

Around Town

BY SAM C. MORRIS

The only comment about the weather is that it is at least liveable.

James R. Holmes, brother of the late Tommie Holmes, who now lives in Cleveland, Ohio was in the office last week to renew his subscription for the paper. He is Housing Supervisor for the Rent Assistance Program for the Cleveland district and was commenting on the program as a whole.

It was nice to talk to him and glad that he still enjoys The News-Journal.

Burnett Coleman, newly elected President of the Raeford Jaycees and Farmers Home Administrator for Hoke County, spoke to the Raeford Kiwanis Club last Thursday night. He came as a guest of Bill Moses who was in charge of the program.

Coleman told of the workings of his agency and his talk was interesting and very informative.

Mrs. Carolyn McGee, chairman for the Summer Camp Project of the Raeford Woman's Club, was by the office last week and asked that I put something in this column concerning the project.

The camp will be from August 1 thru 6 at Camp Monroe and the club hopes to send 42 children to the camp this year. Last year 25 youngsters attended and after observing the thrills and overall aid that came to these kids, the club increased the number.

Now, as everything else this day and time, the cost of doing anything goes up. When they increased the number to 42 children the club expected the cost to be \$35 per child but it has gone up to \$37.50. Besides this fee the club must provide clothes and blankets for each camper. Of course other little expenses will be popping up that you don't expect.

The club is short over \$100.00 just in the money for the fees for the campers.

Now once again these ladies call upon the good citizens of Hoke County to aid in a worthy cause. They are grateful for the contributions that people have already donated, but to make their project a success that ask us to go a little further and dig a little deeper.

If you can help, get in touch with Mrs. McGee or Mrs. Alfred K. Leach, president of the Raeford Woman's Club.

Mrs. Charles Hostetler, president of the Hoke County Arts Council, came by the office the first of the week and gave me some information which should be of interest to many men in the county. The Arts Council wants to form a Barber Shop Quartet or a group of Singing men.

After Ann talked to me about this, it brought back the memories of such names as Make and Martin McKeithan, Freddie Fridell, Jap Davis, Lacy Clark, Dr. H.R. Cromartie, and Col. Rube Poole, just to mention a few of the men that used to sing in Raeford and from the group form a quartet for a Minstrel or a funeral at the drop of a coin.

I can recall even in my earlier days of singing with Sam Snead, Earl Buoyer, John Thomas Walters, Harold McDiarmid, Jack Bethune, etc., many a night on the schoolhouse steps.

Whether we could carry a tune or not, we had fun and it sounded like music to us.

This is a swell idea and so let's all of us join in with this project. If you are interested, just contact Donna Bernhardt, Ashwell Harward or Mrs. Ann Hostetler, and they will give you complete details.

According to Ann, a director hasn't been found as of this writing, but with the talent that is in this county, that shouldn't be hard to come up with.

We'll be singing with you soon!

Don't forget that the Raeford Kiwanis Club Annual Softball tournament starts next week. Look for more information elsewhere in the paper.

Next week we will write about a Raeford native who retired this past school year after teaching at the same school for the past 41 years.

Disaster Aid Asked

Crop Losses Put At \$3 Million



DYING -- Half of the county's corn crop has been declared a loss, the plants dying in the severe drought which has plagued farmers for weeks. This field is on the Woodrow Lewis farm in Five Points, one of the hardest hit sections of the county.

With the crop losses here already nearing \$3 million in one of the severest droughts on record, Hoke County has joined 53 other North Carolina counties in asking to be declared federal crop disaster areas so farmers can become eligible for low interest loans and other aid.

The Hoke County Emergency Board, composed of representatives from the Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service, Soil Conservation Service, Farmers Home Administration, Southeast Production Credit Association and the Agricultural Extension Service offices, met last Friday morning after Gov. Jim Hunt announced that he was requesting 54 of the state's most severely hurt counties to be designated emergency drought areas.

Tom Burgess, Hoke County ASCS executive director, said the committee estimated that 50 per cent of the total corn crop, or about 5,000 acres, will be lost. Based on current market prices of \$2 per bushel, the loss will translate into approximately three-quarters of a million dollars.

Tobacco damage was estimated as about 30 per cent of the total acreage, and "that's going higher every day", Burgess said. Based on a normal output of 1,900 pounds per acre, the loss in tobacco has already exceeded \$1.3 million.

Cotton, wheat and soybean damage has so far been light to negligible, Burgess said. Cotton has held up well but soybeans are beginning to show some stress.

"It's hard to say right now, but if we don't get rain, they'll take a pretty severe loss", Burgess said.

"We've got a two and one half to three million dollar loss already and it's getting worse every day. The tobacco is just burning off the stalk," he said.

Burgess also said that local ASCS committee is readying an application for the Livestock Feed Program, so local producers will be eligible to receive aid under that plan. Livestock producers, especially swine and poultry farmers who have been especially hard hit by the prolonged dry spell, can receive grain from the Commodity Credit Corp. reserves.

Widely scattered showers fell last Thursday and Friday afternoons. Raeford received less than one half inch of moisture and some parts of the county received none.

Wendell Young, agriculture extension chairman, said the western sections of the county, especially around Five Points, have suffered the worst effects, along with portions of McLauchlin Township in the east.

Young characterized the severe drought conditions as "the worst since 1952 or '53".

Burgess said it will be two to three weeks before the county's application can be processed and the official designation made.

Interest rates on loans for actual losses are five per cent. Other parts of the emergency loan program carry a market rate of interest, which is presently set at eight per cent.

Loans to cover actual losses are scheduled for repayment consistent with the ability of the farmer to pay, and available security, up to seven years, according to Burnett Coleman, supervisor of the Hoke County FmHA office.

No Motel? No Problem!

By Marty Vega

The way to see the U.S.A. may be in a Chevrolet but the way to see North Carolina is by bicycle, if you can believe two very tired young men who pedaled into Raeford Monday night.

Don Pearce, 23, and Dennis Deutschle, 26, both junior high school teachers in the Alamance County school system, left Graham on their bikes about 6:15 a.m. Monday, taking with them sleeping bags, extra clothing, towels and a little food.

Bringing the sleeping bags was smart. They found they needed them Monday night.

"We figured Aberdeen was about as far as we would make the first day, but a man gave us directions for a shortcut so we made Raeford and thought we'd look for a motel. What motels! There aren't any!" Don said.

Tired, the two travelers decided the only thing to do would be to go to the local police station and ask if they could spend the night there.

Dead Girl's Handicap

Not Known

Bertha and George Johnson, the parents of slain Annie Lois Johnson, did not know that their daughter had been classed as retarded and was in a special class until after her death.

Mrs. Johnson, who works as a housekeeper at Moore Memorial Hospital, said that Annie was a quiet girl and usually stayed around the house.

"She never gave us any trouble. She seemed normal enough. I just don't know what to think," Mrs. Johnson said.

Mrs. Janet Plummer, who was the murdered girl's language arts teacher in the educable mentally retarded class at Upchurch Junior High School last year, said that Annie was considered "mildly retarded" and had an I.Q. of about 72.

"She was one of the brighter ones in the class. She had days when she was in and out but I'd say she was doing work on a fourth or fifth grade level," Mrs. Plummer said.

"She had friends and she seemed happy enough. You'd always see her with a group," Mrs. Plummer said.

Her teacher, shocked at the news of the violent death, said that Annie could have been lured into situations by strangers if it was an older person or some adult who would appear as an authority figure.

"It's just a terrible tragedy," she said.

(Now, as everybody knows, Raeford just couldn't have strangers treated so inhospitably as that. Graham Niven, who was at the dispatcher's desk at 7:30 p.m., realized that city manager Bob Drumwright was also from Graham, so Niven sent them on their way with directions to the city manager's home, where they unrolled their sleeping bags for some well-earned rest. Their plan was to be up bright and early to cover the last 100 miles to their destination, Holden Beach.

Don is originally from Zebulon and Dennis is a native of Niagara Falls, N.Y.

The trip was Dennis' idea.

"It's not so bad once you get going. We didn't even stop until Pittsboro. The wind picked up a lot in Pittsboro and then we had to make stops," Dennis said.

"Dennis said once you get to Pittsboro then it's all easy. Then, he said, well maybe it's Sanford, that's where it's all downhill. Lord, we never have found the place yet!" Don said.

The pair had no real problems on the first leg of their journey and found that most motorists are very courteous of bikers and give them plenty of room.

"They're fantastic, the people. It kind of makes you feel good about

Americans and North Carolinians," Dennis said.

The only difficulties the two encountered along the way didn't come from people or traffic.

"God, there's a lot of dogs in North Carolina," Dennis laughed. "There was one. I could hear his teeth chatter, he came about one foot from us!"

The men plan to spend a few days at the beach and then head toward home this weekend.

(See NO MOTEL? Pg. 14)

Jobseekers 66% Minorities

Minority people comprised 66 percent of the total active job applicants who were registered for work with the North Carolina Employment Security Commission in May of 1977.

A recently released labor area review for Raeford and Hoke County listed 407 minority applicants out of a total of 617. The review was prepared by the Bureau of Employment Security Research in cooperation with the Fayetteville Employment Security Commission Office.

Other statistics indicate that the minority applications make up 96.4

percent of the applications for farming, forestry and fisheries occupations, 91.7 percent of those for processing work and only 28 percent of those for professional, technical or managerial work.

According to the review the May employment total for the Raeford area was estimated to be 7,610, reflecting a worker gain of 40 since March. But, over the past 12 months there has been a worker loss of 410.

During the last two months prior to the May review the farm sector in Hoke County added 100 workers, but lost 130 workers over the

previous twelve month period.

The nonagricultural wage and salary employment segment decreased by 310 over the year, dropping 50 workers since March.

The "all other" category nonagricultural hiring was up by 30 since May 1976, but edged lower during the last two months of the year.

Using data based on place of work, manufacturing employment was shown to have decreased by 140 workers, with ten being added during the last two months of the 12 month period.

Since March 1977, textile em-

(See JOBSEEKERS, Pg. 14)

Cameron Village Teen Found Slain

house to get some water. Authorities declined to speculate on a motive for the killing.

Barrington said several persons are still being questioned. Funeral services for Miss

Johnson were held Sunday at Mountain Grove A.M.E. Zion Church.



MURDER -- The body of fourteen-year-old Annie Lois Johnson was found in grass next to the dirt road leading to her home in Cameron Village Thursday morning. The cause of death was strangulation.

A retarded teenage girl was found murdered Thursday morning next to the dirt road leading to her home in the Cameron Village neighborhood near Pine Hill.

Det. Alex Norton of the Hoke County Sheriff's Department identified the victim as Annie Lois Johnson of Rt. 3, Box 163, Raeford.

Norton said the girl's body was discovered by a sister, Mrs. Martha Campbell, about 9:30 a.m., when Mrs. Campbell, left the house to visit a neighbor.

Preliminary reports indicated the girl had been beaten, however Sheriff D.M. Barrington said the apparent cause of death was ruled by the state medical examiner as strangulation. The autopsy also indicated that she had not been sexually assaulted.

Norton said the victim's brother told investigators that he left for work that morning about 7:15 a.m. and did not see the body at that time. A sister reported hearing a vehicle in the driveway about 7:30 a.m., Norton said.

Sheriff Barrington said that the girl apparently was last seen by her family about 11:30 p.m. Wednesday when she left the