

Around Town

BY SAM C. MORRIS

Ken McNeill, chairman of the Hoke County Democratic Executive Committee, has asked me to pass along the following information.

The Democratic County Convention will be held at the Hoke County Courthouse Saturday, April 29, starting at 12 o'clock noon. Delegates to this convention were elected at the various precinct meetings held early this year.

At this meeting delegates to the district and state conventions will be elected and also to be elected will be members of various district and state committees.

Candidates for the many offices that are on the ticket for Tuesday's primary will also be recognized at the convention.

So make your plans now to be at the courthouse at noon Saturday.

Every once and awhile some fishermen from Hoke County head down to Santee in South Carolina to do some rock fishing. This paper has had many pictures of large catches of rock in years past.

Recently Clyde Upchurch, Robert Gatlin, Dick Neeley, Jim Williamson and Joe Upchurch took such a trip. On the return of the group and when asked about what they caught, about all they would say was that Neeley caught the rock.

It seems after a gallant fight and thinking that the rock would get away he was able to land it with the aid of Gatlin.

Now not to show partiality we will run the picture of Neeley's rock in this column so that everyone can see what some fishermen catch that didn't get away.

Below is Neeley's rock:



Mrs. Bob Williams called me Monday night and was trying to locate a man who was by her place recently and wanting a small dog. Mrs. Williams said that she has two small dogs and that the man and his wife saw them and was telling her about losing a small dog and would like to get it replaced.

She said that the man stated he lived in Raeford but traveled a whole lot. He was driving a New Yorker according to Mrs. Williams.

Mrs. Williams has located a small dog and would like to give it to the couple if they would get back in touch with her. If anyone recognizes who this couple is, would they give Mrs. Williams a call?

She did say they were an elderly couple, about 60 years old, but of course I would not want to mention anyone 60 years of age as being elderly. Maybe 20 years ago, but not now.

I hope this will aid in your location of the couple.

On Tuesday night, May 2 The News-Journal will again have its election board on display and if you are interested in the results or can't find anything else to do Tuesday night, come down and join the election party.

With the parking lot now open, you can have a place to park and stand with the others in Elwood Avenue and wait for the counting to begin and end.

There are two separate ballots this year, so it shouldn't take too long for countings.

So join the fun and fellowship next Tuesday.

Don't forget to move the clock up Saturday night or you will be late for church or that golf game, or many other things that people do on Sunday.

Campaigns Enter Final Week

Final Decision Monday

Board Reconsiders Transfers

by Cassie Wasko

The Hoke County Board of Education decided Monday night to delay the transfer of principals that received unanimous approval at the last regular board meeting.

The board's decision April 10 to transfer South Hoke Principal George Wood to West Hoke School and West Hoke Principal Woodrow Westall to South Hoke, brought much public criticism. Following an executive session this week that lasted more than three hours, Board Chairman Robert L. Gibson said that, although no action would be taken in the session, a final determination would be made at a special meeting next Monday night.

The transfer represented a demotion for Wood, whose brother-in-law, Richard Coker, is running for a seat on the school board.

Following the meeting Monday, Gibson said there was some sentiment among board members to rescind the action taken at the last meeting. In an interview Tuesday, he explained that the initial action had been taken for what he thought was a valid reason.

"As it turned out, the interpretation of the board's action that Mr. Wood received from Mr. Autry (school superintendent) was not the same interpretation that Mr. Autry gave the board," he said.

Gibson explained that he plans to vote to rescind the transfer. "I want to take a position on the right thing to do. I think this is the right thing to do," Gibson said. "I am not taking sides against Mr. Autry. I support him 100 percent."

Mina Townsend, board member, said she, too, was ready to rescind her vote. Mrs. Townsend also confirmed rumors that she had advised South Hoke teachers against signing their names to a letter in support of George Wood. She reportedly told the teachers that this was not a good time to send signed letters to the board.

"It is very unfair that Gibson saw fit after the meeting was over to make such a statement to the press about rescinding the action," Dr. Riley Jordan, board member, said. "I don't think it's fair for the press to poll the board members individually. The decision should come collectively at the next session."

When asked if he planned to change his vote, he said, "The decision I made at the time was made in good faith and was what I thought was best for the overall school system. I would have no reason to change my decision now."

Board members Ruth McNair and W.L. Howell could not be reached for comment.

Autry was excused from the closed session for a short period at the request of board member Ruth McNair, Gibson said. Mrs. McNair claimed she had had no contact

with the situation since the meeting two weeks ago. It was at her request that the decision was delayed until next Monday. She told the board that she needed time to consider the matter, Gibson said.

Gibson also confirmed rumors alluding to a private letter received by board members from Autry last weekend. He said Autry told in the letter of his intention to retire when his current four-year contract expires June 30, 1979.

Autry had no comment to make on the possibility of the principal switch being reversed.

In other business, Autry recommended to the board that Eleanor Gentry be placed in the position of Hoke High School guidance counselor to replace Shirley Gibson, who has resigned effective the end of this school year. The motion carried by a vote of three to one, with Mrs. Townsend voting no.

Autry then recommended to the board that Katrina Locklear, a reading teacher at South Hoke, be given Mrs. Gentry's position at the high school.

"This has been a goal of the board...concentration on reading in grades one through three. Katrina has made substantial contributions to the reading program. I hate to see us transfer her to a temporary CETA position," Gibson said.

Autry explained that the position Mrs. Gentry now holds is funded by CETA and funding for the position could run out.

Jordan said it would not be an advancement for Ms. Locklear. Autry withdrew his recommendation to transfer her before a vote was taken.

Action on the budget was delayed until next Monday night.

Autry recommended to the board

that a structural engineer be hired on an hourly wage to look into the roofing situation at South Hoke. The board approved the recommendation.

The board will meet again

Monday night in a special session to make a final decision on the transfer of principals and to discuss the budget. The meeting will be at 7 p.m. in the Board of Education building.

Rose Asks Pentagon To Drop MOA Plans

Seventh District Congressman Charlie Rose is continuing efforts to keep a Military Operations Area (MOA) from being chartered in Hoke County.

It was disclosed this week that the congressman has written a letter to the Pentagon requesting that the proposal be dropped.

A hearing was held here April 13 at which many residents expressed their opposition to the zone. Military and Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) spokesman have stated repeatedly that the zone is a safety measure designed to alert private pilots to unusual activity in the area.

For years jet fighters flying ground support missions for troops at Fort Bragg have circled in holding patterns over Hoke County.

Local residents fear the zone might mean an increase in activity and noise, a situation which they say could hurt the local economy.

The text of Congressman Rose's letter to the Pentagon is as follows: **The Honorable John C. Stetson, Secretary, Department of the Air Force, The Pentagon, Washington, D.C.**

Dear Mr. Secretary:
There is a situation in my 7th Congressional District of North Carolina that causes me great concern, and I would like to enlist your aid in reaching an equitable

solution.

The XVIIIth Airborne Corps at Fort Bragg, North Carolina has proposed a Military Operations Area north and south of Restricted Area R-5311. This would legitimize operations of their fighter aircraft at speeds up to 500 miles per hour at altitudes from 500 to 6,000 feet.

This MOA would affect the airspace over the town of Raeford and part of Hoke County. Understandably, the residents do not relish the thought of jets screaming overhead at low altitudes. In addition to the noise and ever-present danger of an accident, any civilian air traffic in this area would receive second priority.

Mr. Secretary, I urge you to do everything possible within the power of your office to have this proposal dropped. Hoke County has never been properly reimbursed for the property it ceded for the Fort Bragg Military Reservation, and I feel that to establish this MOA would be too much to ask the people of Raeford and Hoke County bear. Thank you for your assistance in this matter.

The FAA has promised local officials that no action will be taken on the zone until after the Army completes an environmental impact statement about the effects the MOA will have on Hoke County. Copies of the report are to be made available to the public.

Raeford Businessman Accompanies Hunt On Foreign Trade Mission

by Charles Blackburn

When the governor went abroad on an industry hunting trip, it was just an excuse to do some high living in the glittering capitals of Europe, right? Dress fit to kill, hobnob with royalty, eat a lot of rich food that folks back home never heard of. That was the real goal of the trip, wasn't it?

"I worked harder on that trip than I do at home," Alfred K. Leach said this week, putting such rumors to rest.

Leach, an executive with Farm Chemical in Raeford, was one of 15 North Carolina businessmen who accompanied Governor James Hunt on a trip to Germany, Switzerland, Israel and England to lure industry to the Tar Heel State.

"We covered a lot of miles in two weeks," he said in his office here. "It was very tiring, but it was also very interesting."

There wasn't much time for sightseeing.

"Our schedule was from 7 in the morning to 9 or 10 at night, with only a couple of free evenings or afternoons," he said.

Leach said he got a special invitation from the governor to represent agri-business on the trip. But the invitation was the BYOB kind. Leach said the other businessmen had to pay their own way. About 15 state government representatives also went on the tour, he said.

"The delegation was well received wherever it went," Leach said. "The Governor made formal addresses, and we met with U.S. Ambassadors. Governor Hunt did an excellent sales job for North Carolina. People were highly impressed with him. I think the state will reap benefits from this trip for years to come."

Leach said foreign industry is

attracted to the United States because it represents such a large market. Also, land prices here are much cheaper than they are abroad.

"In Switzerland, for example, we were told that an acre of farmland costs between 58,000 and 110,000, if you can find it," Leach said. "There is a shortage of good industrial sites there."

In selling North Carolina to foreign companies, he said the delegation emphasized the ideal climate here, the reasonable tax rate, and the low percentage of work stoppages due to strikes. When Hunt told businessmen North Carolina operates within a balanced budget, "there was a cheer."

"According to national and international surveys, North Carolina is second in the United States only to California as an ideal place for locating industry," Leach said. "As Governor Hunt told them, who wants to go to California?"

"But the big thing I learned from the trip was, where industries locate depends on the attitude of the community more so than the natural habitat," he said. "Industries want to go where they're wanted."

During his travels, Leach said he noticed a number of differences between the countries he visited and the United States. For one thing, he said Europeans don't litter.

"The communities are exceptionally clean," he said. "They don't waste anything. They don't have the number of paper products we have. Instead, they use linen and other items they can use more than once."

Describing the Middle Eastern leg of the journey, Leach said the citizens of Israel go heavily armed. Two machine guns were stationed outside the hotel in Jerusalem where the delegates stayed, he said.

(See MISSION, Page 12)

Officials Review Applications

The Raeford City Council met in a special session Monday to consider applications for the position of city manager. City officials say they have received upwards of 40 applications for the job.

The position was vacated in March by Robert Drumwright, who had served as city manager since February of 1976. At the time, Drumwright said he was resigning because he was ready for a change. The 29-year-old Alamance County native said he might further his education. He is a graduate of the School of Business at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

Bill Sellars, city planning and zoning officer, has been serving as city manager until a new one can be hired.

The council is now reviewing the applications and will contact five applicants for interviews. The city's new manager will be elected from among the five, city officials said.



GOES ON TRADE MISSION -- Raeford businessman A.K. Leach talked this week about the trade mission he participated in recently with N.C. Governor James Hunt. The trip included visits to Germany, Switzerland, Israel and England.

Politicians have geared up for the final week of campaigning before the primary next Tuesday.

Local offices up for election in the May 2 primary include three seats on the Hoke Board of County Commissioners, the office of sheriff and clerk of court, and Hoke voters will also elect a county coroner.

No Republicans are running in the primary, said Rose Sturgeon, supervisor of elections.

This is unusual, Mrs. Sturgeon said, as usually the local Republicans are represented in at least one race. The lack of Republican opposition virtually assures the winners of the primary race the position they seek.

Commission

In the race for county commissioner, with only three positions available and seven candidates, a run-off could occur if the three top vote-getters do not attain a majority vote. Mrs. Sturgeon said. In order to determine the majority vote, the total number of votes will be added and then divided by two. Candidates who get more votes than this amount will have a majority.

Candidates for the 51,500-per-year seats include incumbent Commissioner J.A. Hunt, 36, owner of a trucking company and grocery store. Hunt will be seeking his second 4-year term on the board.

John Balfour, 45, a Hoke County farmer and current board chairman, is running for his fourth term in office. The third incumbent whose seat is up for election this year, Ralph Barnhart, will not seek re-election.

Wesley Miller, 42, a Carolina Galvanizing employee, will be making his first bid for office. Miller has lived in Hoke County for eight years. Also new to the political scene is Clinton McLaughlin, 38, semi-retired.

Female auto mechanic Mabel Riley, 61, a familiar face on the political scene, will make a bid for a seat on the board. Robert L. Doby, 43, owner and operator of Doby's Funeral Home, will be on the ballot for his first try for public office.

Younger Sneed, manager of Hoke Auto, will also be vying for a seat on the board.

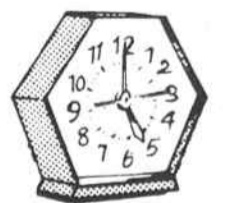
Sheriff

Three candidates will be on the ballot for the office of sheriff. Incumbent Sheriff David M. Barrington, 44, will be seeking his fifth four-year term as sheriff. Barrington has worked in law enforcement for 22 years. This year's race represents the first opposition he has had in some time.

Also seeking the \$15,600-per-year position is Harvey Young, 53, a Raeford police detective. Young resigned as Barrington's deputy two years ago when he was faced with a demotion. He has lived in Hoke County since 1951. Young has worked in law enforcement for 17 years and says he and Barrington are on good terms.

The third candidate, J. Robert Saunders, 35, a Hoke County native, was employed by Summerfield until its closing last February.

(See CAMPAIGNS, Page 12)



Time Change This Sunday

Daylight Savings Time goes into effect for most of the nation this coming Sunday, April 30, at 2 a.m.

If you want to be in step with the rest of the community, turn your clocks ahead one hour at 2 a.m. Sunday. Just turn the hands forward an hour when you go to bed Saturday night if you don't plan to stay up for the blessed event.

We won't go back to honest time until the last Sunday in October, so unless you turn your clocks ahead this weekend, you're going to be an hour late for everything for six months.