

Around Town

BY SAM C. MORRIS

The weather is getting better all the time. As I came to work this morning (Tuesday) it was raining and it must have been raining for some time as everything was wet and water was standing in low places. This is the second rain in a week.

This should aid the farmers with beans still in the ground and also should help the gardens if it is not too late. Maybe the grass will lose the brownish color and turn green again.

...

The band concert given by the 82nd Airborne Division band at the Raeford Presbyterian Church was well attended last Sunday afternoon. The program was sponsored by the newly founded Arts Council of Hoke County. This was a fine event and is the kind of entertainment that most of us want our families to take part in.

Thanks to the council for bringing this program to the people of the county.

...

The passing last Friday of John Dunc McNeill, takes from this community another well known figure or character. Dunc was, for many years, manager of the hardware department of McLaughlin Company. So many of the newcomers to Hoke County will recall him in this part of his life.

To this writer and those older, Dunc can be recalled as one of Hoke County's outstanding athletes. He was an all-around player, taking part in baseball, football and basketball.

I first remember him when he worked as a high school boy for Daniel McKeithan in the small wooden store located on the lot where the hotel building now stands next to DeVane's. He would give us kids stick candy, and of course this is something that a kid always keeps in his memories.

Then his days in high school, playing basketball on the courts outside on the school grounds. This is when the girls played on one side of the building and the boys' court was on the opposite side.

Watching him play in the semi-finals in football against Wilmington at Quarterback and getting defeated and then Wilmington going on to win the State title.

The next spring, pitching Raeford High to the Eastern championship before losing to Shelby 4-2 for the state crown.

Yes, an outstanding high school player.

Then on to Chapel Hill and his college career in baseball and football.

I recall in the early 1930s when the Shoeheel league was in full swing during the summer months. Dunc was playing for Raeford and Jim Moore Tatum was playing for Dillon. On this occasion the team was at Dillon for a game and it began to rain. Most of the players headed for cars around the park to wait out the rain. Dunc and Tatum had played football together at Carolina, so they both got in Buck Blue's car and this writer, who was bat boy, got in with them. The tales they related of the college days and football under Coach Chuck Collins has always remained with me.

Of course, many will remember Dunc for his practical jokes which he played on anyone who shopped at the hardware. To others it will be meeting early in the morning at the hardware and listening to all the gossip.

Yes, John Dunc was a well known figure and character in Hoke County, and his being around during my lifetime leaves many pleasant memories.

...

Benny McLeod had the program at the Raeford Kiwanis Club last Thursday night and presented Lt. Col. Tommy Thompson of Fort Bragg who spoke on many aspects of the new all-volunteer army. Last Saturday was Armed Forces Day and the program was in conjunction with that day. I will not comment or give comments on what Col. Thompson said as it could lead to a trip to Washington!

...

Since some of my friends were (See AROUND TOWN, Pg. 15)



DIRECTOR -- Judy Covington Hendrix and one of her Developmental Day Care Center students, Bryan, share a book about trucks. Mrs. Hendrix joined the center May 16 as director. [Photo by S.H. Aplin]

Director Named For Developmental Center

The Board of Directors for the Hoke County Association for Developmentally Disabled has announced the placement of Judy Covington Hendrix, 25, as director of the Hoke County Developmental Day Care Center.

Chairman of the board, Warren Pate, said that Mrs. Hendrix began work at the center May 16. Funded by a H.E.W. grant and monies from the Sandhills Region Mental Health Center, the Hoke Center is aimed primarily at caring for preschool children with mental or physical disabilities.

The center is familiar territory for Mrs. Hendrix who did a three month internship there in 1975 under former director Dorothy Johnson.

Mrs. Hendrix is a 1970 graduate of Scotland High School in Laurinburg and received an A.A. in human resources from Sandhills Community College. She worked at the Moore County Children's Center in Southern Pines prior to joining the Raeford Center as director. She has also tutored

prisoners in basic reading skills, done volunteer work at Reynolds Rest Home in Carthage, and worked identifying retarded adults in Moore County for the ADAP program. For the past six months she has served as a Girl Scout leader for eight handicapped girls in Moore County. During her first year at Sandhills, Mrs. Hendrix started a private project in which she collected and distributed \$150 to needy families in Moore County. Later as part of her school field program she worked with the Headstart Project in Vass.

Assisted by Mrs. Irene Goins and Mrs. Woodie Morrison, the new director said that she was currently reviewing records and setting up individual programs for each of the children.

"We can always use volunteers who can come on a regular basis," she said. "We need people to hold the children and try to stimulate them."

Mrs. Hendrix has one son, Chad, age six.

CSE Plans Petition Drive

Citizens in Support of Education in Hoke County, an organization which formed last month in protest over the Board of Education's attempt to dismiss high school principal Allen Edwards, held its first official meeting Friday night and announced plans to circulate a county-wide petition.

The meeting in the courthouse attracted about 25 persons. Richard Coker, the temporary chairman of the group, argued against the school board's decision to transfer Edwards to Upchurch

Junior High School and transfer Upchurch principal Earl Oxendine to the high school, saying it was unwise from a "cost per benefit" standpoint.

Gerald Sappenfield, the C.S.E. treasurer, agreed to spearhead the petition drive and to try and get leaders working in each of the county's seven townships. The goal is to collect signatures in time to present the petition to the school board at their regular meeting which is June 6. The petition will formally request the board to

Rain Drops Keep Falling

Crops in Hoke County welcomed the rain that began falling Tuesday in the wake of a long, dry spell that had plagued fields throughout the Cape Fear Region.

Agricultural Extension Agent Wendell Young indicated that if the rains continue it will definitely end the drought. According to his observations, the rain was coming down in all parts of the county. A light rain was coming down in all parts of the county. A light rain last weekend had left as much as one inch in some sections while other parts of the county received almost none.

The crop situation never had reached the critical stage according to Young.

"We suffered some getting crops up, like in some cotton fields," he said. However, Young went on to

say that most of the corn was already up and many farmers delayed setting soybeans until it rained. The moisture falling can help some of the parched tobacco, Wendell said.

"It's really too early in the season to say we've suffered damage," said Young. "We've not really worried over lack of moisture. Maybe in another week or two we'd have had a problem."

Young said that local people may have noticed fields of corn with the leaves rolled and may have been alarmed. Actually it is a normal reflex by the plant to try to keep moisture from evaporating and does not necessarily mean that the crop has been damaged.

"I'm not trying to minimize the need for rain, I'm just saying that for us the situation hasn't gotten critical," he said.

A&R Plans For Lumber Yard To Run Into City Opposition

***** 'No Shows' Raise Judge's Hackles, Says System 'Stinks'

Judge Joe Dupree, who in recent weeks has sharply criticized traffic offenders who fail to show in court, handed out numerous PJC dispositions in District Court here Thursday in protest of a system that "stinks."

Dupree apparently became angered over the number of "no shows" in Court Thursday. Out of 86 cases calendared, 47 were persons cited to court for traffic offenses. Of the 47, 31 defendants were called and failed and orders for arrest papers were drawn.

"Under the present system, orders for arrest go out but I suspect you'll find that maybe 50 per cent of them are never served. The officers hold the orders for a period not to exceed 90 days and if it's not served, it is returned. As a rule, they are not sent out again. So, if a person can avoid service for 90 days, the case is dismissed and that person is only assessed points on his record for failing to appear," Dupree said.

"So what we have is simply this—those people who do come to court are fulfilling an obligation and are law-abiding citizens. But by being law-abiding citizens, they are penalized for coming to court if they are then assessed the cost of court and a fine, too. So anyone can obviously see that it doesn't pay to come to court in traffic cases and the present system stinks," the judge said.

"I have every intention of being just as kind as I possibly can be to people who come to court as they are bound to do when charged with minor traffic offenses, as attested to by the PJC's in my court today," he said.

A PJC, or prayer for judgment continued, does not count as a conviction and ordinarily no final judgment is entered and no points are assessed on a driver's record.

Assistant district attorney John Dickson agreed that "something definitely needs to be done about the problem."

Earlier this month, Dupree presented an idea in the form of a proposed bill for the General Assembly that would allow police officers to take possession of a person's operator's license at the time of issuing a ticket. The person would be given a receipt which

would allow him to continue driving until his court date. Then, if the defendant failed to come to court, his license would be kept.

Dupree heartily supports the plan, believing it would help cut down on the number of "no shows" in the state's courts. The judge estimates that "no shows" are costing North Carolina taxpayers as much as \$10 million a year in administrative costs.

Dupree's protest gladdened many of the lucky offenders in court Thursday who received PJC's. One man began clapping his hands when his case came up until he was told to stop.

An assistant clerk of court, Willaree McDuffie, estimated that about 75 per cent of the arrest orders for failing to appear are returned served. At the judge's request, the clerk's office will begin keeping a record for the next 30 days for comparison purposes.

Murder Charges Dropped

Following the May 13 acquittal of Allen Dwain Smith Jr., the District Attorney's office formally dismissed charges against Kenneth Leo Dockery and James Otis Havis Jr., who had been scheduled to be tried in June.

Dockery, 24, of Raeford, and Mavis, 29, a Ft. Bragg serviceman, were indicted along with Smith for the first degree murder and robbery of Robert Leslie Brooks last Dec. 23 at Brooks' store in Rockfish.

Smith, of Fayetteville, was acquitted of both charges by a Superior Court jury in a week-long trial here which ended May 13. A spokesman in the District Attorney's office said convictions in the two cases were unlikely in view of the acquittal of Smith.

(See LUMBER, Pg. 15)



NO BACK SEAT DRIVER -- Snoopy got impatient waiting for his master to finish his business on W. Elwood Ave. and hopped behind the wheel to go for a spin around the block. Snoopy and his owner, Clifford Collins of Edinborough Ave., enjoy the "open air" rides created by the stripped down Chevy. [Photo by S.H. Aplin]

Jobless Rate Creeps Up

Joblessness in Hoke County during March climbed to 8.2 per cent, according to the latest report issued by the Employment Security Commission.

The March figure reflects a rise over the February estimate of 7.8 per cent.

In the latest report, an estimated 650 persons were out of work during March out of a total labor force put at 7,950 persons. Number of employed persons was estimated at 7,300.