

Viewpoints

College needs quick action

Former Governor Bob Scott told a legislative committee last week that politically strong community colleges in North Carolina are draining state funds from smaller units and creating inequities in the system.

Scott's words hit home in Hoke County, where because of political inactivity, students have had to hit the road to get an education beyond high school.

The plans of the former governor to correct the situation should have also buoyed hopes of a citizen's group which is attempting to obtain a satellite college for Hoke County.

According to Scott, political favoritism has been the

guiding light of the Legislature in determining which schools got construction and program funding.

Currently Hoke County has more than 800 students who are taking full time classes either through Sandhills Community College, Fayetteville Tech or Robeson Tech. All of them must travel over 20 miles to get an education.

A survey last spring showed that about 1,600 county residents would take higher education classes if they were offered in Hoke County. The need and demand for a local campus is here.

This county is one of the poorest in the state and many local residents could improve their lot if they were able to get more training. Many of those residents cannot afford to travel the distances now required to get to class.

Members of the Hoke County Higher Education Foundation are taking an economically responsible approach to meet the need for a college by attempting to get a satellite started

here next fall by using the high school facility.

The group believes that for about \$65,000, a full time director can be hired, classes organized and the college satellite put in business.

If the demand for classes is high, Foundation members feel that then a Hoke County college can eventually move out of the high school to its own campus.

The approach is sound and in keeping with the wishes of college system President Scott.

However, if this county waits another year to get the doors open on a satellite, chances of obtaining state funding will probably be non-existent.

We support members of the Foundation in their efforts to secure the satellite for Hoke County and encourage members of the County Commission and Board of Education to endorse the plan during their March meetings.

If Hoke County is going to have a college satellite, action needs to be taken soon.

Age appreciates friendships

Contrary to many articles written about the woes of growing older it has its "I told you so side". Grumpiness, opinions on all subjects, and the right to say no to anyone, is all a part of it. The younger public chalks it up not to impoliteness, but to age.

On the serious side, age gives one an opportunity to evaluate friendships and friends made in a lifetime of work.

I have written a lot about my friend D.R. Huff; most of it has been of a comical nature. This article is intended to show Huff, the contributor.

D.R. has been a close personal friend for many years. Our friendship grew out of a lot of rough seas we traveled together. I was the high school principal for four of his five sons. Working with them gave me an edge in getting to know the family.

No one individual in Hoke County has made a greater contribution to his fellowman than D.R. He has always shunned the spotlight. On occasions he has blistered my ears for some of my letter writing. Not one to hold back his opinion, he expressed them to me when he thought I was wrong. At no time can I ever remember getting angry with him, when he used Marine Corp language on me to explain a point.

Serving the citizens of Hoke County for 23 years on the board of education was the highlight of his public service. He was elected term after term as chairman by his fellow board members. Never once in the years I worked with him did he ever abuse their trust.

D.R. served through the toughest of times on the board. Consolidation of smaller schools into larger ones, integration of three races into one school system, were but two of the many issues he faced. When the decision was



Looking On
Raz Autry

made by the board to integrate the schools some folks in Hoke County wouldn't sit at the same table with him in a restaurant.

After 23 years of serving Hoke County schools through the most difficult of times, a fickle public defeated him. Instead of being bitter and feeling sorry for himself, he turned his energy and attention to another area of service.

Conservation of our soil and water has been one of D.R. great concerns for many years. After he left the board of education, his full attention was turned toward this area. Moving through the ranks was easy for him, because others recognized his leadership and concern. He was honored by his fellow

conservationists by being elected state president. When his term was over instead of retiring, he continued to serve on the local board as its chairman.

Slowed in body by a crippling stroke and a fight with cancer doesn't stop him from attending state and local meetings, which will further the cause of conservation. A lesser man would have tossed in the towel and watched from a chair of self-pity. That thought has never entered his mind. Giving less than his best is something he is going to have no part of.

I have kidded him and had a lot of fun at his expense, yet he doesn't have a greater admirer than me.

Some men and women were made in a special mold, and we are not privileged to know why. Such individuals demand the best from us and can get it. D.R. is one of those individuals. I thank God for letting me have an opportunity to have this friend.



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Letter To The Editor

401 letter answered

Editor's note: This letter is in response to one published last week from Rep. William G. Hefner.

The Honorable William G. Hefner
U.S. House of Representatives
2161 Rayburn House Office Bldg.
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Hefner:
Thank you for your letter of February 15 in support of the four-laning of US 401 between Raeford and Cumberland County.

As indicated in your letter, our Board of Transportation in

December 1984 again placed this needed improvement of US 401 in our Department's Transportation Improvement Program. Right-of-way acquisition is scheduled for FY 1987 and construction is scheduled for FY 1989.

Our Transportation Improvement Program is based on federal-aid highway funding continuing at the levels authorized by the Surface Transportation Act of 1982. Obviously, whether this funding level will occur or not is dependent on future actions by Congress.

The continued Congressional inaction of the ICE/ISCE has not only brought our interstate con-

struction program to a halt but has also impacted our State's primary and urban highway improvement programs. Our Transportation Improvement Program uses the minimum apportionment federal-aid funding to support improvements on the federal-aid primary and urban highway systems.

We greatly appreciate and value your continuing support and efforts to see that North Carolina gets its share of federal-aid funding for highways and other public works projects.

Sincerely,
James E. Harrington

Hoke has history of industrial developing

The other day I was wandering around the Hoke County Library in search of some historical perspective when I stumbled over some old newspaper clippings about Raeford.

Because of all the recent to-do of hiring an economic developer, these particular articles caught my eye.

A piece in the November, 1939, "Sesqui-centennial" edition of *The Fayetteville Observer* noted in the headline that: "Raeford Centers Attention On Industry; Citizens Hope To Balance The Agri. Payrolls; Territory Surrounding Town Is a Paradise for Sportsmen; Good Government; Has Strong Bank and Good Hotel; Located on U.S. 15-A."

Newspaper headlines were long in those days, and one would think that after the buildup there would be very little left to write about, but there was and here is some of what the article said:

"The people of Raeford, located in one of North Carolina's leading counties, are giving thought to building their town into an industrial center...to balance their agricultural advantages with industrial payrolls.

"A paradise for sportsmen, the territory surrounding Raeford abounds in deer, quail and other game. The Hotel Raeford often is crowded with hunters, as well as, tourists who use route 15-A on their way to and from Florida and New York.

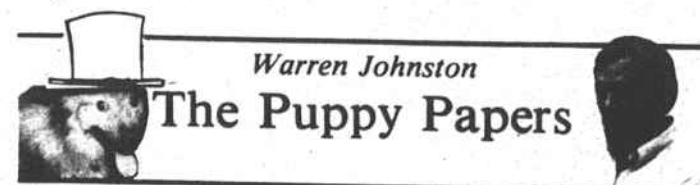
"Raeford numbers among its industries the Upchurch Milling Company, which provides a cash market for farmers of Hoke County.

"The Bank of Raeford, which is strong and progressive, and has paid a 10 per cent dividend since it was started in 1903, is the envy of many in cities much larger in population.

"An efficient town government, headed by Dr. G.W. Brown, the mayor, has given Raeford many of the conveniences expected of larger cities. Serving on the city council are five of the town's civic leaders, including H.L. Gatlin Jr., Joe Gulledege, W.L. Stanton, Carl Morris and R.D. Sanders, each successful in their own businesses.

"Protecting the health, property and lives of its citizens are fine municipally owned water and sewerage systems, fire and police departments.

"Eldridge Chisholm is the chief of police and R.B. Lewis, chief of the fire department. Both men have years of experience.



Seek industries

"With good water, ample transportation facilities, an abundance of loyal workers and a number of industrial sites, Raeford is in a position to offer new industries a number of advantages. The biggest advantage being that the people of the town want new industries...for in this day of labor strife and turmoil, industrialists are seeking to diversify their manufacturing activities and establish branch plants where they know they will be welcome."

A decade later

In an edition of the Fayetteville newspaper which appeared in 1949, Hoke County and Raeford appeared to be making strides toward improving the quality of life by landing jobs for residents and tax dollars for local coffers.

The article appeared under the headline: "Raeford, Million-Dollar Boom Hits Busy Hoke County Town."

In the cutline under a photograph of Mayor W.L. Poole and his father, then 90-year-old journalist and former mayor David Scott Poole, it was noted that the elder Poole, who also served in the state Legislature, liked nothing better than to hoe in his garden and to talk about baseball.

Here's some of what the 1949 article says:
"Raeford—The million-dollar boom that has hit this town since the War's end has caused Raeford folks to rub their eyes in wonder.

"We just aren't accustomed to such fast progress," declares Mayor W.L. Poole. Nevertheless, he is as proud as a young father over the building activity, plus the fact that Raeford's population has soared to an estimated 3,500—as compared to 1,630 given by the 1940 census." (Today's population is approximately 3,800.)

"In the four years since 1945, Raeford had acquired, a \$100,000 cinder block factory, a \$150,000 flour mill, a \$65,000 freezer locker

plant, Johnson Cotton Company's \$68,000 building, a new \$70,000 edifice for the Baptist Church and a \$32,000 remodeling project by the Presbyterian Church.

Housing activity

"The genial mayor took pride in housing activity, with over 100 homes built at an average cost of about \$6,000. These include 19 modern houses in the Sunset Hills, west of the business district and 20 in the eastern section.

"A \$70,000 Negro school (Upchurch Junior High School) has been completed, and the First Methodist Church has begun construction on a \$100,000 building adjoining the courthouse property on North Main Street.

"Perhaps the highlight of the town's growth has been the Para Thread Company's new factory (now JRA Industries). This is located in the western section, being housed in a modern \$100,000 building erected by local capital. Some \$300,000 worth of equipment has been installed and the mill has begun limited production during its 'training period' for employees. (J.H. Austin was the plant manager.)

"The new factory did not 'just happen' to pick Raeford for its location. It was secured mainly through efforts of the Hoke Development Corporation, organized about two years ago by local business leaders to entice new industry to the community.

"Such staunch citizens as C.L. Thomas and J.L. McNeill have realized their vision of new economic lifeblood for the town.

"Mayor Poole could have added a few more observations about the city's changes during his lifetime. But he had an important engagement that held No. 1 priority. He had to take a group of youngsters to Dunn for a baseball game.

"Two things we take seriously in this town," he grinned. "Our fishing and our baseball."

For one who has not been here during the last 36 years, it is difficult to understand why after a continued growth through the 1950's, Raeford and Hoke County slowed the pace.

Perhaps this latest push for growth will rekindle the spirit that once existed in this county during earlier times.

It is a nice thought, anyway.