

## Around Town

By Sam C. Morris

It rained over the weekend but not at a time to interfere with the graduation exercises or for an afternoon of golf. Maybe by next year the principal at Hoke High won't have to go to prayer meeting or have a talk with the preacher before commencement as the new auditorium could be complete.

From all reports it seems that the stadium was filled to capacity for graduation. So maybe they will have to issue tickets for the occasion when it is held inside and seats will be in small numbers. Wait and see!

\*\*\*

While on the subject of graduation it seems that some should have a course in how to behave at a commencement exercise. The following comments were heard by the writer since last Sunday:

-that during the address by the speaker it was impossible to hear him because of conversations going on near them.

-that people got up and left the stadium causing confusion just as soon as a diploma was handed to someone they came to see graduate.

-that some people couldn't stay put while the exercises were in progress.

To put it bluntly, this is down right impolite and very inconsiderate for other people. So why don't you think about these things and try to change before next year.

Yes, try to live by the Golden Rule.

\*\*\*

Mrs. J.L. McNeill and Pam Williams were by the office last week and asked that I try to get some information for them through this column. They are compiling a history for the Hoke County Library which they want to have completed by the July 4th dedication.

They would like to have anything that you know or have heard about the library since the start of it in the early 1900's. Names of people who helped organize it or worked in any way to get it started. Also any comments you have heard people say about the library since its beginning. Any stories or tales, sad or happy, that have been handed down. Pictures about the library are also requested.

In other words go by the library and tell Pam Williams anything you have ever heard. All they have to work with are the minutes of the meetings and this will not give the entire history of the library. If you can help, please do so.

\*\*\*

Benny McLeod was in charge of the program at the Raeford Kiwanis Club last week and had Arthur Moore of Fayetteville as his guest speaker. Mr. Moore, who was officer in charge of the Highway Patrol of the division for years and now retired, spoke on the patrol since its beginning. He was one of the rookies in 1929. His comments were enlightening and very amusing. He spoke for a time on "Life on a Motorcycle", which had the group laughing at times.

He ended up in a more serious note about the patrol and politics which made one think as he left the meeting.

\*\*\*

The politicians should be coming around now that the filing deadline has passed so be ready with the right questions for them.

## Tax Man To Leave

Tax listing supervisor Thomas (Tommy) Wilkerson II has resigned to accept the position of tax listing supervisor in Pasquotank County.

Wilkerson will leave the \$9,675 post June 30. No replacement has been chosen yet. County manager T.B. Lester said.

Wilkerson, 27, has held the position for nearly three years.

County tax supervisors must be certified by the Department of Revenue and pass state examinations.

# Judge Rejects Sheriff's Ouster

\*\*\*\*\*

By Mike Steadman

## Two More Join School Race

At the close of the filing period Friday, the field of candidates for the non-partisan Board of Education race in November stood at six with a past Board of Education member and an ex-schoolteacher the last to beat the deadline.

Robert H. Gatlin, 66, and Mina H. Townsend, 39, joined previously announced candidates Ruth McNair, Kay Thomas and incumbents D.R. Huff Jr. and A. Wilton Wood Jr. for places on the November ballot.

There is no primary election for the Board of Education. The two top vote-getters in November will automatically get the two seats open on the board.

Gatlin, a Hoke native, is a graduate of Hoke High and received his B.S. degree in civil engineering from N.C. State University.

He taught civil engineering at Duke University for three years after graduation and then returned to the county where he farmed and surveyed until World War II. He served two years in the Army, attaining the rank of captain.

Gatlin was first appointed to the Board of Education in 1946 and served until 1965 except for a two year gap in which he did not run for re-election.

He taught vocational education, drafting and surveying courses, at Hoke High from 1966 until his retirement last year. For the past year he has been a consultant to the Board of Education on physical plant engineering.

"It's real close to me, education. After serving 18 years on the Board



Mina Townsend

and teaching for ten years, I'm not ready to quit. Now I'll have more time to devote to education. A lot of the young people don't know me, but the older ones do", he said.

"I've been in the situation for more than ten years, and if I'm going to keep up my public work, this is what I know about", he added.

Gatlin was a Raeford volunteer fireman for 38 years and was chief for two years. He is an active member of the Kiwanis Club and served as president. A member of the First Baptist Church, he served as chairman of the building committee, was elected a lifetime Deacon, served for 20 years as a trustee in the Raeford church and 15 years as a trustee in the North Carolina Baptist



Robert H. Gatlin

Children's Home. He is also a past Sunday School Superintendent of the Raeford church.

Gatlin is currently treasurer of the Hoke County Bicentennial Commission and also co-chairman of the heritage and history committee.

He and his wife, Mamie, have two grown daughters. The Gatlins reside at 301 Harris Ave.

Mrs. Townsend, the wife of a Raeford physician, ran for the Board of Education in 1974 and lost by less than 100 votes. This is her second bid for public office.

A native of Huntington, W. Va., she received a degree in elementary

See SCHOOL RACE, page 11

Sheriff D.M. Barrington was found not to have breached his oath of office by Superior Court Judge James H. Pou Bailey here Tuesday in a courtroom ringed by more than ten state troopers.

Bailey said because the petition that claimed Barrington willfully and unlawfully breached his oath of office was filed almost 17 months following the occurrence; that Barrington recognized his error, and promised no future interference with the duties of his deputies immediately following the occurrence; the action was seemingly ignored by the Hoke County Commissioners earlier in the year; and the petition was filed not in good faith and because of anger and irritation, it was not even a beginning for a call for removal of office.

Spectators were subject to a pat-down search by troopers before they could enter the courtroom. Bailey said he requested six troopers to act as authorized officers for the hearing that was ordered by Chief Justice Susie Sharp.

Dial sat alone behind the petition attorneys, Charles Hostetler, county attorney; and Ed Grannis, district attorney.

Barrington joined his attorneys; Phillip Diehl, Palmer Willcox, and Warren Pate, and was flanked by members of the Hoke County Sheriff's Department, who like members of the Raeford Police Department, had no legal authority in the courtroom and were not armed, as ordered by Bailey.

Grannis called Dial as the petitioners' first witness and he testified that he, Deputy James Peterkin, and J.K. Riley, Hoke County ABC officer, stopped a car driven by Claudine Hodgkin, on August 18, 1974, about 1 A.M. and later arrested her for DUI.

He said Riley drove the Hodgkin car to the Hoke County Sheriff's Department and she was given the Breathalyzer by Charles Campbell, Raeford police officer.

He later testified that he received a phone call from Barrington and was asked whether she was "pretty drunk" and he had told him yes. He said he also told Barrington that he charged her with DUI.

Dial said Barrington first told him to go ahead with the charge and then said he could not let him do it.

Dial said Barrington told him to, "Tear that ticket up and throw it into the trash can and charge her with reckless driving".

He said Barrington told him to turn Miss Hodgkin loose. "I balled it (the citation) up and threw it into the trash can and wrote her another ticket," said Dial.

Dial testified that he wrote the names: James Peterkin, J.K. Riley, and Charles Campbell on the Breathalyzer ticket as witnesses before he threw it away, and later recovered it.

He said he gave the ticket to Plummer Locklear Jr. for safekeeping.

Dial did not recall whether he had Miss Hodgkin walk the white line. He also could not recall a meeting with Barrington on the Monday following the arrest, whether he gave James Peterkin a copy of the citation that he had recovered, or what he did with other copies.

He said he could not recall if he showed Peterkin copies of the ticket, or whether he put names of witnesses on other tickets other than Miss Hodgkin's.

"For a man who has brought such serious charges against a public official, your memory is faulty," said Bailey.

J.K. Riley was called by the petitioners as their next witness and he testified under cross-examination that he had asked Dial to let him take Miss Hodgkin home at the time that she was stopped and Dial had refused.

Riley said he knew that Dial recovered the copy of the ticket and that "Dial said he was going to keep it because it might come in handy someday".

Steve Hedgpeth, Hoke County Magistrate, was the next witness for the petitioners and said he was the magistrate on duty the night of the occurrence.

He said David Hodgkin Jr., Claudine Hodgkin's brother, came in and asked to use the phone. He later said Claudine Hodgkin was brought before him and was charged with driving left of center.

He also testified that both David and Claudine Hodgkin were intoxicated.

David Hodgkin Jr. was then called to the stand and he said he

See BARRINGTON, page 11

## Tax Rate Edges Up In Budget

By Marty Vega

A tentative county budget for fiscal year 1976-77 of nearly \$2.6 million which proposes a nickel increase in the present \$.85 per \$100 valuation tax rate will be reviewed by county commissioners in a public hearing set for June 17 at 7:30 P.M. in the courthouse.

County manager and finance officer T.B. Lester distributed copies of the 85 page budget to commissioners last week. By law, the new budget must be adopted by July 1 after a hearing for public comment.

In his message to commissioners, Lester said the current fiscal year was expected to "be the worst since the 1930's", but that ad valorem tax collections were better than expected, and sales and intangible tax receipts exceeded estimates.

The overall budget totals \$2,596,852, up from this year's \$2,374,664 amount, but reduced from the \$2,946,574 figure which represented requested amounts from all county agencies and the school system.

### Schools

County contributions to the school system were cut sharply in the proposed budget. The budget appropriates \$596,262 for current operating expense, down from the \$734,259 requested by Supt. G. Raz Autry last month. Another \$103,000 requested for repair of Raeford elementary school was rejected, instead \$89,000 in revenue sharing funds was earmarked to reduce the tax burden.

Lester said the school system had a \$115,000 surplus last year, therefore the operating expense for the coming year was cut accordingly. The county's contribution to the school debt service fund adds another \$94,033 to the total. The county's share of the schools' operating expense is increased by \$21,000 over this year.

### Revenue Sharing

In federal revenue sharing funds, the budget reflects a \$101,000 balance from this year's allotment, plus a \$163,651 award for the coming year through December and a \$73,712 payment for the July 1 entitlement period. Including \$11,000 earmarked for recreation this year and unspent, the total amount of revenue sharing funds for the coming year is put \$338,363.

In addition to the \$89,000 allotted for school repairs, the budget proposes expenditures of revenue sharing for the seven rural fire departments (\$17,500), rescue

squad (\$2,500), ambulance service (\$27,000), and landfill operation (\$30,000).

The 1976-77 budget shows an increase in expenditures in the General Fund of \$182,560. The rises were attributed to salary increases, additional employees, utility costs, acquisition of the new library building, and an increase in the debt service due to sale of \$325,000 in school bonds.

### Pay Raises

Most of the pay increases for county workers are put in the 10

per cent range, but some are set at six per cent and others range up to a high of 25 per cent.

Four additional workers requested by the Department of Social Services and two additional library workers are in the proposed budget.

The Social Services budget is tentatively set at \$434,230 up from this year's \$383,781. State and federal re-imbursements amount to \$226,282.

The health department budget

See BUDGET, page 13

## Discount Program Meeting Scheduled

There will be a meeting of all interested senior citizens at the courthouse annex Friday, June 4, (tomorrow) who wish to sign up for the county discount program.

A representative will be there from 2-5 P.M. to sign up people over 60 years of age for the program.

A spokesman said Monday that all that is needed to sign up for the program is a social security number and proof of age. If the signee is over 65, a Medicare card will be sufficient.

Seven local stores are participating in the discount program.

## Commissioners Race

# Seven Seeking Two Seats

Three more Democratic hopefuls and a second Republican challenger beat the Friday deadline for filing and swelled the field of candidates trying for two seats on the county board of commissioners to seven.

Democrats Danny DeVane, Danny Morrison and Mabel Riley and Republican Edward B. McClendon joined incumbent Neil W. McPhatter and challengers Charlie Pendergrass and J.H. (Buddy) Blue Jr. in the primary battle. McPhatter and Pendergrass are Democrats. Blue is a Republican.

Since only two Republicans filed, no GOP primary will be held.

If two candidates do not each receive a majority of votes cast on the Democratic slate, a second primary will be necessary.

DeVane, 30, is an owner of DeVane Department Store in Raeford and sole owner of DeVane's Auction Barn. He is a licensed auctioneer and a real estate broker.

A native of Bladen County, he entered the clothing business in St. Pauls after graduation from high school. He worked as a Fayetteville police officer from 1966-69 and then moved to Raeford as manager of the Raeford Department Store.

In 1971, he opened his own store on Main St.

This is his first bid for public office.

"I filed because I want to serve the people of Hoke and be a part of our county's growth and welfare not to seek any personal gain.

There will be no promises made to anyone, and if I am elected, I will be obligated to all of the people of Hoke County and not to any one person or group", he said.

DeVane favors stepped-up law enforcement in the area of drug abuse and would like to see the city

and county tied into a regional setup of narcotics investigators, similar to the Tri-County Bureau of Narcotics headquartered in Cumberland County.

"I think the sheriff has done an outstanding job, but the sheriff's department can't do it alone. They're catching the boys and girls with the stuff, but we need to cut the source", he said.

DeVane said it may not mean additional tax dollars to finance such a program, as grants have

been available in the past for drug abuse.

DeVane said he left the Fayetteville police because of low pay and stated he feels local law enforcement officers here are also underpaid.

"I certainly can make no promises of any kind, but I do feel the officers are underpaid. They're working too many hours and a man that is overworked cannot do a proper job. There should be a

See SEVEN SEEK, page 13



Danny DeVane



Danny Morrison



Mabel Riley