

Around Town

BY SAM C. MORRIS

Well, when the thermometer gets down in the low 50s in August, most people start asking if a record low has been set for the day. We think that records were made in some parts of the state, but don't know about Hoke County.

The picture on the front page of a daily paper delivered to Raeford had a young lady skiing in Vermont. The caption stated that three inches of snow had fallen there Sunday.

Monday was a nice day, but don't put away your summer clothes, because many hot days are still to come.

The political season is coming into the picture once again and with ads appearing in newspapers and on TV, it won't be long until election day.

From reports or rumors many candidates are willing to speak at club functions now and are willing to pay their expenses to do so.

So if you need a good program in the next couple of months, just get in touch with someone whose name will be on the ballot in November.

It is good to welcome Warren Johnston and his wife to the great county of Hoke. He will be an associate editor of *The News-Journal* and should help get more news for the paper.

Of course Bill Lindau is still with us and this should make it easier for you to get someone to give your news to here at the paper.

I am not sure, but an article about Warren should be elsewhere in the paper.

Schools of the county opened this week, that is for the students. Teachers have been in school for the past ten days and should have everything ready for the opening.

Don't forget that the students will be on the streets and highways going back and forth to school, so be sure to drive safely.

The Bucks lost a hard-fought game here last Friday night by one point, 7-6. They will be in Hope Mills this Friday night and they need your support. So make the trip there if possible.

Several people in the county have asked me why Congressman Charlie Rose is sending out letters asking for donations to his upcoming campaign? They were puzzled because they had voted in the last primary for Bill Hefner of the Eighth District.

The only answer I could give them was to say that one came to our house and it must be that in the day of getting a high-powered letter company to solicit contributions, the names from our county hadn't been taken off the computer.

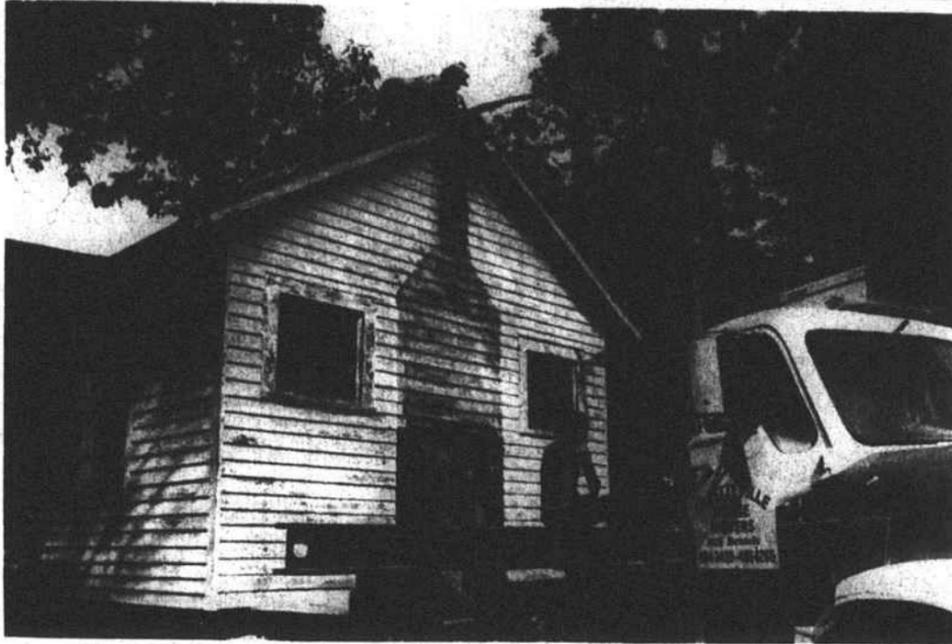
Mary Peele called and said that she had received a letter and couldn't understand why. She did state that maybe the Rose office in Fayetteville hadn't been informed about Hoke being put in the Eighth District.

There are two explanations, but it is good to know that Charlie still knows where Hoke County is located.

A picture that appears elsewhere in this edition is of the Raeford Masonic Lodge in the late 1920s or early 1930s. It was brought into the office by Mrs. Crawford Wright and she thought I could identify some of the members. I could, but not enough to help her get them named, so I am asking some of the readers of this paper to help. Let me know if you recognize any of them or if any of them are still living.

Mrs. Wright remembers she was living on the Tapp farm at Timberland and had two small children

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First section of the house heading for its new place Friday. [Staff photo by Warren Johnston].

Old Raeford House Goes For New Tennis Club

The old house on West Donaldson Avenue between the Hoke County Children's Center and First Baptist Church probably will be gone when this week's edition of *The News-Journal* comes off the press.

Fayetteville House Movers of Fayetteville split the house into two sections last week and moved the first section to the property of the Deer Track Racquet Club being developed on SR 1001 about seven miles south of Raeford. SR 1001 turns southeast off N.C. 211 at Cross Roads Store.

The house was bought by Steve Phillips of the Racquet Club from First Baptist Church and will be renovated into the club's clubhouse.

Phillips said Tuesday morning

the house when remodeled will contain among other facilities a sauna, a jacuzzi, and a hydrofitness area, for conducting individual exercise programs for men and women. He said the house contains three bedrooms, a den, a living room, a dining room, a kitchen, and two bathrooms. It also has a carport which was removed to facilitate the move but which will be put back on the house, Phillips said. On the grounds also, soft-surface tennis courts also will be established.

The club is being developed on eight acres of Phillips's land. He said this location was chosen so the club could serve other communities in addition to Raeford, outside as well as within Hoke County.

Phillips said a charter member-

ship drive is under way. The club will be private, and initiation and dues will be charged for family, single and transient memberships.

The church had to have the house removed because the church needed more space for parking. A new, larger First Baptist sanctuary facing North Main Street is under construction near the lot where the old house stood.

The truck which was moving the house was being driven by Bill Bentley, the owner of Fayetteville House Movers.

Helping with the moving were his son, Tim, his nephew Jerry Bentley, and John Sanders.

The second section of the house was being prepared Tuesday morning for moving from the West Donaldson lot to the new place.

Unemployment Drops Again

During July, the jobless rate in Hoke County dropped for the second month in a row to come within 20 persons of the year's lowest figure.

In July, 820 persons were out of work here, as Hoke County became one of 55 other counties in the state where unemployment rates dropped, according to figures released Thursday by the North Carolina Employment Security Commission.

In Hoke County during July, 10.4% of the county's 7,910 work force were without jobs. That figure is down from 11.2% in June and 12.2% during May, but up from last year's July figure of 9.7%.

The unemployment figure has bounced around during 1982, reaching a low in March of 10.3% which was down from the annual high of 13.4% in January.

During July, the state unem-

ployment figure rose to 9.8%, up from 9.2% in June. The national rate for July remained the same as the June rate at 9.8%.

"We attribute the significant increase which occurred in three counties to temporary, short duration layoffs of large numbers of workers from manufacturing employers," Commission Chairman Glenn R. Jernigan said.

From figures taken in the state's 10 standard metropolitan statistical areas, Fayetteville showed an increase in unemployment from 8.2% to 8.6%.

Figures recorded from other counties around the state showed that Cabarrus County registered an increase of 23.2%, Cleveland increased 8.6%, Rowan 7.4% and Stanly 7.2%.

Fifty-three counties recorded double-digit unemployment. Cabarrus County was highest with a rate of 29.9 percent up from 6.7 percent in June. Of Cabarrus' 50,990 labor force, 15,230 were unemployed during the month.

The largest decrease in unem-

Closings

Hoke County, Raeford city, federal, and state government offices will be closed, and the county's school students will get their first holiday of the school year Monday, Labor Day.

The county commissioners will hold their regular meeting on Tuesday, starting at 9 a.m., instead of the customary first Monday, in view of the holiday.

The Raeford County Council's regular meeting for the month will be held September 13 at 7 p.m., a week later than usual, because of the holiday.

The Hoke County Board of Education's regular monthly meeting will be held Tuesday at 7 p.m., the standing day for the session.

The post offices will be on their customary vacation schedule: no deliveries except "specials," and no window service on Monday.

The city-council landfill, however, will be open Labor Day for its regular hours.

Hefner: U.S. Mightiest

The United States is the strongest country in the world and is far ahead of the Soviet Union in military strength, Eighth District Rep. Bill Hefner told members of the Raeford Kiwanis Club Thursday night.

Hefner, who serves on the Defense Subcommittee of the House Appropriations Committee, said the Soviet Union has never had the military capability of the United States, and those that are "preaching" otherwise, are wrong.

"If they are so far ahead of us, why do they need our technology to build a pipeline," Hefner said.

The Congressman was in town campaigning for re-election in November.

Hoke County will officially be in Hefner's district in January when

the recently approved Congressional reapportionment goes into effect.

Thursday was Hefner's first recent trip to the county.

During his service on the Appropriations Committee, Hefner said he met behind closed doors with representatives of the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) and top Pentagon officials who are authorities on the Soviet military.

"I have never met one of them that would change military capabilities with the Soviet Union," Hefner said.

U.S. officials noted that a top secret Soviet airplane, which was recently captured, had radio equipment that was over 10 years

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DSS Says Few Stamps Stolen

Few cases of theft have been reported during the first three months of a new program in which food stamps are mailed to recipients, members of the Hoke County Department of Social Services (DSS) Board were told Monday.

Only three or four persons each month have reported losses of stamps or claimed that they have not received them, DSS Director Ken Witherspoon said, noting that the department is not replacing the lost stamps.

"We don't know what to attribute the losses to, but we are telling them to report the thefts to the post office," Witherspoon said during the board's regular monthly meeting.

"If they don't want them mailed, then they can come in the office and get them," he added.

DSS started the program quietly in June in an effort to cut cost and eliminate inconvenience to the clients.

After three months, the department is pleased with the way the program has been working, Witherspoon said.

Stamps valued at more than \$299 are not mailed and those recipients must come to the South Magnolia Street office. Other stamps are mailed on a staggered daily schedule.

During July, 4,481 Hoke County residents living in more than 1,300 households received food stamps, and most of those got the supplies by mail.

In an effort to avoid possible theft of the stamps, DSS began the mailing program without announcing the change to its clients.

"We think that it worked real well. We have even had some elderly clients call and thank us," the DSS director said.

The biggest savings to the department in mailing the stamps has been cutting down traffic in the office, which has eased some of the strain in beleaguered case workers and staff members, Witherspoon said.

In July, local residents received \$164,858 in stamps. That figure was down almost \$44,000 from what was paid in July, 1981.

Although unemployment is up from what it was a year ago, 648 fewer residents received food stamps this year than last July.

On another matter, Board members voted unanimously to approve the hiring of a parttime experience staffer for 45 days to help prepare alleged cases of food stamp fraud for eventual prosecution.

The hiring will be presented to members of the Hoke County Commission for a final OK during the next scheduled meeting, Witherspoon said.

Presently, DSS has 14 to 15 cases of suspected fraud involving \$12,000 to \$18,000, Witherspoon said, adding that staff members do not have the time needed to process the cases.

Under state law, 50% of the (See DSS SAYS, page 12)

Bank Merger Dead

Chances of further negotiations are slim on what was billed the largest bank merger in the history of North Carolina, a spokesman for First Union Corp. said Monday.

The \$86 million merger between First Union of Charlotte and United Carolina Bancshares Corp. (UCB) of Whiteville has been "shelved" and is not likely to be revived, spokesman Jim Singleton said.

Singleton would not speculate whether or not First Union was still in a mood to seek other mergers in the state after what the Charlotte firm considered a fair offer was rejected by UCB.

UCB turned thumbs down on the merger Friday, after the Board of Directors voted unanimously to remain independent.

First Union had offered a combination of its stock, promissory notes and cash valued at \$22 per share.

UCB is still working the kinks out of its latest merger which was a takeover of the Bank of Raeford on March 1.

In a letter received Monday by UCB stockholders, Board Chairman L.R. Bowers noted that the decision to reject the offer was

made because members felt:

--The offer was deemed to be inadequate. It was also considered to be untimely.

--There is a question whether approval of such a merger by the U.S. Controller of the Currency or the U.S. Justice Department could be obtained. Singleton said First Union was confident of the approval.

--While the merger was pending, a cloud of uncertainty could damage employe morale and probably cause key employes to leave the organization.

--The delay in approval of the merger would also restrict UCB's ability to attract new business, make planning difficult, almost halt the momentum the bank has now and could result in a loss of an undetermined number of present customers.

The offer was made to UCB unsolicited in early August, and the matter was turned over to a committee of outside directors to study.

The committee employed an experienced investment banking firm to evaluate the offer and also retained, as special counsel, a (See MERGER, page 12)



Summer's End -- These Raeford youngsters were making the best of their free time this week before returning to school on Wednesday by jumping their bicycles over this Fifth Avenue embankment. Bill Locklear (left) soars here, while companion jumper Andrea Walker checks his height.