

## County Commissioners Told

# Hoke Farm Income, Production Costs Up

### Around Town

BY SAM C. MORRIS

The snow last Friday came as a surprise to most of us even though the weatherman had forecast that we would have some snow. He had been predicting snow for several weeks, but it finally arrived.

The roads were kinda dangerous early Saturday morning, but it started leaving as the sun warmed the earth late in the day. The temperature got up to around 60 degrees on Sunday and most of the snow left during the day except on the north side of trees and buildings.

The remainder of the snow left during the night as the rain came, as was predicted. It stopped raining up in the day Monday and the sun was shining as this was being written Monday afternoon.

The forecast is for freezing weather for the remainder of the week.

Maybe I will get to play golf once this month!

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As stated above the sun was shining Monday, February 2, so this means that the groundhog saw his shadow and went back into his or her hole for six more weeks of winter weather.

Bill Lindau stated that we would have six more weeks of winter even if the groundhog didn't see his shadow. You are right Bill, but it would make us all feel better if he hadn't seen his shadow, with the price of fuel oil this winter.

Anyway, we always look forward to Groundhog Day and hope for an early spring.

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Last Friday while eating lunch at a local restaurant, I was joined by my good friend, Richard Taylor. The snow had started falling to the extent that it was hard to see the highway through the door of the restaurant. Now Richard retired several years ago from Burlington Mills and spends most of his time down at the Arabia Golf Course.

When I asked him what he had scored for his round that morning, he looked at me and stated that it was too cold for him to play that day. He did say that four people were on the course when he left to come to the restaurant. He then said, "Do you know who is out on the course in the snow?"

Now after writing about two gentlemen that play golf in freezing weather and after looking around the table and seeing the people seated, I decided not to make any comment.

Before I could say anything, Richard said, "Four preachers from Robeson County?" Amen. Enough said.

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The letter from Clyde Upchurch that appeared in this column last week about the Red Cross and the United Fund brought forth a comment from J.L. Holmes, district commercial manager of Carolina Telephone. He called me last Thursday and said that he had read the letter and my comments and did not want to see the local Red Cross office close down. Holmes further stated that the telephone company has many employees in Hoke County that receive the first aid and safety classes that are taught by the Red Cross.

He continued with what a former treasurer of the fund always wanted to hear. Where do you send a contribution to help keep the office open and also help get the United Fund Drive going?

This was one of the fastest things to answer. Just send it to me and I will see that it gets into the proper hands.

This is all we need to keep the agencies financed for people to give.

In a separate article you will see that United Way is getting ready to start a drive and that John Leandro of the Open Arms Rest Home is the campaign chairman. He can't do it by himself, so when you are contacted, give him your support.

## Winter's Second Snow Falls On Hoke

Friday's snow carpeted Hoke County but east of McCain apparently caused no serious problems, though west and north of McCain the snowfall was heavier and made driving hazardous.

Saturday's subfreezing weather, however, made streets and roads slick in places.

The snowfall in Hoke amounted to two to three inches and was the second of the winter.

The snowstorm arrived in Raeford in early afternoon but did not stick on roads. Schools remained open for the full class day since driving conditions were not hazardous.

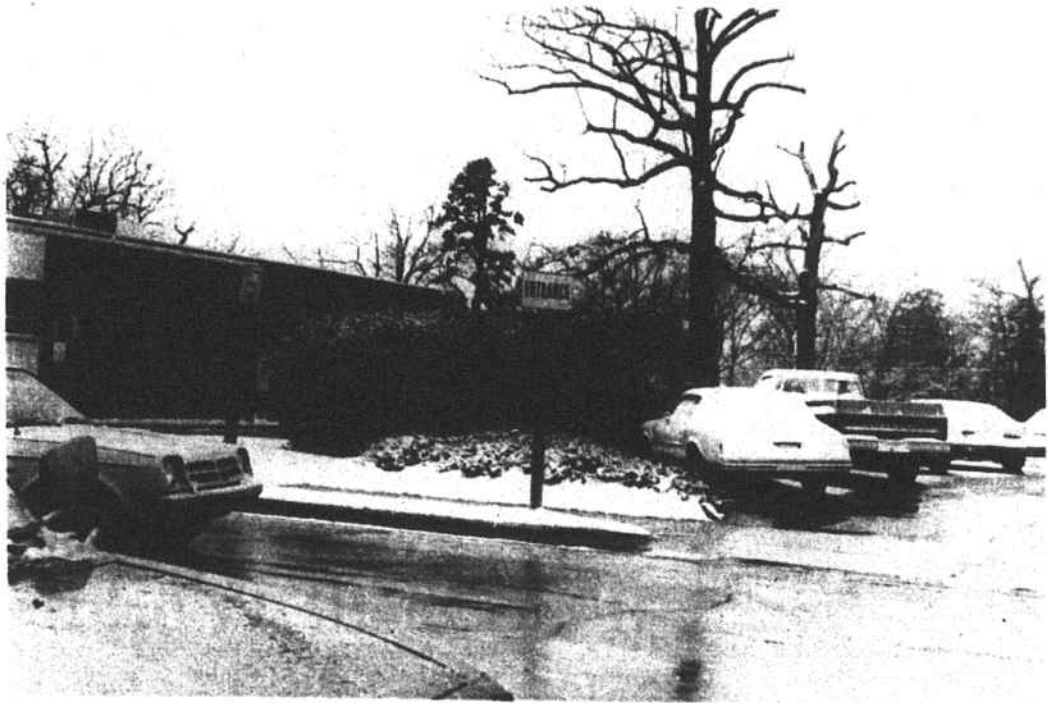
The snowstorm northward, however, caused postponement of the Hoke High-Lee County High basketball game scheduled for Friday night on the Lee court.

Iceing caused by Saturday's freeze of melted snow resulted in at least one injury.

Mrs. Jean Hodgkin suffered a fracture of her right wrist when she fell on ice on a step at her home near Antioch Presbyterian Church. She had used the steps once that morning but before the melted snow had frozen, so she wasn't expecting ice when she went out again later.

Mrs. Hodgkin's injured wrist will be in the cast for six weeks. Mrs. Hodgkin is on the office staff of the Hoke County Agricultural Extension Service.

Drivers heading west from Raeford had little trouble early Friday afternoon till they got to McCain when the roads were blanketed by the snowfall, which had arrived



West Elwood Avenue at the Raeford Post Office and nearby parking lot at mid-afternoon Friday after the snowfall had lightened. [Staff photo by Pam Frederick].

earlier than it had eastward. The layer was slushy, however. Rather than icy, since the temperature at the time was just a few degrees below the freezing mark.

In neighboring Moore County

about three inches of snow had fallen in places before the storm arrived in Hoke County, and Moore schools were closed because of the hazardous driving conditions.

Hoke got its first snowfall of the

winter on December 27, about two inches, but apparently caused no serious damage, though it made driving hazardous and postponed shopping for many at the after-Christmas sales in Raeford.

## Jordan Leaves School Board

Dr. Riley M. Jordan resigned effective immediately Tuesday from the Hoke County Board of Education.

Near the close of the board's regular meeting for February, Jordan, chairman of the board, told the other board members he was leaving a matter to County Schools Supt. Raz Autry, who also is secretary to the board, then left the conference room in the school board building.

Autry read Jordan's letter of resignation, which was dated Tuesday.

The letter did not give a specific reason for the action but it was understood that Jordan felt he was hurting the school system by his stand concerning the Hoke County Alcoholic Beverages Control Board.

Jordan at a January 19 meeting of the composite board responsible for appointing members to the ABC Board questioned the legality of the secret-ballot method by which Alfred K. Leach and Ivery McNair were appointed December 4, 1979, and sought the election of

J.W. Turlington to the board to replace James Conoly, a member for 15 years, whose term expired January 16. Conoly was reappointed by a 9-8 vote to a new three-year term.

Jordan also had moved that the appointments of Leach and McNair be declared null and void, but his motion was defeated.

It also was understood that Jordan was upset by the Raeford Zoning Board's 4-1 vote January 26 to deny the request of the board of education for a variance to the city zoning ordinance and a conditional use permit to use the school board-owned house at 705 Harris Avenue for offices for the director of county school food services (Clara Pope). McNair and Conoly are members of the zoning board with Henry Maxwell, Tommie Teal and Preston Moore, who cast the vote favoring the school board request.

The state attorney general's office in response to a query made by County Attorney Duncan McFadyen advised in writing last week that the appointment of the ABC

Board members by secret ballot was irregular but that the method was not a basis for nullifying the appointments that the only remedy lay in obtaining a court injunction forbidding the Composite Board for using the method again.

Jordan wrote a letter to *The News-Journal* this week concerning his feelings about the ABC Board members, the appointments and the efforts to make a change on the board, and ABC funds. The letter is published on the editorial page of today's edition.

Jordan said in his letter also: "There have recently been events which lead me to believe that my serving on the School Board, at this time, might be a deterrent to the School Board's getting certain budget approvals without hassle." Budget approvals are made by the county commissioners who also are members of the Composite Board and appoint the members of the County Board of Health, who also are members of the Composite Board, as are the members of the school board. Two of the county commissioners, however, had sup-

ported Jordan's nominee for the ABC Board, though one, Mabel Riley, was voting as a member of the board of health.

Autry told the remaining school board members that it was up to them to choose a replacement for Jordan within 30 days, and that if they didn't then the State Board of Education would name a member. The county school board is expected to meet within the next three weeks to make the appointment.

It was agreed Mrs. Mina Townsend, the board's vice chairman, will advise Autry when the board is to meet to make a choice. Board Attorney Bill Moses suggested that the members start considering someone for the vacancy. Jordan's four-year term will expire in 1982. He would have served 22 years on the board by that year.

Board member Bill Cameron said that a meeting of the Composite Board should be called to let the public know how each member stands on the ABC Board matter. He said he thinks there is concern

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### By City Council

## Fund For Industrial Program Voted

The Raeford City Council Monday night voted \$500 in city funds to participate with the Hoke County government in the state's new Highland Plains Marketing Association for attracting new industry to come to the Highland Plains Industrial area of six counties, which includes Hoke.

The county commissioners at their January 19 mid-month meeting voted to put up \$500 to participate, if the Raeford City Council voted the remainder.

Earl Fowler, manager of the Raeford-Hoke County Chamber of Commerce and the Highland Plains Marketing Committee, explained that regional Metro-Marketing is a new approach adopted by the State Department of Commerce to industrial development. The previous approach was "selling" the state as a whole. In a talk to the county commissioners January 19, Fowler said the statewide approach had proven ineffective for industrial development of the Hoke County

area. The other counties in the Highland Plains area are Scotland, Robeson, Sampson, Bladen, and Cumberland.

Mayor John K. McNeill, Jr., expressed approval of the Highland Plains plan. A brochure describing the area for industry prospects would be produced, he added.

The \$1,000 city-county contribution will cover a period of 18 months.

Fowler, also appearing on behalf of the Raeford Airport Steering Committee, informed the councilmen a breakfast meeting of the five-member committee, council and county commissioners has been scheduled for 7 a.m. February 9 at the Wagon Wheel Restaurant.

He said it was hoped that from the meeting would come a blue-ribbon commission to study the airport and make recommendations concerning its development for the future. Fowler at an earlier meeting described the airport as a

key in the industrial development of Hoke County.

The Airport Steering Committee, he explained Monday night, was established to work with the city and county on the role of the airport for the future.

In other business at the council meeting, Councilman Bob Gentry objected to part of a report published in last week's edition of *The News-Journal* about the January 26 public hearing of the Raeford Zoning Board of Adjustment.

He was referring to the statement "members of the City Council" had expressed objection to changing the status of the Hoke County Board of Education house formerly used as a residence of Hoke High principals.

City Manager Ron Matthews, to whom the statement was attributed, told Gentry he "jumped up and down" when he read the quotation. He said what he did say was "a member" of the City Council not "members." He said

the member who had objected was Sam Morris. He also said Mayor John K. McNeill, Jr., also expressed objection to changing the status.

The zoning board following the hearing, at which no property owner other than the board of education was represented, denied the school board request for a variance to the zoning ordinance to allow the house, at 705 Harris Ave., to be used for offices for the director of county school food services.

Under the ordinance this would be a use not conforming to any use permitted in that area by the ordinance. The school board request was in effect an appeal from Zoning Administrator William Selser's denial of a variance, on grounds that the zoning ordinance prohibited operation of offices in that zone, which is classified as one-family residential.

Gentry argued that the zoning

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The Hoke County commissioners were told at their monthly meeting Monday that Hoke County farmers' gross income for the past year is estimated at \$21,724,598, about \$855,130 higher than the estimated gross for 1979, but production costs were 12 to 15 per cent higher.

Wendell Young, county Agricultural Extension Service chairman gave the figures in his regular report. He said inflation effects on production costs eliminated the gains in gross income generally, and some farmers even lost money because of it.

He commented on production costs after John Balfour, chairman of the board of commissioners, said after Young and given the gross income figures that the news media has neglected to report the increase in the farmers' operating costs, leading to the impression that farmers are doing well.

The Extension staff also gained an assistant agent, filling the vacancy created September 19 by the resignation of Larry Locklear. Robert Northern was named to the vacancy by the commissioners. They adopted a motion inviting him to join the staff.

Northern is 26, single, a native of Morganton, W. Va., and a 1979 graduate of Clemson, S.C., University, where his father is serving as dairy specialist for the South Carolina Agricultural Extension Service.

Northern will work in horticulture and agronomy, his fields of major study. Young told the commissioners.

He served in the Marine Corps till 1974 after graduating from high school and before going to college. He has been living in Clemson since 1967.

Northern is working for a commercial landscaping firm based at Easley, S.C., and will join the Hoke staff March 1, since he is obligated to give his current employer 30 days notice that he is leaving.

### FARM INCOME

Young reported the following gross income by farm enterprise for 1980.

Tobacco -- \$5.2 million; cotton -- \$1.3 million; corn -- \$2.4 million; wheat -- \$500,000; soybeans -- \$3.9 million.

Vegetables -- \$931,313; fruits and nuts -- \$92,848; nursery and greenhouse products -- \$350,000; forest products -- \$1,540,750.

Livestock -- \$2,687,095; turkeys and turkey eggs -- \$2,363,840; and barley, rye and other small grains -- \$13,690,290.

Government payments totaled \$68,462.

Young reported more corn was planted last year than the year before, and the yield amounted to an average 60 bushels per acre. The 1979 gross income was an estimated \$1,353,750.

Tobacco gross income rose, according to the estimate, from the 1979 production (\$4,922,345), which was less than the 1978 total (\$5,792,670).

Young attributed the planting of more acres of wheat last year to the increase in gross expected from that crop, from the 1978 estimate.

The soybean income for last year is estimated down from the 1979 gross, (\$5,655,000); 26,000 acres were planted in the crop in 1980, about 3,000 fewer than in the previous year, and last year's average yield was 26 bushels per acre, four under the 1979 yield.

Last year, farmers planted 3,500 acres in cotton, about 1,500 more than in 1979, but cotton yields averaged 498 pounds per acre, compared with about 525 in 1979.

Last year's estimated income from vegetables is about \$531,000 above the previous year's, Young reported.

Other 1979 figures, for comparison with the 1980 estimates: fruits and nuts -- \$35,168; forest products -- \$2,012 million; greenhouse and nursery products -- \$500,000; livestock -- \$2,738,902; poultry (nearly all turkeys and turkey eggs) -- \$1,742,457.

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In response to a request made by County Schools Supt. Raz Autry, the commissioners adopted a motion authorizing \$5,000 extra for the school system budget to pay half the cost of having a survey of

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