

Around Town

BY SAM C. MORRIS

The weather is still on the cold side but the forecast is for warmer weather for the weekend. Last Friday the temperature got up to 60 degrees but took a plunge Saturday and was down in the teens early Monday morning.

The fuel situation is still critical and most businesses are trying to cooperate with Governor Jim Hunt's plan to cut hours to 48 per week. Of course you will always have some that want to wait until the law is enforced before they will close. This could and should be done if the cold weather keeps on as in the past month. As the old saying goes "what is fair for the goose, is fair for the gander." Think about this and try to cooperate.

A call from Mrs. Frank Baker last week was concerning the Cub Scouts of Hoke County. It seems that the youngsters of the county want to be in the scouts but to have Cub Packs you must have leaders. Leaders are needed for the packs that are already organized and 50 or 60 youngsters are on the waiting list to get into a pack.

This writer realizes that everyone is busy this day and time and that someone else has more time than I do. Of course when everyone feels this way that leaves no one to get the work done. The end result of any project is the success or what has been accomplished. Think for a few minutes at the number of stories on television and in the newspapers of kids that are in trouble with the law. Maybe if you could give a few hours each month a Hoke County kid would be put on the right track. This is what scouting is all about.

This is Scout Week and a way to help observe it is to make up your mind this week that you will offer your services to be a leader or an assistant in a troop or pack.

If you can be of any aid call Mr. and Mrs. Frank Baker at 875-2282. It will not be an inconvenience to them for they are offering their time to this project.

Remember a youngster on the right track today will be a community leader tomorrow.

Precinct Meetings Switched

Because of the energy crisis, the date of Democratic party precinct meetings has been switched from Feb. 10 to Thursday, May 5, state party chairman Betty McCain announced.

All precinct meetings will begin at 8 p.m. on the new date in each precinct polling place. Makeup meetings in the event a quorum is not present will be Thursday, May 12.

The new action will also move the date of the county convention back to Saturday, June 18.

Precinct officers and precinct committee members will be elected at the May 5 meetings.

Deputies Foil Wire Shipment

Two men from Wilmington and a Buffalo, N.Y., man picked up here by sheriff's deputies last week have been charged by South Carolina authorities in connection with the theft of a large quantity of copper wire from Duke Power Co.

Sheriff D.M. Barrington identified the suspects as Jesse Lee Blackshear, 33, of Wilmington, Marvin Lee Gray, 27, of Wilmington, and Jerome Davis, 22, of Buffalo, N.Y. The men were arrested by deputies J. Peterkin and C.R. Wilson in the early morning hours Feb. 1 after they stopped a three-quarter ton truck traveling on U.S. 401 near Puppy Creek to ferry a variety of copper wire.

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County To Need Extra Help For Electrical Inspections

County commissioners learned Tuesday that one or more additional workers may have to be hired to carry out inspections when the Lumber River Electrical Cooperative begins installing special switches in customers' homes to cut power usage.

County electrical inspector Jack Ellis explained to the board during its regular meeting Tuesday morning that the co-op plans to install the switches on water heaters and heating and air conditioning units in 1,500 to 2,000 Hoke County homes. It is a voluntary program and the co-op does not yet know the exact number of customers who will participate.

The plan is designed to cut the amount of power being used during the 6-9 p.m. period each day, or "peak load" period. The switches will be activated by a radio signal and will automatically shut off power for a set length of time.

No inspection by the county will be required for the switches on the heating and air conditioning units but it is required for the devices on the water heaters within 48 hours of installation, Ellis said.

The objective of the co-op is to cut customer demand and thereby

Mill Shuts Down

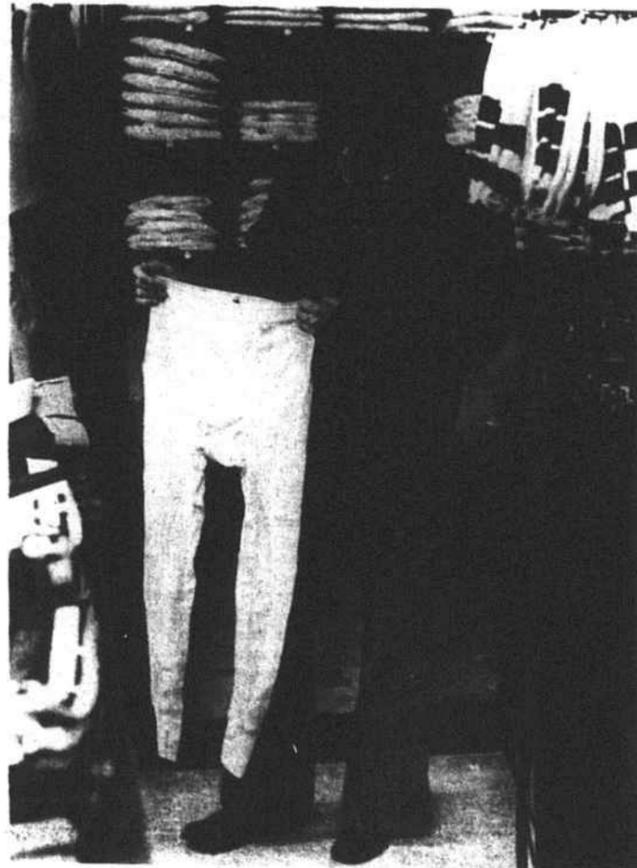
More economic bad news for the area came with the announcement of the closing of Hadley - Peoples Manufacturing Co. textile mill in Rockfish which idled approximately 90 workers.

Most of the plant's work force was laid off early last week while about 20 employees worked their last day Friday.

Plant manager Terry Hawkins had been laid off and was unavailable for comment but a spokesman, Milton Beck, said the Rockfish operation was no longer profitable enough to continue running.

The plant produced yarn and shipped about 20,000 to 30,000 pounds per week but the present market for rayon is very slow, Beck

County Offices Cut Back Hours, Stores Splitting



WARMTH -- Ray Seado, Green Pines Trailer Park, checks out a pair of "long johns" at a local department store. With thermostats lowered to 65 degrees by day and 55 degrees by night, area residents are resorting to thermal underwear to maintain body heat. [Photo by S.H. Aplin]

County government offices began a four-day, 32 hour work week Monday in response to Gov. Hunt's appeal for energy conservation, but the voluntary cooperation by stores to curtail operating hours to 48 hours a week collapsed almost before it began.

County commissioners met in special session last Thursday at 9 a.m. and formally adopted the shorter work week after rejecting the governor's plan of four days, 40 hours a week for state employees.

Commissioner Danny DeVane, who introduced the motion for the 32 hour week, argued that keeping offices open for an additional two hours daily would waste energy because more heat would be required in the late afternoon and evening. County manager T.B. Lester Jr. also favored the shorter week after many department heads called to the meeting acknowledged that all of the necessary work could be accomplished in 32 hours instead of 40.

The commissioners' order applies to all county offices except the sheriff's department and the courthouse. The Clerk of Court, magistrate and Register of Deeds offices will continue to operate Monday through Friday. However, the probation and parole office and the juvenile court counselor's office will be closed Mondays.

The order was adopted with the provision that all Mondays are to be declared official holidays so all workers will continue to be paid for a 40 hour week.

The board also ordered that temperatures within all county buildings be maintained at 65 degrees during working hours and turned back to 60 degrees or lower during non-working hours.

The public library, normally open six days a week, will be closed Mondays and Tuesdays under the plan.

The health center canceled its children's immunization clinics held on Mondays and re-scheduled them for Fridays from 1-4:30 p.m.

The action will not affect the school system or the board of education offices which will continue on regular schedule. School Supt. G. Raz Autry last week eased the restrictions on nighttime athletic events and announced that basketball games would be played beginning at 4 p.m. All other night activities have been halted.

Sandhills Community College announced that all adult education night classes held in Hoke County are canceled until further notice.

The Downtown Merchants Association met Friday and announced its members would cooperate with the governor's request on cutting back store hours, but early this week the plan began falling through.

The Raeford A&P Supermarket posted new hours effective Sunday but early Tuesday it announced it would resume regular hours immediately following the Monday announcement by Winn-Dixie that its stores were bolting from the voluntary plan.

A&P manager Cicero Sullivan said he was notified Tuesday morning by the head office in Charlotte to drop the 48 hour plan.

B.C. Moore & Sons and Mack's Variety, also in the Edenborough Shopping Center, both announced new 48 hours a week schedules and said the A&P decision would not influence them.

Many retailers in and outside the city, however, reported they had no plans to curtail hours to conform to the governor's request.

One member of the Merchant's Association who asked not to be named declared the "only way to get it to work is to make it mandatory".

Bob Harrell of Harrell's Grocery said he had no intention of curtailing hours at his store and said it would cost him just as much to close as to stay open.

William Hales, owner of Puppy Creek Grocery in the eastern end of the county, said he couldn't reduce hours because it would inconvenience many of his customers who come in at different times.

David Hendrix at Arabia Cash Mart said he wouldn't curtail hours because his competition in the area wasn't doing so.

Restaurants in city seemed to be going along with the conservation request. Both the Southern Restaurant and the Family Restaurant

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Bobby Gentry New Councilman

City councilmen agreed unanimously Monday night to accept Bob M. Gentry as a council replacement for David Lovett who resigned last December.

Gentry, 45, was sworn in and will fill the unexpired term which ends next December. He is a past president of the Chamber of Commerce, past post commander of American Legion Post XX (Hoke County), a member of the Kiwanis, and serves as chairman of the administration board of the Raeford United Methodist Church.

Married to a Hoke County school teacher, the former Eleanor Stewart of Roxboro, Gentry claims to have lived in Raeford as many as five times, moving away and then returning. The father of two sons and a daughter, he spent 16½ years working for Burlington Industries. He was the personnel manager at the Raeford Worsted Plant from 1971 - 75. Then in January of 1975 he opened Gentry's Tire Center on Main St.

Gentry attended elementary school in Raeford, graduated from high school in Roxboro and earned a degree in business administration from the University of South Carolina.

Gentry said, "I'm delighted to be appointed and will try to uphold my oath."

In other business, councilmen



Bob Gentry

approved the \$6,200 purchase of a dragline from N.C. Equipment Co. According to Robert Drumwright, city manager an offer previously extended to the city of Lumberton for a dragline was rescinded. The county will pay 75 percent of the cost of the equipment.

The contract with the N.C. Department of Transportation for the airport project met with council

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