller.

"The Legislature is just back in session and they may change it," Miller said.

According to Miller, the state system is "equal if not better than all systems now operating." (See OFFICIALS, page 2A)

Inventory proposal sparks ire of Board of Education members

By Ed Miller

After heated discussion, the Hoke County Board of Education tabled action on a proposal to pay consultants \$17,800 for an inventory of all property owned by the school system.

The inventory would be taken by American Appraisal, a consulting firm "dealing in value and cost," said Bo Perry, a representative of the company.

Almost every piece of equipment in all the county's schools will be included in the inventory for the initial cost of \$17,800, Perry said.

The system will cost about \$1,900 per year to keep going once the initial inventory is done, said Perry.

According to Hoke County Schools Business Manager Don Steed, private businesses have had systems of this sort for years.

"These methods have not been used in school systems much before," Steed said.

The school system in Hoke County has been under pressure for years to use better, more accurate techniques in accounting for their "fixed assets," said Frank Baker, of Pittard, Perry and Crone Accountants.

Baker's firm audits the books for the Hoke County Schools.

For the last several years, Baker's firm has attached notes to the schools' audit concerning the need for accurate inventories,

Board of Education Chairman Bill Cameron said.

The proposed system will incorporate three methods to assure correct accounting, said Perry.

Property control is "all the little things you'd like to know about your fixed assets," Perry said.

How big a bookshelf is, what it is made of and where it is currently are examples, said Perry.

Property accounting is part of the methodology dealing with accounting principles, he said.

Risk management and forecasting is the process of listing what equipment cost when it was bought and what current replacement cost would be. (See INVENTORY, page 2A)

Tylertown targeted for CD funds

By Ed Miller

Although the proposal may change after a public hearing, Hoke County is again seeking Community Development (CD) funds to revitalize the Tylertown area.

Preliminary estimates are that about \$726,000 will be applied for, county and state officials said Monday.

"That's what's going to be proposed at the public hearing," Hoke County Manager William Cowan said.

According to Cowan, the first of two public hearings on the matter is scheduled for February 18 at 7:15 p.m.

"The planned proposal is the same as last year's," said Cowan.

The Board of Hoke County Commissioners has not voted on the proposal yet; therefore, the plan could change if public interests lie in other areas, Cowan said.

"The public hearing is for people to come qualify options of

greater need," the County Manager said.

According to Cowan, the Lumber River Council of Governments (COG) will actually prepare the application for the grant.

On applications prepared last year for the same project, by the same organization, Hoke County was rated 121 out of 169 applicants, said a spokesperson for the state Department of Natural Resources and Community Development (NRCD).

Hoke County would have had to be placed in the top 39 applications to have been funded last year, Penny Craver said.

According to Lumber River COG Director Jim Perry, the matter of changing certain items on the application so they will be rated higher is not in the picture yet.

"It's difficult to say that we will do the same thing we did last year," Perry said.

"Unless there is a drastic change in public opinion, we plan to present the same proposal," he said.

Perry appeared hopeful about getting the funds for Tylertown this year.

"Rehabilitation of existing structures and housing is a national objective," he said, adding that keeping in line with such objectives will aid Hoke County in scoring highly on the application.

Perry would not comment on this county's chances of being funded this year.

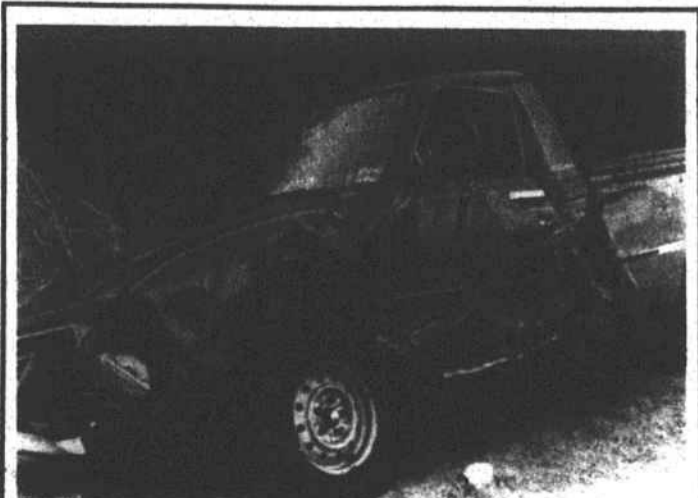
Biddings for the grants are "very competitive," he said.

According to Cowan, NRCD has a total of over \$31 million to be dealt out among the applicants for community revitalization projects.

Another \$8.4 million has been set aside for economic development grants, Cowan said.

Both Cowan and Perry say Hoke County could apply for those funds if an industry becomes interested in this area.

According to an example given by the County Manager, if Hoke (See TYLERTOWN, page 9A)



Knocked its lights loose

This Toyota pick-up was damaged when it was struck by a tractor trailer rig early last Monday morning on US Highway 401. According to investigating State Trooper John Gildewell, Gaylord Dye, driver of the tractor rig, tried to pass in an intersection on Highway 401 and ran into the side of Roger George's pick-up. George is from Lumber Bridge. Dye, a Mt. Holly resident, was charged with improper passing. Gildewell said. There was about \$1,000 damage done to Dye's truck.

Around Town

By Sam Morris

The weather was nice Sunday and Monday with the temperatures being in the 50s. This will change by Tuesday with a forecast of rain and maybe snow. Also the temperatures will get back to wintertime weather.

According to Robert Gatlin, we have already had over 10 inches of rain this year. This is above what we usually have this time of year, according to Gatlin.

Anyway, maybe by the middle of March we will have more warm days than cold. I don't believe I have played golf but once this year.

Since retiring most of the information that goes in this column comes by talking to people or what someone will tell me he has heard recently. This is fine unless the information you receive isn't exactly (See AROUND, page 2A)