

## Phone Rates Jump Here

**By Sherry Matthews**  
Higher basic telephone rates went into effect last week in Hoke County, as Carolina Telephone began charging operating expenses to customers' monthly bills.

The phone company announced last Thursday that bills would increase and be reflected in the statements received after April 6.

For some 4,400 residential customers already on the Raeford exchange this means an increase from the existing rate of \$7.20 to \$7.90.

Raeford businesses did not fair as well. The basic rate for business phones on the Raeford exchange will increase \$1 from \$17.95 to \$18.95.

Hoke County residents who are on the Red Springs exchange will see basic service rates increase \$1.15 per month from \$6.95 to \$8.10. Red Springs exchange business phones will be hiked by \$2.05 per month.

Fayetteville residential phones will go up \$1.50 per month from \$10.45 to \$11.95. Business phones in Fayetteville will increase \$2.40 per month.

The newest rate increase is being blamed on deregulation and the "high cost of living."

"Inflation has hit us just like any other company," Carolina Telephone spokesman J. L. Holmes of the Fayetteville office said.

Deregulation seems to be another thorn in the side of the phone companies.

"Deregulation is bringing higher rates to local service as competition increases in long-distance service and equipment sales, which traditionally have subsidized local service," Vice President of Administration T. P. Williamson said in a press release which announced the hike.

Even with the increase, telephone company officers believe the service they administer "remains an excellent buy considering the benefits it provides to homes and businesses."

The overall rate hike which was approved by the state Utilities Commission, will be a \$13.9 million for Carolina Telephone.

## Around Town

by Sam Morris

Maybe the rain has stopped for awhile. We notice as we drive around the county that most fields are still under water and it will be some time before a tractor can get there to prepare the soil for planting. The days of the horse and mule to prepare the land would make it almost impossible at this late date. The tractor with the heavy drags and plows can catch up very quickly when the land does dry out. We hope that the farmers don't get too far behind.

Anyway, we are fortunate here in Hoke County compared to the people in other parts of the nation that have been flooded. It is hard to imagine as you watch pictures on television that people will clean up their homes and resume life again in a few days.

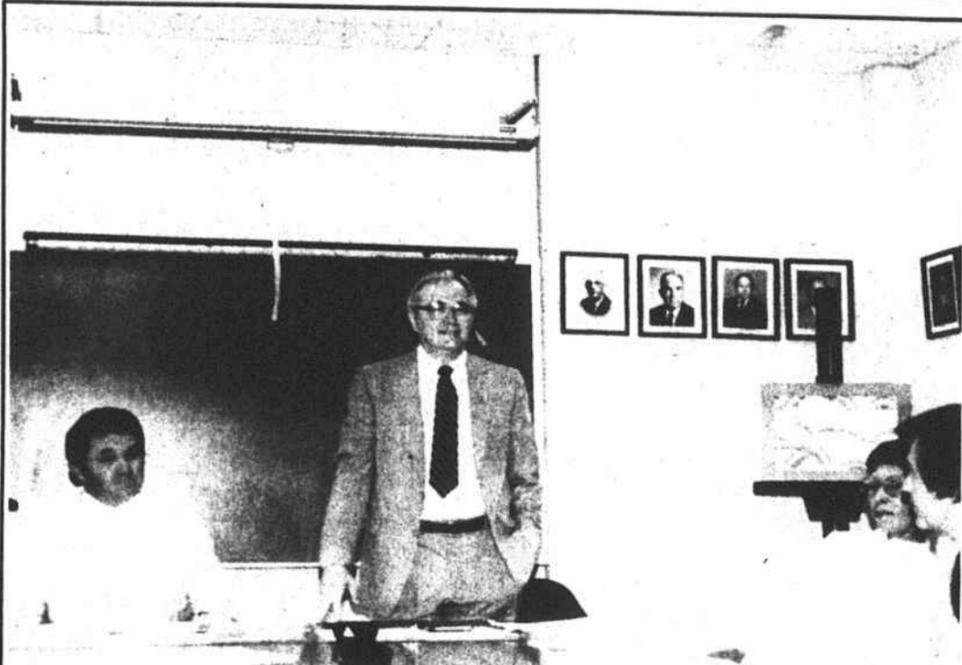
Yes, we all have troubles, but the fellow in the next state seems to have more problems than ours.

Have you seen and heard enough about N.C. State winning the NCAA Championship? Of course if you are a State fan, you will answer NO. On the other hand most others will say that they have seen red about enough.

As of this writing we don't know if the 'Pack' will get to the White House, but if they do, they can well represent North Carolina.

The Hoke County United Way drive is now underway and they need your support. Read elsewhere about the agencies that will be aided by this fund and then give generously to the volunteer that calls on you.

(See AROUND TOWN, page 10A)



**New Superintendent**  
Robert A. Nelson (standing), the new Hoke County School Superintendent, addresses school board members and the press after being named for the post Tuesday by board chairman Bill Cameron (seated left).

## New Superintendent Appointed

**By Sherry Matthews**  
After nearly five months of accepting applications, the Hoke County School Board Tuesday morning unanimously voted to name a new superintendent.

Robert A. Nelson, 52, of Alamance County was named Hoke County Superintendent by board Chairman W.W. Cameron with an overwhelming approval by the board members during a meeting specially called for the announcement.

Nelson, whose application was received February 25, made four requested visits to Hoke County

before being officially asked to take over the helm.

"I am very happy to be here, and I'm looking forward to working with the board and the entire school system," Nelson said.

"Everybody is extremely happy about this decision," Cameron said.

The decision came after the board had reviewed 43 applications that had been sent in since mid-January.

According to Cameron, the board narrowed down the choices to six top candidates and interviewed three of the six.

"Bob was our first choice," Cameron said.

Nelson, who has been superintendent of the Alamance County School System for almost 12 years, and previously superintendent of the Morganton City Schools, is looking forward to residing in a small town.

Graham, the city where Nelson has lived for the past 12 years is larger than Raeford and Alamance County is larger than Hoke.

"I enjoy the small town atmosphere," Nelson said.

(See SCHOOL, page 11A)



**Master of the saw**  
This worker is drawing off boards in preparation for the sawing to come. He is one of many men on the job at the Pilot Building attempting to finish construction so that the county offices can be moved by the end of May or the first of June.

## Sales Tax Hike Backed By Hoke

**By Sherry Matthews**  
A one cent sales tax proposal, which has been sitting on a state Legislative finance committee burner since March 14, is being supported by Hoke County Commissioners, County Manager James Martin said.

House Bill 426 will allow counties to increase sales taxes by one cent and calls for proceeds to be distributed on a 50-50 basis between the state and the county, Martin said.

According to Martin, the funds generated by the proposed bill will bring in about \$120,000 extra to the county government which will be used in the General Fund Revenue with "no strings attached by the state."

Of the monies collected from the proposed tax increase the Raeford city government would receive 15%, with the balance going to the county government, Martin said.

There have been numerous bills proposed in the General Assembly this year to increase the sales tax, but none have passed.

(See SALES TAX, page 11A)

## Crews Working To Complete Building

**By Sherry Matthews**  
Saws are buzzing, hammers are pounding, and men are baring their backs, in an effort to complete the renovations needed before the Hoke County offices can be moved.

At present, the county offices are located in the courthouse annex and house 11 employees.

After renovations are completed the offices will be moved to the old Pilot Building on Main Street, County Manager James Martin said.

County taxpayers are spending close to \$150,000 for the building and repairs.

The decision to move the county offices was made because the sheriff's department needed and

requested extra space, Martin said.

"They wanted to expand the prisoner visiting area so that more than two prisoners could visit at one time," Martin said.

Space was also requested to accommodate a waiting area for prison visitors.

At present, visitors must wait in the outer administrative office, Martin said.

An architect was hired to give an estimate on how much the renovations and expansion would cost, Martin said.

"To bring the expanded area up to North Carolina jail standards, the architect estimated the cost would run around \$150,000, Martin said.



**Bird populated tree**  
The sun came out Monday, bringing with it chirping birds housing in the tree limbs.

## Sewer Woes Ease, Firm's Fines Held

**By Sherry Matthews**  
Members of the Raeford City Council deferred action Monday night on sewer discharge fines pending against the House of Raeford because construction on a waste water treatment plant is nearing completion.

The turkey plant worked three days last week with the new system, and are now trying to get the rest of the bugs out, City Manager Ron Matthews said during the regular monthly meeting.

According to Matthews, plant administrators are hoping the system will be completed by the end of this week.

The pre-treatment facility is aiding the plant in bringing its discharge in line with a municipal ordinance.

After the House of Raeford announced plans to construct a pre-treatment facility, council members voted unanimously earlier this year to delay over \$30,000 in fines levied against the plant for discharge violations.

The city is operating under a warning from the state Department of Natural Resources and Community Development (NRCD) because of discharge violations into Rockfish Creek.

Many of the city's sewer woes have been pinned on the House of Raeford by North Carolina officials, and had not action been taken by the turkey plant, Raeford could have faced fines up to \$10,000 per day from the state.

Matthews said Tuesday the city had not heard officially from the state although the NRCD deadline for a 90-day grace period given to correct the sewer problems had passed.

House of Raeford is expected to have the equipment in full operation soon, and the sewer problem

should then be resolved, city officials have said.

### Wooley St. Nod

In other action Monday night, councilmen unanimously voted to apply for a Community Block Grant, sponsored by the federal Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD).

The Wooley Street community was named as the central area for which the grant would be applied.

Before Monday night's council meeting, a public hearing was held with over 20 Wooley Street residents attending in support of developing the neighborhood.

Lumberton engineering firm Koonce, Noble, and Associates spokesman Skip Green reviewed the application process for the councilmen and residents during the public hearing.

According to Green, housing rehabilitation would be the goal to shoot for on the grant application.

"This grant is set up to help low and moderate income individuals and cleaning up this area's housing does not mean beautifying it," Green said.

For the grant to be accepted, the intent must be to bring homes in that area, not presently meeting housing codes, up to that level, Green said.

The city would be competing with other cities for the grant money, Green added.

Last year, only 41 cities out of 200 applying, received grant monies, City Manager Ron Matthews said.

"Our chances are about one in five of getting funded," Matthews said.

"We like what we see and will support you in your efforts,"

(See SEWER, page 11A)

The Hoke County Commissioners decided to look at other buildings available that would serve more than one purpose.

The Pilot Building was the result of that search, Martin said.

With the county offices moving to the Pilot Building, the administrative area of the sheriff's department will move into the courthouse annex, leaving room for expansion of the prison waiting facility, Martin said.

The move will give the sheriff's department extra space that was badly needed and allow the county offices to be expanded as well, Martin said.

All these changes and renovations can be done for about the

## Raeford Cracking Down On Errant Dog Owners

Raeford officials are contacting city dog owners, who have apparently forgotten to register and pay taxes on their animals.

Notices are being sent out to approximately 400 owners, who registered to pay county dog fees but failed to pay city charges by the February 15 deadline.

Although the owners are over 30 days past due, City Manager Ron Matthews says the late payers will not be penalized.

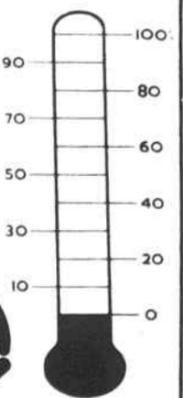
"We won't penalize them this time, as long as they come on in and pay," the city manager said.

Less than 40 dog owners in the city registered their animals and paid the \$2.50 fee on time, Matthews said.

Names of the 400 late payers showed up after county tax listings were turned over to the city, Matthews said, noting that the county provides the listings for Raeford as a regular service.

According to the city ordinance, persons who do not pay the dog fees could be fined up to \$50.

\$23,631



## Inside Today

### Kicking Off

After two weeks, the United Way Campaign is off and running in Hoke County. We take a look at the campaign and the agencies it will be serving in this week's Section B of The News-Journal.