

The News - Journal

The Hoke County News - Established 1928

The Hoke County Journal - Established 1905

VOLUME LXIV NUMBER 17

RAEFORD, HOKE COUNTY, NORTH CAROLINA

\$4 PER YEAR 10¢ PER COPY

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 5, 1968

Bus Problems Appear Solved

Hoke County school buses appeared Wednesday to be finding their way, and students identifying with their buses, after considerable transportation turmoil Friday and Tuesday, the first two days of school.

D. D. Abernethy, superintendent of schools, said difficulty was expected (and the expectation announced in The News-Journal on two consecutive weeks) at the beginning of the new term.

The turmoil occurred primarily because of the total integration of grades six through twelve and the transfer of many students in grades one through five. Actually, most students in the county are attending schools different than last year's.

Monday, parents complained that some students did not arrive home until 4:45 in Robbins Heights, only two miles, more or less, from Upchurch School, which most of them attend. Many buses also reportedly arrived late Tuesday morning.

Abernethy said Wednesday morning most students were in their places by 8:30 a. m., and all by 9 a. m. He said revision of routes will eliminate most double loads, and by the beginning of the week, only routine transportation problems are expected.

"I want to stress to parents and others that the difficulties we experienced were fully expected and in no way were the fault of Dallas Whitfield of the N. C. Department of Education, who helped plan the routes," Abernethy said.

The difficulty arose, he said, because

the entire system was ordered revamped in June, after children had begun their summer vacation, and most students were not available for information until the new school term began.

"Last year, we transported more than 3,600 students by bus," Abernethy said, "but only about 2,500 of those were pinpointed on our maps. That left more than 1,100 whose precise residence was not known, and could not be ascertained, until school began."

Now, he said, problems have been isolated, and in large measure dealt with.

At the beginning of the current term last week, only 41 buses were placed in service, although 51 had been used last year.

"We expected that the other 10 buses would be required, but we had to wait until school began before we could tell where they were needed," Abernethy said.

He said most transfers from one bus to another during the trip to and from school will be eliminated before the first of the week, and that "expressing" to schools will be lessened, if not eliminated.

"We will have continuing problems for awhile," he said, "but they will be the customary problems that plague us each year."

Abernethy said the consolidation of the county's three high schools into one and the assignment of all students in grades six, seven and eight to Upchurch School has brought no problems other than those anticipated, and that the reorganization is being satisfactorily accomplished.



Crowded Afternoon Scene In Front Of Upchurch School

Hoke's Eighth Fatality

Body Found On Highway Termed Hit-Run Victim

No Evidence To Identify Car Found

State Highway patrolman this week continued their search for a hit-run driver believed to have run over and killed a 30-year-old Hoke County man Saturday night.

Patrolman Joe Stanley identified the victim as Woodrow Locklear, Indian, 33, of Shannon, whose badly mangled body was discovered about 9 o'clock Saturday night a mile south of Arabia on the road to Dundarrach.

Stanley said there was no evidence at the scene helpful in identifying the vehicle, but there appeared little doubt that Locklear had been run over.

Stanley said the pavement showed signs that Locklear had been in the right southbound lane and was dragged some 90 feet after being struck. His body was found near the centerline of the pavement.

The officer said evidence at the scene leads him to believe Locklear was lying on the pavement when struck. There was no broken glass, nor was Locklear knocked off the road, as usually is the case when an upright pedestrian is struck by a vehicle.

Locklear's death is the eighth highway fatality of the year in Hoke County.

Funeral services for Locklear were conducted at 2 p.m. Tuesday at Mt. Elam (See HIT-RUN, Page 7)

Court Orders Air-Condition

BY LUCY GRAY PEEBLES

Another step was taken Monday at a meeting of Hoke County Commissioners to consolidate the health departments of Hoke, Richmond and Scotland counties.

Letters have been received from the two neighboring county boards stating that they were willing to hold a joint meeting to further discuss the proposal. The county boards of Scotland and Richmond were contacted by letter after Dr. H. R. McLean, area coordinator for the N. D. Health Department, had confronted the local board with the proposal of a statutory district. This would be expected to cut down on the cost of operation for each county.

The Hoke County men voted to let the three health departments get together and

work out a plan acceptable to the county boards.

During Monday's meeting Sheriff Dave Barrington presented each member of the board a court order from the senior resident judge of the 12th district, E. Maurice Braswell, calling for the air conditioning of the Hoke County Courtroom.

The two-page document said in part: "Hoke County is a prosperous county and has money within its general fund and that it makes a tax levy on its citizens and that it has or should have accumulated sufficient funds with which to provide air conditioning for the citizens of Hoke County and courthouse officials."

"In the executing of this order, let the commissioners fail not at their own peril." The order was first read into the court records during the (See AIR CONDITION, Page 7)



NEW DEPUTY Robert Locklear, above, of Blue Springs community, has been hired as night jailer at the new Hoke County jail, and ranks as a deputy sheriff. State regulations require that a jailer be on duty at all times at the jail. Frank Brock will be day jailer, but other deputies will have to be pulled off regular duties to man one eight-hour shift and days off for the regular jailers. Locklear formerly was a farmer and more recently a truck driver in Norfolk, Va.

Sheriff Says 'No' To School Patrol

Board of Hoke County Commissioners and county school officials are sweating out a traffic problem.

The situation came to light Monday when Sheriff Dave Barrington told commissioners he had been called upon for help in eliminating a confusion of school traffic which is arising each morning and afternoon. The sheriff declared that his hands are tied because of lack of manpower.

The major problem is at Upchurch School, where well over 1,300 students get off 50 school buses or numerous parent-driven automobiles each morning. Too, many students come to Upchurch to change buses and continue on to some other school, and that some additional 50 cars arrive bringing teachers.

A bumper-to-bumper line-up begins shortly after 7:30 a.m., Barrington said, as parents drop children off on their own way to an 8 o'clock job. Some have complained that the traffic jam has caused them to be late for work.

Buses also begin to arrive at that time. Some routes are so heavy that the driver must make two trips. While others struggle to re-enter the highway to deliver part of their load to other schools.

Former Upchurch grades one through four must be transported across town to Scarlock. Upchurch grade five goes to

Raeford Elementary. Only grades six, seven and eight are taken care of at Upchurch.

"We are using terms," School Superintendent D.D. Abernethy told commissioners. He explained that there is still work to be done in mapping the bus routes in an effort to eliminate return trips for some of the drivers.

"When Upchurch School was first built," a commissioner recalled, the location was considered ideal. Now, it is impossible."

The school traffic at Upchurch has doubled with this year's integration program, because more students are being brought in by car. In addition, there is Highway 401 traffic taking the short cut from the bypass to NC 211 and the heavy flow of mill traffic at 8 a.m. shift time.

"The mill people are sympathetic," Abernethy said, "and are offering to do whatever possible to help ease the difficult situation."

The sheriff offered to forego the purchase of an approved new patrol car until next year if the move would make it possible to hire another jailer. The additional deputy would make it possible to provide a traffic director twice a day at Upchurch, he said.

A committee was appointed to assist in working out a plan



NEW MEMBERS Henry Diet of Antioch and Mrs. Nell McFadyen, new members of Hoke County Department of Welfare, were sworn in last Thursday by Clerk of Court E.E. Smith. Mrs. Helen B. Williams, right, already sworn in, is another addition to the five-member board this year.

'Victim' Of Shooting Leads Law On Not-Merry Chase

For a man who claimed to have been shot in the stomach, he ran faster and farther than a wounded deer might have done.

And behind him, at one time or another, came two ambulances, sheriff's officers from three counties, and State Highway Patrol, Hoke Rescue Squad, and eventually, two brothers who arrived from Charlotte and Raleigh to join the chase.

When it was all over, James Davis, 35, of Fayetteville turned out not to have been shot, nor was he seriously injured.

Sheriff Dave Barrington said Davis created more turmoil Sunday night and Monday than is ordinary with a major criminal case.

Barrington and other officers gave this account:

Davis arrived at a Red Springs funeral parlor and asked for ambulance service, saying he had been shot. His abdomen was covered with blood, and he gave the

appearance of being injured.

Before he could be put into the ambulance, however, he jumped into his car and drove away. He came to the home of James Byrnes, Raeford Rt. 1, near Wagram. There, he allegedly claimed to have been shot. Officers said he wallowed on the Byrnes deep freezer, covering it with blood.

Barrington said that Byrnes went to a neighbor's home to telephone the sheriff's office. That was at about 10:30 p.m. Sunday.

While he was gone, Davis allegedly jumped into his car and drove away. He is said to have returned to the funeral home in Red Springs, and when he again drove away from there, an ambulance followed him.

By that time, Robeson County officers were trying to locate him, as were officers in Hoke County. Scotland County officers were alerted when at least two motorists stopped at Wagram and

reported that a "blood-covered" man was standing alongside Highway 401 just over the Hoke County line, trying to flag traffic.

Officers sped to the scene. Davis fled into a wooded area. Officers found his abandoned car in the ditch about a half mile from US 401 on a rural paved road.

Surmising that a badly injured man now was wandering around in the woods, deputies called for Hoke Rescue Squad. They joined officers in a sweep of the woods until the early hours of Monday morning.

Sheriff Barrington said he and Deputy Harvey Young worked all day Monday on the case. In late afternoon, he said, Davis arrived at the sheriff's office to reclaim his car, which had been towed in.

Barrington said Davis told him he had stopped his car and gone to sleep between Pembroke and Red Springs in the early morning. (See NOT-MERRY, Page 7)