

## At Commissioners' Meeting

# 4 To RHA; Land Value Schedule Viewed

### Around Town

BY SAM C. MORRIS

The weather has been nice for the past weekend and the cool mornings suit me fine. The forecast is almost perfect for the remainder of the week.

Bob Harris was by the office last week and was commenting on the item in this column concerning George Brett and his hitting .400. Bob, who was a professional baseball player and later was an umpire, said he didn't think anyone would hit .400 again for a season.

He based his opinion on the fact that now a manager expects a pitcher to go all out from the first pitch and that when he tires, a fresh relief pitcher from the bullpen will come to the mound. There are very few pitchers who finish a game these days, Harris said, and a hitter never gets a pitcher that is tired like some years ago.

This sounds like Bob knows what he is talking about, because Brett didn't make the magic number.

Another item that brought forth comment was concerning the United Fund. Kay Thomas was in this week and stated that she was president of the organization and that as soon as a campaign chairman could be found, the drive would get started.

I hope it is not too late, but with all the other drives going on, it doesn't look good for the United Fund. In fact, with all the drives we have now, it kills the purpose of the Fund.

A letter appears on the editorial page in answer to the item a couple of weeks ago about the working of prisoners. The letter is from Joe Holt, former employee of *The News-Journal*, and now a security guard at the McCain Prison Unit.

Joe explains the situation very well and we think everyone should read the letter.

The Hoke County Chapter of Ducks Unlimited had its 1st annual banquet Wednesday night. The organization has received many contributions and asked that I acknowledge them in this column.

They are as follows: Dickson Press, Raeford Kwik Print, Dr. Lawrence Bullard, Grocery Mart, Raeford Hardware, Hoke Auto Company, McLaughlin Company, Home Food Super Market, Parker Equipment Company, Inverleith Farms, J.H. "Buddy" Blue, Mrs. Yvonne Snead, Raeford Cleaners & Launderers, A - Growing Concern, Western Auto of Raeford, Raeford Aviation, Inc., Travelers Service Station of Red Springs, Economy Food Center, Teal Oil Company, Country Fair Mobile Homes.

Also Tiger Mobile Homes, Kinlaw's Jewelry, Bait & Tackle Shop, Auto Parts & Equipment, Pittard & Perry, Raeford Savings & Loan, Raeford Oil Company, Carolina Turf Company, McDonald's Tire Service, Gentry's Tire Service, Farm Chemical Company, Roy Wood Spraying Service, Howell Drug Company, W S H B, Hoke Drug Company, Burlington Industries, DeVane Auction & Realty, Theresa's, The House of Raeford, Faberge.

The Battery 'F' reunion was held this past weekend at the Blockade Runner in Wrightsville Beach and a large number of former members attended.

I believe that this was the best reunion so far, and that each year that the members seem to enjoy seeing one another more and more. Of course, it seems that new faces show up that haven't been before, and that makes it all the more enjoyable. This year seven new

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### Vance Withdrawing From Operation

## City To Ask County To Aid With Airport

The Raeford City Council Monday night adopted a motion to ask Hoke County government participation in to make the Raeford Airport a city-county operation, with city and county sharing the expenses, not just the city.

The action was taken after the council was informed by Herbert G. Vance by letter that his Vance Aircraft Sales, Inc., as of October 31 "will cease all operations on the Raeford Municipal Airport."

Vance, who appeared before the council Monday night, says in his letter:

"This decision has been made for a number of reasons: the economy, continued failure of airport growth, failure of any expansion programs to be initiated. Continued negative growth and disinterest of both city and county governments make it impossible to operate a full service fixed base operation at any level of profit margin and therefore limits the services that should be provided."

A.J. Furches, Vance's chief mechanic, will provide maintenance services at the airport, by a month-by-month lease of the hangar by the authority of the City Council. The council adopted a motion on the lease on a recommendation Vance makes in his letter.

Gene Thacker, like Vance an airport fixed base operator, who runs a sports parachute program, told the council, "I think the county should share in the expense" of operating the airport. He added that what air traffic the Raeford Airport gets "has reasons for coming to Raeford," since the

airport is off the main lines of east-west and north-south air travel. Thacker also said that, for his part, he has no problems, is happy and isn't planning to move.

Vance in his appearance at the meeting told the council the airport is going to have to be a city-county operation and is going to have to grow, if it is going to amount to anything.

He said it won't grow until it is expanded physically. The airport needs more land and an additional hangar, he said.

Councilman Bob Gentry told Vance "I take offense" to the word "disinterest" in the letter. "It's not 'disinterest,'" he added, referring to the city's part. He said that the city hasn't done all that has to be done but it's not disinterested in the airport.

Vance replied, "The airport needs more attention," adding that it's not paying now because it doesn't have land to expand.

Of the city government, he said, "I say you're not working hard enough." More land has to be added, "that's the only way to grow," Vance said. He predicted that in two years the city won't be able to expand because houses will be built on what is available for expansion of the airport.

He also told the council if the airport had the storage space it would get 30 to 50 private aircraft out of Fayetteville.

To this Gentry asked, "Do we want Fayetteville traffic?"

Vance replied that it would mean more profit for the airport operator, and consequently more money in taxes for the city and county.

Matthews said the airport is needed for industrial development, that one of the first questions the Faberge, Inc., representatives asked when a Raeford site was being considered for the new Faberge plant was: does the area have an airport? Earl Fowler, manager of the Raeford-Hoke County Chamber of Commerce, told the council if the airport hadn't existed, the Faberge plant wouldn't be here. Fowler appeared at the meeting to ask the council to have downtown revitalization consultant Peter Batchelor contacted to get technical help in developing the off-street parking project in the downtown area. The council complied with the request, adopting a motion to arrange for Batchelor to work with Fowler and his Downtown Revitalization Committee.

### Raeford Mayor 'Doing Fine' In Hospital

Raeford Mayor John K. McNeill, Jr., admitted to Rex Hospital in Raleigh Friday after having chest pains Thursday and Friday, was "doing fine" Monday, City Manager Ron Matthews said Monday night.

He quoted the mayor in a telephone conversation Monday as saying he was to be given more tests and hopes to get out of the hospital in a few days.

Mayor Pro Tem Graham Clark presided over the City Council's regular meeting for October Monday night in McNeill's place.

### County Board Chairman In Sunday Ceremony

# County Building Dedicated To Lester

The new County Office Building became the T.B. Lester, Jr., Building Sunday afternoon.

It was dedicated formally by John Balfour, Jr., chairman of the Board of Hoke County Commissioners, in honor of the late Thomas Benton Lester, Jr., the first Hoke County manager.

The 12,783-square-foot building on South Magnolia Street was completed in September 1975.

The dedication was made at a program in front of the building. It was attended by members of Mr. Lester's family, county officials, county employees, friends of the Lesters and members of their families, and private citizens. A tour of the building and serving of refreshments in the building followed the dedication.

A plaque to Mr. Lester was installed on the wall facing the main doors of the building.

In the guest address, former County Attorney Charles Hostetler described Mr. Lester's service to the county, which started on February 16, 1971, and ended only when he died, on November 8, 1977. Mr. Lester served as county manager his last 11 years, immediately after the county manager

form of government was adopted.

Hostetler told the audience that Mr. Lester's special talent was his ability to work with others. He wasn't the "boss," he said, but "the man in charge, the one you called on when you needed help. Hostetler said Mr. Lester also worked without noticing the clock and could be seen in his office at night because Mr. Lester would say, he had work to catch up on.

Balfour presented Mr. Lester's wife with a framed copy of the resolution adopted by the commissioners earlier this year naming the building in honor of Mr. Lester. At the rostrum with Mr. Lester on this occasion were the Lester's daughter and son-in-law Jack and Andrea Scarborough and their son, Tom of Raeford; Mr. Lester's uncle, John Blount of Macon, Ga.; and Mr. Lester's cousin, Billy Lester and Billy Lester's wife, Carolyn, and their daughter Chris.

The Rev. Kelly J. Wilson, pastor of Raeford United Methodist Church gave the invocation at the opening of the program, and Dr. John C. Ropp, pastor of Raeford Presbyterian Church, gave the benediction.

In reference to the airport situation, Matthews told the council that viable airports he has seen elsewhere each has an airport commission. He said the town needs an active airport commission to run the airport. Matthews said this after telling the council the town needs help in bearing the burden of the airport operation.

He recommended a blue-ribbon commission to work with the city and county managers to look into the airport and see what direction is wanted for the airport and what its needs are. He also said "we need to" talk with the county to see whether it will make a commitment regarding the airport.

Matthews also recommended that Furches be allowed to lease the hangar from the city.

**HOUSING AUTHORITY**  
In other business, the council adopted a resolution authorizing the county-wide operation of the Raeford Housing Authority and expanding the authority to nine members. Five are to be city residents and four will be residents of areas in the county.

The five city members were to

have been appointed Monday night by Mayor John K. McNeill, Jr., but the action had to be postponed till the mayor returns from Rex Hospital. (See separate story).

The establishment of joint city-county housing authorities was authorized by an act of the General Assembly in its session of the past summer. The expansion was wanted for the Raeford Housing Authority so it could have jurisdiction over the entire county in connection with the proposed federal housing project for low-income Hoke County people.

The Board of Hoke County Commissioners appointed the four county members at its October meeting Monday morning.

**JOINT PLANNER**  
The council adopted a motion authorizing the city manager to proceed with drawing up a plan and a budget with the county manager to provide for a joint city-county planner.

Matthews said a budget of \$20,000 annually, covering all expenses of the planning offices, was

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### Wife Appeals

## 12-15 Years Given In Locklear Death

Constance Locklear, 40, of 308 W. Eighth Ave., Raeford, was convicted September 29 of voluntary manslaughter and sentenced October 1 to 12 to 15 years by Hoke County Superior Court Judge Robert H. Hobgood of Louisburg.

She gave notice of appeal to the State Court of Appeals, and, on grounds she is indigent, the judge appointed John Britt as her counsel to prosecute the appeal.

Mrs. Locklear had pleaded innocent to a charge of second-degree murder in the shooting of her husband, Henry Locklear, 32, January 30 with a .22 caliber rifle.

The court was informed during the jury trial that the couple had been separated several months when the shooting occurred at their home about 9 a.m. Locklear, shot in the head, died about 12 hours in Cape Fear Valley Hospital in

Fayetteville, reportedly of complications from the wound.

Betty Dial, 26, testified September 29 that she and Locklear had been living together since July. She said they met at the Lion's Lounge on N.C. 211 that month while they were working there. She also told the court Locklear and his wife on the morning of the shooting had argued about Locklear's relationship with Betty Dial.

Mrs. Locklear was charged after the shooting with assault with a deadly weapon with intent to kill, but the charge was changed to second-degree murder after Locklear died. She was freed under \$15,000 bond for appearance for the preliminary hearing in Hoke County District Court earlier this year. Mrs. Locklear was bound over for grand jury action after Judge Joseph E. Dupree found probable cause for the charge.

The proposed schedule shows open, cultivated or pasture land values would range from \$375 per acre land classified as poor and on a private, dirt road, to \$1,075 for good land on a hard-surface road.

The proposed schedule defines woods land as land capable of producing woods growth and says the classification will be determined by the producing capability of the land as well as the type of road the tract is adjacent to. The size and shape of tracts may cause

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Mrs. Lester receives commissioners' resolution from John Balfour at Sunday's dedication. L-R. John Blount, Mr. and Mrs. Scarborough and son Tom, Mrs. Lester, Balfour, and Mr. and Mrs. Billy Lester, and their daughter Chris.