

Downtown Revitalization

Grant Details Discussed At Hearing

Around Town

BY SAM C. MORRIS

The weather over the past weekend was perfect and I don't believe anyone could complain. The long range forecast is for the weather to get colder, but not so cold it will not be pleasant in the daytime.

Most of the farmers should have soybeans in by this time, so maybe it would help if it rained a little. According to Robert Gatlin, we need some rain because we have not had the normal rainfall this year. He didn't say how much we have had this year, but we usually get between 50 to 60 inches a year.

Of course some of the help here at the office are looking for a white Christmas. It sounds good, but I had rather hear Bing Crosby sing it, than see it on the ground.

Sunday, December 7th, was Pearl Harbor day. It was 39 years ago last Sunday that the attack was launched on Pearl Harbor and brought the United States into war. I was home that day from Fort Scriven, Ga. and can still remember hearing about the attack and getting the news for all soldiers to report back to camps.

Now things don't look so good this December, as the Russians are getting ready to invade Poland. It was the invasion of Poland in the 30s that started World War II. Let's hope that things can be worked out and that peace will prevail.

Last week another visitor came by the office that I hadn't seen in several years. It was Lester Seals of Austin, Texas. Lester was born in Hoke County and finished high school here just before the National Guard was called out in 1940. He went with the guard September 16, 1940 to Fort Moultrie, S.C.

Seals and I went to OCS and then to Fort Crockett, Texas where we separated in 1944. He married a Texas girl and has lived in Texas since his separation from the service. He is now working with the Disaster Agency for the State of Texas. It was good to see and talk with him again.

Don't forget that since the newspaper will come out early Christmas week we must take the door scenes for the Christmas section on Thursday and Friday, December 11 & 12. So if you have a pretty door, give us a call and our photographer will try and get by your house. Give us your name and address so we won't get the pictures crossed as sometimes happens.

The following letter was in with a change of address of a former couple that were very good citizens while they lived in Raeford. They are Sam & Barbara Hiser.

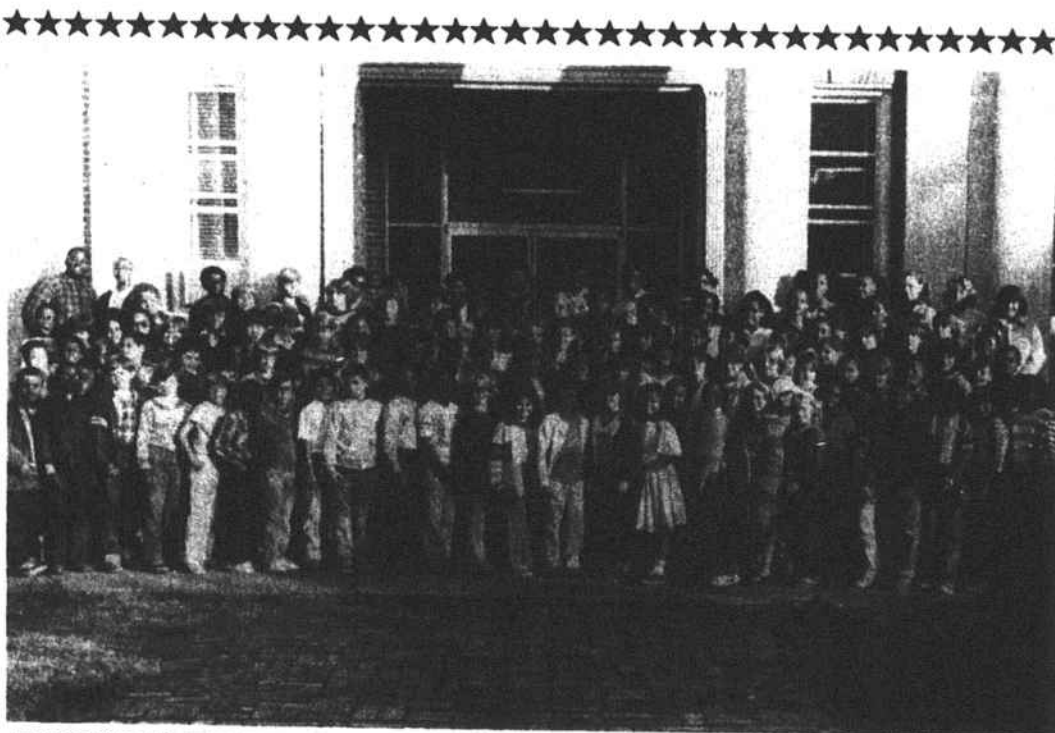
Dear Sam:
We both want to wish you and yours much joy and peace during this season, and to tell you how much we enjoy keeping in touch with friends in Raeford thru *The News-Journal*.

This seems to be an age of "collections" - so we fit right in, as we have a great "collection" of friends made in all our changing of locations. We prize this collection and plan to be adding a few more names.

As you may have heard, we are moving to Spartanburg, S.C. so we will want *The News-Journal* to follow with us. (2nd wk in Dec.)
Our new address is
216 Ponce de Leon
Spartanburg, S.C. 29302
Thank you and do come to see us when you are in our area.

As ever,

Barbara Hiser
P.S. Our phone is listed under J.C. Harrison at present.



IN CHRISTMAS CONCERT -- The J. W. Turlington Elementary School boys' and girls' choruses, shown together here, will give the annual Turlington Christmas Concert Thursday night, starting at 7 p.m., in the school auditorium. The choruses will sing Christmas songs, some as separate groups, others as a combined chorus. The principal soloist is Sammy Scriven, alto. Other students also will sing solo. "Silent Night" will be sung to the accompaniment of the Turlington Hand Bell Choir. Beth Fox will play piano accompaniment for the other selections. The director of the choruses is Jane Davis. The boys' chorus has 50 singers, and the girls' 80. [Staff photo by Bill Lindau].

Schools' Choruses Giving Concerts

Hoke County school students are singing Christmas concerts this week through December 19.

Two were held this week, at Upchurch Junior High and J.W. Turlington Elementary schools.

The Turlington school boys' and girls' choruses will sing Thursday, starting at 7 p.m., in the school

auditorium, in a public concert. This will be the concert they gave for the Turlington students Wednesday morning. Mrs. Jane Davis is the director of the choruses.

The West Hoke School chorus will perform at 1:15 p.m. Tuesday for the student body. The director is Mrs. Miriam McNeill.

The Scurlock School chorus, directed by Mrs. Doris Austin, will sing December 18 in a 7 p.m. concert.

The same night, starting at 8, the Hoke High School Chorale and

Chorus, directed by Mrs. Linda Huff will sing.

The last concerts before the Christmas holidays will be given December 19 by the Upchurch and the South Hoke choruses for their respective student bodies. The Upchurch program will start at 9 a.m. and the South Hoke concert at 1 p.m.

Mrs. Anne Freeze is director of the Upchurch chorus, and Mrs. McNeill directs the South Hoke chorus.

The Upchurch chorus sang Tuesday night in a public concert.

November Rain Lightest In 6 Years

Raeford got 2.65 inches of rain last month, the lightest for a November in six years.

The previous low for a November was the 2.7 total for the month in 1977.

The figures were obtained from the readings on an official National Weather Service gauge at the home of Robert Gatlin of Raeford, the official NWS weather observer for Hoke County.

The other totals for November in the previous five years: 3.4 inches in 1975, 5.0 in 1976, 6.1 in 1978, and 7.1 last year.

Gunman Gets Cash, Food Stamps

Raeford police are looking for the man who robbed The Pantry on Harris Avenue of an undetermined amount of cash and food stamps December 4.

Police Chief Leonard Wiggins reported the man came into the store about 6:45 p.m. asked Evelyn McQueen, who was on duty and the only other person in the store, for a pack of cigarettes. Then the man drew a pistol and demanded the money and stamps.

He left when a customer drove up.

Correction

Most stores will be open till 8 p.m., starting December 15 (next Monday).

A story in *The News Journal* last week said December 25. This was an error.

Most stores will be open till 8 p.m. weekdays and 6 p.m. Saturdays.

2 Accidentally Wounded By One Pistol Bullet

A 20-year-old man and a 15-year-old boy were wounded by the same bullet about 6 p.m. Saturday when a pistol discharged accidentally as they were sitting in a car outside Rockfish Store on Rt. 2, Raeford, reported the Hoke County Sheriff's Department.

No charge was filed in the woundings, the report says, but the owner of the car was charged with possession of a stolen firearm, and a juvenile petition was to have been taken out for the wounded boy for the alleged theft of the pistol.

The pistol, a .38, was reported November 6 stolen from a car while the driver, Jack Beasley, was in a

store. Frankie Junior Smith was charged with possession of the weapon.

The juvenile and the other person wounded, Maurice Andre Holt, of Raeford, were treated at Cape Fear Valley Hospital, then released. The juvenile suffered wounds in the left hand and left leg, and Holt was hit in the left leg, the report says.

The gun discharged while the 15-year-old was putting it under the rear seat. After the bullet hit him, it traveled through a speaker cabinet and hit Holt. The projectile was found on the left floor board.

Santa House

To Open Friday

The Santa House, sponsored by the Raeford Merchants Association will open Friday in the Aberdeen & Rockfish Railroad depot in Raeford.

Santa Claus will be there from 4 to 6 p.m. Friday, 2-6 p.m. Saturday, Monday through December 23 from 5 to 8 p.m., and Saturdays 2-6 p.m.

A professional photographer will be at Santa House Friday 4-6 p.m. and Saturday 2-6 p.m. to take pictures of children with Santa.

The Raeford-Hoke County Chamber of Commerce mailbox for Santa Claus has been moved to the Santa House.

Requirements and procedures for obtaining a federal grant to help pay for revitalization of downtown Raeford were discussed Monday night in the first of two public hearings scheduled before the Raeford City Council.

The second hearing is scheduled for December 22 at 7 p.m. in the council chambers of City Hall, the site of the first.

The amount the city will ask for in its pre-application is yet to be determined.

Charles C. Niedringhaus, Jr., regional planner for the Lumber River Council of Governments, said if a pre-application is approved by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, approval of the application is nearly 100 per cent certain. He said HUD would review pre-applications between January and March, then invite the filers of the approved pre-applications to apply for Community Development grants in April. Approval of applications would be given in August, and the grant would become available by October, possibly in September. Niedringhaus told the city officials and the approximately dozen private citizens who attended the hearing. Most of the private people were owners and operators of businesses in the downtown business district which is the object of the joint city administration and Raeford-Hoke County Chamber of Commerce Downtown Revitalization project.

Niedringhaus told the audience that if the city is successful in the pre-application phase, "it is sure to succeed in the application" stage.

He also distributed written lists of Community Development activities eligible and activities not eligible for the federal assistance; and of selected criteria for single purpose and for comprehensive grants. Then he explained the allowable and unallowable activities and the criteria for the grants.

The criteria includes stating the need, with the number of poverty people and their percentage of the population; "outstanding performance" by the applying community in housing and local equal opportunity efforts; and the benefit the project would bring to low- and moderate-income persons.

Mayor John K. McNeill, Jr., said the pre-application would try to relate downtown renewal to economic development, and Niedringhaus confirmed this.

Earl Fowler, manager of the chamber, said let the record be presented to HUD in the pre-application show that the revitalization has been going on since April 1978 with improvements, made among other areas, by new construction, of a bank building, remodeling of business buildings, and in parking.

He also said the project would mean job-retention and availability for lower and middle-income

people, and that the record also should show that five minority businesses are in the downtown area.

Fowler also said the pre-application should show the city had a study of downtown revitalization needs and recommendations made by an architect and that the remainder of the phase has been contracted for to work with downtown property owners on recommended changes, among other points. The contract has been made with Peter Batchelor of Townscape Union Development Services, Inc., of Raleigh. Batchelor also directed the study of the downtown area.

The Downtown Revitalization Committee has been working for the chamber. City Manager Ron Matthews pointed out after the hearing that a Citizen Participation Plan had to be filed with the pre-application, and this required establishment of a Citizen Advisory Council. He suggested that members of the Revitalization Committee could serve as members of the council. The advisory group will consist of six to eight people to help work on the application.

It was agreed that Fowler was to get the committee together Tuesday and submit names for appointments by the council to the Advisory Council at the December 22 hearing.

The council is to adopt the plan in time for filing the pre-application. Matthews pointed out that the plan and advisory committee would indicate the community interest.

The plan would exist for the life of the Community Development program, which would be for one year, Niedringhaus said.

He also said during the discussion at the public hearing that money from the grant could be provided by the city to downtown businesses as low-interest loans to help pay for improvements to their property. Niedringhaus said that under the provisions the businesses would put up \$3 for every \$1 in loan provided.

In other business at Monday night's meeting, the City Council adopted motions to accept a Planning Board recommendation that an addition to a mobile home park owned by Bill Moses be allowed. The council also voted permission to Raeford Power & Manufacturing Co. to change the name of its subdivision to Pine Forest from Pine Tops.

An executive session on personnel ended the meeting, which was the regular session for December. City Councilman Sam Morris was absent, attending another meeting.

A previous report described a November 24 public meeting on the Downtown Revitalization project as the first of three scheduled public hearings. This was not a formal public hearing but a meeting to explain the project to interested people.

1980 Percentages Of Juniors

Hoke Competency Test Passing Rate Drops

The percentages of Hoke County High School juniors who passed the 1980 competency tests in reading and mathematics were lower than those of 1979 and 1978, reports of the test results show.

Of the number who took this year's tests, 83 per cent passed the reading and 82 per cent the mathematics examinations. Last year, 88 per cent passed the reading and 87 per cent the mathematics tests.

In 1978, the reading test was passed by 85 per cent and the mathematics test by 83 per cent of the Hoke juniors.

Statewide, 93 per cent of the juniors who took the reading test for the first time and 89 per cent the math test this year passed.

Want To 'Adopt' A Family For Christmas?

The Hoke County Department of Social Services announced Tuesday some families have been "adopted" for Christmas but others are available.

Ken Witherspoon, the department's director, said there are several ways people can "adopt" poor families.

These include:

- Contributing toys
- Giving money for foster children

- Taking goods to elderly people

Anyone who wants to help is advised to call the department, 875-3772.