

## Jobless rate has bid drop

Plant call backs and hard work by the local employment office have been credited with the reason the Hoke County jobless rate dropped more than three percentage points during September to hit the second lowest level of the year.

During September, unemployment in the county dropped from 11.4% to 8.1%, figures released last week by the state Employment Security Commission show.

Plants like Burlington and others have been rehiring workers who were let go earlier in the year and the unemployment rate is coming down, Hoke County Job Service Supervisor Sandra C. Moss said.

Because the economy is becoming more stable, retail stores are also beginning to hire, Moss said.

In September, 280 county residents found work, to bring the total jobless in the county to 650.

The job service figures show the county has a work force of 8,070 of which 7,420 on the job.

The Hoke office of the job service recently garnered two awards for its efforts to find jobs for local residents.

The local Employment Security Office was judged to have the state's best On The Job Training Program, which is under the Job Training Partnership Act, and was also found to have a superior Upgrading Youth Tryout Employment Program.

Moss was presented the two awards during a state convention held in Wilmington recently.

The youth program is coordinated through the Hoke County Dropout Center located at Hoke High School.

"Without the help of the center, we could not make the program work," Moss said.

Several employers were also essential to the success of the JTPA program, she added.

The last time unemployment in Hoke County hit 8.1% was in May.

The lowest rate of the year was in April when the jobless rate hit 7.9%.

In June the rate climbed to 8.4% and to 9.2% in July.

The August rate was 11.4%.

During the fiscal year beginning July 1, the Raeford office of the job service had found jobs for 132 residents.



### New venture

Denver Locklear of Rex checks his level on bricks he is laying on the new David's convenience store on NC Highway 211 West of Raeford. The store will be the third in the county for the partnership which includes state Sen. David Parnell. Hoke Economic Developer John Howard noted in a recent development commission meeting that the construction of the store indicated a new area of growth for the county.

## ...Fraud cases probed

(Continued from page 1A)

Another reason the fraud cases have increased, is good cooperation from Hoke County employers.

Employers are asked to fill out forms verifying the employment of the fraudulent recipients.

"We've had excellent cooperation," Witherspoon said.

DSS has also been getting good cooperation from Assistant District Attorney Jean Powell.

In an effort not to overburden the Hoke County Sheriff's Department, Poole investigates all of the fraud cases and works with Powell to prepare the cases for trial, Witherspoon said.

In addition to actually recovering funds which have been fraudulently obtained, DSS cannot put a value on the deterrent factor in prosecuting cases, Witherspoon said.

## ...Around Town continued

(Continued from page 1A)

The Raeford Kiwanis Club will hold their annual Pancake Supper Thursday, December 5 at the Gibson School Cafeteria. Besides the good eating, you can always enjoy the fellowship with your friends and neighbors.

So mark the date on your calendar, now! Tickets will soon be available from members of the club. If not, you can buy them at the door.

The Hoke County Committee of 100 will again sponsor a Mullet Roast on December 11. It will be held again this year at the Civic Center and as you know the place will not hold but 150 people, so get prepared now to purchase your ticket.

The roast last year was the start of a new spirit in Hoke County and many results have come from that meeting. Everyone that attended left with the feeling that Raeford and Hoke County was again on the move. We need to revive that spirit, so make plans now to attend this event.

Many VIPs from the state will be present for each of us to rub elbows. So let's keep the ball rolling.

A newcomer to Raeford asked me last week what was the difference between a Homecoming and an Ingathering? The only answer that came to my mind was that an Ingathering prepares food and then they hold out their hand for money. A Homecoming is where food is prepared and brought to the church by everyone in attendance. No charge.

If this is wrong, inform me! The fellowship is wonderful at both occasions.

I saw something happen at Chapel Hill last Saturday that I have never seen before at a football game. When the final whistle blew and Carolina had upset Clemson, it seemed that the followers of both teams were stunned. No one moved for a few minutes.

It was sweet revenge for the Tar Heels who hadn't beaten the Tigers at Kenan Stadium since 1971. The usually gleeful orange-colored crowd was awful silent last Saturday. It was strange, but very enjoyable.

It was about 25 years ago that Mary Alice and I rode down to Parkton to talk with Lucy Gray

Peebles about helping get out a special edition to celebrate the 50th Anniversary of Hoke County. She did take the job and did a wonderful piece of work in 1961. We are now getting everything ready for the 75th Anniversary edition which will be published in April or May of 1986.

The reason for mentioning Lucy Gray is that I found the following note on my desk Monday afternoon. I think it will be of interest to many of her friends in Hoke County. She still lives in Raleigh.

The note follows:

Sam,  
I talked to Lucy Gray Peebles Saturday by telephone. She asked about you and Paul. She is well and keeps busy as usual — bridge twice a week, some sewing, exercise classes with a group her age at the "Y" and has taken up organ lessons! She inherited an organ from a deceased sister.

She says she does have trouble remembering where she puts things and forgets the next word she was saying, but that she is the "wellest" one in her entire family.

Ann Webb  
Thanks Ann for the note and we will never forget Lucy Gray.

## Food stamp sales barred at Hoke store


A Hoke County store has been permanently barred from accepting food stamps because of violations, the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Food and Nutrition Service reports.

Park's Grocery and Exxon, Raeford, under the ownership of Lois Parks, was permanently disqualified based on evidence that the firm discounted \$73 in food stamps for \$60 in cash.

"Retailers found discounting food stamps — that is, purchasing the stamps for cash, usually at an amount less than their face value, and then redeeming them through banks for their full value — receive the maximum administrative penalty allowed under Food Stamp Program rules," explained Gerald Holt, who is in charge of the Food and Nutrition Service's Raleigh field office.

According to Mrs. Holt, store owners must agree to abide by regulations governing the Food Stamp Program before they are authorized to accept food stamps.


Retailers who commit violations lose their right to accept food stamps for periods ranging from a minimum of six months to the maximum period imposed in this case, she said.

  
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