

Around Town

BY SAM C. MORRIS

When you write about the weather these days, all you can write is that it is bad winter weather. So far we haven't had any snow cover the ground, but from reports from the western part of the state it will show up here one of these days.

Randall Ashburn came in with the following figures about the temperature so far this year:

Degree Days. The average temperature over the State for the half month ending December 31, 1976 was 8 degree days, or 2% colder than for the like period last year. For the season since September 1, it was 571 degree days, or 50% colder than the same season last year; and 389 degree days, or 29% colder than for a normal season.

As for this writer, he is looking forward to Spring.

The men of the Raeford Presbyterian Church will try something different for their January meeting. President Duncan McFadyen said that they would have a Breakfast Meeting, Sunday, January 16 at eight o'clock at the church. McFadyen said that the meeting would last for one hour and would end promptly at nine o'clock.

The speaker for the meeting will be Chaplain David Peterson of Fort Bragg.

So you men of the Presbyterian Church that have had an excuse for missing the regular Tuesday night meetings each month, be sure to be present. Duncan will not take the excuse of another meeting, so I will see each of you there.

H.R. McLean brought some interesting letters and papers by the office last week, of which I would like to briefly pass along the contents to you readers.

A letter from A.P. Dickson, Jr. dated August 12, 1908 and countersigned by F.P. Johnson was to the boys that had attended the class of Miss Lizzie McDuffie. The letter stated that to show appreciation to her, the members were having a portrait painted to be presented at an Educational Rally to be held that month.

The cost of the portrait, according to the letter, would be \$30 and each of the 60 students were asked to donate \$.50. The portrait was to be painted by Miss Zula Tomlinson, art teacher at Raeford Institute.

The letter ended with this line, "we feel sure the work will be good, as she is also giving us a \$50.00 painting for \$25.00, the frame costing \$5.00."

Also was a card to Mr. McLean from the Hoke County Local Board requesting that he report for a physical examination for induction into the Army. It was dated February 9, 1918 and signed by John L. McFadyen.

Also was a "Greetings" letter dated May, 1918 for induction into the Army. Mr. McLean said he went into the Army the last of that May and was in the trenches in France in July, 1918.

This wouldn't give much time for training.

Thanks for the material, Mr. McLean.

Someone stopped by the office recently and said they saw people hauling garbage and placing this in the new containers behind local business firms. He said that the containers were owned by the businessmen and not by the city, and were put there for business use only.

Maybe a sign on the containers would stop people from putting garbage in them. Time will tell!

An article in a daily paper that is delivered into Raeford brought forth some comments last week. The article was about the meeting of the Hoke County commissioners on January 2.

To quote a paragraph or two: "In another matter, county department of social services officials asked the commissioners to erect a small building near the new county office building so that employees will have a place to hang coats."

"John Balfour, chairman of the

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City To Ease Parking Crunch



TARGET AREA -- This is one of scores of dilapidated and sub-standard homes in the section north of town known as Jones Hill. The county plans to spend \$87,000 in federal funds to repair homes in Jones Hill, Cameron Heights and Silver City.

Housing Rehabilitation Task Force Fixes Eligibility Requirements

The task force appointed by the county last month to direct the spending of federal funds for rehabilitation of sub-standard homes in low income neighborhoods met with state officials last week and approved eligibility guidelines for the project.

Danny Willis and Aubrey Jones of the Department of Natural and Economic Resources in Fayetteville met with the group Thursday night and finalized the application which is to be used by individuals in the

three "target areas" who want the free aid.

Under the \$87,000 federal grant approved last year by the Department of Housing and Urban Development, the Cameron Heights, Jones Hill and Silver City sections north of the city are to get the assistance. All three neighborhoods are predominantly black with a high concentration of dilapidated dwellings.

The task force agreed to set a

\$6,000 maximum family income ceiling for any household which applies for the program. An additional \$300 deduction for each dependent will be allowed.

For example, a family with six children with a total yearly income of \$7,800 would deduct six times \$300, or \$1,800, to give them an adjusted income of \$6,000.

The task force also agreed to make the program open only to owners who occupy their homes, or occupants with a legal lifetime right to occupy their homes, or occupants with a legal lifetime right to occupy the home. Task force member Willie Featherstone Jr. explained this provision would allow certain individuals who do not own a home to benefit.

"This is intended for cases of grown children who live in a home belonging to their parents but the parents may live elsewhere. As long as a son or daughter has lifetime rights to stay in the home they would be eligible, as long as they met the other requirements," he said.

The task force also set an \$18,000 maximum on total assets. Any family with land and personal property worth more than \$18,000 would not be eligible.

Application forms for families who want to be considered for the program are available at the Cameron Heights Neighborhood Center on N. Main Ext.

Deadline for submitting applications is Jan. 31.

Death Toll Lowest In 10 Years

1976 recorded the fewest number of fatalities on roads outside of the city since 1967 when eight persons died.

The total death toll for the year stands at 11 persons, but this includes three victims killed in a crash inside the city limits.

According to reports compiled by the Traffic Records Section of the Division of Motor Vehicles in Raleigh, the yearly average for combined city-county deaths during the last ten years is 14. The numbers of fatalities for the years 1968-75 were: 1968 (14), 1969 (13), 1970 (10), 1971 (30), 1972 (13), 1973 (11), 1974 (20) and 1975 (12).

The figures represent fatalities outside of the city limits for all years except 1972 and 1974. 1972 includes one city death and 1974 two.

Sgt. D.L. Minshew of the Highway Patrol, the agency responsible for investigating all accidents outside of incorporated areas, said better enforcement and acceptance of the 55 m.p.h. speed limit has helped to reduce the death toll. Speeding is a major factor in fatal accidents.

"We were very lucky. Let's hope it continues," the sergeant said.

Jobless Rate Declines

The unemployment rate in Hoke County for November was estimated at 7.5 per cent, according to the latest report of the Employment Security Commission.

The jobless rate is a drop from the October figure of 8.5 per cent, however part of the decline is due to a reduction in the total labor force -- the number of persons actively seeking work.

The number of persons out of work was estimated at 590 persons and the total number of employed persons was put at 7,320. The total labor force was estimated at 7,910 persons. Although the overall unemployment rate dropped, the number of employed persons also declined from the previous month.

All of the data contained in the ESC monthly reports is preliminary and subject to later revision.

Beer Resolution To Be Acted On

County commissioners are expected to pass a resolution drafted by the county attorney last week which asks the state legislature to overturn a section of the ABC laws and allow Hoke County to ban sales of beer on Sundays at restaurants and clubs.

The resolution, prepared by Charles Hostetler, says the county wishes to "petition their representatives...to work for passage of an act...to prohibit the sale of off-premise beer at restaurants between the hours of 1 p.m. Sunday and 7 a.m. Monday". The proposed resolution will be acted upon at the commissioners' next meeting Jan. 17.

The action is the latest maneuver in the controversy over the sale of beer on Sundays from restaurants holding state brown bagging permits, which has been an issue here for the past six months.

Grocery operators, who are not permitted by Hoke law to sell beer on Sundays, have claimed the system is unfair because the restaurants are allowed under their brown bagging permits to also sell beer for takeout. There are at least three such restaurants in the county presently doing so. (Beer is sold only for takeout because Hoke County did not approve on-premise

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Last Part Of 1976 In Review

(This concludes The News-Journal's Review of 1976 with the last six months of the year)

On July 4, good-sized crowds braved a steady downpour to attend the long-awaited opening ceremony for the \$350,000 new library, Hoke County's official Bicentennial project. The following night, the skies over the high school stadium were ablaze with color and light as people enjoyed the first fireworks display in many years.

The city council ends the snafu over the sidewalk in front of the library by working out a compromise with the contractor to share the costs of replacing the damaged areas, and the misdemeanor charge of destroying property pending against the construction foreman is dismissed.

County commissioners are kept busy during the month as a dispute between the only two ambulance firms over the distribution of a subsidy flared up, and more groups exerted pressure on the Sunday beer controversy. One commissioner and the social services director are in the public eye for attending a five-day convention in a Utah resort area at taxpayer expense.

A two-car smashup west of the city claimed another life.

People stayed glued to televisions and radios until the news came -

Kathy McMillan jumped 21 feet and 10 1/4 inches to win the silver medal for the united States in Montreal! Her mother, brother and high school coach Billy Colston are on hand to see it.

The Olympic star was welcomed back home at the end of the month with "Kathy McMillan Day" as hundreds of people jam Main St. for a motorcade and mob the athlete at a reception staged at the school.

In August, the biggest news was the primary election, as Hoke voters closely followed the state trends and also forced two local contests - the county board and register of deeds - into run-offs. The beer controversy, brewing for weeks, comes to a "head" when commissioners deadlock 2-2 on a vote to allow all places to sell beer on Sunday.

Neill McFadyen resigns as chairman of the Raeford Housing Authority as the group unsuccessfully searches for a site for a public housing development that will meet federal requirements and not draw opposition from homeowners nearby. State highway patrolman J.D. Thigpen and a Raleigh trooper are charged with the abduction and rape of a 19-year-old woman Aug. 19. An assistant elementary school principal, Ronnie Branch, takes a leave of absence following his arrest

by the State Bureau of Investigation on a charge of grand theft.

The county finalizes the purchase of land for the new National Guard Armory to be constructed on 401-bypass. Schools opened at the end of the month with first grade enrollments showing an unexpected jump, causing some overcrowding at two schools.

The county recorded one Labor Day weekend traffic fatality with the death of a Ft. Bragg soldier on a motorcycle. Undaunted, the pro-Sunday beer groups are back at county commissioners' meetings and get a new vote - this time it is 3-2 opposed. Danny DeVane wins the Democratic run-off Sept. 14 to take his place on the Democratic ballot alongside Neill McPhatter and Della Maynor wins the nomination for register of deeds - assured of victory in November with no GOP opposition.

Summerfield Industries of Rocky Mount announces the acquisition of the Raeford Knit - Away plant which had been floundering in a depressed market for most of the year. Harry Williamson is named new personnel manager at Burlington Menswear.

Hoke County is among seven jurisdictions targeted for a special federal census later in the year. County commissioners adopt a get tough attitude with mobile home

owners ducking taxes and approve a new ordinance requiring registration, and also declare war on the pesky pigeon population at the courthouse by hiring an exterminator.

Troopers Thigpen and Wiley Snow are cleared of all charges involving the alleged rape of Bobbie R. Magee following a day-long hearing before District Court Judge Joseph Dupree in a courtroom packed with the curious. City voters narrowly approve the \$200,000 bond issue and planning begin for the new fire station. The library makes more news as a giant goof which sent 10,000 gallons of fuel oil down the city sewer is discovered and officials scramble to keep it from reaching Rockfish Creek. Harold Brock quits as elections board chairman and is replaced by Clyde Knox.

Rising crime reported in the vicinity of several "juke joints" operating out in the county prompts the sheriff to announce stepped-up surveillance tactics in October. City councilmen double the amount of deposit for new water customers.

The library moves into its new quarters and the public health department begins the much-publicized swine flu immunizations. Carolina Telephone & Telegraph announces voting will be

The city council acted Monday night to help ease congestion in the central business district by paving and lighting a section of off-street property bounded by Main St., W. Elwood Ave. and the A & R railroad tracks.

City Manager Robert Drumwright said he was scheduled to meet with merchants Wednesday morning at the Downtown Merchants Association meeting to discuss the proposal. Drumwright said he already has gotten an okay from three businesses owning property in the designated area.

Under the plan approved by the council, the city would not purchase any land but would obtain leases for the parking lot. Besides the A & R, agreements would be made with Pope's Variety Store, Howell Drug Co., Home Food Market and Raeford Department Store for space in back of Main St.

The county would have to give its approval for the space behind the county-owned buildings on W. Elwood.

Drumwright estimated the cost to the city for the entire project to be about \$7,000. He said the alley leading off of Main St. near the Harris Ave. intersection would probably become one-way as an entrance only for the new parking lot. Cars would exit the lot through Elwood Ave.

Although the plan is expected to create fewer than 50 parking spaces, council members feel it is a step to ease the growing parking problem. Only a handful of stores in the downtown district have off-street parking for customers, and there are only about 80 spaces along Main St. in the two block area from Edinborough Ave. to Harris Ave.

The city manager said the work could be completed by March.

In other business Monday, the council okayed a request from Hoke County Medical Betterment Association, a non-profit group, for funds to help defray expenses incurred while trying to attract more doctors to the area.

A five-member delegation representing the Association told the councilmen more than one physician has been contacted in recent weeks.

The group was given \$2,500. The council appropriated \$3,800 for a new police car and also earmarked \$7,432 out of the city's share in federal anti-recession funds for salaries of dispatchers in the police and fire departments.

Roger Dixon was appointed to the Board of Appeals, replacing Charlie Morrison, as an alternate.

Councilmen agreed to offer \$7,500 for a dragline which the city of Lumberton is selling. Under the agreement with the county, on sharing costs of operating the landfill, the county will pay 75 per cent of the cost.

In a related matter, the board

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held the next month on the proposed merger of the Raeford exchange with Fayetteville. Cotton harvesting gets underway with a bright outlook for excellent yields.

L.G. Simpson replaces Thomas Wilkerson as tax listing supervisor. Upchurch School principal Earl Oxendine receives a presidential appointment in the National Advisory Council on Indian Education. Kathy McMillan, now a freshman at Tennessee State University, is nominated for the prestigious Sullivan Award. The 211-bypass, which produced a storm of protest when it was approved, is opened quietly to traffic and the link to U.S. 401 becomes complete.

A Wagram man is added to the toll of traffic victims in an accident on a rural route near the county line.

By the end of the month scare headlines about the swine flu shots have seriously damaged public confidence and only a few hundred people have been vaccinated.

As predicted, Democrats made a sweep on Nov. 2 and Hoke voters also elected the first two women to the Board of Education, turning out longtime incumbents D.R. Huff Jr. and A. Wilton Wood Jr. The oil dumping goof at the library

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