

## Around Town

BY SAM C. MORRIS

The weather for the past week has been perfect as far as this writer is concerned. The forecast is for showers over the next few days and this should settle the dust.

The sunburned faces and light clothes has everyone in the summer look. With the clocks moving up on Sunday it will make the days seem longer and give us more time to play and relax.

After a cold winter everyone is ready for the warm weather time.

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President Jimmy Carter, in his speech Monday night, left no doubt in my mind that this country could be in serious trouble in a few years as far as energy is concerned. I don't believe the cartoonist can picture his smile and teeth in this instance. He was dead serious or he is a very capable actor.

He is trying to sell to the American people one of the hardest things to sell. That is to take away or conserve that which we all have been used to for so long and can't conceive a shortage in.

The gas lines of a few years ago disappeared when the price of gasoline went up and this has planted the seed of doubt in our minds and it is hard to believe they can come back again. The shortage this past winter of natural gas and fuel oil is blamed entirely on the severe winter weather. Now, not all of this is true. A shortage is coming and we had better get prepared for it.

Maybe you have heard of the good old days from people older than you are. I know that even in my younger days the same thing was said. Now this writer doesn't want to go back, even to my good old days.

The very thought of no central heat, no air conditioning or no frozen food locker is just the start of the good old days. So many of the readers of this column can't remember even these everyday things we have now not being available. How do I know? Because I came up before the day of electric refrigerators or radios. Fires had to be built every morning and it was as cold, almost, inside the house as outside. The sign was put out for the iceman and a bag of coal was a luxury.

The automobile was for the rich and very few people even knew how to drive. Jethro Ammons' tent show was looked forward to every year and a taped ball and broken bat started a baseball game.

Why go back to this way of life when a little sacrifice by each of us will make all of us live better than we should? I for one will go along with what is best for this country and for the good of all my fellowmen.

Before you start finding fault with an energy program, think of what it will do to your life and the future generations.

The sermon is over.

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The name of Earl Yarborough appeared in this column several weeks ago after he had spoken to the Raeford Kiwanis Club. While here he also subscribed to The News-Journal and since receiving his first copy he wrote me the following letter:

Dear Mr. Morris: It had been such a long time since I had enjoyed reading The News-Journal and you may be sure that this is the way I spent most of Saturday evening. I really don't think I missed a single word from front to the back page.

I also wanted you to know once again how much I enjoyed seeing you and so many other friends of mine at the Raeford Kiwanis Club on the evening of March 31st. It was a great evening for me and one that I will remember for a long time. I felt your comments in The News-Journal about my visit back home were very flattering and were written with such warm feeling. Many thanks for thinking of me in such a kind way.

With kindest personal regards,  
Yours sincerely,

Earl

Thanks Earl and so glad you enjoyed your first copy of The News-Journal. To the rest of your readers, if you want to make a loved one happy, just come down and subscribe to the paper for them.

## Superintendent: 'Conflict'

# Principal To Fight Ouster

By Marty Vega

Following a closed door session which reportedly lasted until nearly 1 a.m., the Board of Education agreed with the recommendation of School Supt. G. Raz Autry and voted not to employ Allen Edwards as high school principal beyond the end of the school year.

The action came at the end of a special meeting last Thursday night which attracted about a dozen spectators, including schoolteachers and students supporting the principal. Edwards requested the hearing.

The board re-opened the meeting and a motion from Riley M. Jordan, seconded by Bill Howell, not to approve tenure status for Edwards carried unanimously, according to the minutes shown the next day.

Under North Carolina law, a teacher or supervisor automatically receives tenure at the end of his third year unless the local school board decides not to rehire him. Edwards, 30, is finishing his third year as principal.

Board chairman Bobby Gibson announced at 7:30 p.m. when the meeting opened that a petition bearing 202 students' names supporting Edwards had been received and then invited the audience to speak, but no one present asked to be heard.

Autry read a prepared statement aloud before the public was excluded, saying that he wanted everybody to "know his part in it".

Autry cited four reasons for his recommendation to dismiss Edwards -- "his lack of credibility with his faculty, his inconsistency in dealing with the students and public, his being unavailable to his students and to his faculty, and his disregard for keeping appointments."

The superintendent said that he never questioned Edwards' morals or capabilities, only his judgment "many times".

The board went into executive session at 7:45 on a motion from Ruth McNair, seconded by Jordan, after Edwards said he would not make a request to close the meeting.

Earlier, Mrs. McNair voiced an objection to the presence of a tape recorder a radio station reporter carried, saying she did not want what she had to say recorded. Under law, recording devices cannot be prohibited by a public official at an open meeting.

Edwards said he left the meeting about 11:30 and was called at his home about 1 a.m. and told the board's decision. He said he was told by the superintendent he still would be given the opportunity to resign before a public announcement was made.

Edwards declined to comment on the discussion during the closed door meeting but said it concerned only the four charges Autry made. He issued a written statement regarding the firing Monday morning to *The News-Journal* for publication.

### Discrepancy

Based on the principal's statement, the school board members may have violated the N.C. Open Meetings Law, G.S. 143-318, during its April 4 meeting by taking action secretly. The official minutes of that meeting show no final action was taken, yet Edwards said he was informed of a decision by the board the next morning.

Edwards said Monday he has retained an attorney and intends to contest the dismissal but that he will not allow anything to disrupt the school between now and the end of classes.

"My intention is to have things run smoothly as they always have. The kids come first," he said.

"I am not ashamed of my personal or professional life and I feel I still have a lot to offer Hoke County as Hoke County has a tremendous amount to offer me," he said.

Autry said Monday that he has been instructed by the board to solicit outside applications for the \$23,788 a year principal's post, but that the board would also accept applications from within the local schools.

The superintendent said he felt a replacement would be named sometime in the latter part of May.

### Autry's Statement

The complete text of Autry's statement Thursday night follows. "When Allen Edwards was hired to replace me as principal of Hoke County High School, I made the statement that he was a fine capable young man. I have not changed my mind."

"It is my duty as superintendent to recommend to the Board of Education and they either accept or reject my recommendations."

"I have tried to fulfill my duty in making a recommendation to them and that doesn't infer that I have always been right. Mr. Edwards has completed three years as principal of Hoke County High School and he was due to go on tenure as principal which simply states that a Board of Education and superintendent puts their stamp of approval on the job that the individual is doing."

After spending many agonizing hours on reaching a decision, I felt Mr. Edwards could not effectively function as principal of Hoke County High School because of the following reasons:

1. His lack of credibility with his faculty.
2. His inconsistency in dealing with the students and public.
3. His being unavailable to his students and to his faculty.
4. His disregard for keeping appointments."

"Based on these reasons, I did not recommend to the Board that he be placed on tenure. Not once have I questioned his morals or his capabilities. I have questioned his judgment many times."

Mr. Edwards and I are fully committed to the ultimate results both being professional educators that the issue has boiled down to a conflict between him and me. For this I am extremely sorry because there is no power struggle. I am not interested in telling the principal how to run the high school. It is my job to see if I can offer advice."

"My first and only job is to do what is right for our children and for that I make no apologies."

"I have been in Hoke County for ten years and I have made my share of enemies because of my aggressive nature in wanting the best for our children and I have stepped on some toes. I am sorry there is one individual that I can't call friend but in my opinion, it is better to end a friendship than sacrifice what I believe is right for our children."

## Rose's Office Here Today

The mobile office of Congressman Charlie Rose will be in Raeford today (Thursday) from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. in the parking lot of

the post office.

Administrative assistant Rip Collins will be with the van.

## Edwards Replies

CITIZENS OF HOKE COUNTY:

On Tuesday, April 5, 1977, I was informed by the Superintendent that he had not recommended that I receive career status and thereby not be allowed to continue as Principal of Hoke County High School. I was informed that the members of the Board of Education had generally accepted his recommendation. The superintendent then gave me the option to resign immediately or make a decision within ten days. He assured me that no public disclosure would be made of his recommendation during this time. In all honesty I was shocked and dismayed at his recommendation.

After learning from various members of the community that they knew of my situation, I realized that the above mentioned actions had indeed been made public. At this point I requested a hearing before the Board of Education so that I could fully comprehend the charges in regard to my performance as Principal of Hoke County High School. I also wish to have the opportunity to speak to those charges.

Upon my request a meeting was held on Thursday, April 14. The charges of the Superintendent were discussed and the decision not to grant me tenure was rendered. I was given until 8:30 the following morning to resign or their decision would be made public.

I refused to resign because I cannot compromise my personal convictions concerning my performance as Principal of the high school. I feel my performance reflects neither incompetence nor anything so serious as to warrant my resignation or my dismissal. I do feel that I can continue to be effective at the high school as I have the credibility with the faculty, students and community. Let me hasten to add that I have most certainly made mistakes as Principal of the high school, which is a complex institution being the 29th largest school in the state. I will continue to make mistakes in the future even as I do my best, which indicates I am only human.

I will make every effort to resolve this unfortunate situation in the near future through highly professional, ethical and legal means. It is my sincere hope that the steps I now take will result in a better Hoke County school system regardless of whomever the Principal of the high school is.

My family and I have come to regard Raeford and Hoke County as a very special place and truly consider it our home. We wish to remain here even as I wish to remain Principal of the high school. If given the opportunity, I will continue to serve the students, parents and community with all I have to give and to the best of my abilities.

## Petition On House

# Officials 'Disgusting' Local Man Charges

Calling the conduct of city officials "disgusting", a Raeford man and four other persons have petitioned the city council to take action to demolish a dilapidated house at the corner of Central Ave. and Stewart St.

Warren Pate, an attorney who lives on Central Ave. opposite the house he objects to, filed the petition April 12 and wrote to Mayor John K. McNeill Jr. and the five council members. The others signing the petition were John Leandro, Julian W. King, Mrs. C.J. McNeill Jr. and Isabel McFadden.

The aged frame dwelling is used by McDonald's Tire Recapping Service, which is adjacent to the house the lot is on. In recent years the house has been used for the storage of tires.

Pate wrote the officials that the city government has refused to take action despite repeated complaints for a period of three years. He said that the city's failure to enforce the condemnation ordinances has created a fire peril and other hazards, and that the house is dangerous to persons and property.

All of the petition signers except

Leandro reside in the vicinity of the house, known as the old Maultsby home. The house was built in 1911.

Neil A. McDonald III, the owner, said he really couldn't comment on the petition since he had only heard about it second hand.

"The letter wasn't addressed to me, I'm not supposed to know anything about it. So I really have no comment," McDonald quipped.

The house was condemned several years ago by former city building inspector and zoning administrator Monroe Williams. Inspector Bill Sellars said. Sellars said there were no records kept but that the action would have been sometime before 1973.

"It's ready to be torn down voluntarily. I have had conversations about it and Neil is just looking to find somebody to do it," Sellars said.

The house has come under criticism numerous times from women's club members and beautification groups. Last year, it was singled out as a blight to be removed in time for the Bicentennial celebration by some women in the community.

## Next Saturday Is 'Fix-up' Day

Individuals and groups are invited to pitch in Saturday, April 23 for the 'Fix-up Festival' to help make Raeford more attractive. Students from the N.C. State University School of Design will help supervise.

The Fix-up Festival is being coordinated through the Chamber of Commerce. A survey of shopping

habits and attitudes toward downtown Raeford was recently conducted and the Chamber reported a large number of people polled felt the physical appearance of the city needed improvement, Ann Wright, one of the festival organizers, said.

Volunteers are needed to help paint murals on the walls of Hellig-Meyers store on Harris Ave.,

## Doctor Named

Dr. Riley M. Jordan has been charged by the North Carolina Board of Medical Examiners with excessive use of alcohol, it was reported in the Sunday editions of *The Charlotte Observer*. He is among 16 Tar Heel physicians investigated and subsequently formerly charged by the panel which has the power to suspend or revoke licenses to practice.

Jordan was charged June 24, 1976. The case is still pending and no action has been taken officially.

Most of the cases which have come before the Board since an investigation was begun in late 1974 center on suspected illegal prescribing of drugs. Only two other doctors among the 16 were cited for alcohol-related charges.

Jordan said Tuesday he had no comment.

## Lundys Depart Monday

Next Monday is the big day for Allen and Wimzy Lundy who will depart here for Charlotte and then fly west for their two week vacation in Hawaii and California.

The Lundys are being sent on their first vacation in 50 years of married life by a grateful community which raised over \$2,500.

"We would like to thank everyone who has any part in making this such a wonderful time for us with the gifts, money and good wishes," Mrs. Lundy said. "May God's richest blessings abide with each one always."

The Lundys won't feel too far away from home when they arrive in Hawaii, though. Odell Ashburn Jr. is stationed at Hickam AFB there and has already offered to help show them around.

Last week, the Lundys received a flag from Rep. Charlie Rose in Washington which had flown over the Capitol. The flag is now flying over Lundy's Shoe Shop.

## UNC Stars To Play In City

Hoke County basketball fans are in for a treat Thursday, April 28 when the UNC all-stars come to town to play the 'Hoke County Superstars' in the Hoke High gymnasium at 7:30 p.m.

John Kuester, Walter Davis, Woody Coley and Bruce Buckley will take to the court in the charity benefit game, along with a couple of former UNC stars.

Proceeds from the ticket sales will go to the Hoke County unit of the American Cancer Society.

Ticket are \$3 per person and may be bought at Howell Drug, Hoke Drug, Upchurch Junior High or at the high school.

to clean up in alleys and behind stores and to prepare walls for painting at the taxi stand.

Strolling musicians, homemade food and arts and crafts exhibits are planned to help add to a festival atmosphere.

Anyone who would like to volunteer or give suggestions may call the Chamber office at 875-2179.