

Viewpoints

Nursing home needs local fight group

Hoke County has fallen victim to a state controlled system which is crippling health care. That system needs to be corrected, and local residents need to campaign for changes in the law.

Currently the state Department of Human Resources (DHR) is holding up construction of a nursing home in Hoke County because of a squabble over who will be granted the certificate of need. After more than six months of application delays, DHR officials are now saying a solution could take as much as two more years.

There is no debate over the need in Hoke County to have the nursing beds. That need has been called critical, but the question which is delaying the construction of a facility is tied to the state's decision on which firm would be the best to develop the nursing home.

In short, Hoke County is suffering because of "red tape." If county residents sit back, as we have in the past, the nursing home may never be built here.

Formal letters of protest should be sent by local officials to DHR, to the governor and to the local legislative delegation.

The local members of the committee who are working to get the nursing home here should go to Raleigh and present Hoke County's need for action.

Like everything which is wanted from the state, those who protest the loudest get the results. The system is not fair, but it is fact. Hoke County needs a nursing home, and if we are ever going to get one, we are going to have to fight for it.

Mobile home ordinance is strong first step

Members of the Hoke County Commission and the Planning Board should be commended for taking swift action to adopt a mobile home ordinance.

The ordinance was approved Monday by the commissioners and will become law in July. The OK came after planning board members worked out a compromise on objections to the proposed ordinance and quickly returned the changed bill to the commission.

Once the ordinance becomes the law, Hoke County will have controls over future irresponsible mobile home developers and will be able to insure that quality housing is being provided for residents.

The job by the commissioners and the planning board was a good one.

Now, both boards can begin work on needed regulations to improve the appearance of junk yards, to regulate residential lot sizes and to define sites for industrial development.

Hoke County needs zoning restrictions, and the planning board is doing the job to provide them.

Graduates starting towards adult life

On Friday, the lives of almost 300 Hoke County residents will change. They will be leaving the safe harbor of high school and heading out into an exacting world which offers few second chances.

After Friday's graduation ceremony, some will continue with their formal education, but for many, although they will keep learning, the school experience will be "finally" over.

High school graduation marks the first traceable steps into adulthood, and from now on, graduates will have to rely on the knowledge they have already acquired to survive.

There will still be time to correct wrong moves; however, decisions that are made now will begin to have more of a telling influence on the remainder of their lives.

For June graduates, the future is exciting and at the same time frightening. It is hoped they have accumulated the tools to make the way easier.

We wish them well.



Letters To The Editor

Turkey Pickin' community effort

To the Editor:
If you missed the Turkey Pickin' Thursday night at the National Guard Armory you missed out on lots of things. Good food, good fellowship and good Hoke County people working together to make our county a better place to live and hopefully to let the state and country learn all about Raeford, and our "Turkey Festival."

So often when an event like this takes place the people who have worked so hard to make a success of it aren't thanked or recognized.

If I might use a portion of this paper I would like for the people in Hoke County to know who to thank and/or drop a thank you note to.

Marvin Johnson, generously donated hundreds of pounds of turkey fillets at over \$2.00 per pound at market price to our cause. We thank you Mr. Johnson.

Other things were also donated, ice cream from A&P, and the Paul

Livingston's, part of the turkey marinate from PYA Wholesale, gas for the grills from Raeford Oil Co., and prizes from our local merchants.

Two of the hardest workers were Kay Thomas and Sandy Johnston. Kay's dedication to Raeford and Hoke County is to be commended. She gives so much of her time and energy.

Sandy Johnston is a true asset to Hoke County. She has gone beyond the call of duty -- We thank you Sandy & Kay.

Others who worked so hard to make the Turkey Pickin' a success were Sara Leach, Bob Gentry, Clyde Leach, Crawford Thomas, Warren Johnston, Earl McDuffie and Joe Upchurch. We also had many people who helped serve, take up tickets, sell tickets, aprons and t-shirts, wash dishes, mop floors, take down tables, chairs and return to borrowers, deliver trash cans, empty garbage, pick-up food and run errands. You know who you are and I hope you will accept this thank you!

Community spirit comes out in an event like this. It is important to be a town, and county you can be proud of. The people make the town and county. I'm proud of you Raeford and Hoke County. As one of my friends said, "You do pretty work." Let's make it better!!

Evelyn Manning,
Turkey Pickin'
Committee Person

Home health appreciated

To the Editor:
St. Joseph Health home agency of Hoke County has wonderful people working for them.

There are no words that can express the love and kindness and compassion shown to Mrs. Margret Hutter during her long illness.

Mrs. Ronda Pickler, Vicki Jones, and Judy Ferguson worked long after hours to help.

(See LETTERS, page 3B)

Cross-country trip renewing

One of the great joys derived from living is being able to do the unexpected.

I experienced this joy recently and had the best of two worlds. The publisher of my children's book needed me in California and my brother Jerry wanted me to go with him across country and drive a 1966 Corvaire. Being the adventurous type, I agreed. Only the young at heart would have enough nerve to start such a venture. Having survived turbulent years with school boards and county commissioners prepared me well for the journey.

Our travels started in Nashville, Tennessee, after the graduation of my niece from Vanderbilt University.

Only two people of the 100 we asked felt two adventurous nuts would make the 2500-mile trip. One of those was my good friend Bob Gentry and the other was my niece's boyfriend.

When I was in my courtin' days, if my girlfriend's father was going to undertake such a journey, I would have said he was going to make it also. The young man hadn't spent four years in college trying to get a B.S. Degree in Fool.

Positive thinking and faith served us well, as we departed from Nashville at 2 p.m. on May 10.

Memphis was to be our goal for the first night. Instead we made it to Little Rock, Arkansas.

It is imperative to have several quarts of oil when you are driving a Corvaire. Using oil is not the problem. Leaking oil and Ralph Nader were responsible for the demise of the Corvaire. The trip to Little Rock consumed a quart of oil but no trouble developed.

Gaining confidence on the first leg we decided to try for Amarillo, Texas the next day. It was 619 miles and two quarts of oil away.

Texas looked more inviting this time than it did in November when I was struggling with Huff. Green luscious grass and money hungry oil wells were in abundance.

Old no. 66 was still purring along. It was runing to near perfection because Jerry and I had taken none of the advice given us. Get an extra heat light, motorcycle oil, tune the motor, drive at night and fix the muffler were only a few of the gems we received.



Looking On
Raz Autry

If we had followed all of the advice, it would have taken \$18,000 to bring it to California. We carried it on \$75 worth of gas, several belts and an \$8 tire replacement. We wouldn't have needed the \$8 tire if Brother Corbett hadn't been trying to collect our insurance. The belts were another story. We used on belt from Nashville to Bakersfield, California. Outside the city the red light came on. Reaching for my tools and assuring Brother everything was under control, I discovered much to my dismay I had brought the wrong tools. I will forever be thankful that my minister was not along.

Brother Jerry's fellow Californians at the rate of one every two seconds passed us by. Not only wouldn't they stop, one would have thought they were zombies the way they gazed straight ahead. Jerry's Levi's could have caused a communication gap. The Salvation Army would have refused them.

Finding a dilapidated belt in the car, we forced it in place and crept down the road. Arriving in a small

community named Siema, we bedded down for the night.

After eye balling a clerk at an auto parts store at 8 a.m. the next morning we continued toward San Francisco. Discussing the robbery by a modern day Jessie James in the auto parts store gave us another reason to be thankful that the Lord looks after his children.

Many folks along the route wanted to know what language I spoke. Informing them youall, swanta and doggone was from the original language didn't get me an offer from the local university.

The trip had a lot of pluses for me. Enjoying the company of my brother, renewing my faith in General Motors and acting like I was a veteran writer was an ego booster.

America is a great place, often we forget. If one wants to renew the faith of our values, travel across the broad place we call home.

People, places and things while it is an old cliché tells the story of our love, concern and joy. We may be divided on issues and talk different English, but the joy of calling America the greatest country on earth, always brings our eyes to the brink of tears.

It is good to be home. The satisfaction of knowing I can go any place I like with one I love makes it a better home.

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High school graduation caused bad dreams

I graduated from old North Fulton High 21 years ago. It was a nerve-wracking experience.

Until they actually handed me the diploma, I was sure something would go wrong and I would be forced to remain in high school, while my friends went on to new lives.

Prior to the graduation exercises, I was so concerned that I dreamed about miscues which would send me back to roam the disinfectant-smelling halls of the school and would force me to associate with underclassmen.

Two nights before the graduation, I had a dream that I got lost on the way to the ceremony.

In the dream, I was running late and traffic was bad. I took a shortcut in downtown Atlanta in hopes of eliminating minutes off the trip to the civic auditorium where the graduation was to be held.

Most Atlanta natives know that one never takes shortcuts in the downtown, particularly since the traffic department tried to make the cow paths into logical routes. I was nervous about graduating, so I must not have been thinking clearly.

I became hopelessly snarled in the twisting maze of downtown streets, and ended up selling my car to a wino in exchange for bus fare back to the auditorium.



Warren Johnston

The Puppy Papers

When I finally arrived, all of my classmates had gone on to new lives or at least to the evening's celebrations. Only the school's principal remained. He was picking up discarded programs, which he planned to reuse the next year. He was very frugal.

"You missed the graduation," the principal said. "You'll have to go back to the eighth grade and start over."

I woke up in a panic. There are few things which will bring a prospective high school graduate to his knees faster than the thought of a trip back to the eighth grade.

On the eve of the graduation, I had another dream. This time I made the ceremony, but I forgot my pants.

Everyone else had on their black robes; however, I didn't. I was naked from the waist down.

"If this doesn't get me sent back, nothing will," I thought in my dream.

We were sitting there on the stage of the auditorium. The lights were shining on us. The audience, which must have been filled with 10,000 proud parents and friends, was eagerly applauding as each member of the class stood, walked forward and received the diploma from the school's thrifty principal.

The dream went on for what seemed like a lifetime. With each name the principal called, I got closer to the eighth grade.

Finally, just as the guy next to me was asking me if I would like to borrow his hat, I woke up.

After those dreams, I was very careful to arrive at my graduation two hours early. I also checked four times to make sure I had on my pants.

Now that it is 21 years later, occasionally I still dream about high school.

There is a difference from those nightmares I had two decades ago. In today's musings, going back to the eighth grade does not seem that bad.