

# The News - Journal

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Coming Wednesday

## Federal School Team Will Study Hoke Plan



Willie McPhaul And Prize

### Seven-Foot Alligator Caught, Killed, 'Skunt'

BY JIM TAYLOR

Willie McPhaul, 59, turned up at Sheriff Dave Barrington's office last week with a peculiar problem.

He told the sheriff he had an alligator in the car and didn't know what to do with it. "Why didn't you take a stick and kill it?" Barrington asked.

"He's most too big for that," McPhaul replied.

The sheriff had McPhaul drive his car back of the courthouse onto the grassed playground of McLauchlin School.

Expecting to encounter a small iguana-size alligator of the size tourists smuggle out of Florida, Barrington opened the trunk of McPhaul's car.

What he encountered was more than a spring lizard.

The 'gator later was measured at seven feet long and weighed an estimated 75 to 80 pounds.

How in the world did he capture such a critter and put it into the trunk of an automobile?

McPhaul, who lives in the vicinity of Newton's Pond west of Antioch, was driving home when he saw the alligator near the edge of the road.

The critter was miles from any sizeable

swamp or body of water.

McPhaul went home, got a neighbor, Lerow Henderson, and they went together to catch the alligator.

No problem. They made a lasso out of insulated wire, slipped the noose over the 'gator's head, and tightened it around its throat.

"He thrashed his tail and rolled around a good bit," McPhaul said. One of the two men grabbed the alligator by the tail, the other hoisted the lassoed head, and they crammed it into the trunk.

There was a real problem, of course, when the alligator got out of the trunk and started writhing on the schoolground.

That put an obviously unhappy, seven-foot alligator loose near the busiest part of town, scarcely a block from the center of the business section.

Barrington saw fit to exterminate it and dispatched it forthwith with his pistol.

McPhaul took the carcass home. Almost immediately, neighbors began arriving to view the phenomenon.

Seven-foot alligators are not common in Hoke County, although smaller ones turn up from time to time.

Oldtimers recall specimens of two feet or so in length, but nothing out of the "baby"

See ALLIGATOR, Page 9

A federal team will arrive here Wednesday to advise local school officials how to step up integration of Hoke County schools, so as to comply with Title IV of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

The county school system for the past three years has operated on a "freedom of choice" basis, with students and their parents deciding which schools they want to attend.

In the past, the procedure has satisfied officials of the Department of Health, Education and Welfare. This year, HEW indicates more "student integration" may be necessary before the county can qualify for federal education funds.

The board of education met Monday night on the eve of the departure of W.T. Gibson Jr., superintendent of schools, who is now attending the state convention of school superintendents. In addition to discussing the forthcoming visit by HEW officials, members of the board also elected a principal for J.W. McLauchlin Elementary School.

He is James B. Bowles, 40, of Morven a graduate of Catawba College who has been teaching in Anson County.

Bowles will succeed Lonnie W. Bledsoe, who will become principal of the new elementary school on Bethel Road.

Bowles also has had special training at Wake Forest College. He is married and has three children. The Bowles family is Presbyterian.

The HEW visit was proposed early in June when its officials reviewed Hoke's desegregation plans for the forthcoming year. At that time, Harold B. Williams, acting assistant commissioner of HEW, wrote:

"The report you recently submitted on the staff and student assignments you expect to make for next fall under your desegregation plan indicates your faculty desegregation represents sufficient progress for the 1967-68 school year. However, a review of the operation of your plan will be necessary because further action would appear to be necessary in the area of student desegregation."

"... I urge you to discuss with your board at the earliest possible time what additional steps can be taken to make further progress in the elimination

See SCHOOL, Page 9



Mr. and Mrs. Pat Nixon Survey Ruined Tobacco and Soybeans

### Hailstorm Batters 100 Acres Of Leaf

Wind and hail cut a \$150,000 swath through Quewhiffle Township Thursday evening, laying waste 75 to 100 acres of tobacco and several hundred acres of corn, soybeans and other crops.

The storm was concentrated in an area containing about a dozen farms, near Five Points. Most of them had tobacco losses of 100 per cent.

Perhaps the worst blow was delivered at the Pat Nixon farm, where five acres of tobacco was literally "tripped from the stalk. Corn leaves were shredded and the leaves and stalks of soybeans bruised, broken, and riddled by hail.

Bryon Parks said his 10.7-acre crop was stripped from the stalk and some 40 acres of soybeans and corn virtually ruined.

Parks was in his pickup truck

when the storm struck shortly after 6 p. m.

"My brother drove up and got in the truck with me," Parks said. "When it started to hail, I moved the truck up against the south end of the house, the storm whipped around and started blowing from the other way, and I had to move the truck to the other side of the house."

One pellet knocked a plug from the truck's windshield, as if it had been shot by a BB gun. Parks said hailstones as large as golf balls plummeted the area for about 30 minutes. The wind was extremely strong.

In a nearby path of woods, trees were wrung from several trunks and branches blown off into the roadway.

Nixon said the wind was so strong at his home "that it looked to me like the house was going to blow away."

W. S. Young, county farm agent, said the storm also struck at the farms of Paul Hurst, Willie Davis, Parnell Locklear, Howard Ray, Mrs. Ruth Leslie, Bobby Lee Walters, Reuben Webb, Charlie Pendergrass and Nellie McFadyen.

Light hail also struck in the Ashley Heights section, where four inches of rainfall was measured after the half-hour storm. The tobacco crop of D. R. Huff Jr. was damaged by both wind and hail.

It was the second consecutive year the Five Points community has received hail damage. Last summer, two different hailstorms damaged leaf crops, but not to the extent of Thursday's storm.

Most of the tobacco was beginning to ripen and some of it had been primed one time. Nixon said the hail was

See HAILSTORM, Page 4



CHARLES G. ROSE III

### Rose Gets Judgeship

Charles G. Rose III, young Fayetteville attorney, has been appointed district prosecutor for Hoke-Cumberland District Court.

He succeeds George Stahl, who was elevated to the district judgeship vacated when Judge Coy Brewer was made a superior court judge.

Rose was appointed by Judge Maurice Braswell of Fayetteville, resident superior court judge for the 12th Judicial District.

Indications are that the court had a somewhat difficult time in filling the post. Reports were that no attorneys in Hoke County were interested in the \$12,000-a-year job.

Rose, a 1964 graduate of the University of North Carolina School of Law, has been working for his father's law firm, Rose and Thorp, in Fayetteville since April. Previously, he worked in Raleigh in the Department of Administration and with former governor Terry Sanford when he formed a law firm after leaving the executive mansion.

Rose is married to the former Sarah Richardson of Monroe and they have one child, a son. Another vacancy exists in the district prosecutor's office. Douglas J. Clark is assistant.

### Preacher Is Pedaling Peddler

When Preacher A.W. Wright's eyesight became a bit blurred a dozen years ago, it didn't bother him that he might not be able to get his auto driver's license renewed.

He parked his car and bought a bicycle, and has been pedaling off into the sunset ever since.

More accurate, he's used the bike as his sole means of conveyance ever since he returned an instruction manual to the license examiner.

"I can't see to read the book," he told the examiner, "so I don't have any business with a driver's license."

How many miles has he ridden the bike?

"There's no telling," Preacher Wright said. "I ride it all over Raeford and parts of Hoke County selling my bathroom chemicals, and I've been as far away as Bladenboro on

Preacher Wright (few people know his first name or initials) is a bona fide minister in The Church of God of Prophecy. He doesn't "hasten" a church anymore, but he "sort of fills in." He conducts house-to-house meditation, instruction and prayer among members of the local congregation, visiting his "band" by bicycle.

At 74 years of age, he's wiry, long-winded, and doesn't weigh more than a cake of wet soap. The bike-riding undoubtedly has been partly responsible for his physical fitness.

"It's good exercise," he said. See PREACHER, Page 4



Preacher And Wheel

### Owner Of 'Speedway' Site Says Track 4 Years Off

The owner of a piece of property on which Parker Methodist Church members reportedly are seeking to block construction of an auto race track said this week their action is premature.

"I don't know where they got the idea I am going to build a speedway right away," said James R. Zimmerman. "And if they had any objection, why didn't they come to me?"

Zimmerman, a supply sergeant at Fort Bragg, said he recently bought some 15 acres of land across Highway 401 from the church. The property includes a roadside building, formerly used as a service station, the Zimmerman home,

and a strip of cleared land extending some 600 yards away from the road.

"I bought the property because I was looking for a place in the country where I can retire in four more years. Yes, I am thinking about building a three-tenths-mile speedway for cars and motorcycles, but I'll probably wait until I retire to do it. It depends on the money situation," he said.

Neighbors and members of the church apparently suspected that the track would be built sooner.

Last week, several members of the church confirmed rumors that the board of stewards had hired an attorney to investigate

legal means of preventing the construction. A petition reportedly was prepared and circulated in the community.

"The newspaper account said I was going to build a drag strip," Zimmerman said. "I am not. My plans are someday to build a speedway on the back side of the property, where there is not room enough for a drag strip."

Zimmerman contends a speedway would not interfere with church service or the activity of neighbors.

He invited a reporter to look at the property and walked over it with him.

Zimmerman's house is some

See SPEEDWAY, Page 9