

Around Town

BY SAM C. MORRIS

No, fall has not arrived yet, but these cool nights remind me of that season. The days are still hot and it has been foggy so far each morning this week.

If you were watching the golf match Sunday on television you could see that the players were wearing sweaters. The tournament was played in Michigan. Also, the weather report Sunday afternoon stated that they had frost in the New England states.

Don't turn off your air conditioner yet, because September will bring some hot days.

A subscription renewal envelope also contained a letter from a former Raeford resident who now resides in Virginia. It was from Betty Burgess and her husband, Tom, who works in Washington. Tom was manager of the local ASCS office for many years and Betty taught in the local schools.

The letter follows:
Sam Morris:

Just a note to say hello to all our friends in Raeford. We really miss everyone and we are really sorry that we did not get a chance to visit Raeford this summer.

Tom has been so busy with the tobacco program this spring and summer.

I start back to work next week. Please tell Mr. Autry we are starting an interesting program this school year "Pay for Performance."

Again we enjoy getting *The News-Journal* and we wish all our friends the best.

Sincerely,
Betty Burgess

Thanks Betty for the nice note and we hope the best for you, Tom and family.

Another letter we received recently contained an article about a woman cured from cancer and it seems that from the article it was because of the "Power of Prayer." We have the article and will be glad for anyone to read it, but we don't believe we can print it at this time.

The letter follows:
Dr. Mr. Morris:

Since you're Presbyterian and I am too, I am sending you this testimonial that I have taken from a magazine I get in the mail, and I hope you will reprint it in the *Journal* to help build faith in more of our Hoke County people.

We all need more faith in prayer. Thank you so very much. I enjoy your editorial so very much, don't ever quit writing for the *Journal*.

Back in 1945 when I returned from the Army after serving five and a half years in World War II, I came back to *The News-Journal* to work. The secretary and bookkeeper was Mrs. Hazel Niven who worked in the office until the early 1950s when Mrs. Connie Ellis took over the job.

As most of you noticed in a small ad on the society page, Hazel has come back to work for the paper as society reporter. Of course, Connie is still with us and is in charge of the composing room.

So it is good during my few hours work each week to have Hazel back to help us. If you have any social news be sure to get in touch with her and it will be fixed up and placed in the paper.
Welcome back Hazel!

Since we are now in the Eighth Congressional District, the race for the seat in Congress will be a close one. The old Seventh was about 75% Democratic, but this is not the case in the Eighth.

So from now until November, you will be pressed to vote for either Blake or Hefner.

The teachers are back at work and are getting everything in order for the opening of school on September 1.

The kids go back on that day and they will be walking along the roads or awaiting buses by the highways. So please be careful and slow down when you approach them.

Play Therapy For Troubled Children

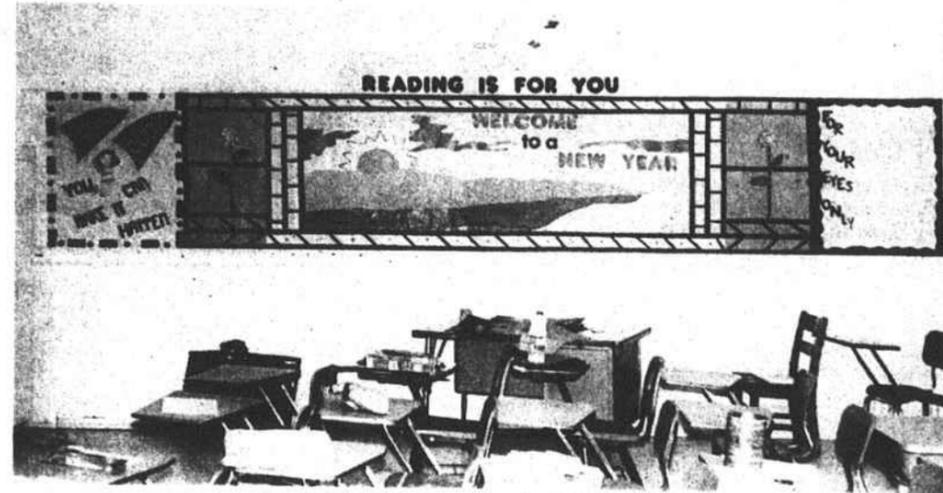
There is help for troubled children at the Hoke Unit of Sandhills Center for Mental Health, Inc.

Play therapy, a valuable method of working with children, is offered at the Sandhills Center. In play therapy, toys and games are used as the tools through which the child expresses his feelings, such as anger, sadness, or jealousy.

The child is given the freedom to choose the activities in the therapy session. The therapist accepts the child as he is and helps the child understand his feelings. The therapy is a gradual process. Any change that occurs is directed by the child. Play therapy has helped many children work through problems.

If you know a troubled child who needs play therapy, contact the Sandhills Center for Mental Health, Inc., at 875-8156 or refer his parents.

Hoke County School Year: Drums, Problems, Programs



Beverly Bowden's eye-catching board in her classroom.

The sound of a band member practicing his drums echoes over the Hoke High School grounds as the school year is beginning for the Hoke County School System. At the high school, teachers were preparing for the year by attending three days of seminars. Meanwhile at the County Board of Education building, the administrative side was busy preparing all the necessary lists and placements.

Superintendent Raz Autry, who has been at the position for nine years, discussed the coming school year. The teachers' year began on August 17 though the school year begins for the expected 5,000 students on September 1. It is the preparation by the teachers and administrative staff that provides the seven Hoke County schools with a very thorough educational program.

Despite cutbacks in aid, the \$10 million school budget allowed for the hire of eight new teachers. Mr. Autry said that the turnover in teachers has become less, primarily due to oversupply of teachers and aid cutbacks. In all, 280.5 positions in the 500 of the school system were teachers, the rest were custodial, transportation, and administrative positions.

Several changes have been introduced to this year. The school system has gone back to the community school concept in the kindergarten through fourth grade levels. Affecting all levels has been the reintroduction of the fees program. This program, which is designed to provide funds for instructional materials, is placed at \$3 per student in kindergarten through sixth, while the fee will be \$10 for seventh through twelfth grades.

With a hint of sadness, Mr. Autry remembered that the Hoke County School System had been the only one in the nation to provide free meals throughout all levels. However, the financial situation of the system can now only provide meals without cost to the student in grades K-8. High school students must pay for their lunch. Cutbacks and the familiar sound of a problem national economy were cited as causes.

On a more hopeful note, a CETA sponsored job placement department has been developed this year. Eleanor Gentry will head the department that is oriented towards helping those students that may be considering dropping out or need assistance in finding a job. Essentially the department will function as a guidance and personal assistance counseling project.

Mr. Autry was especially concerned about the future of the county schools. Several needed capital outlay plans are very much in doubt. The county population is expected to expand, yet, several schools are becoming overcrowded in the meantime. Particularly the Scurlock District, Rockfish and Davis's Bridge classrooms are problem areas. The McLaughlin School has little land available and

(See SCHOOL YEAR, page 16)

Failure To Observe Regulations Details

Elections Chairman Explains Firing

A Hoke County precinct registrar was dismissed by the Hoke County Board of Elections essentially for failing to observe regulations details, the board chairman indicated Tuesday.

J. Scott Poole, chairman of the county elections board, was explaining the reasons for the board's dismissal of the Rev. Leroy Horsley, registrar for Blue Springs Precinct.

He added, however, he hated to see Horsley leave, because Horsley had done "a good job of registering people." He said that in two years Horsley had registered "at least 1,000." Poole said he felt that Horsley's difficulty was he had been unable to spend enough time in Hoke County to handle the job. Horsley's fulltime professional job is as a member of the staff of Samarkand Manor at Eagles Springs on the western border of Moore County. Samarkand is

about 35 miles west of Raeford and about 30 west of Horsley's home, on Turnpike Road.

Poole said, however, the reasons Horsley was dismissed included:

--Poole had to call him to come to the canvass of the returns of the June 29 primary. The regulations require that the registrar appear or that he send a representative to each official canvass following each election. The canvass is the official review made by the elections board of the elections returns.

--Horsley had made several errors in registering people in the wrong precincts. But Horsley was not responsible for the 99 per cent of the errors in registration for the June 29 primary that was attributed to him in another publication. Poole said he was misquoted on that figure. He said 10 people in all were not registered properly and that none who were properly registered were refused the right to vote.

--Horsley also had "a couple of times" locked material other than ballots in boxes. Only ballots may be locked in the boxes which are then sealed, Poole said. He explained that on election night after all the ballots have been counted, only the ballots can be placed in their proper boxes, which are then sealed. He said Horsley's adding other material to the box made it necessary for the entire elections board to assemble, select an "innocent bystander" for a witness, then unseal and unlock the boxes and remove the unauthorized material. After that, the boxes are locked and sealed again. This procedure is necessary to demonstrate that no irregularity in handling ballots after the election can occur.

Poole said others had made the same mistake in the past, but after the elections board sent out a notice instructing the precinct officials to

include nothing but ballots in the boxes after an election, only Horsley made the mistakes, which occurred after the June 29 primary.

Poole said Horsley registered the people regardless of race.

Of the 10 not properly registered, he added, about half were white and the others non-white.

Poole also said a total of 40 cases were reported in wrong precincts on June 29. However, he said, they were directed to the proper precinct.

Most people turned away, he said, were refused because their names had been purged from the books for not having voted for at least four years and they had not re-registered, as state law requires.

Essentially, he indicated, Horsley was dismissed because his inability to spend sufficient time in Hoke County was causing errors which were causing the elections board too much extra work.

UCB Reply To First Union Offer

Merger Decision Slated In 2 Weeks

Whether United Carolina Bancshares and First Union Corp. will merge will be made known in the next two weeks, a UCB executive said Monday.

Bancshares is the parent company of United Carolina Bank, of which the former Bank of Raeford is a member.

Officials of Bancshares, headquartered in Whiteville, confirmed Thursday they had received a \$86 million merger offer from First Union Corp., whose headquarters is in Charlotte. First Union is the parent corporation of the statewide system of First Union National banks, some of which are operating

in Fayetteville and Southern Pines among communities in the southeastern area of the state.

The Bancshares executive, Richard Chepul, comptroller of the corporation, was answering a question asked by a reporter for *The News-Journal* when he referred to the pending response by the Bancshares Board of Directors to First Union's merger proposal.

"The directors are doing an evaluation of the offer," he said, in saying no new developments in the situation had occurred since last week's public announcement that the proposal had been received.

The Bank of Raeford merged officially with United Carolina Bank last March 1. The local bank opened for business October 6, 1903.

The News-Journal reporter first asked R.L. Conoly, senior vice president of Raeford UCB, for comment on the merger offer. In his position he is chief executive of the Raeford bank. Conoly replied any comment would have to come from the corporation's headquarters in Whiteville and referred the reporter to Chepul.

The UCB announcement of the merger offer came in a brief note. *The Charlotte Observer*, in a

comprehensive report, published Friday, says "If the purchase is completed it would be the largest bank merger in N.C. history."

L.R. Bowers, chairman and chief executive of Bancshares, is quoted as saying that the firm's board would review the offer and response and declined to say whether UCB's management favored the offer. First Union is rated the third largest and UCB is ranked seventh-largest of the state's banking firms.

First Union, whose main subsidiary is First Union National Bank, has \$5.3 billion in assets. At the end of 1981 it had 207 branches (See MERGER, page 16)

Construction Nearly 60% Complete

November Moving Time For Shopping Center

Stores committed as tenants to the Raeford-Hoke Village Shopping Center will start moving into their areas during November and are expected to be ready for their customers by Christmas.

This was reported Monday by Robin Dial, vice president in charge of development for Edens & McTeer, Inc., of Columbia, S.C., which is building the center on U.S. 401 south bypass and Cole Avenue Extension.

Dial gave the information in replying to questions put by a reporter for *The News-Journal*.

He said the projected opening of the space for Sky City of the chain of department stores is about the first of November, and for Food Town, of the supermarket chain,

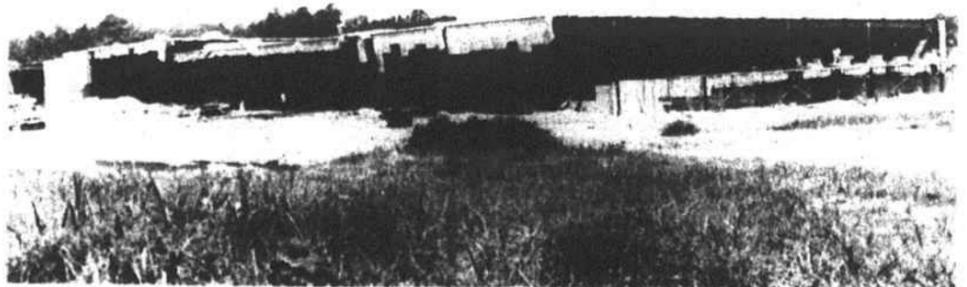
and Revco, of the discount drug-store chain, mid-to late November.

Besides the space for these, the center will provide about 12,400 square feet for local businesses. The business part of the center itself is being constructed as one long, continuous building containing about 60,000 square feet of floor space.

Dial said the construction is nearly 60 percent complete and is expected to be completed by the end of September.

The parking area for the customers will be "ample," as one company executive put it earlier.

A bulldozer started breaking ground for the shopping center shortly after June 1.



This is the way the rising building of the Raeford-Hoke Village shopping center looked Friday. [Staff photo by Harley Palmer].