

The Hoke County News - Established 1928

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RAEFORD, HOKE COUNTY, NORTH CAROLINA

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THURSDAY, JULY 16, 1981

Lightning, 4-inch Rains Strike Southeast Hoke

Tenant House Destroyed, Other Damage

Around Town

BY SAM C. MORRIS

The weather is still hot and the forecast is for it to continue. The afternoon thundershowers cool things off for a few minutes, but the temperature goes right back up when they have passed. The low for the past week has been in the 70s, so it doesn't take long for the days to become really hot.

John Baker, fire chief of the North Raeford Fire Department, was by the office Monday and was telling me that the department needs more firemen.

The unit usually has about 35 volunteer firemen and the roster is now down from that number. Baker said that with people working all shifts that only about half of the firemen show up for a fire.

He said that applications would be taken on Monday, July 20 starting at seven p.m. You can come to the North Raeford firehouse at that time and someone will be there to help you in any way they can.

The requirements are that you be 18 years of age or older and that you are a resident between the boundary lines that form the North Raeford district.

So if you are qualified to become a member, go by the firehouse next Monday night and sign up. If you think these fire departments are not needed, then read the story about the storm elsewhere on this page. One department of the county had to divide his unit this weekend when lightning struck at different places. So you see the departments need to be at full strength.

The following three letters were received this week:

Dear Sam:

I am enclosing check for \$6.24 for renewal to *The News-Journal* until October 1, 1982.

I always look forward to receiving *The News-Journal*.

It is hoped you and your family are doing fine.

With kindest regards,

Sincerely

Lillian F. Moore

Thanks Lillian for the check, and it is always good to hear from people that lived in Raeford many years ago. Your letter will let other friends know that you still think of us.

Sam, please send me 3 copies each of July 2nd and July 9th issues of *The News-Journal*. Suppose you noted both my sons are getting married in September.

Also would note in your column within the next couple of weeks for members of the graduating Class of 1947 to please contact me if interested in a 35th Class Reunion in 1982. Would also like to hear from those not interested in order to compile a complete list of names and addresses.

Thanks

Jean McNeill Harris

Thanks Jean, for the letter and I had noted about your sons. Stop by to see me the next time you are visiting relatives in Hoke County.

To you 1947 graduates write to: Jean McNeill Harris
137-B Grotton St.
Fayetteville, N.C. 28305
Telephone Res. (919) 484-9347
Office (919) 867-0103

Sam:

As always I enjoy your "Around Town," but I would like to praise a diehard democrat for your comment this week. It's nice to know the news media will admit when their people in Raleigh makes a large mistake. I too think the 4.1 million dollars that taxpayers in N.C. will be paying for a horse palace is a bit much. I don't call this trying to cut the budget! I talked with some Hoke Co. people

(See AROUND TOWN, page 10)

Lightning accompanying a 90-minute storm which dumped up to four inches of rain on the

Dundarrach area of Hoke County Saturday afternoon set a fire that destroyed an unoccu-

pied tenant house. Lightning itself damaged another home and appliances in at least one

other.

The storm also knocked out power in some sections of the county for several hours.

The rains were scattered and varied in intensity. They arrived in Hoke County at about 3:30 p.m.

The rainfall measured an inch at the gauge kept by Robert Gatlin, official observer in Raeford for the National Weather Service, at his home at 301 Harris Ave., about four inches just outside the city limits on East Prospect Avenue Extension, lesser amounts elsewhere, down to bone dry across U.S. 401 bypass.

At the Dundarrach Trading Co. farm on N.C. 20, the official gauge showed 3.75 inches had fallen.

The storm apparently ranged from Cumberland County southward, cutting across Hoke County in a southeastern path. Some hail was reported mixed with the rainfall.

The tenant house, one story high, containing three rooms and frame in construction, burned down on the farm of the late J.A. Jones, despite the efforts of the Stonewall and Rockfish fire department to save it. The farm is on SR 1105 a few miles east of Dundarrach.

Mrs. Jones, Mr. Jones's widow who owns the property and lives across SR 1105 from the farm on which the tenant house stood, said Monday morning furniture, a refrigerator and other articles had been stored in it, and all were destroyed. She said part of the loss was covered by insurance but she couldn't say then what the value of the house and contents was.

She said that, though all was lost, she wanted to thank the men of the fire departments for their efforts.

Mrs. Jones said she heard the lightning "pop" but thought it had struck a transformer. She said she couldn't see the tenant house from her front porch. She added hail was falling at the time.

Soon after she heard the "pop" she said, someone drove up and said the tenant house was on fire and asked whether anyone was in the house. Mrs.

Jones said there wasn't, then she called her son, Robert Jones, who notified the Stonewall Fire Department.

At first the firemen thought it was Mrs. Jones's home that was on fire but then saw the tenant house.

Stonewall Fire Chief Neill McKenzie said when the firemen arrived the tenant house was beyond saving.

He said the call was the first of several his department received within a few minutes of each other that afternoon.

He described the situation as a "mess" and the storm as one of the worst he had ever seen.

He said the Stonewall department had 15 to 20 firemen and its three trucks working at various places in the area and that he had called the Rockfish department for assistance. Stonewall firemen also used their individual vehicles in responding to the calls.

As the Stonewall firemen were preparing to answer the call to the Jones farm, another alarm sounded, and part of the force was dispatched to a home a few miles east of Dundarrach. McKenzie said the house was damaged by lightning and part of the damage was scorching, but the lightning caused no fire.

The owner of the property requested *The News-Journal* reporter not to take pictures of the damaged areas and to withhold the name of the owner from publication.

The Stonewall department shortly afterward received a report that Danny McGougan's home off N.C. 20 a few miles southwest of Dundarrach had been struck by lightning. McKenzie said the lightning entered the house and damaged appliances but did not set a fire.

At Dundarrach, lightning damaged the water pump and refrigerator at the home of Tom Jones, and the strong wind that accompanied the storm tore down a large limb from a pine tree behind the home of his son and daughter-in-law, Mr. and Mrs. Marty Jones on Arabia Road about four miles southeast of Raeford. The casualty of the falling limb was a bird bath.

Elsewhere in Hoke County, little or no rain fell.



Remains of tenant house destroyed by lightning-set fire.



This limb was felled behind the Jones home on Arabia Road by the Saturday afternoon storm. The bird bath's damage was caused when the bath was hit by the falling limb. [Staff photo].

Ground To Be Broken In 30 To 60 Days

Shopping Center Building Start Set

Ground for construction of the Raeford - Hoke Village shopping center on Cole Avenue Extension at the U.S. 401 South bypass will be broken in 30 to 60 days, and the building work will be completed in 4½ to 5 months.

This was reported Monday night to the Raeford City Council at its regular monthly meeting by Pat Mulvaney of Edens & McTeer of Columbia, S.C., which will build and own the center. The construction will cost about \$1.5

million, Mulvaney said, replying to a question asked by a private citizen in the audience.

Wayne Reynolds, who handles leasing for the company, told the council that Food Town, Revco and Sky City had made commitments to lease buildings in the center. Food Town previously announced it would build a supermarket in the center. Revco is a discount drug store chain, and Sky City is a chain of variety stores similar to K-Mart. Reynolds said about 6,000 square feet of the center will be reserved for three to four locally owned shops.

City Manager Ron Matthews announced that a petition also had been filed asking for annexation of the entire 7.9-acre site to the city. Part of the site is already in the city limits.

Reynolds said tenant businesses other than the three already committed would be signed up about three months before construction is completed. He said most stores will hire local people. Sky City, he said, for example, will employ 40 to 50.

Mulvaney said subcontractors for doing the electrical, plumbing and heating work and the like for the general building contractor will be area people.

He said he was working with Bill Sellars, Raeford public works

superintendent and assistant city manager, on the water and sewer services for the center.

The center's grounds will be landscaped professionally, he added.

In other business at the meeting, the council adopted a motion by a 4-1 vote to provide \$5,000 in federal revenue-sharing money to help finance the work of the Hoke Reading/Literacy Council for the fiscal year 1981-82. The council conducts a program to teach illiterate and nearly illiterate Hoke County adults to read and write at least well enough for them to handle their regular essential day-to-day activities, such as writing checks, replying to notes sent to them by their children's teachers, and filling out applications and other forms.

The council voted after hearing descriptions of the need for the program, and its results to date from members of the council's board of directors and other people speaking on behalf of the program. These included the Rev. Charles Ansley, who has done missionary work in Brazil; Mina Townsend, a member of the Hoke County Board of Education and of the literacy council; Barbara Buie, professional fulltime director of the council; J.D. McAllister, a council member and associate superintendent of the

Hoke County public schools.

The vote against providing the funds was cast by Councilman Sam Morris. He has expressed support for the literacy program but argued against putting up taxpayers' money on grounds that it is an educational function.

Current - expense funds for the Hoke County school systems educational as well as maintenance and physical operations are provided by the county treasury.

The Hoke County commissioners have been asked by the county board of education to appropriate \$5,000 for the literacy council's 1981 - 82 budget. The commissioners are expected to act on the request at their mid-month meeting July 20.

Replying to a statement that federal revenue - sharing funds are not "local" funds, Morris pointed out that federal revenue-sharing money is taxpayers' money, just as city funds are.

Mrs. Townsend, in pointing to the feeling of private citizens for the program, said the council has raised by the efforts of volunteers \$3,692 from small churches, black and white, and people interested in literacy. This has been done in a recent period, she said.

In other business, the council

Two Enter Home Here By Trick, Steal \$530

An 89-year-old Raeford woman and her son lost a total of \$530 in cash Monday to a pair of thieves who got into their home on the pretext of installing storm windows, Raeford Police Chief Leonard Wiggins reported.

The officer said the woman, Mrs. John McKeithan of 320 E. Prospect Ave., gave this information.

Two white males came to her house, told her they were painters putting in storm windows for the elderly and wanted to look through the house to see what needed to be done.

While they were going through the house, they got \$360 from her pocketbook and \$170 from her son Milton's wallet, then left, going away in a green Chevrolet Monte Carlo.

Mrs. McKeithan told police both thieves were white males, one was large and had a beard and was wearing a red hat, and the other was 15 or 16.

Wiggins said Mrs. McKeithan's granddaughter, Beverly, of Southern Pines, said she saw three men when she was at Mrs. McKeithan's house, which was before the theft occurred. The men approached Mrs. McKeithan after Beverly left, Mrs. McKeithan said.

Wiggins said Raeford officers in three cruisers searched for the thieves' vehicle and that law enforcement agencies in neighboring counties were alerted by the Raeford Police Department to watch for the men and their car. The investigation is continuing.