

Worker Hired To Prepare Stamp Fraud Cases

The Hoke County commissioners Tuesday authorized employment of an assistant to help prepare suspected food stamp fraud cases for review by the Hoke County Board of Social Services and a secretary to staff the county inspection and maintenance departments' office.

The actions were taken at the board's regular first-of-the-month meeting, postponed a day because of the Labor Day holiday.

The authorization of the appointment of the food stamp fraud cases worker was made for the County Department of Social Services in reply to a request made by the Social Services Board. The latter had voted at its August 30 meeting to make the request of the commissioners.

The reasons for it were described in a letter written by and in person before the commissioners by Ken Witherspoon, department director. Witherspoon's letter explained

that "Approximately 12-15 food stamp cases have been identified by various means as possibly being fraudulent. The total amount of monies involved is difficult to determine at this time but could range from \$12,000 to \$18,000."

Witherspoon's letter added that the Social Services Department's "problem has been in securing enough staff time in preparing these cases for presentation to the Board of Social Services. If the Board authorizes the Director, then he presents the cases to the District Attorney. After a satisfactory review, warrants can be drawn and then the cases move through the court system."

The Social Services request was for permission to add a food stamps worker for 45 days (30 working days) to prepare the cases for putting into the procedure. However, Commissioner Danny DeVane, a former Fayetteville police-

man, said he didn't believe this would be enough time, and moved to authorize the employment for up to six months. This means, it was pointed out, that the worker could be employed for less time if the job took less than six months.

Witherspoon's letter says the staff time would be reimbursed at a 75/25 match rate. This means the county would pay 25 per cent and federal funds the remainder. The county share would be \$408 per 45 days, according to the Social Services Board request.

He told the commissioners in describing the situation that aside from the suspected food-stamp fraud cases, three cases of suspected fraud involving funds in the program of Aid to Families with Dependent Children are ready to go to the Social Services Board for review.

Witherspoon said that the 12 to 15 suspected food stamp fraud

cases were seen among the total of about 1,400 food stamp recipients on the Social Services Department rolls.

SECRETARY

The request for the inspection and maintenance departments secretary was made by Jack Ellis, head of the county Inspection Division, to County Manager James Martin, who recommended to the commissioners: consider approving a clerical position at an annual rate of \$7,912 to \$8,643.

Ellis explained to the commissioners that the secretary is needed to set up and maintain a records system and also to handle incoming calls from contractors and to issue permits to contractors coming to the office. He said the inspection department now has no one in the office all the time, so that a visiting contractor may find no

one there when he comes on business. He also said 95 to 96 per cent of all permits issued are issued to out-of-town contractors. Ellis also mentioned other reasons for employing a secretary.

The motion adopted includes the provision that the secretary be available for helping other county departments when the secretary is not needed in inspection and maintenance.

The pay will range from \$7,912 to \$8,643 annually, depending on the employee's qualifications and experience.

PRINTER

In reference to Social Services, the commissioners also authorized the purchase from the lowest bidder of a printer for computer use in the food stamp program. The lowest of the three bids to supply the printer is \$4,924 which

includes a cluster feature, and \$3,785 without it. The other bidders and bids were: CMA -- \$4,100 without the cluster feature (\$1,139 in each of the three bids), and SOS -- \$3,850, without the cluster feature.

Without a printer in Social Services now, the one clerk now working in food stamps has "to make almost daily trips to secure printouts on the (Courtthouse) annex printer." Witherspoon said in his written request to Martin. The absence of the clerk on these trips to the annex "causes another staff member to fill in while she is away. The other option is to send the supervisor or an eligibility specialist to the annex. Neither way is very good management on my part."

The federal government will pay half the expenses of the extra help.

(See STAMP FRAUD, page 14)

Around Town

BY SAM C. MORRIS

Now this is what I call perfect weather, not hot or cold, just right. Let's hope that it will continue this way and on until the winter weather comes in November or December. But we all know that this is too much to hope for at this time of year.

Last Friday afternoon I received a phone call at home from Danny DeVane and he informed me that his Republican opposition had asked that his name be left off the ballot and that the time had passed for him to be replaced. Of course this was good news for me, but I can't believe that anyone could have been any happier than Danny DeVane.

I was not here on election night when he won the nomination, but last Friday was enough to last me for a long time.

This will not only take the sweat and worry out of having to run, but it will save Danny money in advertising in the three counties. Most folks don't realize how much it costs this day and time to be elected to public office.

So let me say again, congratulations to him and it is good to have a Hoke County representative once again.

I went out to lunch last Thursday with Bill Archer, manager of the Raeford Plant and Jack Bradford who was down from the group office in Clarksville, Va. During the course of our conversation, I made the error of calling the plant Pacific Mills. Of course this branch is no longer in existence and the name is Men's Wear Division.

Bradford said that he could tell when folks had been in a place for many years because they would make the same mistake about the name of other plants in other places. He named Lexington, Burlington and one or two other places where the names had changed.

Maybe plants are not the only things that can be re-named and mistakes made. Last Saturday night as I was listening to the Furman-State game over WPTF in Raleigh, one of the announcers called the site of the game Riddick Stadium. Of course the place is Carter Stadium.

This announcer must have been around for a number of years for State did play at Riddick Stadium or Field many years ago.

I guess when you get accustomed to a place the name sticks with you.

The way of the scoring for Hoke High last Friday night brought back memories of a Rose Bowl game many years ago. In that game a player, I believe his name was Ray Reigel, ran the wrong way against Georgia Tech and the game was lost by one point. I think

(See AROUND TOWN, page 14)



IN THE DITCH -- This worker last week was packing dirt around utility lines which were recently installed to serve the new addition on the First Baptist Church. The new lines forced workers to take a sizeable chunk out of Main Street.

DeVane Assured Of Seat

Raeford real estate broker Daniel H. DeVane was virtually assured of a seat in the state House of Representatives Friday after Republican opposition in the November 2 general election failed to materialize.

Until Friday DeVane had been one of four candidates expected on the ballot who were vying for three seats in the House.

However, Republican candidate Steve Strickland withdrew from the race earlier last week and fellow party officials failed to name a replacement by the 3 p.m. Friday deadline.

The ballots will be printed with the names of DeVane and two other Democratic Party nominees and

will show no Republican opposition, Hoke County Election Supervisor Rose Sturgeon said Friday.

Voters will rubber stamp the Democratic Party candidates for the three House seats, she said.

DeVane will be the first House member from Hoke County in approximately 10 years. He will join John (Pete) Hasty and Sidney A. Locks representing Hoke, Robeson and Scotland Counties.

In the primary runoff voting July 27, DeVane finished second in the three-county tally about 500 votes behind Locks and 700 ballots ahead of Hasty.

DeVane swept the Hoke County vote winning by more than 1,000 votes.

Federal Ax Hits Elderly In Hoke

The federal budget ax fell on Hoke County again last week, cutting 30 elderly and disabled residents from a bi-weekly chore service program.

The cuts may force some of the residents to abandon their present dwellings and enter a rest home, a spokesman for the Hoke County Department of Social Services (DSS) said Friday.

The program, was designed to

help the disabled elderly remain in their homes, and also employed three workers in their 60's to conduct domestic chores on an every-two-week basis.

Without the assistance of the workers to do the chores, which included house cleaning, washing clothes and some cooking, at least some of the recipients may be forced to enter rest homes, DSS (See FEDERAL AX, page 14)

Most Hoke County Students Testing Above State Average

Hoke County students in the four elementary school grades tested about six months ago performed on the whole above or about equal to their grades but ninth graders fell below, a state summary of the test scores shows.

The scores showed what the child knows and the skills he or she actually achieved.

The summaries were published and issued statewide in recent weeks.

The tests, in reading and mathematics fields, formed the North Carolina Annual Testing Program of Basic Skills for the five grades.

The report shows the following for the Hoke County students in the grades indicated.

In the First Grade, a total of 443 students took the reading test. On the whole the scores showed they were performing at the level of close to the second grade -- the first year plus eight months. They also had a percentile of 59, which means they did at least as well or better than 59 percent of the students throughout the nation taking the test.

In mathematics, the 443 students over-all were performing at the level of the third month of the second grade. The scores gave them an 83 percentile.

A total of 289 Second Graders took the reading test, and their over-all score showed a performance equal to what is expected of students in the Third Grade. Their percentile was 57. In mathematics, the students' scores showed the equivalent of the fifth month of the Third Grade, with an 84 percentile.

A total of 414 Third Graders scored the equivalent of students three months into the Third Grade in reading, and six months into the Third Grade in mathematics. The scores over-all gave them a 39

percentile in reading and 42 in mathematics.

Among the Sixth Graders, 390 took the reading test, and their scores over-all showed the equivalent of three months into the Sixth Grade, with a percentile of 45. In mathematics, 390 took the test, with scores on the whole showing eight months into the sixth grade in performance, with a percentile of 52.

The 317 Ninth Graders scored in reading the equivalent of students in the eighth month of the Eighth Grade, and their percentile was 40. In mathematics the grade equivalent for the 317 over-all was six months into the Eighth Grade, with a percentile of 38.

County Schools Supt. Raz Autry said the administration felt pleased with the elementary graders' performances but not with the Ninth Graders.

Elsewhere in Region 4, which contains 18 school systems, including Ft. Bragg's federal and Hoke County's, the grade equivalents in reading showed Ninth Grade students in some were higher but others the same or lower than Hoke's (Ft. Bragg's was not listed in the Ninth Grade category in the state report). The grade equivalents of Ninth or higher in other school systems included Moore County five months into the Tenth Grade, Cumberland, Harnett and Montgomery Tenth each, and Whiteville city Tenth Grade second month, and Lee County Tenth, third month. The grade equivalents for the Fayetteville city Tenth first month. The grade equivalents for Scotland and Richmond were Ninth or higher but less than Tenth.

School systems of the region showing a grade equivalent lower than Hoke's Ninth Graders in the mathematics tests' scores include Fairmont city and Robeson County Eighth Grade, and Red Springs city and Columbus County, Eighth Grade third month each. Bladen and St. Pauls were higher than Hoke but less than Ninth Grade.

In the math test results for the Ninth Grade, Hoke's grade equivalent was even with Columbus County's. Moore County was tops with a GE of 11th Grade first month. Fairmont city ranked lowest with Eighth Grade third month.

In the language tests, however, Hoke's Ninth Graders showed a GE of Ninth Grade eighth month with a 51 percentile.

Regionwide, the 10,406 students who took the reading test scored a grade equivalent of Ninth fifth month and a percentile of 49. Statewide, 86,233 Ninth Graders took the test, coming up over-all with the equivalent of a Tenth Grade performance and a percentile of 53.

In mathematics, the region's figures were Ninth Grade eighth month and a 51 percentile, and statewide they were Tenth Grade equivalent and a 54 percentile.

For the other grades tested, the figures for region and state were:

--Reading: region GE Sixth Grade ninth month, and 53 percentile. State GE Seventh Grade fifth month, and 63 percentile.

The region and state figures for the First, Second and Third grades are not listed.

Voter Registration Deadline Oct. 4

The deadline for registering to vote in the November 2 general election is 5 p.m. October 4.

Hoke County people were reminded of this Friday by Rose Sturgeon, supervisor of Hoke County elections. She is in the Hoke County Board of Elections office in the Old County Office Building on West Elwood Avenue.

Mrs. Sturgeon also said that applications for absentee ballots could be requested as early as last Friday.

Applications for one-stop voting ballots and for absentee ballots will be received up to 5 p.m. September 28, Mrs. Sturgeon added. After that, it will be too late to apply.

One-stop voting will start October 5. Any registered who will be out of town on election day is eligible to vote the one-stop method.

The voting places will open on election day at 6:30 a.m. and remain open till 7:30 p.m.



CACTUS BLOSSOM -- For the first time in noticeable memory, this four-year-old cactus gave birth recently to a blossom during day light hours. The cactus, which belongs to the David Davis family on East Fifth Avenue in Raeford, normally blooms around midnight for anyone who is up to watch it. However, this year it was in full bloom at noon. The Davis' attribute the change to recent rainy weather.