

Around Town

BY SAM C. MORRIS

It will be interesting to look at the rain chart for June. When you talk to some people they will say it has rained too much, and then in a few days they will say it is dry and rain is needed. So the heavy rains are soon dried up by the hot sun which has been around for the last week or so.

The forecast for the upcoming weekend gives the hopes of a little rain, but the temperatures are forecast for the ninety degree mark.

The city council met Monday night and it was a meeting without any visitors in the council room. It seems that most folks were across the street at the courthouse attending the budget hearing of the county commissioners.

It seems that since the voting in California on Proposition 13, that the newspapers and radio-TV news are filled with tax revolts or talks of such in about every state in the union. There are two sides to every issue, but this one; that is taxes, seem to be leaning heavily toward the cut side.

I believe taxes can be cut or that the line can be held in most counties and cities, but the people that are leading these protests must realize that some services must be cut. Of course, we all want anything cut that will not affect most personally.

So if the commissioners hold the line, don't be back in six months fussing about services.

When a writer doesn't have anything in mind to write about, he will usually go out and try to find something, or will talk to someone to get an idea for a story or item. Tuesday morning before I started writing this column I went down to a local restaurant to pick up some news from the early morning coffee drinkers.

Most of the time my visit with the group comes on Saturday mornings and they are always commenting on "what are you doing up this early", or words to that effect. So, much to my surprise Tuesday morning when I walked in the restaurant, only John Hair and Tommy Teal were around. Since this column had to be written and turned in by eight o'clock it was impossible to wait around for the people that are always wanting to know about my early rising.

I will not call any names, but the head table wasn't full when I left at 6:30.

The 'over 35 softball league' is now going strong and most of the players are walking better after a game or two and the soreness is finally leaving the old muscles.

It seems that the McLaughlin Chapel and the First Baptist teams got a head start on the Presbyterians and Methodists. But from all reports, it seems that the last two mentioned are improving. I heard a player say Tuesday morning that they played four innings instead of the minimum three Monday night before they were behind by 10 runs which stops the game.

Now if this keeps up and the season lasts long enough, this team may get in a full seven inning game. Best of luck and keep using the linement!

Sam Snead of Red Springs was by the office this week and was telling me that a group of men that left here in September of 1940 for the army were going to have a meeting to try and get this group together again. This is the old Battery 'F' group that went to Fort Moultrie, S.C.

If you are around and would like to help with the plans, be at the Family Restaurant Wednesday night, June 28 at 7:00 p.m. This will be a Dutch affair and for further information, contact Snead or Graham Clark.

The following letter is self-explanatory:

Dear Mr. Morris,

On behalf of the Hoke County (See AROUND TOWN, Page 15)

Citizens Oppose Tax Hike

by Charles Blackburn

Rose Talks About Tax Revolt, MOA At Kiwanis Club Meeting

California's Proposition 13 and a military air zone proposed for Hoke County were among topics discussed by Seventh District Congressman Charles Rose at a meeting last Thursday of the Raeford Kiwanis Club.

"The General at Fort Bragg is not the problem," Rose told the audience, in reference to the Military Operations Area (MOA). "The problem lies with the Air Force and the FAA. They are mulling over a second proposal, and when we get more details on the impact of the zone, we'll see what, if anything, we can live with and what we want to change."

It has been a little over six months since Hoke County residents learned of military and FAA (Federal Aviation Administration) intentions to chart an air zone in the skies over Raeford and surrounding farmlands.

For years Air Force jets flying ground support missions for infantry troops at nearby Fort Bragg have circled in holding patterns over Hoke County. A new FAA order restricts high speed fighters from flying below 10,000 feet unless they operate in designated airspace, such as an MOA.

The Army has said air support is essential if ground troops at Bragg are to maintain combat readiness.

The MOA would concentrate the aircraft holding patterns into a defined area around Raeford. The zone itself would appear on aviation charts to let pilots unfamiliar with the area know to be on the lookout for military air traffic.

Military and FAA spokesmen have called the zone a safety measure and have said repeatedly that it will not have any adverse impact on the area. However, in spite of such assurances, many local residents are suspicious of the zone. They fear military activity in the area will increase once the MOA is established and the resulting noise from jet aircraft will hurt the local economy.

Late last month it was announced that officials were working on modifications of the Hoke County MOA, modifications which included establishing an access corridor to Raeford Airport, raising the MOA floor over the airport to an altitude that will provide for adequate operations and traffic patterns, and establishing an MOA floor of 3,000 feet over the City of Raeford.

Congressman Rose said he told Gen. Volney Warner, Fort Bragg commander, the feeling in Hoke is that the county has suffered more than it has gained by Fort Bragg. When Fort Bragg was formed in the 1920's, Hoke County lost 92,000 acres to the reservation.

"We don't want any more encroachment on Hoke County

Manager Withdraws Resignation

Hoke County Manager James Martin officially withdrew his resignation Monday night at the regular meeting of the board of commissioners. Martin submitted his resignation May 15, saying that he wanted to go back into accounting. He was an accountant in the Cumberland County Finance Department before assuming his post here in mid-January.

"Since my resignation several weeks ago, the Board and several others have requested that I reconsider my decision to resign," he said in a letter to the board.

"I have decided to withdraw my resignation if you will allow me to do so.

"I have enjoyed working with you and look forward to working with you in the future," Martin said.

The county manager's resignation had not been officially accepted by the board, according to Chairman John Balfour. The commissioners voted Monday night to let him withdraw it.



ROSE SPEAKS HERE--Seventh District Congressman Charlie Rose assured members of the Raeford Kiwanis Club last Thursday that he will continue his efforts to make certain a Military Operations Area proposed for Hoke County will not adversely affect the economy. Speaking at the club's regular dinner meeting, the congressman also addressed the issue of California's Proposition 13, saying that it illustrated the gap which exists between the voters and their elected officials. Rose was introduced by former Democratic Party Chairman Sam C. Morris, who invited him to speak to the club.

airspace in any way which would endanger the future growth or peace of the area," Rose said he told the general.

Gen. Warner agreed with him, he said. Asked by *The News-Journal* what could be done to stop the MOA if it were found to have harmful effects on the county, Rose said:

"We haven't gotten the Senate or the White House involved in it yet. I hope and believe we can work it out far short of any action like federal court. I'm going to be conferring with the Secretary of the Army and the FAA until we can solve this problem."

Turning to California's tax revolt, Rose said Proposition 13, which reduced property taxes in that state to 1975 levels, is an indication of how far apart the government and the people have grown.

"Preachers would say we have lost our sense of community, and they are right," the Congressman said. "We used to be a nation of small towns. Now we've gotten so large and factionalized we don't talk to each other any more. The communication gaps are getting wider and wider. People are very frustrated about the effectiveness of the federal government."

For all his good intentions,

President Carter's two appearances on television in a cardigan sweater didn't convince people that there was a true and lasting energy crisis in America, Rose said.

"If people aren't convinced that a problem exists, they aren't likely to seek solution," Rose pointed out. "Most problems in the country are in the category of the energy crisis. We don't agree what the problem is. We have allowed too many groups to ask the government to do too much for them. The government offers to solve all kinds of problems that most don't even consider problems. The result is an ever-enlarging bureaucracy that seems less and less able to solve problems."

It was this kind of frustration that led Californians to begin the "initiative process" whereby, with a required number of signatures, the voters could put legislation on the ballot.

"I believe many other parts of the country will do the same thing because they are afraid of the California revolt," Rose said. "But there is another revolt more serious than Proposition 13. And that is the federal income tax revolt. People are taking more and more advantage of loopholes to avoid income tax payment. Few IRS

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Edwards Critical Of Salary

by Cassie Wasko

Upchurch Junior High Principal Alan Edwards has expressed criticism of the Hoke Board of Education's salary and supplement pay scale set forth in the recently-approved school budget for 1978-79.

Edwards claims that as a result of his transfer to the junior high, he has suffered a salary loss of approximately \$4,264.

"The supplement and salary during the 1977-79 and 1978-89 school years is not based on the understanding I had from the board of education that I would be transferred to Upchurch Junior High with no loss of pay," Edwards said. "It concerns me and mandates that I again consider other opportunities as they are offered."

Edwards' supplement of \$2,200 that he has received every year of his employment here was cut to \$1,500 for the coming school year.

He was transferred from the position of high school principal to the junior high post last year amid

City Budget

The Raeford City Council approved the city budget Monday night with no increase in the tax rate. Details on the budget will appear in next week's *News-Journal*.

much controversy. Two citizens groups, the P.T.A. and Citizens in support of Education in Hoke County, sprang forth as a result of the public's discontent over the board's actions.

The board originally voted to dismiss Edwards whom they then believed to be a non-tenured employee, but the action was abated when it was learned that through prior positions at other schools, Edwards was, in fact, a tenured teacher, therefore not subject to dismissal.

According to state law, Edwards had to be paid the same salary last year as he had received at the high school, although Superintendent of Schools, Raz G. Autry, says that after a period of one year, his salary can be dropped to the pay level for the junior high post. Edwards contends that when the board transferred him, he was guaranteed no salary loss.

According to records at the board office, Edwards was paid \$1,700 per month for the year 1976-77 plus a \$2,200 supplement, equalling \$3,900 for the year.

"The pay for Alan at Upchurch worked out to \$1,780 per month, but we added another \$19 to make his pay equal to the previous year," Autry said. Edwards was not given the six percent increase awarded the other principals by the state last year.

Over the weekend, Hoke County residents Rev. P.O. Lee and Hugh Lowe went about spreading the alarm, but unlike a previous revolution, they weren't warning their neighbors of imminent invasion. The cry this time was: "The taxes are coming!"

"I went to every store in town and from house to house and asked people if they wanted a tax increase and they said no," the 81-year-old retired minister told the Hoke County Board of Commissioners at a budget hearing Monday night. "I've had it. Not only have I had it, but all these people in Hoke County have had it, too."

Revolution was in the air. Rev. Lee got a round of applause from the crowd as he told the board he was tired of tightening his belt to meet rising taxes. His oratory was inspired. Lowe presented the board petitions with 662 signatures opposing a county tax hike.

About 85 people attending the hearing in the courthouse, and those who spoke were clearly against a proposed five cent increase in the property tax rate called for in the county budget.

The budget has not been approved. The commissioners were expected to make cuts in it Thursday during another budget session. The hearing Monday night was to get public opinion on county spending.

A seven percent cost of living increase for county workers is included in the tentative budget, which calls for general fund expenditures in excess of \$3.49 million. It represents a \$256,691 increase over last year's budget. (County Manager James Martin said local taxes make up \$1.5 million of the budget, with the rest coming from the federal government.)

To cover the increase, the budget calls for a hike in the property tax rate from 92 cents per \$100 evaluation to 97 cents per \$100.

"The general consensus in my neighborhood is that people are violently opposed to an increase," one speaker said. "The taxes are especially hard on people who are living on fixed incomes."

Although no one mentioned it at the meeting, it was obvious that California's Proposition 13 was very much on the minds of those assembled. Two weeks ago Californians voted overwhelmingly to cut their own property taxes back to 1975 levels. The passage of Proposition 13, as the legislation was called, has been hailed as the beginning of a taxpayer's revolt.

At the local hearing, Hugh Lowe pointed out that county property taxes have gone up every year since 1973 when the rate was 80 cents per \$100. He said property taxes had increased 20 percent here in the last four years.

Superintendent Raz Autry warned that if the school budget were cut it would mean eliminating the music program in the schools.

"You sound like the politicians in California who say they are going to cut what the people don't want cut instead of cutting at the top where they could," Rev. Lee told him.

"There's not one department in the county that can't be cut," commissioner-elect Mabel Riley told the superintendent. "We don't have to have new fences at the schools every year. I've driven by and seen flood lights burning at the schools all night. I'm convinced every department could be streamlined without a loss of services... and that includes social services."

County Manager James Martin went over the proposed budget item by item, comparing it with last year's figures, and members of the audience questioned the increases. One speaker said a seven percent pay increase for county employees was "totally out of line with federal and state policy." He said the state is giving a six percent increase, with the federal wage increase coming in below five percent.

Hoke County Director of Social Services Ben Niblock pointed out that state and federal employees will get merit raises in addition to the cost of living increase.

When one member of the audience noted that Durham and Wake counties are holding the line at 87 and 83 cents per \$100 respectively, Commission Chairman John Balfour replied that those counties have larger tax bases than Hoke.

"They have industries we don't have," he said. "We're a small county and have to provide the same services as a large county."

The chairman said the turnout Monday night was the best he'd seen for a budget hearing in all his 14 years on the board.

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time and extra hours that they put in.

Classroom teachers received only a \$100 supplement this year, although they have received as much as \$200 in past years.

"The extra \$100 came from

(See EDWARDS, Page 14)

Turlington Day Set For June 30

The Hoke County Board of Education adopted a resolution renaming Raeford Elementary School the J.W. Turlington School in a special called session Monday night.

Board members Ruth McNair, R.L. Gibson and W.L. Howell were present and voted unanimously to adopt the resolution.

June 30 has been named J.W. Turlington day by the Hoke Chamber of Commerce, the Hoke Board of Education and the Kiwanis Club. Those organizations will sponsor a reception honoring Turlington at the Raeford Elementary School lunchroom from 5-7 p.m. The public is invited to attend.

At 8 p.m. at the Captain's Place, (See TURLINGTON, Page 15)