

Around Town

BY SAM C. MORRIS

The weather for the past week has been all one could ask for if they like to be outdoors. If the rain comes, as is forecast, and washes the pollen and dust away, then things will be almost perfect. The forecast for the coming weekend looks super.

The parking lot in front of the office has been put into use, and from all indications, it was needed in Raeford. More and more people are using it and it leaves parking places in front of many businesses that haven't been there before.

So if you work in this part of the city, use the lot so that customers can get to the stores.

There is a letter to the editor on page 2 that deals with Cub Scouts and a barbecue supper that is being put on to aid in that cause. Mrs. Lewis Upchurch called and asked that it be mentioned in this column also.

The supper is Thursday night, April 20 at the Gibson School cafeteria, starting at five o'clock and ending at eight. Tickets are now on sale and those in charge would like all tickets to be purchased by Thursday, April 13. The supper is to make money for the scouts and they don't want to purchase more food than is necessary, so by buying your tickets in advance they will know how many to prepare for.

The tickets can be purchased at the Raeford United Methodist Church, or you can call and leave your name and address, and someone will be by to sell you a ticket. Also, tickets are available at the Avery Connell Insurance Agency on West Elwood Avenue.

So purchase a ticket, and go out Thursday, April 20 and not only help the Cub Scouts, but enjoy the fellowship as well.

Mrs. Joe Stanley of the Raeford Junior Woman's Club was by the office Monday and said that the containers at the shopping center were filled with scrap paper. So we are glad to have helped in a small way for this worthy project.

After the paper came out last week and the story about cable TV was being cussed and discussed, I had a call Thursday from the cable office to inform me that all channels were on the air. I didn't check this out, but Monday morning someone came in the office and said that all the channels were off. I can't say one way or the other because when I looked Monday night the TV looked all right to me. Maybe I don't look at the right time.

The public hearing that will be held at the courthouse on Thursday night beginning at 7:30 o'clock concerning the flight of jets over Raeford should be attended by as many citizens as can be there. This could be very important to you and to the value of your property in years to come.

Having lived in Raeford and Hoke County for 60 years I have seen what the military has done to the county and how they keep promises that are made.

I will not go into the details here, but just request that you be present Thursday, April 13 at 7:30 p.m. at the courthouse. Thanks!

The political season is now in full swing and it seems that we have more candidates this year than ever before.

Talk to the candidates, ask them questions, and see what their positions are on the issues, and then pick out your favorite and vote. Unless you vote, the other part is a waste.

So keep Tuesday, May 2 marked in your calendar.

Golf was on TV Sunday, and the expression on Gary Player's face was something to see, as his opponents putted out on the 18th green. Excellent camera work.

Board Transfers School Principals

by Cassie Wasko

The Hoke County Board of Education voted Monday night to hire Hoke County's first female principal and to switch principals of West Hoke and South Hoke schools as part of a series of transfers. The board elected to hire Emma Mims as principal of Raeford Elementary school to replace James Turlington, retiring principal. Superintendent of Schools, Raz Autry recommended to the board that George Wood, principal of South Hoke School, be transferred to West Hoke School, and Woodrow Westall, West Hoke principal, be given the South Hoke post.

Board members sat in silence until Robert L. Gibson, board chairman, asked if further discussion was needed. Bill Howell, board member, reluctantly made the motion to switch the two principals. Although the vote was not audible, Gibson announced the motion had carried.

The board did not disclose the reason for the transfers. Gibson explained that "it could be detrimental to one or the other of the men" if the reason were made known.

"It was on Mr. Autry's recommendation. He felt the two men could function better if they switched places," Gibson said.

"A change of scene would be better for Mr. Wood's image as an administrator," said Autry.

South Hoke School has suffered numerous break-ins and Autry explained the situation had worsened in the last year or two. "Sometimes a change in leadership helps those situations," Autry said.

Both Gibson and Autry deny that the candidacy of Wood's brother-in-law, Richard Coker, for a seat on the school board, had any bearing on the decision to make the transfers now. Gibson said the transfers were not implemented because the campaign was going on.

"It just happened that the campaign was going on at this time. It had no relation (to the campaign) as far as the board was concerned," Gibson said.

Gibson conceded that the board had discussed the situation at South Hoke as much as a year ago, although action was not taken until the Monday night session.

Autry claims he did not "consider political overtones" in making the recommendations to the board.

Westall, current West Hoke principal, said he told Autry this morning, after learning of the transfers, that he would go wherever he could do the most good, but that he was satisfied with the position he now holds.

"I like it out here," he said. "I know the people and I am used to the school."

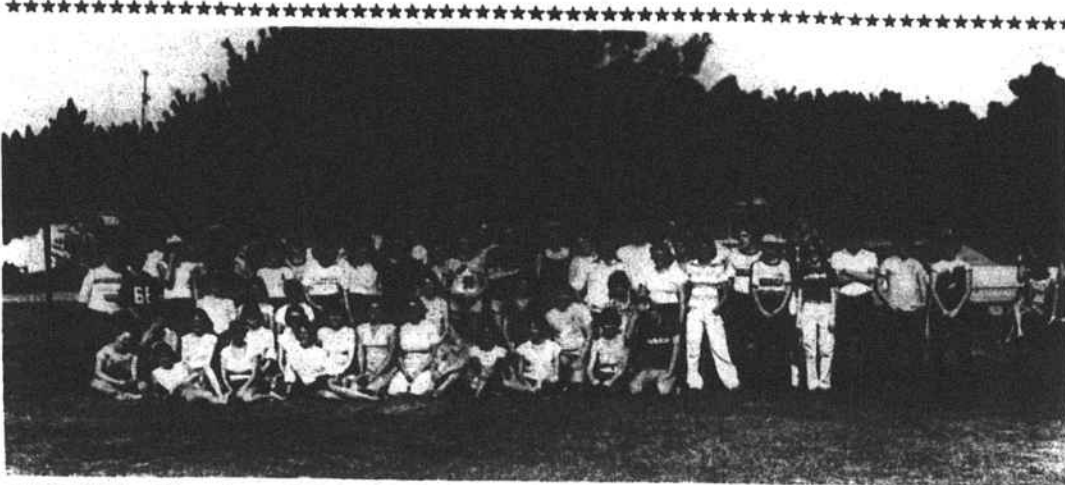
Wood had no statement to make, but Wayne Mills, South Hoke assistant principal said, "I've worked with Mr. Wood for two years. I think he does the best academic job in the county."

Other transfers included moving Mills to the assistant principal post at Raeford Elementary. Hank Richards, currently assistant principal at Raeford Elementary School, was assigned to Scurlock, and Marilyn Semones, a high school math teacher, was given the assistant principal post at South Hoke.

In other business, the school board elected to meet on April 24 to review the budget proposed for the coming year. The new budget is in excess of \$1 million, well over the mark of \$925,000 allotted for school use in last year's budget.

Special projects, including a new heating system for the Gibson building at Hoke High, new roofing for South Hoke Elementary school and brick veneer for portable classrooms at the high school, are the most expensive new items on the budget.

The board also approved the school calendar for next year. Because of problems encountered last year, school will not start for the students until September 5. The 1977-78 school term beginning had to be delayed for one week because of the students working with the tobacco crops, it was explained.



STUDENTS -- Pictured are all of the Wisconsin students and Raeford students that took part in the exchange program. They made many new friends and had new experiences as a result of the program.

Wisconsin Students Enjoy Life In Corn Pone Country

by Cassie Wasko

When they left, clad in shorts and summer wear, the temperature in Raeford was in the 80's. But upon arriving in Wisconsin, they found a chilly 42 degrees awaiting them and the sunshine and warmth of North Carolina were 23 hours behind them.

Thirty-four students, all from Hartford, Wisconsin, came to Raeford last week as part of a domestic exchange program. About 30 Raeford kids spent a week in Wisconsin in February. The students paid \$75 bus fare for the trip and housing was provided by local families.

The visiting kids enjoyed the weather here more than any other part of the trip. Weather in Wisconsin is cold, still, and their summers are shorter. One visitor commented that he didn't see how anyone could get any work done in the summertime, as hot as it is here.

The Wisconsin group chose to sit outside for an interview saying they wanted to soak up as much sun as they could. Raeford student Deborah Jameson said her house guest called upon arriving at home to say that the temperature there was only 42 degrees.

The climax of the visit was a trip to Wrightsville Beach last Friday, which included a tour of the U.S.S. North Carolina.

"They went out at 5 a.m. to watch the sun rise over the ocean," David Holland of Raeford said. Joanne Leach said she told one of the visitors about sharks and other ocean dwellers.

"But she didn't believe me," Joanne said. "I don't know where she thinks they come from!"

All in all the beach excursion was quite an adventure. Upon seeing the inland waterway as they neared the beach, one of the visitors exclaimed, "I thought you said the ocean was big!"

"The water was saltier and the waves were stronger than they had expected," Michael Boyles, a Raeford student said. "They didn't think it was as cold as we did."

Old Photo Identified

Sometimes it pays to run an old picture in the paper.

On March 9 a picture appeared in *The News-Journal* along with a story on the old cotton platform on Main Street, in Raeford where farmers used to unload bales of cotton for weighing.

The picture was taken in 1940 by Robert Gatlin and shows a man on a wagon drawn by a mule and an ox. The wagon is beside the platform.

Last Thursday some people came into the office and identified the man on the wagon as the late William (Bud) McRae of Rt. 1, Red Springs. They were his children and grandchildren.

They said McRae farmed in the area all of his life. Born in 1878 he was 92 when he died in 1971.

In all he had 12 children: James, Surrussia, Plummer, Bessie, Gabe, George, Viola, John, Hezekiah, Susia, Minnie, and Frances. Both Bessie and Frances live on Rt. 1, Red Springs.

"The Raeford kids went swimming in the pool," Deborah Jameson said. "The ocean was too cold for them."

But when the Wisconsin people got sunburned, they jumped in the pool, too, one of the local students reported.

Julie Gibson presented Cindy Thompson with a grit tree when

Cindy arrived in Raeford. Grits had been one of the major topics of conversation among the kids while they visited Wisconsin. One student asked where grits came from and was told that they grow on grit trees. Julie tried to prove that, but the visitors soon caught on and realized the grit tree was really a (See WISCONSIN, Page 9)

Air Zone Hearing Set For Thursday

The stage is set for a lively public hearing in Raeford this Thursday night when local residents will get the chance to tell Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) and military representatives what they think of a military air zone that has been proposed for Hoke County.

The meeting is scheduled for 7:30 p.m., April 13, in the courthouse.

Public sentiment here has been running strongly in opposition to the proposed zone, called a Military Operations Area (MOA). Congressman Charlie Rose sent a letter of protest to the FAA and vowed to start a law suit against the government if necessary to stop the zone from being charted.

Comments on the proposal at various board meetings here indicate that people are afraid excessive noise created by low flying jets will hurt the local economy, particularly local turkey farms, and may have other damaging effects.

The MOA would allow armed military jets to fly at altitudes as

low as 500 feet over Raeford and surrounding farmlands. FAA representatives have described the zone as a safety measure, and military spokesmen have given assurances that air traffic will not increase in the area.

Currently, fighter planes flying ground support missions for infantry troops at Fort Bragg circle in holding patterns over Hoke County. The MOA would concentrate these patterns into a defined area around Raeford. The zone would appear on aviation charts to let pilots unfamiliar with the area know that "something unusual is going on."

Local officials have complained that they have been left in the dark about certain aspects of this proposal and that the FAA has been moving toward a decision on the zone without soliciting public opinion.

Thursday's hearing was scheduled after Raeford Mayor J.K. McNeill, Jr. called the Atlanta office of the FAA and requested it.

Political Forum Kicks Up No Dust

Two political rivals for the office of Hoke County Sheriff seemed to be in perfect agreement Monday night at a meet-the-candidates forum held by the Raeford Lions Club.

Incumbent Sheriff D.M. Barrington and Raeford Police Officer Harvey Young had nothing but kind words for each other. They might have been fraternity brothers.

Barrington fended off the only touchy question from the audience.

Asked by a Fayetteville reporter why Young had been demoted when he served as one of his deputies, Sheriff Barrington said, "I think in an election year that's a loaded question. Mr. Young knows the reasons. There is no need to air it before a group of people and embarrass him...or me."

And that was that. Young appeared perfectly happy with the answer.

Both men made it plain they wanted the office, but neither criticized his opponent. Young went so far as to say he thought Barrington was doing "a pretty good job."

It was a dinner meeting, and no one's digestion was disturbed.

District Attorney Ed Grannis told the gathering he thought his

opponent's idea of a full-time prosecutor's office in Hoke County was "impractical." But his opponent wasn't in the room, or anywhere in the county, as far as anyone knew, so the remark kicked up no dust.

Later a Lions Club member said that through an oversight, Hank Finch, Grannis' rival, was not invited to the forum. A third candidate for sheriff, J. Robert Saunders, was also absent.

Grannis went on to say that he couldn't justify bringing a man over to Hoke County full-time.

"I can work him a lot harder over in Fayetteville and still handle the situation over here," he said. "It's not practical to have someone sit over here, with court not in session, drawing \$15,000 to \$18,000 a year."

As soon as approval comes in, Grannis said a special team of lawyers will be assembled to go after career criminals. He said similar programs elsewhere have proved effective in getting the career criminal off the street.

Barrington said his department has come a long way under his guidance and he would like to expand it further to meet the needs of the county. He would like to see (See FORUM, Page 15)

Raeford Woman Charged In Slaying

A local woman was arrested Friday following the shooting death of a Raeford man, police Chief V.L. Wiggins said.

Gwendalyn V. Nettles, 27, of 325 St. Pauls Drive in Raeford was arrested and charged with murder in the slaying of Laverne Campbell, 21, of Rt. 2 Box 74, Raeford.

Wiggins said officers G.P. Brown and Rodney Collins responded to the 1:25 a.m. call from

the sheriff's department. When they arrived at the home, they found that Campbell had been shot and killed.

Police say they confiscated a 12-gauge shotgun believed to be the murder weapon.

Ms. Nettles was placed under a \$50,000 surety bond in Hoke County District Court Friday. A trial date of April 27 was set.

Cemetery Sales Here No More Than Usual

The City of Raeford hasn't been selling any more cemetery plots than usual in spite of a recommendation last week that the city raise its prices on burial spaces.

The city council was told April 3 that some people are choosing Raeford as a last resting place for their relatives because it's cheaper to bury them here than anywhere else.

"Some people are shopping around," the board was told by Management Improvement Corporation of America (MICA) representative Lew Brown. "They've found that Raeford cemetery plots are cheapest."

You might say they are going for a dirge.

The city is selling individual burial spaces to Raeford resident for \$25 each. The rates are higher for out-of-towners, but the fees here are still the lowest of any town around, Brown said.

He told the board that cemetery

revenues aren't covering costs.

MICA, which serves as a consultant to the city, recommended that the town raise the price on individual plots to \$150 for customers who live inside the city limits. That and other cemetery proposals were taken under advisement by the board.

This week Acting City Manager Bill Sellars said, if anything, cemetery sales have dropped since the price increases were recommended. The cemetery is considered a city service, like police and fire protection and water service, he said. He said he didn't think the town needed to make a profit on the cemetery operation but should come closer to breaking even.

Last week MICA recommended that lot sizes in the cemetery be reduced where possible. If the city closed a short section of Elwood Avenue that runs into the cemetery, 90 more plots could be opened.

(See CEMETERY, Page 15)