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Around Town

BY SAM C. MORRIS

The fall weather this week makes it hard to get up in the mornings. It is just right for sleeping. The days are also perfect with the temperature in the low seventies.

This weather brings to mind that the leaves are now in full color in the mountains of North Carolina. From all reports in the newspaper they will be pretty through the month of October. Usually I hear from my brother, James, in Chimney Rock by this time of year but guess the apple crop is not very good this year and prices are too high for him to come down and bring a bushel and tell me all about the color in Hickory Nut Gap.

Anyway this is the time of year that I like in the mountains. If you haven't been in the mountains in the fall do so this year or as soon as possible and you will see a sight you will always remember.

* * *

A letter in the mail this week:

Dear Sam:

As you say, "the following letter should be self - explanatory", but this one leaves me with a question or two.

You see, I'm still not 100% sold on computers. It once cost me 80c and 8 months to clear a 1c debt.

Also the 2.5 children that each average family is assured of having got run through twice for our family.

You can see why I'm a bit leary of the enclosed check. (They did say I could sell or give it to a friend.) I'm wondering how good the guarantee on the merchandise will be if I can't prove I'm who they say I am. I do know that you've been my friend for a long time - so maybe you can take advantage of the fabulous offer.

Sincerely,

Mrs. Arabia G. Course
(Annie Mae Hendrix)

This letter struck me by surprise for a few moments until I looked over the pieces in the envelope. There was a check for $200.00 made out to Mrs. Arabia G. Course, Route, 2, Raeford, N.C. and it had been endorsed by Mrs. Arabia G. Course. I don't know if Gene Carter or Freddie Williams will cash it or not.

Also enclosed was a letter telling about the $200.00 off on a certain set of cookware. Also a brochure showing off the cookware.

Now to some people this may be good advertising but to me it is not. It was just several months ago that a land development company sent checks into the City and one was cashed at a local bank. A check is supposed to be legal tender just like a dollar bill so when you use it for advertising gimmicks you are downgrading checks.

I believe that this is what Annie Mae had in the back of her mind when she sent me the letter and check.

Anyway it always makes me feel good to have someone say they consider me a friend. Thanks Annie Mae.

* * *

The vote on the fire house was lower than I had expected. Maybe the spending of $200,000 doesn't mean as much to some people as it does to me!

Remember if you didn't vote do not argue about the results.

CAMPAIGN -- Lt. Gov. Jim Hunt, Democratic nominee for governor in November, met Raeford voters last Wednesday at a 90 minute campaign stop at the Raeford Civic Center. The visit was arranged by Alfred Leach, Hoke County chairman for the Hunt campaign.

'Juke Joints' Raise Ire

County commissioners received written recommendations from the county Youth Services Committee to establish a "halfway" house for delinquent youths, and also heard a report from the sheriff on problems associated with "juke joints" being run from private residences during their regular meeting Monday morning.

The Youth Services Committee, headed by Walter Coley, presented a report recommending the establishment of a specialized foster home, or "halfway" house, to place undisciplined youths who can no longer be sent to a state training school beginning next year.

Initial costs of setting up such a home, which would house five youngsters, were estimated at $35,000. Four sources of funds were outlined: all county; Title XX program which is 75 per cent federal and 25 per cent local; Law Enforcement Assistance Administration (LEAA); and the state Youth Services Fund which is 74 per cent state and 26 per cent local.

LEAA funds 90 per cent of the costs during the first year but the federal share then declines in succeeding years until the fourth year when it is 100 per cent local money.

Commissioners had no comment and took no formal action on the recommendations.

Sheriff D.M. Barrington, who had come to the meeting to discuss a proposed change in the burning permit procedure sought by the Fireman's Association, was also questioned about shootings, assaults and general lawlessness going on at two places which have installed jukeboxes and attract large crowds.

"I've just found out this morning there's a company in Robeson County bringing these jukeboxes in to rent and what I intend to do is contact the District Attorney's office about padlocking procedures, although this is really just a bluff. With the padlocking procedure, I've got to have people in the neighborhood come to court and testify and the people won't do it. Number two -- issue a warrant for public nuisance, but I've got to have five citizens complain about it", Barrington said.

Barrington told the board that four persons had been shot recently in the vicinity of these "joints". Two of the spots, Donald's Place and Howard's Place, are located between Buffalo Springs and U.S. 401 in the western end of the county.

"The next solution is to take three cars and just sit out there and check every car. Get the DUI's, the concealed weapons, etc. The liquor lawa are so vague now that if they've got eight pints sitting on the counter, we can't touch them. It's gone up to 20 gallons of beer, but if it's a bona fide residence, the law makes no limit. The only way we can touch them is if it's non-tax paid liquor. So the only thing I see is to get the jukeboxes", he said.

"We're going to have joints as long as we have people -- or until they tighten up on the liquor laws or allow police officers to testify to public nuisance", Barrington said.

The sheriff said he had one citizen complain about the noise and disorderly conduct, but that the citizen told him it would be impossible to get another four citizens willing to testify.

In the matter concerning the burning permits, Barrington said he saw no need to change the present system. Firemen had requested a change to require either the fire chief of the district or the sheriff's department be notified whenever a permit was issued to cut down on false alarms.

Barrington argued that the sheriff's dispatcher does not call any rural fire department if a reported fire is in woods.

Barrington also said that if any of the fire departments had any complaints about not being able to reach the jailer by radio, as is the case whenever the jailer must go to the cellblock, each fire department can purchase a walkie-talkie.

In other business, commissioners:

Approved a $500 transfer from the recreation fund to the city to match a $1,500 grant from the state for arts and crafts activities, with the city to administer the money;

Authorized the hiring of a secretary for the Raeford-Hoke Chamber of Commerce office to be paid out of emergency jobs funds.;

Agreed to accept a $41,000 allocation of Title I funds for the hiring of a microfilm supervisor for the schools, a claims interviewer for the Employment Security Commission office and a personnel clerk for county offices after nixing a suggestion from the Region N Council of Governments for a team from the Robeson County Church to do rehabilitation of substandard housing;

Accepted with regret the resignation of assistant extension agent Marsha Smith, effective Oct. 20;

Received notice that Moore Gardner Associates has agreed to conduct the environmental review, to be completed by Oct. 22, necessary for approval of the community development funds grant to be received this year;

Appointed Johnny M. McPhatter to the vacancy on the county planning board at the recommendation of commissioner Neill W. McPhatter;

Approved payment of $31.96 for county manager's expenses while attending a two-day conference in Greensboro last month for the community development funds grant;

Agreed to submit to the Department of Transportation a request to place Cumberland Ave. east of N. Main on the state road system;

Agreed to study trees at the new library building after it was suggested one or more pines may have to be cut down.

Authorized the sale of the old stamp machine after it is advertised;

Changed the date of the next regular meeting to 10 a.m. on Tuesday, Oct. 19.

Council Raises Water Fees

City councilmen ordered an increase in water deposits and sewer and water tap-on fees and refused to overturn a planning board decision denying a residential to commercial change, amid talk of massage parlors during their Monday night meeting.

Deposits for residential water users were increased from $10 to $20 with the condition that deposits will be returned once a customer lists home ownership. Water tap-on charges were raised. New rates are $150 for a three quarter-inch tap; $200 for a one-inch tap; $250 for a one and one-quarter-inch tap; $300 for a one and one half-inch tap; and $350 for a two-inch tap.

In the zoning matter, J.W. (Buck) McPhaul protested a decision by the city planning board to turn down a request for changing a small area next to Raeford Woodworks from residential to commercial to locate a beauty parlor.

Some persons expressed concern that if the beauty parlor failed, other businesses, such as massage parlors, might open, and this led to speculation about massage parlors locating in Raeford.

Present city ordinances do not make any mention of massage parlors, only "physical culture" businesses, but city manager Robert Drumwright said it would require a ruling before any massage parlors could open up.

The vote of the council to uphold the earlier decision was unanimous, with councilman Benny McLeod abstaining.

In other matters, the council:

Certified the results of the fire bonds referendum to the local Government Commission and were told bids may be opened in February for the construction of the fire station;

Appointed J.H. (Buddy) Blue Jr. to the housing authority to fill the vacancy left by Duncan McFadyen;

Awarded a $31,689 bid for curbing and guttering one block of Sixth Ave., and Jackson St. between Sixth Ave. and Prospect Ave., to Southeastern Asphalt Co.;

Approved sewer tap-on charges in the amount of $900 for the Country Porch restaurant now under construction within one mile of the city limits;

Concurred with a recommendation from the airport committee and turned down an offer from Rose's Aviation to sell a hanger to the city for $20,000, which would then be leased back to Rose's Aviation;

Received a preliminary report from Pittard & Perry accountants on the 1975-76 fiscal year audit;

Adopted the 1976 fire protection code and agreed to begin enforcement of the no parking zone at the Edenborough Shopping Center as soon as signs can be put up.

Mayor Fights City Hall - Loses, Too

Even the mayor gets to bring a gripe to city hall now and then, but like Joe Citizen, it didn't do any good to fight.

For Mayor John K. McNeill, garbage was his complaint Monday night as he told a tale of woe which all started when a condemned sticker appeared on his garbage can. Since his garbage can had just a little hole in the bottom, he tore the sticker off.

The next day, another sticker was back on the can again, and the mayor's garbage can was still condemned. So the third day, McNeill had a better idea. A Hefty bag. Into it went the mayor's garbage and there it stayed. The city wouldn't pick it up. Against the city ordinance.

So what does a mayor do when he can't get his garbage picked up because he's violating the city ordinance? Buy a new garbage can was the best advice.

Powell Funds Allotted

Raeford will receive $44,356.37 in state funds next week, its share in the annual allocation of State Street Aid (Powell Bill) funds.

The total allocation among the 446 North Carolina Municipalities certified this year is more than $30 million, according to the N.C. Department of Transportation.

The Powell Bill returns to qualified cities and towns one cent of the eight cent state tax on gasoline and requires that these funds be disbursed no later than Oct. 1.

The checks are prepared based on the allocation formula prescribed by the Powell Bill, which takes into consideration the population of the community and its local street mileage.

"This year's sum of more than 30 million dollars is the largest amount ever returned to North Carolina communities under the Powell Bill provisions," DOT Secretary G. Perry Greene said. He added that this year's total of $30,746,163.64 is nearly 1.4 million dollars more than last year's disbursement.

Of this year's allocation, the largest single check, $3,368,131, will go to the city of Charlotte.

Raeford's share was based on a population figure of 3,380 and the local street figure of 19.48.

55 MPH Limit Rapped

A Turnpike Road resident whose three year-old son narrowly missed death or serious injury Monday when a car went out of control on a curve and ran up on his lawn criticized the 55 m.p.h. speed limit on the road.

John Mitchell, a retired serviceman, said his son was playing near his house which is about 75 feet back from the road when a speeding car left the roadway and careened onto his lawn, missing his son by about a foot, before coming to a stop Monday afternoon.

"My wife was petrified, and the young man driving the car did stop and at least inquire about the boy. But, with the meager information my wife was able to furnish the sheriff's detective, I doubt if they'll be able to apprehend him", Mitchell said.

Mitchell said that at least five to ten times daily, cars will travel around the curve near his home at a high rate of speed and it is dangerous.

"I know the sheriff's department

(See 55 MPH, Page 15)

'General Screwup'

No Wildlife Kill In Oil Dump Goof

Federal investigators ruled last week that no wildlife was killed by the accidental dumping of 10,000 gallons of fuel oil down a sewer cleanout hole at the new Hoke County Library building.

Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Investigator Allen Bartlett found no danger of a fish kill after viewing Rockfish Creek where Raeford Oil Company and city workers were pumping the oil off of the water, according to city manager Robert Drumwright. Straw barriers had been put up at two points on the creek to try to contain the slick.

Under federal law, the EPA can recommend heavy fines and penalties, but according to Drumwright, Barlett ruled that this was not intentional dumping.

Agreeing with Barlett, Drumwright termed the spill a "general screwup." He went on to explain that there was no label on the sewer cleanout plug or on the oil fill cap.

Randall Ashburn of Raeford Oil Company explained that his truck driver asked in the county manager's office for the location of the tank fill holes and was told by Jack Ellis, county engineer, who consulted the library blueprints, that one was located on the south side that held 550 gallons of fuel. The other one, he said, was located on the "back side" and had a larger tank but he didn't know how much it did hold.

The driver then filled the tank located on the courthouse side of the library and began to fill the "larger" tank. After 10,000 gallons of fuel had been poured down the hole, Ashburn called Drumwright and asked if he wanted more. They both agreed that that was a sufficient amount. Ashburn went on to say that 10,000 gallons is not an uncommon amount for a commercial account to order, as it is more economical to buy oil by the tanker full than on just a gallon basis.

The oil was discovered as it came through the city sewage treatment plant. Ashburn received a call inquiring about the possibility of one of his tankers leaking or his having washed one out. He became suspicious that something had gone wrong at the library and sent servicemen to make sure that the oil had gone into the right hole. Two holes were visible and the driver confirmed that he had placed the $4,000 worth of oil in them. When leaving the library sight one of the oil men stepped on something hard covered by grass. The proper hole located on the north side of the building had been completely grown over with grass.

According to Ashburn, the fault lies with the contractor. "one should have been labeled No. 2 fuel oil and the other sewer cleanout. The blueprints didn't give the tank capacity, either. No one knew how much that tank held. If we knew it held 1,500 gallons then we would have been suspicious when it was not full," he said.

The oil that was pumped from the creek was taken to a reprocessing center in Charlotte. Ashburn said that he just had to give it away. "After all it was mixed with sewer material and you can't legally dump fuel anywhere."

When asked who will bear the cost for the mistake Ashburn answered, "We haven't discussed that yet."

New Man Joins Patrol

R.V. Lee, a Lumberton native, has been assigned to the Hoke County Highway Patrol troop, replaceing J.D. Thigpen.

R. V. Lee

Lee, 31, has been a trooper since 1972 and assigned to the Charlotte area. He was re-assigned to Raeford effective Oct. 1.

Lee earned an associate degree in police science from Central Piedmont Community College in Charlotte in 1975.

He and his wife, Paula, are the parents of a son, seven, and a daughter, four.

Rose's Office Visits Oct. 14

Congressman Charles G. Rose announced the October schedule for his mobile district office. The van will be in Raeford Thursday, Oct. 14 from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

The van will be at the post office lot.

*SWEARING IN -- **Republican Clyde Knox of Raeford was sworn in last Thursday as the newest member of the board of elections. Knox replaced chairman Harold Brock who resigned Oct. 1. Administering** the oath of office is Clerk of Court Juanita Edmund.*