

The News - Journal

The Hoke County News - Established 1928

The Hoke County Journal - Established 1905

VOLUME LXIV NUMBER 8

RAEFORD, HOKE COUNTY, NORTH CAROLINA

\$4 PER YEAR 10¢ PER COPY

THURSDAY, JULY 4, 1968

Drought To Blame

Hoke Corn Crop Is Feared Lost

BY JIM TAYLOR

There's an old superstition about ruining the rhubarb, but it hasn't crossed Hoke County farmers' minds recently.

Their main concern right now is an extended drought which threatens to ruin the corn crop, and to inflict serious damage on tobacco, soybeans and cotton.

For more than a week, temperatures have hovered near 100 degrees, and there hasn't been any appreciable rain here in almost a month.

Before the last rain - which totaled something more than an inch of rainfall during a two-day period - the county had been suffering from drought. The welcome rain set the tobacco crop to growing, and before the recent heat wave set in, it had sprung from ankle to waist high and most of it is in the blooming stage right now.

Weather records are not kept here (there is no official reporting station closer than Fayetteville), but many Hoke residents say the current heat wave is about as bad as any they remember.

One would have to go back many years to find records of a spring and early summer as dry as this one has been in this section.

Weather forecasters were predicting at the first of the week the heat wave and drought will be broken this

week, with rain beginning in the mountains either Tuesday night or Wednesday. Extended forecasts often don't pan out, though, and disgruntled farmers won't start pulling down windows until the raindrops start to fall.

Farm experts declare the tobacco, cotton and soybean crops have not been drastically damaged at this point, but have reached a stage where they must have moisture soon, or their growth and maturity will be affected.

The corn crop is a different story.

Late corn has been damaged beyond any hope of recovery, farm experts declare, and damage to early corn depends upon what stage of maturity it is in.

Where corn is just tasseling, or has not yet tasseled, fodder has burned from top to bottom of the stalk. Because of more developed root system, early corn has fared better; however, a few more days of drought will claim it, too.

Lawns and gardens were suffering, too, and where they were not being irrigated, had (See CORN, Page 10)



HOT -- This picture of a thermometer was taken on Main Street in Raeford last Wednesday afternoon while skies were overcast. That day, the official reading in Fayetteville was 100 degrees. An unofficial reading at a radio station there was 102.



PARCHED CORN -- This corn is "kaput," as they say in Germany when the jig is up. Earlier corn still has a chance to survive the current heat wave, but rain and cooler weather have to hurry.

Few Citizens Complain

School Board Acts After Stormy Hearing

Hoke Board of Education formally adopted a resolution Monday night to totally integrate grades six through 12 throughout the county this fall, and to consolidate the county's three high schools into one.

The resolution was adopted following a sometimes stormy public hearing on the high school consolidation question in which discussion sometimes wandered far afield.

The two-hour session, held in the county courthouse, was attended by 95 adults-71 of whom were white and 24 Negro. There was at times an obvious verbal sparring between the two groups.

The decision to totally integrate all county public school facilities actually was made a month ago when the board moved to comply with a federal order to eliminate the dual school system in Hoke County.

That order was given to the school board in January with a warning that if the board did not submit a concrete plan for elimination of the dual system, administrative action would be taken against the county. Several weeks ago, the Civil Rights district office in Charlottesville, Va., informed the local school board that it was not satisfactorily complying with the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (regarding integration of public school facilities) and that administrative action against the county had been initiated and the case forwarded to Washington.

The next logical step in the case, had the board not complied with the order to eliminate the dual system, would have been a hearing in the case and subsequently the denial of federal school funds to the county.

Total federal assistance to schools amounts to some \$750,000 per year, school officials declare.

At Monday night's public hearing, County Attorney Bill Moses explained that North Carolina law requires such hearings be held before consolidation of high schools.

Donald D. Abernethy, superintendent of schools, explained the necessity of complying with federal regulations and outlined the consolidation and integration plans of the school board.

In a spirited question and answer period (in which some questions did not receive a full answer and some others required none), the floodgates were opened and the tide rolled in.

Lloyd Jackson, who told the school board he buys pulpwood at Timberland, said: "I work with colored people. They have said to me that Upchurch High School is being taken away from them and they are being told where they have to go to school. What about that?"

D.R. Huff Jr., chairman of the school board, answered (after several other questions

along the same line) that the board was operating to satisfy a federal edict and that the federal government hadn't made allowances for who the action would make unhappy and who it would not.

The Rev. Thomas Walker said he was not disturbed about the elimination of Upchurch as an all-Negro school-that what he was interested in was equal opportunity for his children to be educated as well as white children in the county, and that inferior facilities in previously all-Negro schools

did not permit this. Willie Bratcher, who before graduation from high school several years ago was president of the Upchurch student body, said his experience while in school was that facilities (primarily in foreign languages and lab) were better at Hoke High School than at Upchurch.

Dr. Riley M. Jordan, vice chairman of the school board, said it is conceded that more interest in and attention to all-white schools were given before 1946. Since that time, however, the boards of education here spent school

money with the intention of making all county schools as nearly equal as possible.

"We don't deny that 30 years ago the white schools were favored, but we can't do anything about 30 years ago. We have to deal with the present. I think we now have an opportunity to do more for more people than ever before. The important thing now is that we will have the best possible school system," he said.

One citizen asked Dr. Jordan (See STORMY, Page 10)



Autry, Bledsoe Assigned Hoke, Upchurch Principals

Hoke County Board of Education this week assigned principals to newly integrated schools and retained the principals in other elementary facilities.

Raz Autry will be principal at Hoke High School, Lonnie Bledsoe at Upchurch, and J. D. McAllister will be an assistant superintendent.

The appointments were made Monday night after the

board resumed its regular monthly meeting following a public hearing at the county courthouse on the matter of consolidating the county's three high schools.

Other principals - all of whom served in the same capacity last year - will be James Turlington at Raeford Elementary; James Bowles at McLaughlin Elementary; Earl Oxendine at South Hoke; M.

W. Hayes at West Hoke, and Floyd Caldwell at Scurlock.

There had been much speculation as to the assignment of principals in the totally integrated and consolidated sections of the school system, which next fall will erase the dual school system in grades six through 12.

It was assumed that Autry, (See PRINCIPALS, Page 10)

State Commission Eyes Hoke Jail

The Hoke County jail is getting a coat of inside paint and is expected to be ready for occupancy July 15 or soon thereafter, according to County Manager T. B. Lester.

Furnishings have been purchased for delivery on July 15. Some pieces already have arrived, such as a kitchen range, a heavy duty food mixer, and some pieces for the offices.

Last week final work was being done on the plumbing and finishing touches were being put on by painters. The inside is being done throughout in pastel colors, including pale green bars.

A team of men, under the name of the State Jail Study Commission, a body established by the last general assembly and headed by Judge Frank Snepps of Charlotte,

who was appointed by Gov. Dan Moore, toured the facility Friday to get a first-hand view of a newly constructed North Carolina jail.

Among the group were Judge David Taylor of Tarboro, representative of the North Carolina League of Municipalities; Rep. Thomas Hunter of Rockingham; Sheriff W. G. Clark of Fayetteville, representative of North Carolina Sheriff's Association; Chief of Police H. W. Alderman of Tarboro, representative of the North Carolina Police Executive Committee; L. P. Zachary of Raleigh, representative of the N.C. Association of County Commissioners; Allen Ashman of Chapel Hill, assistant director of the Institute of Government and consultant to

the commission; and Les Smith, chairman of the state's jail and detention services.

The men were taken on the

tour by Commissioners T. C. Jones and J. A. Webb, Sheriff Dave Barrington, and T. B. Lester, county manager.

Jail Cold-Shoulders Too-Big Refrigerator

The refrigerator for the Hoke County jail should have been delivered long ago and the structure built around it.

This was an assumption after County Manager T. B. Lester reported to the board of county commissioners at Monday morning's meeting that the large unit was delivered last week and it had to be returned because it would not go through the door.

"We don't need one that large anyway," Lester said. The one used in the old jail was almost miniature in size. The new establishment will not only have a larger refrigerator,

but also a freezer.

The hood for the kitchen range was also off-size and had to be sent back, Lester said. These situations, plus some other slow-moving projects, may keep the new jail from going into use before August 1.

The Commissioners approved payment of three bills for extra work not included in the construction contract: \$130 for bars to be placed at the medical window; \$90 for enclosing the sallyport; \$1,260 for concrete paving of drive through sallyport, curb and gutter.

Extra money will also be (See JAIL, Page 10)

Hoke Budget Is Slightly Higher Than Last Year

Hoke County commissioners have adopted a \$1,083,912 budget for the new fiscal year, which began July 1. The budget is only slightly larger than last year, when the total was \$1,068,231.

Biggest items in the budget were \$553,653.27 for schools, which does not include federal assistance; law enforcement, \$55,161; register of deeds, \$13,363.50; jail, \$12,158.92; county accountant, \$28,752.36; farm and home demonstration, \$16,218.56; welfare administration, \$83,067.90; welfare public assistance, \$35,369; health, \$58,779.97.

The new budget includes a 6 per cent increase in wages and salaries of all county employees except those under the state merit system.

The tax rate will remain the same as last year - \$1.38 per \$100 taxable evaluation, according to T.B. Lester Jr., county manager.

Following is a complete listing of budget appropriations, all of which are on file at the county accountant's office (last year's totals are in parentheses): Administration, \$8,490.44 (\$8,433.16) - Salary of board, \$2,640; clerk to board, \$600;

county attorney, \$300; social security, \$121.44; travel of board, \$200; supplies and expense, \$3,600; miscellaneous, \$100; auditing, \$850; hospital insurance, \$60; workmen's compensation, \$19.

Tax Listing, \$9,529.81 (\$8,723.64) - Social security, \$657.81; travel, \$150; books and supplies, \$800; list takers, \$2,000; tax receipts, \$400; Raeford tax lister, \$3,510; mapping, \$500; postage, \$500; appraisal expense, \$1,000; workmen's compensation, \$12. Tax Collector, \$13,592.03 (\$12,665.24) - Salary

(collector), \$5,625; assistant collector, \$4,505; social security and retirement, \$1,632.96; travel, \$200; telephone, \$150; supplies and expenses, \$1,330; workmen's compensation, \$29.07; hospital insurance, \$120.

Elections, \$5,419.20 (\$12,100) - Officials, \$3,400; travel, \$150; supplies and expenses, \$1,250; workmen's compensation, \$19.20; chairman's salary, \$600.

Law Enforcement, \$55,161 (\$45,914) - Salaries: Barrington, \$7,420; Norton, (See BUDGET, Page 10)

Bike Riders Told Observe Rules

Town authorities have again declared war on irresponsible bike riders, promising to impound bicycles for 10 days and take whatever other action the law permits against violators.

Mayor H.R. McLean, a crusader against the "bicycle takeover" in downtown Raeford, declared the police department will begin strict enforcement of local ordinances regulating bike traffic, particularly those dealing with riding "wheels" on the sidewalk.

"I've nearly been run over several times," the mayor said, "and if we don't stop this riding on the sidewalk, someone is going to get seriously injured, perhaps an old person."

Mayor McLean revealed that Raeford policemen will be instructed to warn a youngster for the first offense of improper riding on parking of bikes. A second offense will cause the youngster's bike to be impounded 10 days.

Actually, traffic laws stipulate that bicycles are subject to the same laws governing operation of motor vehicles, except the bike rider

does not have to have operator's permit and does not have to license his bike.

In operating a bike, the rider must move on the right side of the street or road, observe stop signs and other directional instructions, and keep on the pavement or shoulder of the road.

It is particularly dangerous - and unlawful - to ride facing oncoming traffic, or without lights at night. Nightriders should wear white clothing or other apparel easily seen by auto drivers.

Bike parking stands have been placed in the downtown area and youngsters are requested to use them. It is unlawful to park a bike on the sidewalk at sites other than those designated for that purpose, the mayor said.

"We surely must have more problems with bike riders than other towns," Mayor McLean said. "We do not wish to place unusually severe restrictions on bicycle operators, but we insist they be sensible and safe - for protection of both the bike rider and the pedestrian. If we cannot control the situation with present ordinances, we will have to enact adequate restrictions."



JAIL VISITORS -- A state jail study commission visited Hoke County Friday to make a tour of the new jail.

Sheriff Dave Barrington and other local officials chat, above, with some of the visitors while they wait for others to arrive.

Raeford Worsted Plant Sets Safety Record

Raeford Worsted Plant has completed 2,000,000 safe manhours without lost time due to accident, the mill announced this week.

To recognize employees for their efforts toward the prevention of accidents, the mill will entertain employees with a mid-shift meal on Friday.

Tables will be set up in four

locations in the plant and barbecue, chicken, potato salad, slaw and hushpuppies will be served cafeteria style.

A torch burning in front of the plant symbolizes the no time due to accident theme. It will burn as long as the record continues to increase, according to Ashwell Harward, personnel director.