

Around Town

BY SAM C. MORRIS

Spring comes in March, but old man winter is showing off before bowing out. This week the weather has been extremely cold. The nights in the 20's and the days in the 40's.

Snow was reported in some parts of the state Sunday morning, but I don't believe any fell in Hoke County. Maybe a good snow would cause the weather to break and we could have an early spring.

The Jefferson-Jackson Day Dinner was held last Saturday night in Raleigh and was well attended. It was held at the Royal Villa Motel between Raleigh and Durham and brought together Democrats for the first time since the 1974 General Election.

The crowd was larger than the planning committee had expected and some late arrivers for the dinner didn't get seats and had to eat elsewhere at the motel. Of course this caused some grumbling from \$50 ticket holders, but I expect they got a better meal than the 900 to a 1000 that got seats in the convention hall. Of course the party was the winner, as it turned out, as more money was added to the coffers. The old saying still goes, "The early bird gets the worm (or seat)."

Senator Robert C. Byrd of West Virginia gave a typical Democratic speech and added humor along the way to keep the audience listening all the way. He also compared the programs of the President and the Congress and sold his package to the listening Democrats. I don't believe it was too hard to sell.

Three men were around the lobby all afternoon shaking hands and, to me, seemed to be running hard for governor now. They were Skipper Bowles, Jim Hunt and Ed O'Hercom. The first two named are well known to most Democrats across the state, but the third is not as well known. The time for election is a long way off, so with his early start, he will be known by voting time.

The ACC basketball tournament gets underway in Greensboro this week and it seems that the title is up for grabs. Maryland, conference winner, is considered the favorite but has been defeated by Clemson and North Carolina during the regular season play. State, Clemson and Carolina tied for second, but each have been defeated by a team lower in the standings. So, it could be any team's title.

The tournament has been a sellout for months and many fans are complaining because they can't get tickets. This makes an easy job for the promoters and more money in the conference treasury.

Anyway, the semi-finals and finals will be televised and usually you can see better than being at the game. Of course, most of us like to say, "We were at the tournament."

The baseball season at Hoke High got off to a cold start Tuesday, weatherwise!

Attic Shows A Profit

The Attic, a thrift shop operated by two county women's clubs, will no longer accept consignments or provide a layaway service.

The decisions were reached at a meeting last week of the executive board composed of members from Raeford Woman's Club and Raeford Junior Woman's Club. Bookkeeping

Firemen Seek Aid To Purchase Truck

Firemen from the organizing West Hoke district met with county commissioners Monday morning, hoping for a solution to equipment problems that have caused a setback in plans for state certification.

The truck the department is buying and has converted into a tanker-pumper will not meet the requirements for state certification, fire chief Dannie McCollum told the board.

The West Hoke truck will only pump 95 to 120 gallons of water per minute, he said, and the state requires a flow of 750 gallons per minute for a 15-minute period.

The financial condition of the department is weak, he told the commissioners. West Hoke district derives slightly more than \$2,400 in fire taxes per year, county manager T.B. Lester reported. The \$5,000 in revenue sharing money has been spent already this year on the building and equipment and the department owes \$3,900 on their truck.

A new truck costs about \$32,000, McCollum reported.

Borrowing from Farmers Home Administration and buying a used truck were discussed and the board urged the group to seek to expand their district to a four-mile radius to increase the tax base. The commissioners told the firemen that they could not promise any funds.

Family Planning

The executive director of Lumber River Council of Governments, John Highfill, appeared briefly at the regular commissioners meeting to deliver a proposal to expand the family planning program at Hoke County Health Department.

Susan McKenzie, acting

Prayer Day This Friday

The eighty ninth World Day of Prayer will be observed in Raeford Friday, March 7, Mrs. Robert Gatlin of Raeford Presbyterian Church announced.

The international celebration is observed by Protestants, Orthodox, and Catholic Christians in 169 lands, she said.

The theme this year is "Become Perfectly One", a search for the meaning of Christian unity in the broader context of a pluralistic society, she said.

The international committee has designated Church Women United as official sponsors, but since the county has no chapter of Church Women, the First Baptist, United Methodist, and Raeford Presbyterian churches will be the county sponsors.

The service will be held at the Raeford United Methodist Church. The church will be open from 10 A.M. to 4 P.M., for individual meditation and service, Mrs. Gatlin said.

Shortly after 4 P.M., the women of the First Baptist Church will present a concluding service.

Jury Awards \$1,000 Damages To Propst In Long Time Feud

A Superior Court jury awarded \$1,000 damages to a Hoke County man after ruling he was willfully and maliciously assaulted and injured by his neighbor.

After deliberating about an hour and fifteen minutes, the jurors found the plaintiff, David Propst, 58, of Rt. 1, Raeford, entitled to recover \$500 in actual damages as a result of an assault last June 25, made on Propst by Arol H. Smith, Sr., also of Rt. 1.

Punitive damages were set at \$500. Smith's wife, Magdalene N. Smith, a co-defendant in the suit, received a favorable ruling from the jury and they found she was not a party to the assault and was not liable.

The lawsuit, involving a long-time feud among the two families, was interrupted Tuesday when Smith became angered and threatened to "take apart" the plaintiff's attorney.

Judge Hamilton Hobgood

immediately excused the jurors from the courtroom and sternly warned Smith he would be jailed for contempt of court if he made any more threatening statements.

Smith made the remark from the witness stand while under cross examination from Raeford attorney Philip Diehl.

Diehl asked Smith what crimes he had been arrested and convicted of. Smith glared at the lawyer and said, "I'm fixing to be convicted of taking you apart."

The trial entered the second day of testimony Tuesday after a jury was seated Monday.

The Smiths, who acted as their own attorneys, were respondents in a suit brought by Propst who sought damages totaling \$150,000 arising out of the June 25 incident.

A countersuit filed by the Smiths

requested \$175,000 in damages, alleging Propst caused Smith to be falsely arrested and jailed for forty-one days.

The Superior Court suit was the latest in a series of criminal and civil cases involving the two families over several years.

The disagreements have arisen out of the lack of a public roadway to the Propst home. The only access to the Propst home was via a roadway on the Smith property, and numerous disputes over the use of the road resulted in charges and countercharges brought to court since 1969.

A civil suit brought by the Propsts, and heard in Superior Court last March, granted the Propsts the right to a roadway and access for purposes of construction Propst and his wife, Ethel, testified they were working on the road June 25 when Propst was attacked and beaten by Smith.

Sheriff D.M. Barrington testified he

administrator, said the proposal, in which the county would have a health nurse practitioner for family planning clinics two days a week, would expand the services now offered at the department.

Highfill asked for the commissioners' comments on the proposal by March 10.

He also brought copies of the proposed ordinance to create a planning board. The commissioners will meet to study the ordinance on March 11 at 8 p.m.

Hunt Appointed

Commissioner James A. Hunt was appointed to the board of the Sandhills Mental Health Center. He is replacing former chairman of the board of county commissioners, T.C. Jones.

The board approved the purchase of two adding machines, two typewriters and two stenographers chairs to be used in the courthouse annex.

The equipment, which will amount to

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City Council Agenda Includes Bids, Court Summons, Airport

Raeford's city council Monday night received a summons from the clerk of court to reply to a suit against the city being brought by an irate resident, heard a report that a problem at the sewage disposal plant may cost \$100,000 to fix, and referred a request back to the airport commission in another round of the continuing dissension at Raeford airport.

The city was given 30 days to reply to a civil suit being brought by Mrs. Agnes Campbell, who contends that the city is denying water service to her.

Richard Moore, consulting engineer from the city, reported that a problem in drying the sludge at the city waste treatment plant may cost \$100,000 to correct.

He recommended that the city wait for the completion of a federal waste facility study and then investigate applying for possible grants.

Paul Rose, who operates a flying

Zoning Snags Library Plans

Plans for the county's Bicentennial library have hit a snag on the city's zoning ordinance.

To comply with the law, one space of off-street parking must be provided for every four seats for patrons in the library.

Only a few spaces for the bookmobile and staff are now included in the building plans and the proposed building site on Main Street is not large enough to add a parking area.

"The problem with parking just never came up," Ralph Barnhart, chairman of the library building committee, said. "I figured we had both sides of Main Street and all down Donaldson."

"But of course the city has a zoning law, and it's good that they have one."

Gifts Asked For Auction

Do you have an old wicker chair shoved in a tool shed? A sewing machine cabinet rusting behind the pump house? Some old bottles or canning jars?

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Housing Meeting Tuesday

A public meeting on low-income housing will be held Tuesday at 7:30 p.m. in the courtroom.

Scheduled to present information on public housing are Aubrey Jones, housing specialist for the N.C. Department of Economic and Natural Resources, Thurman Burnett from the state office of Farmers Home Administration and William E. Clark, county supervisor of FmHA.

Also expected are private developers interested in providing low income public housing.

Mayor John K. McNeill urged that anyone interested in public housing, such as builders, landowners, church, community or senior citizen groups, to attend the meeting.

school at the city-owned airport, appeared with his attorney, Philip Diehl to ask that the city council allow Rose to continue operating a radio at the airfield.

Diehl, in a letter to the council, said that Rose had gone to considerable expense and difficulty to obtain the radio and FCC license, only to have the city in six months terminate his privilege to operate.

Rose told the council that he had not objected when city manager John Gaddy had first asked him about the city taking over the radio operation.

The council referred the matter back to the airport commission.

Bids ranging from \$5,000 to \$15,000 were opened on roof repairs to city hall. Cumberland Roofing bid \$5,021. Other bids were Roscoe Snipes, \$9,812.20; Sneed and Hatcher, \$13,460 and T.R. Driscoll, \$15,725.

Ralph Barnhart, chairman of the county commissioners, met with the

Barnhart said his main concern was to do whatever was necessary to assure that they could get a building permit when the time came to let the contract.

According to city zoning administrator Bill Sellars, the most probable course to resolve the difficulty will be for the library to apply to the zoning board of adjustment for a variance. This will require a public hearing before the board headed by Jimmy Conoly can rule on whether to waive the parking requirements.

The problem surfaced several weeks ago when city manager John Gaddy received a letter from the library architect, Darryl Wally, saying he understood that Raeford had no zoning ordinance. Sellars said a copy of the ordinance was sent to him immediately.

What is junk to one may be a treasure to another, is the theory behind the Raeford Woman's Club auction to be held April 12 at Devane's auction barn

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Farm Income Dropped In '74 \$ One Million

Registration Set April 9 - 11

Registration for kindergarten and first grade will be held April 9 - 11 from 8:30 A.M. - 4:00 P.M. at West Hoke, Scurlock and J.W. McLaughlin elementary schools.

A child registering for kindergarten must be 5 years old on or before Oct. 16.

A child registering for first grade must be 6 years old by Oct. 16.

A child enrolled in public kindergarten need not re-register for first grade.

Estimated farm income in the county last year dropped by about a million dollars.

Lower cotton prices accounted for most of the loss, according to county farm agent Wendell Young.

Estimated value of cotton grown here last year was \$2.4 million, Young said, compared to \$3.5 million the year before. The estimate was based on a market price this year of 38 cents a pound, even though very little of this year's crop has yet been sold.

Total farm income for 1974 was estimated at \$17,669,150. Young estimated 1973 income at \$18,632,452.

Unless Congress intervenes with increased price supports, Young predicted that cotton acreage will drop this year to half that planted in 1974.

"Last year we had some 11,000 acres in cotton," Young said. "If we end up this year with 5,000 it'll fool me."

Also showing a drop last year was forestry income which fell from \$1.3 million in 1973 to \$826,000 last year.

Young said the decrease had no particular significance.

"Some winters it's just easier to get the wood out," he said.

Payments through federal programs also dropped last year, reflecting a shift in policy toward a supply and demand program, Young said. In 1973, Hoke farmers were paid \$929,271 by the federal government. Last year, federal payments amounted to \$55,726.59.

Tobacco income was up considerably, due mostly to higher prices, Young said. Last year's estimated income was \$4.1 million, compared to \$3.5 the year before.

Other areas of farm income changed little. Income from soybeans was \$3.9 million, compared to \$3.2 million in 1973. Vegetables brought \$282,313 compared to \$266,505 the previous year.

Young said he expected more emphasis on pickling cucumbers this year.

"It's a way to pick up a little cash early in the season," he said.

Income from livestock last year amounted to \$2.9 million, compared to \$2.8 million in 1973 and poultry income was estimated at \$1.6 million, up somewhat from \$1.1 million the year before.

Luckie Returned To Jail, Murder Trial Next Month

Jesse L. Luckie, indicted for the double murder of his girlfriend's parents last October here, has been returned to the Hoke County jail.

Luckie, 25, of Rt. 1, Raeford, was brought back from Dorothea Dix hospital in Raleigh where he underwent a court-ordered pre-trial study to determine if he is competent to stand trial.

Luckie is charged in the killings of W.T. McAllister and his wife, Mary Lee, at their home near Blue Springs in the early morning hours of October 19. At the time of his arrest, Luckie was described as the boyfriend of the McAllister's daughter, Ava.

The bodies of the victims were found

sprawled on the floor of the dining room with numerous gunshot wounds from a .22 caliber automatic rifle.

Public Defender James Little, representing Luckie, declined to confirm or deny a change in venue will be sought in the case.

"It would be improper for me to comment at this time," he said. "No motions have been made."

Little was asked about the recent speculation of Luckie getting a fair trial from a Raeford jury.

"Really, I don't have an opinion. We're still studying that."

The murder trial has been calendared for the next term of Superior Court which begins April 28.

sent in response to her call June 25, and Barrington stated the only call he was aware of was made by the Propsts after the affray.

"I've received so many calls from you and the Propsts in the past seven or eight years, it's hard for me to sort them out," he said.

"We were under a court order to send a deputy, at Mr. Propst's request, every time he went out to repair the road. On this date, no request was received," Barrington said.

The Smiths' son, Arol (Buster) Smith, Jr., testified he witnessed Propst using a shovel to attack his father, and his father was only attempting to defend himself.

The Smiths called Harold Boyles, who sold the Smiths their property, and also county agent Wendell Young, to the witness stand to describe the land in detail to the jurors.

Various restraining orders, dating from 1972, were admitted into evidence for the plaintiffs. The orders enjoined both parties from interfering with each other, under penalty of civil arrest for a violation of the order.

Smith's counterclaim for false arrest damages was based on his civil arrest, shortly after the June 25 fracas, for allegedly violating a March 4, 1974, court order.

At the conclusion of the defense presentation, Hobgood sent the jurors out of the courtroom and dismissed the counterclaim because the Smiths did not present any evidence of a wrongful arrest.

After the proceedings, Judge Hobgood warned the litigants "not to start anything as you're going down the stairs" and told both families he didn't want to have to "take any action".