



NEW CLASS - Mrs. Martha Phillips gathers her pupils around her in the brightly decorated classroom of the recently begun class for trainable retarded children. Front row: left to right Thurman Glover, Ross Miller, Bennie Chavis and Lewis Melvin. Middle row, left to right: Linda Hines, Louise Bratcher, Stanly Jones, Ru by King and Eliza Bridges. Rear, Mackie Locklear and Mrs. Phillips. Not present for the photo were Mrs. Pam Sessoms, aide; Carrie Lee Bethea and Herman Moody.

Mentally Retarded Class Gives Children A Chance

Twelve Hoke County children have a chance now at a better life. They are mentally retarded - too handicapped to be able to benefit from the special education classes that have been available in the county schools for several years but capable of training that will enable them to care for themselves as they grow older.

The class for trainable mentally retarded children began Jan. 9, the result, largely, of one mother's concern for her own retarded child.

Mrs. James O. Miller wrote a letter to the editor of The News-Journal that was published in the July 31 edition of the paper explaining that she had tried for three years to contact people in the county concerned with the mentally retarded and that she had had no success. She cited efforts in other counties to provide training for children and asked if anyone was concerned about Hoke County children.

From that letter, she received replies from people involved with programs for mentally retarded children across the state. One of the answers was from Pat Russell Gaudet, a former Raeford resident and a daughter of Mrs. Brown Hendrix. Mr. Gaudet sent names and addresses of people to contact for help to Mrs. Miller.

From that point, meetings were held with state representatives from Raleigh and with the Department of Social Services here and with other county agencies.

A Hoke Association for Retarded Children was formed in September with Mrs. Hendrix as president and Mrs. Miller as vice-president. Other officers are Mrs. Hal Knott, secretary and Mrs. Boyd Edmunds, treasurer.

Since then, many residents of Hoke County have contributed to make the trainable class possible, Mrs. Hendrix said. Superintendent of Schools Donald Abernethy was vital in arranging for the

class, she said.

The idea for a trainable class had been suggested at least four years ago, Mrs. Agnes Page said. However, the state was not as concerned with such training then and county school officials felt there was not a sufficient need here for one.

The children attend school in a large, bright room in McLaughlin School. The room is outfitted with a sink and toilet facilities and is large enough to have several separate areas. In one corner there is a cardboard fireplace and a large oval braided rug. The piano, donated by the Raeford Kiwanis Club, is there.

Another contains two long tables, an ironing board, and the sink. Another corner has the look of a formal classroom with the teachers desk and students desks arranged in a circle in front of the two blackboards.

Much of the material is either donated or borrowed from the Head Start Program. The trainable class operates on

a budget of \$1000 a month, with \$200 of that provided locally by the Association.

The teacher, Mrs. Martha Phillips, and teacher's aide, Mrs. Pam Sessoms, are paid by the state.

Only 12 children are allowed in each trainable class by state regulation so there is a small waiting list here, Mrs. Page said. The ages set by the state are from 6 to 18 but the children in Hoke's class range in age from 8 years to 16 years. All but two of the youngsters are teen-agers.

The children for the class were carefully screened by school authorities, Mrs. Page said. Mrs. Tom Cameron administered a Stanford-Binet Intelligence Test to them, and selection was based on test scores and other evaluation.

The basic idea behind the teaching program is to train these children to be able to care for themselves in society, Mrs. Phillips said. She helps them develop habits of cleanliness and personal care for themselves and their clothing.

They also study about their community, learn community helpers such as firemen and policemen. Other skills as printing their names, reading by pictures and signs and learning the days of the week are taught.

Mrs. Phillips also helps them learn household tasks such as ironing and polishing shoes.

The trainable class was brought about by a community effort. The Association for Retarded Children sold candles at Christmas to raise funds for the class. Others in the community donated money and equipment, Mrs. Phillips said.

Much of the money to contribute monthly to the class comes from donations, Mrs. Hendrix said.

Besides the new trainable class, there are six special education classes in the county for children who learn more slowly than average. More of these classes are needed, Mrs. Page said.

In addition to offering a dozen school children a better chance at life than they had before, the class for trainable retarded children stands as an example of what private citizens who care can do.



LET'S COUNT - Mrs. Martha Phillips helps Linda Hines and Bennie Chavis with counting by putting clothes pins for fingers on the hands of the gingerbread man (shown at the board behind her) and then helping the children count the fingers.

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Weber Files For House

Frederic R. Weber, of Lumber Bridge, has announced his candidacy for the Republican nomination to the U.S. House of Representatives from the Seventh Congressional District.

Weber, a retired Army colonel, is now Director of Placement at Pembroke State University. He was formerly mayor of Lumber Bridge and served for two years as a member of the Robeson County Industrial and Agricultural Commission.

He is a graduate of West Point and served 35 years in the Army. He received his Master's degree in Guidance and Education at East Carolina University and has begun work on his doctorate at the University of Virginia. He has instructed in math and science at Pembroke, Vardell Hall and Blue Ridge School for Boys in Charlottesville, Va.

Weber was captain and coach of the United States Olympic Pentathlon and Fencing teams and competed in Berlin in 1936 as well as in London, Switzerland, Finland, South America and Austria riding steeplechase, swimming, shooting, running, cross-country and dueling sword. He was the first American athlete to compete on two Olympic teams in the same year and the first American to win the dueling sword pentathlon which was held in Berlin in 1936.

He served overseas 12 years at Pearl Harbor, including the period of the Japanese attack on the base. Weber also served in Australia, the Philippines, Japan, France, Korea and Germany.

He is a member of Phi Delta Kappa (graduate scholastic fraternity), Airplane Owners and Pilots Association; N.C. Pilots, Shriner; National Guidance and Personnel Association; National Education Association; West Point Alumni Association; New York Athletic Club, 32nd Degree Mason, National Rifle Association and a life member of the Amateur Fencers League of America.

Weber is a pilot and enjoys sky-diving. He also holds ratings as instrument and commercial pilot.

He is married to the former Katharine Kingman and they have three children.

Debbie Anderson writes about places and events in Raeford. She mentions her classes at Hoke High School, her time at Raefordites, and her experiences at the Grizzly Hotel. She also talks about her Christmas vacation and her time at the school.

Debbie Anderson Writes About Places And Events

Editor's Note: Below is a letter received from Debbie Anderson, an exchange student to France from Hoke High School, which we think you will find interesting.

Hi Raefordites!

It has been a long time since I've written but alot has happened since then.

First, I'll tell you about my Christmas vacation. For eight days I went to the Alps to ski! I have never skied before so I guess it was funny for the people around me who watched as I TRIED to ski. name of the skiing town was LES GETS it was real pretty - not very far from the French-Switzerland border. I took lessons every morning from 10 til 12 and every afternoon from 2-4. The instructors were very nice and by the end of eight days I could ski down the ski slopes without falling too many times! I really like the mountains - the Alps are very pretty. Les Gets isn't very far from "Le Mont Blanc" is the highest peak in France.

I stayed at the "Grizzly" Hotel, the view from the hotel was really fantastic because the town was in a valley but the hotel was on a hill, high above the town.

The second week of my Christmas vacation I went to see a friend and I celebrated the new year with friends at a party.

Before the Christmas vacation, we had a big party at school. A band made up of some boys at school. These boys practice on their own time at school, because they live at the school all the time.

After Christmas, I had five weeks of school and then I had a vacation for the "Mardi-Gras" which is celebrated mostly in the South, Nice, Marseille.

During this vacation, I went to Paris and stayed with a lady who was at Biscot, N.C. three years ago. Her name is Josette Recanati. Mr. Autry was her principal and she knows some of the teachers at Hoke High.

She passed by Raeford this summer in August to visit Raeford and Biscot.

Also, I went to see some friends that I met during the Christmas vacation.

School started again February 12th. Since then we have had some real cold weather. It snowed for three days and now it's beginning to clear up.

I'm really looking forward to the Easter vacation because my mom is coming over and we're going to go to Germany.

I wrote this letter at the school, because for two weeks, I am an intern (boarder), just to see what type of life it is. I must say it's not really all that bad and I'm beginning to get to know alot more people.

A regular day runs like this: At 6:45 you get up and get dressed, at 7:20 you go down to the dining room to eat breakfast which consists of coffee, black or with milk, bread and butter or sometimes jelly. After breakfast you go and get your things together for the classes, which begins at 8:00. I don't usually have a

Republicans Elect District Officers

New officers were selected at a meeting of the 7th Congressional District Republican organization held in Wilmington Feb. 26.

John Thompson of Whiteville was elected chairman and Mrs. Homer N. Davis of New Hanover was named vice-chairman. Other officers are Mrs. Charles Kern of Fayetteville, secretary, and Tom Keith, treasurer.

About 200 delegates from Hoke, Cumberland, Robeson, Bladen, Columbus, Brunswick and New Hanover counties were present.

Col. Frederick R. Weber, GOP candidate for the nomination to the U.S. House of Representatives, spoke to the group on inflation, crime pollution and other problems confronting the nation.

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