

## Around Town

BY SAM C. MORRIS

For the people that read this column and live outside of North Carolina I will say to you that the weather is perfect in the old North State. Fall is here and with the cool nights and warm days everyone seems to feel better and is going around with a different look on their faces.

As one writer said this week, October is a month all to itself.

From the reports out of the Board of Election office Monday, it appears that a race for City Council might develop after all. Four people filed Monday for the five seats but there are still three more filing days left. The deadline for filing is Monday, October 10th at noon.

So if you want for an exciting two years of your life, go by the election office and file. It could be an experience you will never forget.

Have you joined the Hoke County Chapter of the North Carolina Symphony? Don't forget that the Little Symphony will be in concert here on Tuesday, November 1. From a partial listing on the program it will not be what we call "long-haired music" but will be something that we will be able to understand and enjoy.

Tickets or memberships can be obtained from any of the chapter's directors or to make it very simple for anyone, just drop by *The News-Journal* office and I will be glad to fix you up.

The deadline has been set for the membership drive to end on October 18th, so make plans now to aid this worthy cause.

You know some weeks just don't start off right and it seems that it would be a joy to end the week on Monday and start it all over again. Last week was one of them. It was a week of everything going wrong or if anything happened it seemed as if the car was in front of the horse.

Anyway I was bemoaning and griping at the beginning of the week, but anyway I made it through and after a couple of things that happened to other people that I was informed about, maybe my week wasn't so bad.

One good friend of mine, I was told by another friend, on a trip to the western part of the United States happened to get in the wrong lane of traffic somewhere in Texas and when he realized what had happened he was in Mexico.

Now this wouldn't seem to cause any problem, and my friend didn't think so either, until he started trying to get back to the United States line. It seems that the people in Mexico don't speak the same language that the people do in the United States or that is what my friend found out when he started inquiring for directions back to Interstate No. 10.

The Spanish course this man had taken, either at PJC or Pembroke State didn't come back to him, like the professors told him it would, a number of years ago. Of course, he had been told many times not to panic in a situation like this. Did he? I don't know, but anyway to make a long story short, a taxi driver came along and my friend finally crossed the border to safety.

Could someone please let me know the Spanish words for "wash" and "watch". My friend would like to know if he ever returns "South of the Border."

Now the problem of the other friend was partly solved by this writer when he wouldn't let Marty Vega take a picture. This gentleman now lives in Fayetteville and made a special trip over to Raeford last Friday to show me a sign that was on his wife's car. (Why he wouldn't put it on his car I couldn't find out.) The sign read as follows: "The only Carolina is East Carolina."

My friend wanted a picture made of the car and the sign, so it could be run in this week's paper after last Saturday's game in Columbia, S.C. Now I helped him by not letting the picture be taken, because the caption under the picture this week would certainly be embarrassing to him after what he

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Lonnie Baldwin



Vardell Hedgpeth

## Four File To Run For Council Seats

After a slow start, the city election race got going this week with the filing of two incumbents and two newcomers on the political scene.

Veteran Councilman Graham Clark, 61, filed for re-election Monday with the Board of Elections, along with Councilman Bob Gentry, 46, who is running for election in his own right.

Clark is seeking a fifth term. Gentry, appointed last year to replace David Lovette, is running for office for the first time.

Incumbents Sam C. Morris and Crawford Thomas Jr. both announced earlier they will not run again.

Still to be heard from is Benny McLeod, finishing out his fourth term on the council.

Lonnie Baldwin, a taxi operator, filed as a candidate also Monday, becoming the first black to run for the council.

Baldwin, 25, is operator of Public Service Taxi and a student at Fayetteville Technical Institute, where he is in his third year of industrial management studies. A native of Raeford, he is a graduate of Hoke High and spent three years in the Army. A bachelor, he lives with his mother at 409 S. Magnolia St.

Baldwin said he is a candidate because he has an interest in Raeford and its problems.

"I'm assuming I'll be here hopefully for the rest of my life. I have an interest in what's going on," he said.

"I read the paper quite often and in essence, I feel there's a lack of understanding. People don't understand what the council is and

what it does. With my business management schooling, I think I can be a help. I do have the interest and I like to help people," he said.

"My motto is to 'make the best better'," he said.

Baldwin said he realized that he was the first minority race member to make a try for election but that he felt he could attract support from all segments of the community.

"I'll be an active candidate and run an active campaign. I plan to speak to groups and make myself known," he said.

Baldwin previously worked for the school bus garage. He is a member of the Society for Advancement of Managers (SAM) and Freedom Chapel A.M.E. Zion Church.

Baldwin received his taxi permit from the city council last month.

Insurance agent Vardell Hedgpeth, 34, also filed Monday.

"This is not a hasty decision. I've been thinking about running for some time, and several people have asked me to run," he said.

Born in Robeson County, Hedgpeth moved to Raeford when he was nine. He graduated from Hoke High School in 1961, served six months active duty with the Army and six years with the National Guard.

He received his license to sell insurance in 1964 and has been in Raeford with Nationwide Insurance since that time. His agency is located on E. Elwood Ave.

He is married and has three children.

Hedgpeth has served as one of the directors of the Kiwanis Club (See COUNCIL, Page 15)

## County Board Hears Water Management Study Proposals

County commissioners were briefed on options prepared in the North Carolina Water Resources Framework Study Monday morning during their regular meeting.

Presenting the preliminary findings of the study to the board was Donald Sherry of the Department of Natural Resources and Community Development. Sherry is an economist with the Division of Environmental Management.

Specific options developed in the study include a regional water and sewer system and an urban floodway system for the Raeford area. The plan also suggests a scenic preservation area for Rockfish Creek and designation of a water trail and public fishing stream on the Lumber River.

Hoke County encompasses both the Cape Fear River Basin and the Lumber River Basin.

The second part of the study, which will cover two years, will be involved with possible solutions to agricultural drainage problems, flooding and groundwater management.

All five commissioners were present and each received a priority evaluation form to rate the proposals and make comments.

In other business, the board agreed to a change in the procedure for signing county checks. A stamp to put Chairman John Balfour's signature on all checks was approved. County Manager T.B. Lester will continue to initial the checks.

Balfour estimated that it was taking him an hour or more to individually sign each check.

Triangle Co. of Fayetteville submitted a low bid of \$1,982 for timberline shingles to replace the roof on the courthouse annex. The board unanimously accepted the bid.

Kenneth Davis of A.K. Lovin and Co., certified public accountants, presented the annual audit report and termed the county's financial condition as "excellent."

Davis noted that the tax collection rate for the prior year was 94.2 per cent.

A written report from the Department of Human Resources Emergency Medical Services Division on the inspection of the Hoke County Rescue Squad was received. The report praised the Squad and said everything was found to be operating in a highly professional manner.

Commissioner Danny DeVane's motion to send a formal letter of appreciation to the Squad was approved unanimously.

Commissioners will meet again tonight (Thursday) at 7:30 p.m. in a special meeting to review the 45-page proposed county zoning ordinance and draft of mobile home park regulations.

The board is expected to formally approve the drafts. Public hearings will be held later. The ordinances cannot be adopted until after the hearings.

## Cable TV Firm Asks Rate Hike

### Board Changes Memorial

By common consent, the Hoke County Board of Education Monday night reversed a Sept. 5 action to dedicate the Glen Echo School as a memorial to K.A. MacDonald.

According to Supt. G. Raz Autry the committee which had earlier suggested naming the restored one-room school house for the long-time Hoke school superintendent had reconsidered and decided that naming a larger building for MacDonald would be more suitable. Mrs. Mina Townsend made a motion that the older portion of the high school be designated as the K.A. MacDonald Building and the motion was carried.

According to the minutes of the meeting Dr. Riley Jordan moved for the acceptance of the following people as employees of the school system: Linda B. Fisher, interim teacher for the first semester; Sandra L. Sayer as interim teacher for the first semester; Sera Gilmore, teacher; Reginald Blue as TMR aide at Upchurch. Mrs. Townsend moved that Mary M. Smith be employed as an interim teacher at Scurlock. Both motions carried.

Board members R.L. Gibson, R.M. Jordan, Ruth S. McNair and (See MEMORIAL, Page 15)

## Medical Complex Finalized

Bids are expected to be let in about 60 days on the planned medical arts building for Raeford, funded under a federal grant.

Announcement of the \$285,000 grant award was made last week by Rep. Charlie Rose in Washington.

The grant, approved by the Economic Development Administration to upgrade rural health care, will fund 80 per cent of the estimated \$357,000 facility. The balance of the costs will be financed through a Farmers Home Administration loan.

The award was made to the Hoke County Medical Complex Inc., a non-profit body headed by local citizens. The president, Younger Snead Jr., said an option has been obtained on part of a four-acre parcel on S. Main St., and negotiations are in progress to acquire the full tract.

Architects for the building are Cogswell/Hausler Associates of Chapel Hill. Current plans for the 7,040 square-foot facility call for offices for three physicians, 15 examination rooms and space for an optometrist's practice.

Snead said construction bids may be let within the next 60 days. Completion of the facility is planned for sometime next summer.

Practitioners in the new complex will pay rent comparable to costs in surrounding areas, Snead said.

## Bloodmobile To Make Extra Visit

The first Bloodmobile visit of the 1977-78 fiscal year will be Friday from noon until 5:30 p.m. at the Raeford United Methodist Church.

Donors who gave blood Aug. 29 will not be eligible to give this time as a six weeks waiting period is required.

This visit is an extra one in the schedule as Hoke County was short supplying the requirements for blood collection last year, Clyde Upchurch, Red Cross chairman, said.

Citing a \$136,000 loss in the three cities served by N.C. Cable TV Co., the president of the cable firm formally requested the city council to approve rate increase for Raeford subscribers.

James F. Collins, along with N.C. Cable TV Co. vice-president Jim Payton, appeared before the council Monday night and asked for an increase from \$6 monthly for one outlet to \$7, effective next January. For subscribers with more than one outlet, the monthly charge would go to \$1.50 for each additional outlet.

"We anticipated we would be a 2,100 subscribers in the three communities by this time," Collins told the council. "We appear to have reached the saturation point in Raeford and we can't continue with these losses."

Collins said there are currently just over 600 cable TV customers in Raeford. The system can offer service to every house in Raeford except six homes, he said. The last major campaign to attract more customers was not as successful in Raeford as in St. Pauls, he said, and a rate increase was needed in order to make the system more self-supporting.

Councilman Sam C. Morris expressed doubts that a rate increase would improve anything as some customers would drop the service if the price went up, he said. Morris also said some customers were dissatisfied because of the absence of the time and weather station.

Collins said it was not possible to get the time and weather station operational as promised earlier because of equipment interference with the emergency radios at the jail. The cablevision receiver is atop the radio tower at the jail.

Mayor J.K. McNeill Jr. and Councilman Benny McLeod were the only ones present Monday who are not cable subscribers. Morris, Councilman Graham Clark and Councilman Crawford Thomas are subscribers. Councilman Bob Gentry was absent for the meeting.

Under the franchise agreement with the city, city council approval is required before the adoption of any rate increases. Two public hearings are also required.

The council did not formally raise an objection on the matter of moving the cablevision collection box for customers to pay bills. Last month, the council voiced misgivings about moving the box from the municipal building to Wood's Furniture Store.

Collins said that under the written contract, the company had the right to move the box with 30 days notice.

Raeford has had cable television since 1975. If approved, this will be the second rate increase here.

In other matters Monday, City Manager Robert Drumwright recommended enforcement of the city fire code concerning the operation of self-service gasoline pumps.

Drumwright said one station, Graham's Gulf, had installed a self-service pump since the adoption of the code. The code requires the presence of an attendant where gasoline is dispensed.

After hearing a recommendation from Drumwright, the council authorized an agreement with Management Improvement Consultants of America to provide recommendations on saving money in city government.

A MICA representative presented a proposal to the city last month. Under the contract, the city would pay a minimum of \$16,000 if the firm finds ways to save money, Drumwright said. If no savings are realized, no fee is owed.

The council approved a request from the Board of Education to ban parking on a portion of E. Donaldson Ave. during certain hours. The request was to alleviate traffic problems for school buses loading and unloading.

The council ordered the no-parking area on a 60-day trial basis. It is to be in effect between 8-9 a.m. and 2-3 p.m.

Harold Stone was appointed to the Raeford Housing Authority to fill an unexpired term.

The board authorized advertising of bids for new accounting equipment. Drumwright estimated the cost of the needed machinery at about \$20,000.

Two recommendations from the Planning Board were approved, a mobile home park in the Queenmore section and a residential-to-commercial change for 401-bypass property. The latter request was made by Younger Snead Jr.

## Customer Slain At Club

A Robeson County man was charged with murder Sunday following a Saturday night slaying of a Hoke County man at a nightclub about eight miles south of Raeford.

Eugene Locklear, 22, of Rt. 1, Shannon, was killed by gunfire about 10:45 p.m. Saturday outside an establishment run by Lena Mae McMillan, Sheriff D.M. Barrington said.

Being held in jail on an open charge of murder is Carl Oxendine, 22, of Rt. 1, Box 238, Pembroke.

According to the sheriff, Locklear got into an argument with a woman. A club bouncer, Bobby Oxendine, attempted to break up the quarrel and got into an altercation with Locklear. Barrington said the employee's brother, Carl Oxendine, went into a nearby trailer and returned with a .22 automatic rifle.

Locklear was hit by two bullet wounds and was dead at the scene.

(See CUSTOMER SLAIN, Page 15)

## Medical Betterment Group Gets Grant

The Department of Health, Education and Welfare has awarded a \$15,000 planning grant for a study of emergency room needs in Raeford.

Announcement of the award was made by the Hoke County Medical Betterment Association, a non-profit citizens group which has been working to strengthen medical care.

Wyatt Upchurch, president of the Association, said a meeting will be held next week with an Atlantic representative to discuss how the grant will be implemented.

The Association, which successfully attracted another physician to Raeford earlier this year, has been

working jointly with the Cardinal Health Agency, the area health planning body, on the HEW application.

Upchurch said the funds will be used to finance a study on the practicality of establishing some type of emergency facility offering care 24 hours a day. Hoke County residents must now go to either Cumberland County or Moore County for the nearest hospital emergency room.

Members of the Association are Frank Baker, Bobby Gibson, Emma Mims, Bill Howell and Warren Pate, in addition to Upchurch.