

## Around Town

BY SAM C. MORRIS

Last week I stated in this column about some much needed rain having fallen a few days before the paper came out. This much needed rain has now turned the state almost into a flood area. I don't know how bad crops are damaged, but a story should appear elsewhere in the paper.

I do know that every year during the softball tournament play, that it has been very wet during the time. Now this district tournament play starts next Monday night at Armory Park. So, if things go as usual, the rain is not over yet.

Twice in this column I have commented about a plant that had both potatoes and tomatoes on it. There was some disagreement about what the fruit called tomatoes was. Some said they were seeds and not tomatoes.

This week Eunice Roper of Raeford settled the tomato-potato controversy with true evidence.

A magazine advertising a plant that grew tomatoes and potatoes on the same vine invited you to amaze your friends by growing them together. Anyone may order the seeds from a nursery.

Now, if this doesn't convince you, then come by the office and I will show you the advertisement and a picture of the plant.

I know the readers of this paper will miss Laurie Telfair and will hope for her much success in whatever crosses her path in the years ahead. Laurie will move with her family to Texas to join her husband who will be stationed there. Major Telfair has been on a tour of duty in Thailand for the past year. Laurie will leave from Fayetteville the first of August.

This is the second farewell to Laurie and, who knows, she might turn back up in this area again. If so, a desk seems to be open anytime she returns.

Dayna Pate, publicity chairman for the groundbreaking for the new library, was by the office recently and stated that the big day would be Friday, August 8. Plans are underway to make this a big event. Many political leaders and other dignitaries have been invited.

A brief ceremony will be held at the courthouse at 11 o'clock that morning before going to the library site for the groundbreaking.

Everyone in the county is invited, and the Bicentennial chairmen, Mr. and Mrs. Carson Davis, are hoping for a large crowd.

Aberdeen Coca-Cola Bottling Co. will give free Cokes to everyone that attends the groundbreaking.

The date is not too far off, so mark it on your calendar. This newspaper will keep you informed as the plans are finalized.

## Leave Policy Okayed, Then Nixed By HEW

The board of education adopted a maternity leave policy for school faculty at their July 7 meeting and Superintendent of Schools G. Raz Autry later said the policy would not be permitted and recommended the board rescind it.

The board had adopted a policy which requires a teacher on maternity leave remain on leave the entire semester, but Thursday Autry said Title IX amendments to the Civil Rights Act which are going into effect would prohibit such a stipulation.

"I asked Bill Moses (school board attorney) if it would be all right and he said yes," Autry said.

"On Wednesday it comes in the mail, and it's not all right at all," he said, referring to Health, Education and Welfare (HEW) guidelines.

Autry said the purpose of the policy was designed to protect youngsters from having to adjust to a teacher returning at the very end of a semester just before exams.

He cited an example of a teacher who was on leave at the beginning of a term and returned after Christmas for the final two weeks.



WELCOMED - Farm agent Wendell Young (left) welcomes new assistant agent Fred O'Neal, who assumed his duties Monday.

## Extension Agent Named

Fred O'Neal joined the county extension service Monday as assistant farm agent.

A native of Hyde County, O'Neal was graduated from Mattamuskeet High School and attended the College of Albemarle for two years. He transferred to North Carolina

State University in Raleigh and will receive his degree in agricultural education this year.

O'Neal, 22, will specialize in livestock work here and direct the 4-H programs.

A bachelor, he is re-locating in Raeford.

## Social Services Hit With Two Lawsuits

The Hoke county department of social services and its director, Benjamin O. Niblock, have been sued in federal court by a woman who claims public assistance benefits for herself and five children were illegally terminated and the department denied her a hearing to appeal the termination.

Two suits were filed last week in U.S. District Court in Greensboro by Mrs. Pearl O. Locklear, Rt. 1, Red Springs, for herself and on behalf of her grandchildren by her attorney Philip Diehl.

In her petition, Mrs. Locklear requests benefits for herself and her two children, and for three grandchildren placed in her care, be re-instated. No punitive damages are requested.

The family was receiving about \$250 monthly in benefits through AFDC (Aid to Families with Dependent Children), food stamps, and Medicaid programs.

Niblock declined any comment on the action, saying it would be inappropriate to discuss it at this time.

Mrs. Locklear contends her grandchildren, placed in her care by the Robeson county department of social services following their mother's death, received a \$1,494 lump sum payment from the Social Security Administration after approval of their father's disability claim award in May. The same month, the Hoke social services office notified her that her aid would be terminated May 31.

The suits contend the Social Security payment was for the use

and benefit of Mrs. Locklear's grandchildren only, and termination of benefits to the woman and her children was unlawful.

Sole income for the household now is \$80 in monthly payments for the grandchildren from the disability award, according to the petition. Mrs. Locklear is unemployed.

The petition further alleges that Mrs. Locklear gave verbal and written notice of her desire to appeal the decision, but that no hearing was afforded her.

According to the petition, Mrs. Locklear was unaware of the application for the disability claim, and when she reported the payment to the social services department, caseworker C. McKoy subjected her to "demeaning and derogatory accusations."

The agency has 20 days under the law to file a response to the allegations in the suits, which were filed July 8.



Michael Steadman

## Reporter Joins N-J

Michael Steadman has joined the staff of The News-Journal as a reporter-photographer.

Steadman is a Raeford native and attended Hoke County High School. He received a B.A. degree with a major in English and a minor in journalism from East Carolina University. While there he was a feature writer for the Fountainhead, the school paper of ECU.

## Rose's Office Here Saturday

The mobile office of Congressman Charlie Rose will be at the Raeford post office Saturday from 10 A.M. to 3 P.M.

Rip Collins, Rose's administrative assistant, will be on hand.

## 'Worst It Has Been'

# Rain Threatens Crop

## Bicentennial Day Aug. 8

U.S. Senator Robert Morgan and Congressman Charles G. Rose III have been invited to the special Bicentennial observance here next month, in recognition of Hoke County as a Bicentennial community and to break the first ground at the site of the Bicentennial Library.

August 8 is the date, Bicentennial co-chairman Mrs. Carson Davis, Jr., announced.

State Senator Luther Britt and Representatives Joy Johnson, David

Parnell and Henry Oxendine have also been asked to attend.

Hector McLean, a Bicentennial state chairman, is expected.

A ceremony is scheduled on the courthouse lawn where the official flag designating the county as a Bicentennial community will be unfurled. Mayor John K. McNeill will deliver the welcome, and chairman of the county commissioners, Ralph Barnhart, will formally accept the flag for the county.

Rev. John C. Ropp of the Raeford Presbyterian Church will conduct a prayer.

At 11 a.m., the Bicentennial library committee will preside over the groundbreaking ceremony at the Main Street and Donaldson Avenue site of the future library.

The Raeford Woman's Club will host an old fashioned luncheon, following the ceremony, at the Raeford Presbyterian Church. About 150 people, representing churches, civic and community organizations, and elected officials and their wives, will be guests.

## Viet Refugees Apply For Aid

Two Vietnamese refugee families living here have applied for aid with the department of social services, director Benjamin O. Niblock disclosed Friday.

Niblock said the two families, who he refused to identify, have applied for food stamps and also for AFDC benefits (Aid to Families with Dependent Children).

"Need is the only criteria for establishing eligibility," Niblock said, referring to the refugees. One food stamp application has already been processed, he said.

One Vietnamese family is reportedly sponsored by a Lieutenant Colonel at Ft. Bragg, who located housing for the family here.

Niblock said that the federal government will be re-imbursing localities, at least for the next 12 months, for public assistance benefits paid to Vietnamese refugees.

## Library Bids Opening Today

Construction bids on the new library building will be opened at 3 P.M. today (Thursday) in the conference room of the courthouse annex.

The bids will be announced by Hayes and Howell Associates, Southern Pines architectural firm.

August 8 is set as the date for a groundbreaking ceremony at the Main Street and Donaldson Avenue site.

## Two Deputy Jobs Vacant

Another opening for a deputy in the sheriff's department was made last week after a job shift. Sheriff D.M. Barrington announced.

Deputy Henry Bowen resigned his post to be assigned as jailer, filling an existing vacancy for a jailer. Barrington said.

The hiring of one more deputy was approved for the 1975-76 budget, and Bowen's action results in two vacancies for deputy.

Starting salary for Hoke county deputies is \$7,000.

## Airport Panel Eyeing County Tax Dollars

In their regular meeting Wednesday night last week, the airport committee made several suggestions, including a proposal the county reimburse the city taxes paid by private pilots, according to minutes of the meeting.

The county's lack of participation in operations at the airport was cited for the idea. Airport manager John Gaddy made no estimate of the amount of taxes involved, but calculated the taxes on some planes to be in the \$100-170 range. About 30 planes are at the airport.

The committee reported the misuse of the transient area on the apron. An aircraft had been on the transient area for three weeks, Gaddy said he did not know who owned the plane, but he discussed it with Gene Thacker and the plane was later moved.

It was recommended that Raeford Aviation use their leased property for jump plane loading.

The airport committee also recommended tie-downs be installed on the dirt area and a fee of \$5 per month be charged for tie-down in this area.

The committee requested the city council make an effort to obtain a new lease for the Raeford Aviation operation.

The airport committee also recommended the possibility of lengthening the landing strip with necessary lighting be looked into. Also the possibility of the installations of a non-directional beacon should be checked.

The recommendations are expected to be brought up at the city council's next regular meeting.

The heavy rainfall which has battered Raeford in the past week may threaten the county's tobacco crop and growers are facing sizeable losses if the drenching continues, the county extension office warned.

A total of eight inches was recorded for the past five days as of midnight Tuesday, but the forecast for the rest of the week calls for cloudy skies.

Friday's downpour totaled 2.3 inches, followed by 1.5 inches Saturday. Sunday's heavy storm brought another 2.1 inches, followed by more precipitation Monday.

A heavy downpour began Tuesday afternoon about 1:30, and by 4 p.m., nearly an inch had accumulated, recorder Robert Gatlin reported.

Much of the county's low lying farmland was under water Tuesday, farm agent Wendell Young said.

"If it continues," Young said, "it could get to the point that tobacco, and other crops, could drown or suffocate because of the water around the roots. In essence, it (rain) actually cuts off the oxygen supply."

"Another two or three inches, and it could put the crops in pretty bad shape," he said.

"This is the worst it has been in the last year, and it could get worse," he said.

Young said the most troubled areas are in Raeford and Blue Springs townships, and some growers have been affected in the Allendale township.

Worst hit could be tobacco, with some 2,600 to 2,800 acres planted this year, about a 15% increase over last year.

Young said as of Tuesday, there was not a great deal of damage reported, and added it was impossible to give an actual dollar figure yet.

Particularly hard hit could be the Blue Springs area because of the lack of an adequate drainage system, Young pointed out.

The record rainfall followed a prolonged dry period from June 22 through last Thursday, in which only a fraction of an inch was recorded, Gatlin reported.

## Youth Dies Of Injuries

A fifteen year-old badly hurt in a swimming accident at Rockfish Creek died of his injuries at North Carolina Memorial Hospital July 8.

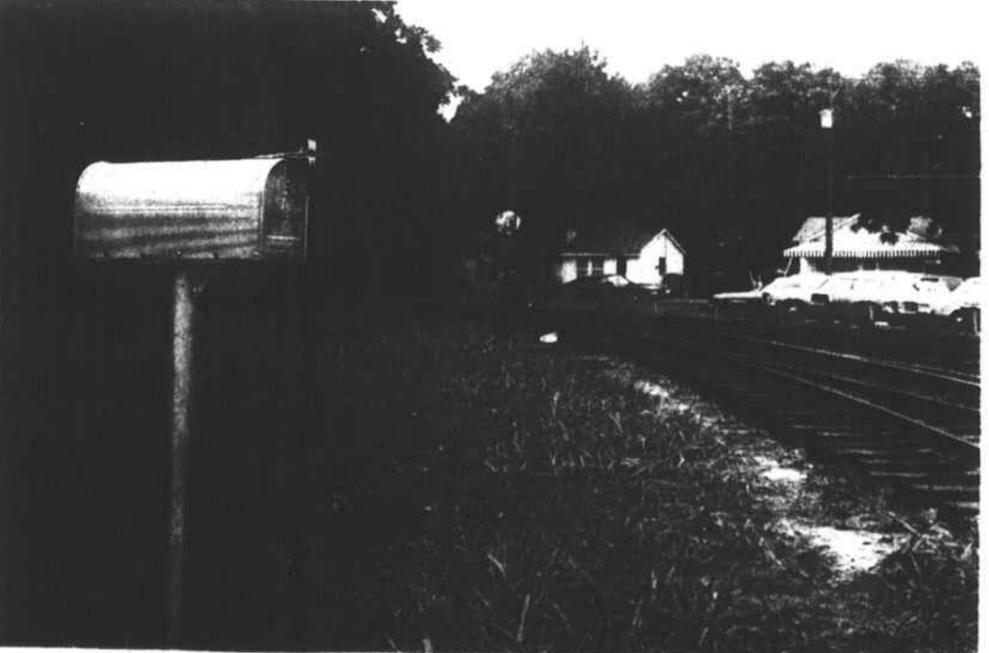
Larry Jacobs, Rt. 1, Shannon, was paralyzed with a broken neck and had been hospitalized since the June 27 accident in the intensive care unit.

Jacobs, an Upchurch school student last year, was swimming with friends and failed to surface after making a dive from about 20 feet into the water. His companions said he probably struck the bottom.

He was the son of Mrs. Nellie Jacobs.

The creek, which is often used for swimming, is not regarded as safe because of litter and debris.

W.K. Morgan, recreation director, said because of the fluctuation of the water level at the creek, diving is very dangerous.



MAIL CALL? - This mailbox appeared last week next to the A & R tracks, two weeks after the closing of the depot, although it is not entirely clear just what box number, or what route, for that matter, is here.