

# The News - Journal

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THURSDAY, AUGUST 5, 1982

## Balance in House

Barring an upset by the Republican candidate in November, the representation for twelfth House District in the General Assembly the next two years should be balanced, though not perfectly, but far better than it has been in nearly 10 years.

We are referring to Danny DeVane's victory in the July 27 Democratic runoff primary involving the district's three seats. The district is composed of Robeson, Hoke and Scotland. DeVane is a Hoke County businessman. The representation since Hoke County's Neill McFadyen left the house has been all Robeson County, by virtue of superiority in voter numbers.

The June 27 runoffs were won by DeVane and two Robeson County men -- Sidney Locks and John Hasty.

Though candidates pledge themselves to represent the entire district, and work for the interests of the district as a whole, not just their home counties, there's no place like home, when you get down to it.

We're sure the winners in the November election will not play favorites when they get into the legislature's sessions.

But nevertheless, let's pray that Hoke County's citizen makes it to Raleigh. The fact is, above all, however, that DeVane is qualified for the job through his experience in local government as a county commissioner and with the whole district through his business activities.

--BL

## Change the runoff?

Word from Raleigh is that some changes in the state's political primary system will be offered to reduce the expenses of the runoffs for the taxpayers.

One change would have candidates gaining 42 per cent of the vote in a primary involving more than two candidates being declared the winners. This would apply to certain contests taking in more than one county. The present system states a majority vote, which saves a candidate from being forced into a runoff, consists of the result of applying this formula: the total number of votes cast for all candidates is divided by the number of positions involved; then this result is divided by two, and that total is increased by one vote.

The runoff primary has been embedded in North Carolina politics since 1913.

It's cost many a leader of the first primary the nomination.

For a few examples, if a simple majority decided the nominations, then Howard Lee, the black former mayor of Chapel Hill, would have been North Carolina's lieutenant governor, instead of Jimmy Green, and Richardson Preyer would have been governor instead of Dan K. Moore. Preyer went on to become a congressman, serving till the 1980 Republican uprising swept him out of office. (If he had been elected governor, would he have run for Congress?) Those are just two examples selected at random.

Locally, if a simple majority had decided, then the Democratic nominees for the State House district of Robeson, Scotland and Hoke counties would be three Robesonians -- the incumbent, State Rep. William Gay, Sidney Locks, and John Hasty. Hoke County's Danny DeVane would have been eliminated in the first primary (he ran fifth in the nine-man field in which no one received a clear majority in the contests for the district's three House seats).

At least two of the Democratic nominees, and probably all three, will be elected in November, since there is only one Republican in the contest, in a heavily Democratic district.

On the face of it, risky as it would be for one's favorite candidates, the most efficient and economical way to decide a party's nominees would be by simple majorities in the primary, with the runoff system eliminated.

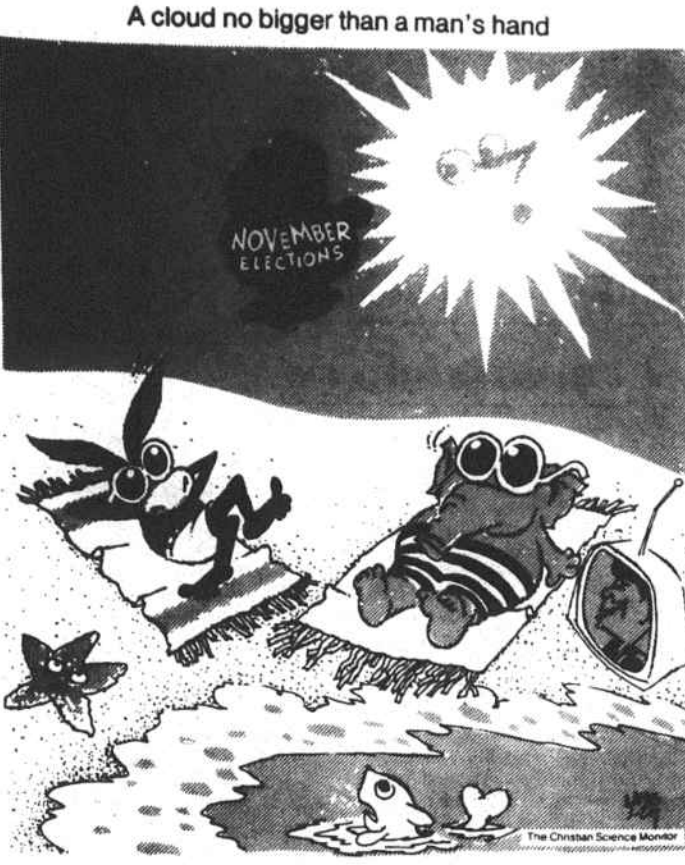
This would be unfair to the candidates losing by very narrow margins. In these cases, then, a rule could allow a candidate finishing, say, one per cent behind the leaders to call for a runoff.

The trouble with the runoffs has been the winners have been decided by minority vote -- that is a majority of the minority of registered voters who went to the polls. The records show that the percentage of registered party members have turned out for the runoffs than for the primary. In Hoke County, for example, about 52 per cent of the registered Democrats voted in the June 27 primary -- and about 36 per cent in the July 27 runoff.

The records also show that the runoffs have benefited far more also-rans than front runners. (It so happened, however, that the candidates who finished second and third in the June 29 primary for the Hoke County commissioners' nominations also won the runoffs. The third nominee, John Balfour, got a majority in the June 29 primary, but one candidate received 407 fewer and the other 125 fewer votes than they did in the June 29 primary.)

Some change in the runoff system should be made in the interests of economy, for the candidates who must run a second time, as well as the taxpayers, and efficiency.

--BL



## It's a Small World

By Bill Lindau

The Puppy Creek Fire Department has a unique tribute in its fire station.

It's a memorial to the volunteer department's first fire chief, Chuck Helbling. He served for 16 years, and was still chief when he died last January. He also was the first president of the Puppy Creek Community Watch.

Helbling was a fireman before he moved to the community. He was with the Fayetteville Fire Department.

The memorial is set up on a wall of the fire station. It consists of a large picture of Helbling, head and shoulders, a flag, and a plaque given by his fellow volunteers in appreciation for his service.

The memorial was pointed out to me by the present Puppy Creek chief, Buddy Newton, when I went out there to get some information about a fire the volunteers had fought a few days before.

I was planning to get a picture of the memorial. But Buddy Newton and I couldn't work out a time that was right for both of us at the same time.

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Somebody complained to the dog catcher about the dog named LuLu. The complaint was that LuLu dug holes in the complainer's property. After paying the magistrate for LuLu's efforts, I went around looking for the holes she allegedly dug. I know LuLu likes to dig holes, because the earth under the surface is cool, and she likes to lounge in the cool dug-out places on hot days.

I found only one hole. It was in my yard.

Incidentally, LuLu isn't even my dog. But her owner didn't have \$10 to bail her out. His job doesn't pay enough for that. In fact, he didn't have enough to get her a rabies shot. (But she got one, and she also got spayed). Or even a collar. But she got one, to hang her rabies tag on.

But the main thing is something money can't buy. He loves her, and she's nuts about him.

Knowing that makes it no big deal to put out \$10 to keep LuLu out of jail.

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Last week's *News-Journal* was supposed to have a picture of the rising Fifth through Eighth Graders in "Kids on Broadway" which will be played Thursday and Friday in the Upchurch Junior High School auditorium.

I took their picture and one of the high school students in the other act of "Live on Broadway" the week before. But the film met with an accident. I went back and got picture of the students to run this week though.

The picture of the Faberge employees with perfect attendance on the job was on the same roll of film with the pictures of the kids. I called the plant to see if we couldn't do it over, but it was out of the question as the people work on different shifts and it would have taken a great deal of time and effort to get them together again. But at least I can give you the names of the people, including one

who couldn't come for the picture-taking. That was Kipling Maroney, with a year's perfect attendance. The others, who were in what would have been the picture, are Larry Sanders and his sister, Sheila Sanders, each with three years' perfect attendance; and, each with a year's perfect attendance -- Linda Cherry, Harley Caulder, Malcolm McMillan, James Adams, James P. Edwards, Valerie Hollmond, Warren Anderson, Louis Chester, Florence Williams, and Aline E. Daniels. August Zitzman, the plant's general manager and the corporation's vice president for manufacturing, was with them for the picture-taking.

Photography can be a nuisance because of all the things that can happen. In Anson County one day I took some pictures of a guy showing and explaining his homemade solar energy machine to a bunch of Bowman High School students.

Later that day, a guy wanted to use the same camera to get some pictures of his own.

"Wonder if there's film in it?" he asked himself, but not me. So he opened the camera. Sure enough, there was.

But after he found out that way, there might as well not have been.

Another time I spent a day wandering all over the Cherokee Reservation taking pictures with an old time Speed Graphic camera. I got some colorful scenes.

Unfortunately, no one ever saw them.

I'd shot all the pictures with something called the focal plane shutter engaged. That was fine for fast action pictures, but the setting was wrong for my still life.

Then a staff photographer of *The Charlotte Observer* once spent a wasted day at Myrtle Beach, taking pictures for the paper's Vacation Edition.

When he got back to his darkroom and developed the film, he found he had absolutely nothing but clear blanks.

He'd forgotten to remove the cover from his lens before shooting.

## Puppy Creek Philosopher

Dear editor:  
You can't believe everything you hear from Washington -- if you did you'd lose your mind -- so I don't know what to make over the trouble with Congressional pages, the youngsters who run errands for Congressmen and Senators and make \$8,000 a year for the part-time work.  
Some say the fault lies in the fact the pages don't have a government-financed dormitory, where they can be better supervised. But I say the blame goes further back than that. It starts in the home. Any parents who'd turn a 14-year-old child loose in the midst of Congressional politicians is just not thinking straight. Don't they know that a kid's environment, his associates, in his formative years has a lot to do with the development of his moral character?  
Why, there are grown men who can't maintain much character in Congress. How do you expect a kid to do it?  
I have never understood the need for pages in Congress. I understand

## CLIFF BLUE ... People & Issues



CIGARETTE TAX? ... When I first heard about Senators Helms and East voting in the U.S. Senate to increase the cigarette tax from 8¢ to 16¢ I was opposed to it.

I have been writing all along that the Federal budget should be balanced, and I still cling to the hope that it soon may be.

But, it is my thinking that an eight cents tax increase in the cost of cigarettes is just a beginning toward this goal.

Even though I don't like the suggestion of doubling the tax on cigarettes, I cannot offer a more acceptable product to tax. I don't say it is a good tax because no tax is good for all the people.

All in all, the cigarette tax may raise as much money with less harm done than a tax on some other product.

While cigarette taxes will hit many citizens of North Carolina, we are thankful it is not an essential item. Obviously many sacrifices will have to be made in order to get this country on a sound course again.

BALANCED BUDGET ... President Reagan is advocating a balanced budget amendment to the U.S. Constitution.

We wonder why he does not present a balanced budget to the Congress and press for its adoption instead of waiting on Congress and three-fourths of the 50 states to ratify an amendment requiring a balanced budget!

It now looks as if the debt will be growing by at least one hundred billion dollars each year, or more.

Then it would be up to congress to balance the budget or fail to do so. That has been the situation in the past, with a big deficit!

DEFAULTING ... Last week, Education Secretary, T.H. Bell barred more than 400 colleges and trade schools with default rates of 25% or more from receiving new federal aid money. The action affected the following schools in North Carolina: Barber-Scotia College, Concord; Blanton's Junior College, Asheville; Elizabeth City State University; Hamilton College, Charlotte; King's College; Rutledge College, Greensboro; St. Augustine College, Raleigh; Shaw University, Raleigh; Winston-Salem University;

ty; and a half dozen from South Carolina.

PROTECTING THEMSELVES? ... It seems that the House of Representatives in Washington where the Democrats are in majority, decided not to challenge the House appropriations bill. Democratic Chairman, Dan Rostenkowski of Illinois said the committee used the unusual tactic to avoid a bruising election year floor fight and possible defeat of the tax bill, which he said was vitally needed to help shrink looming budget deficits.

PRESS CONVENTION ... Like many other newspaper people I attended the annual N.C. Newspaper convention at the Hilton Hotel in Wilmington July 22-24. I attended the breakfast meeting of the Past President's Saturday morning, Frank Daniels of the *News & Observer*, immediate past president asked the group around the table who they thought would be the next Democratic nominee for governor. Several names were mentioned. Most seem to favor President William Friday, but questioned whether he would run. Several other names were mentioned, Commissioner of Insurance, John Ingram, Attorney General, Rufus Edmisten, Charlotte Mayor Eddie Knox, Lt. Governor Jimmy Green, Congressman Charlie Rose and others.

It was an "off the cuff" question, as were the answers.

HOLLINGS & EAST ... Last week a reporter asked Senator Hollings of South Carolina whether the Carter legacy was hurting his chances as a Southerner running for the Democratic nomination for president in 1984.

Hollings said there was no doubt about Carter's "brilliance and intellect". But he said Carter chose a weak White House staff, so weak that "with that team I would fall." U.S. Senator John East said last week that he is growing so peaved at his own party that he was even thinking about leaving it to become an independent.

East's comments were printed in the *Charlotte Observer*. East said later his comments were "hyperbole to make a point" and that as a Republican he was seriously thinking about leaving the party.

## Letter To The Editor

Editor,  
*The News-Journal*

I have a few observations and comments to make about the recent Democratic primaries.

It is unfortunate that in the race for County Commissioner little attention was focused on what the candidates proposed to DO about the problems facing the County. The problems are real and will not be solved without great effort. As you know, our county is poor, one of the poorest in North Carolina; we have high unemployment and a high rate of incarceration among our citizenry; we need industry and jobs, especially for our poor, and we need a plan to attract such industry; we need to improve our school conditions and provide more money for recreation; we need to put people in jobs and get them off the public assistance rolls; we desperately need to deal with the issue of controlled growth and adopt concrete, workable plans that will protect Hoke County from the blight of urban sprawl that is so evident in Cumberland County. These are just a few of the issues that I'm concerned about. I'm sure you could add to the list. It would have been nice in the recent election to have had public dis-

course and debate about how to solve these difficult problems.

Incidentally, I was disappointed that *The News-Journal* never ran an article on the County Commissioners' race featuring the candidates' ideas and positions on county government. Nor did I see any editorial comment on the race. This is unfortunate because, given the importance of the race and the magnitude of the issues facing our County, the candidates' positions certainly seem newsworthy.

One final comment: In campaigning for Tom Howell out in the county, I got the impression that many of our people don't feel they are a real part of the local government process. One reason for this is that several sections of the county are unrepresented on the Board. It seems to me that a districting plan wherein each section of the county elected its own representative to the Board would be beneficial. We could still have some at-large candidates.

At any rate, I offer my congratulations to all the winners and certainly hope their terms in office will be marked by notable achievement.

Sincerely,  
Warren L. Pate

Dear editor:

You can't believe everything you hear from Washington -- if you did you'd lose your mind -- so I don't know what to make over the trouble with Congressional pages, the youngsters who run errands for Congressmen and Senators and make \$8,000 a year for the part-time work.

Some say the fault lies in the fact the pages don't have a government-financed dormitory, where they can be better supervised. But I say the blame goes further back than that. It starts in the home. Any parents who'd turn a 14-year-old child loose in the midst of Congressional politicians is just not thinking straight. Don't they know that a kid's environment, his associates, in his formative years has a lot to do with the development of his moral character?

Why, there are grown men who can't maintain much character in Congress. How do you expect a kid to do it?

I have never understood the need for pages in Congress. I understand

they run errands for members, like bringing them newspapers or going after an absent-minded member's bifocals or a glass of water or carrying messages like where the poker game is tonight, etc.

I have seen Congressmen on television and a lot of them look like they ought to be running their own errands just to get the exercise. When you can buy meals at half-price in the Congressional restaurant the temptation to over-eat is hard to resist, although members have established a safety valve. They can go to a government-financed hospital at greatly reduced prices. Congress has whipped the high cost of food and medical care. For Congressmen.

I have a notion that Congress will attack the pages' moral problems by voting to house them in a multi-million-dollar dormitory, with strict supervision. If it works, you reckon a supervised dormitory for Congressmen would be worth a try?

Yours faithfully,  
J.A.