

Around Town

BY SAM C. MORRIS

The weather over the weekend was winter to me. I did get out on the golf course Thanksgiving Day, but after then it was too cold and rainy for me to play. Of course some of my friends said it wasn't bad at all and played Saturday and Sunday. Yes, I guess I must be "chicken."

Anyway the forecast is for temperatures to be in the 60s for the coming weekend so maybe it will be possible for some of us to get outside.

J.W. Turlington, principal at Raeford Elementary School, was by the office last Friday, as he was off from school that day. He said that Harvey Young of the Raeford Police Department had talked to several classes at the school recently about fingerprinting. From listening to Turlington, the kids were very interested in the subject and Harvey really did a fine job.

This is good in two ways. The kids will learn something about crime and how it is dealt with by law enforcement officers, but it will also let the kids know that the law enforcement officers are doing a fine job and that they should build up respect for them. I hope that more of this kind of talking will be done in the schools of Hoke County.

On Thursday night, December 8th starting at 5 o'clock the Raeford Kiwanis Club will once again hold their annual Pancake Supper. The supper will be held at the W.T. Gibson cafeteria of the High School.

Avery Connell is in charge of the affair and he has been cracking the whip over the other Kiwanians and says that everything will be in top-notch order this year.

If you haven't bought a ticket, they can be purchased from any member of the Kiwanis Club or can be purchased at the door that night. All you can eat for \$1.75, and besides that, just think of all the fellowship that will go with the pancakes and sausage.

So mark the date on your calendar, and let a Kiwanian serve you so that they can better serve the community.

The picture that appeared in this column last week brought forth some comment. Most of the readers recognized Bobby Carter but his friend was missed by many. Some came by the office and asked who they were and others came by to tell me.

Of course Bobby Carter is correct, and the gentleman with him is Ed McNeill, owner of Home Food Super Market. The only thing I can't find out about the picture is the where and when of it. Was it before or after World War II?

I believe only Bobby or Ed could answer this question, unless the photographer still remembers when it was taken.

In an envelope in which subscription checks are returned to this office, came also a note along with a check this past week.

The check was from Leo Fuller of Mt. Holly. Leo lived here before World War II and played football and baseball at Raeford High School. He was on the baseball team that won the Eastern Championship in 1929. This team lost to Shelby in Chapel Hill by the score of 4-2. Leo played third base.

The Fullers lived on North Main Street in the house now occupied by Bill Sellars and his family. Leo's father was in the horse and mule business and his stable was located where T.B. Upchurch, Inc. now has its office on South Main street. Just around the corner where Heilig Meyers is located, my father and uncle also had a stable. Times have changed.

The note from Leo is as follows:

Sam:
Sorry to admit it, but I'm 66 and I believe I will take advantage of your offer.

Leo:
Thanks Leo for the note and I will say that my age is slowly approaching 60 also. But maybe we should be thankful we are still around and in good health. Stop by the office and see me the next time you are in Raeford.

McCain Praised At Hearing



McCain HEARING -- Hundreds of supporters turned out for a hearing Nov. 22 at McCain Hospital to tell a legislative task force that the facility is of vital importance to health care in the 30 counties it serves. The 24 member task force is studying the state's three specialty hospitals to see if any can be closed or consolidated. The group will make its recommendations to the N.C. Dept. of Human Resources in February.

City Council Holds Special Session On Airport Lease

The Raeford City Council met in special session at 7:30 p.m. Nov. 30 to discuss the Raeford-Municipal Airport.

The meeting was scheduled Monday after the Raeford-Hoke Chamber of Commerce presented Mayor J.K. McNeill, Jr. with a petition signed by four council members calling for the session.

According to the petition, the special session was for "the sole purpose of reviewing any and all proposed leases of the Raeford-Municipal Airport." It was signed by councilmen James McLeod, Bob

Open House

The Hoke County Mental Health Center, located at 116 Campus Ave., will hold an open house Dec. 4. The public is invited to tour the facility and enjoy an exhibit put on by local artists.

Hoke County is one of five counties served by the Sandhills Mental Health Center. It houses a full-time staff of five including George Barbour, Hoke County director and psychologist; Cathy Radecki, school psychologist; Beth Royal, social worker; Ed McCarthy, alcohol services counselor and Hazel Niven, secretary.

The Mental Health Center officially opened in August. With the new staff and building, outpatient coverage has doubled. An alcohol counselor is now available full time and there are four full-time clinicians.

Before the new Mental Health facility, people were seen at the Health Department one day a week. All calls were also taken through the Health Department. The new Center now handles all of its calls and clients.

Fees for the services are based on a sliding scale. Most clients fall into the \$1-\$2 per visit range, according to Barbour. Minimum charge is \$1, although no one will be turned away for financial reasons. Most of the clients are assigned to one therapist and all contacts with the therapist and the Mental Health Center are confidential. Appointments at the Center are established by the client and his therapist, although clients are requested to notify the Center should they be unable to keep an appointment. How long a person remains in therapy depends upon personal need and is determined by the client and therapist.

On the Advisory Board are Robert Taylor, Emma Mims, Steve Benkosky, Rev. Charles Litzenger, Harry Williamson, Harriett McDonald, Melinda Leggett, Lucille McGregor and Clyde Jacobs.

Mr. Jacobs not only serves on the advisory board, but as an art instructor at Hoke High School, he has arranged for his students to paint a mural to be used in the Mental Health building.

Gentry, Sam Morris, and C.L. Thomas, Jr.

The petition also requested that no lease concerning the airport be signed before the meeting.

Last week, City Manager Robert Drumwright said it would be up to the mayor to decide whether or not to sign a 12-year lease with Gene Thacker for airport facilities. The city manager said the lease was being drawn up and would be presented to the mayor for signature once it was completed.

The council authorized the mayor to sign the lease on Nov. 2, by a vote of three to two, councilmen Morris and McLeod cast the dissenting votes. Since that time, the local chamber of commerce has sought to delay the agreement, saying that it had additional information that should be considered before the lease is signed.

The petition was given to the mayor and city manager Monday afternoon and was accompanied by a letter. It was the second letter regarding the airport sent to city officials by the chamber. Signed by chamber manager Earl N. Fowler, it reads:

"As manager of the Raeford - Hoke Chamber of Commerce, I am again requesting a temporary delay in signing any lease involving the Raeford - Municipal Airport.

United Way Campaign Falls Short Of Goal

With the completion of the scheduled United Way drive Nov. 30, contributions stood at \$21,081, 20, representing 87 percent of the goal of \$24,374.17, according to co-chairman Ralph Huff.

When asked for reasons for the failure of the drive to meet its goal,

Councilmen To Be Sworn On Monday

Newly elected members of the Raeford City Council will be sworn in during the regular meeting of the board on Monday, Dec. 5.

Insurance agent Vardell Hedgpeth, who polled more votes than any other candidate, will be the only newcomer to take a seat on the board. He will join incumbents Graham Clark, James McLeod, Bobby Gentry, and Sam Morris.

The second hearing on a proposed rate increase for the N.C. Cable TV Co. is on the agenda for the evening meeting.

The Hoke County Board of Commissioners will hold a regular business session on Dec. 5, beginning at 9 a.m.

"This request is considered to be in the best interest of all citizens, and has the full endorsement of the Chamber Board of Directors. As previously stated in my letter to Mr. Robert Drumwright (Nov. 15) this request is in no way intended to criticize any actions that you and our city council have taken.

"Attached to this letter you will find a petition signed by four members of the city council. They ask for a special session of the entire council for the purpose of reviewing any and all proposed leases of the airport. The petition further requests that no lease be signed prior to this meeting.

"Let me assure you that the chamber of commerce is in no way attempting to tell you or any other city official how to operate the airport facilities. We have been asked to intervene on behalf of many concerned citizens, who apparently fear that future economic growth in Hoke County may be hampered.

"Let me urge you to take seriously the requests made by responsible people, and immediately call a special meeting of the city council in order to clear up any misunderstanding that may exist.

"The chamber pledges its support -- in any manner -- to help resolve this problem, hopefully, to the satisfaction of all concerned."

Huff cited short time and layoffs from two local industries as a contributing factor. Huff added, however, that he was delighted with the response from these two industries, which accounted for 62 percent of the money raised.

The second reason, and the most disturbing one, was a lack of commitment from many individuals and businesses in the community, Huff said.

"You would be shocked to see a list of people in the community who would not participate," he said. "These included some professional people, prominent individuals, local businesses, chain stores, and public employees. With the exception of school personnel, the contributions from public employees were most disappointing."

He said that neighboring counties offered a real contrast.

"Just across the county line in Moore County, Carolina Galvanizing agreed to match the contributions of its 161 employees," Huff said. "With an employee per capita of \$35.35, the company provided the matching funds, resulting in a combined pledge of \$11,384.

"We made a total commitment this year to contact each individual (See UNITED WAY, Page 15)

A legislative task force heard nothing but praise for McCain Hospital as hundreds of supporters turned out Nov. 22 for a public hearing that may decide the future of the state's first sanitarium.

The 24-member task force, headed by Ben Aiken, director of the mental health division of the N.C. Dept. of Human Resources, is reviewing the state's three specialty hospitals to see if any of the facilities should be eliminated or consolidated.

The hospitals treat victims of respiratory diseases: tuberculosis, lung cancer, emphysema and brown lung.

Aiken told those assembled in McCain's auditorium that a Senate budget panel recommended closing the other two hospitals, in Wilson and Black Mountain. He said a legislative sub-committee recommended in 1975 that McCain be closed.

Declining admissions was cited as one reason for closing the three hospitals. However, once these recommendations were publicized, the outcry became so great that a special task force was appointed to give the hospitals further study.

The task force is expected to make its recommendations to the Dept. of Human Resources in February.

A large crowd appeared in support of Western North Carolina Hospital in Black Mountain at a public hearing held there. A hearing is set for Dec. 16 at Eastern North Carolina Hospital in Wilson.

McCain Needed

Former patients, area legislators, health professionals, and county officials told the task force that McCain Hospital is of vital importance to the health and economy of North Carolinians in the 30 counties it serves.

Those who spoke at the two-hour hearing were applauded by the crowd, which spilled out into the hallway and into an adjacent chapel on the building's second floor.

In all, 36 people registered to speak -- some deferred their allotted time to others. The speakers presented the task force with facts and figures concerning the hospital and its services.

Facts And Figures

Founded in 1908, McCain not only treats patients, it serves as a training center for the detection and treatment of respiratory diseases.

Dr. Wilbur J. Steining, past director of McCain, said that the average patient there is 55 years old, indigent, with between a fourth and fifth grade education, employed as a laborer. He said most of these people would have no where else to go if McCain were closed.

Dr. Jesse Williams, of the Cumberland Co. Health Dept., told the task force that there were 327 new cases of tuberculosis last year among the 1.7 million people in the counties served by McCain. It is projected that 393 new TB victims will need an extended stay at McCain each year, he said.

Dr. Williams pointed out that North Carolina ranks fifth among the states for incidents of tuberculosis.

J.C. Balfour, chairman of the Hoke Co. Board of Commissioners, said that McCain reads Chest x-rays for health departments, M.D.'s and area hospitals. John Campbell, of the Southern Pines Chamber of Commerce, noted that 2,500 chest x-rays from Moore Co. alone were read at McCain every year.

Duplication Expensive

"It would be extremely expensive to duplicate the services offered by McCain in county hospitals," said Rep. Joy Johnson. "The closing of such a facility would make it a financial burden for the elderly and poor."

Hoke Co. Director of Social Services Ben Niblock told the task force about the high rate of unemployment in this area. He said that many rural counties don't have the means to treat TB patients. There is no other hospital or clinic in Hoke Co., he pointed out.

Staff Dedicated

"You won't find a more dedicated staff than here at McCain Hospital," said M.R. Mills, sanitarian with the Hoke Co. Health Dept. "Many of the staff members here have been at McCain for 10 or 15 years. We need this hospital desperately. It's centrally located. The absence of this facility would create a hardship on the local area."

Closing McCain would mean that 294 people on the staff would have to find jobs elsewhere, said Rep. David Parnell, of the 21st legislative district. And that would definitely hurt the local economy, he said.

"McCain plays a vital role in the health care of the people in 30 counties in eastern North Carolina," Parnell said. "It is truly rendering a service to the people of this state."

He pointed out that the average per patient cost was lower at McCain than at the other two hospitals.

Former Patient

Edgar Atkinson, an ex-patient at McCain, said he always got the best treatment from the staff.

"Speaking firsthand about what McCain has meant to me over seven years, it seems to be the only place I can get relief," he said. "I've been to other places, but this seems to be the only place I can get help. If you have any respiratory problems, I recommend McCain."

"We might save a little money if we close McCain, but we will sacrifice service to the people," said Hoke Co. Superintendent of Schools Raz Autry.

Other Hoke County speakers included: Earl N. Fowler, of the Raeford-Hoke Chamber of Commerce; Raeford Mayor J.K. McNeill, Jr.; and Dr. R.G. Townsend, chairman of the Hoke Co. Board of Health.

Other counties represented at the meeting included: Cumberland, Anson, Richmond, Stanley, Union, Onslow, Scotland, Randolph, and Bladen.

Rose's Office Visits Dec. 14

Congressman Charlie Rose, D-N.C., announced the Seventh Congressional District Mobile Office schedule for Dec.

Rip Collins, Congressman Rose's administrative assistant and representative in the district, announced

that the mobile office will be parked as close as possible to the post office at each of its stops.

The Mobile Office will visit Hoke County Dec. 14. It will be at the Raeford Post Office from 10 a.m. until 3 p.m.