

Hoke High ROTC, 'Worth The Cost'

By Sherry Matthews

After nearly 10 years of trying, the Hoke County School System could very well be next in line for a Junior Reserve Officers' Training Corp (ROTC).

According to Hoke High principal Linwood Simpson, an application was first made back in the 1970's and Hoke County was placed on a waiting list.

Since that time, the school has moved up on the list, but has remained out of contention.

However, in the 1983-84 school budget presented to the County Commissioners for approval,

\$20,000 has been earmarked for the ROTC program.

At this point school officials are unsure if the local funds for the program will be approved, but support among backers for ROTC is strong.

"The ROTC is a good program and one well worth investing in," Superintendent Bob Nelson said.

"The program often will reach students who haven't been reached by the typical curriculum," Nelson said.

"This type of program is a distinct advantage for a school," Nelson added.

Both Nelson and Simpson are backing the program and see long range benefits.

"I think it is an excellent program that provides good benefits for both young men and women," Simpson said.

"I support it whole-heartedly and hope it gets off the ground this year," Simpson added.

At this point, funding for the program must come from local monies.

According to Gloria Williams, who is director of instruction for the 7-12 grades, the \$20,000 in local money goes toward the

salaries of two instructors who are "retired military."

The army pays the instructors retirement and the school must make up the difference, Williams said.

According to Williams, the army provides the equipment and the uniforms used, while the school must provide facilities and salaries.

State monies are not appropriated for "extra curricula" activities, so the local government must fund it, Williams said.

Many people believe that the ROTC program would benefit a lot of children.

School board vice-chairman Mina Townsend voiced support for the program at a recent board meeting saying that she felt the ROTC would benefit those "kids who did not wish to take college preparatory courses."

Others see the ROTC as a discipline tool.

"The program will instill discipline into students who often times need a more regimented way of life," Nelson said.

According to Nelson, the ROTC will also provide "beneficial" experiences for the students.

Through the ROTC program, a

young man or woman will learn discipline, responsibility, leadership, physical fitness and the various opportunities that the U.S. Army can provide.

According to Williams, some of the students involved with the ROTC may graduate from high school and enter the military or choose college and the ROTC programs offered there.

Those students who finish the ROTC in college and join the army, go into service as an officer, Williams said.

"There are a lot of opportunities (See ROTC, page 3A)

Around Town

by Sam Morris

We did get a little rain in Raeford Sunday afternoon, but we can still use a good rain. I have been informed that Robert Gatlin said that six-hundredths of an inch fell Sunday.

The forecast is for rain on Wednesday and if it goes as in the past few days, most of it will either go north or south of Raeford.

According to one farmer, it is not too bad at the present time. He did say that we couldn't hold off many more days without rain, without it hurting crops.

The annual meeting of the Raeford-Hoke Chamber of Commerce last Tuesday night was well attended. Just about all businesses and local government offices were represented.

Steve Parker, manager of SNB, was installed as the new president and we know that he will do a good job. Of course he will need the support of all the business leaders of the community. So let's all get behind him and see Raeford and Hoke County move forward.

Lauch Faircloth, Secretary of Commerce of North Carolina, was the principal speaker and he left no doubt in anyone's mind that he is thinking about running for governor. It would seem that he is closely related to about everyone in Hoke County, all at once. So this is a good sign that he is looking for votes.

It was good to hear that Faberge is expanding and we congratulated the company on their fine community involvement since coming to Raeford.

You know whenever you go to the barber shop to get a hair cut, you will also get plenty of news. It seems that barbers have a way of making conversation.

Last week Stanley Koonce was telling me about spending a recent weekend in Rock Hill, S.C. with his son, Don and family. They attended church services there and during the worship hour, he said, all visitors were asked to stand.

After service, a man came up to Stanley and Louise and introduced himself as a Mr. Sturgis. This caused Stanley to ask him about Carrie Sturgis that taught here in Raeford during the 1920s and 1930s. Of course he expected to hear that she was dead, if this man knew her. It was just the opposite. The man was related to Miss Sturgis and said she lived with her nephew on the edge of the city.

After getting directions to the house Stanley, Louise and his son went to the house. There they had a visit with Miss Sturgis and she was able to walk back to the car with them. She should be in her 80s, but Stanley said except for age, she was still the same small lady we would all remember. Of course, as we all know, as we get older, we can't remember like we could years ago.

To many of the late comers to Raeford this will not mean anything to you. But to many graduates of Raeford High School in the 20s and 30s I know you will be glad that Stanley related this to me.

Thanks Stanley and get me more news for my next haircut.



Somewhere down the tracks

You can't here the lonesome whine of the train nor can you see the locomotive rolling past, but somewhere down those tracks an engine is slowly creeping its way toward Raeford perhaps in search of a destination and a place to cool its tiring axles.

Hoke Mental Health Unit Running Smoothly

By Sherry Matthews

Despite rumors to the contrary, Sandhills Mental Health Acting Director Paul McDonald says the Hoke County Clinic is operating normally.

McDonald, who was director of the Hoke County unit, took over the helm of the mental health facility after Dr. Steven Dingfelder resigned his position three weeks ago.

Area residents have complained

that the Hoke unit has been placed on the back burner due to McDonald's appointment.

"There is no shortage of coverage in the Hoke County area," McDonald said.

"We are rotating different people through there so that things will continue to run smoothly," McDonald added.

According to McDonald, the only thing missing from the Hoke unit is him.

"Everything is covered to this point. The only thing different is, I won't be there," McDonald said.

The musical chairs that the center has been playing with its employees began when a letter by Raeford attorney Philip Diehl, who is also a center board member, sparked a state audit of the center's books.

The audit was initiated because of the center's alleged misuse of funds, and Dingfelder's apparent

violation of state conflict of interest statutes.

Diehl had said in an earlier interview that Dingfelder was involved with the Sandhills Mental Health Foundation, which is a non-profit counseling service in Moore County that provides services much like the center.

A tentative audit was presented to the board on Wednesday, May 11, the same night that Dingfelder and four board members resigned.

McDonald was immediately named to assume Dingfelder's responsibilities, taking him away from the Hoke County unit.

According to McDonald, the center's situation has not prevented the Hoke unit from being "taken care of."

"That is my own backyard. I am seeing to it that they don't get slighted in any way," McDonald added.

After 50 Years

Troop 401 In Danger

By Sherry Matthews

After more than 50 years of existence, Raeford Boy Scout Troop 401 is in danger of extinction.

The scout troop, which has been sponsored by the Raeford Kiwanis Club since the 1920's, is in danger of losing its charter because of a lack of a scout master to lead the troop.

According to Kiwanian Steve Connell, who is also heading the committee formed to keep the scout troop alive, finding a scout master has "been a tough job."

"It has been nearly a year since we've had an active scout troop or a master," Connell said.

The Kiwanis Club appointed a new scout master sometime last year, but due to a lack of communication, the troop "fell apart at the seams", Connell said.

"As a result, there were no meetings, no outings and eventually no troop," Connell said.

With the troop's future on the line, Connell says that interest in the scouts is peaking again.

"There has been a great deal of

interest over this thing, especially from disgruntled parents who are concerned about the future of the scouts," Connell said.

"We (Kiwanis) have also renewed our dedication to this troop and plan to work more diligently than we have in the past to see that it continues to exist," Connell said.

"I would hate to see it go," Connell added.

At present the Kiwanis Club has formed a three-man committee set up to study the scout situation and locate a master for the troop.

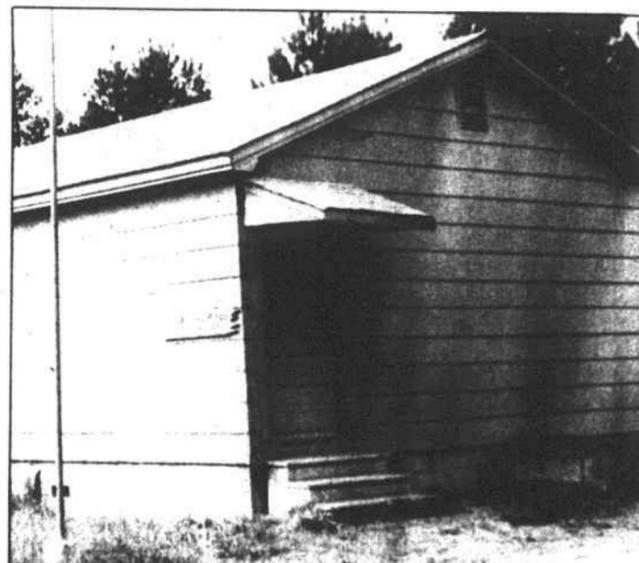
"We have the facilities and the money, but it takes a lot more than just that," Connell said.

"We need to find someone who is willing to take on the responsibility," he added.

With 43 scouts on the roster last year, and no one actively involved at present, something must be done, and Connell is the first to admit it.

"We have got to get this thing straightened out," Connell said.

"I feel like we will be successful (See SCOUTS, page 7A)



Deserted: unkept and alone

The 401 Scout hut is just before being closed for good. Because there is no scout master, there are no scouts, and without scouts there is no need for this hut. It has been deserted, left unkept and alone for the past year as decisions are being made on the fate of the troop and the hut. If a scout master is not found to take over the troop within 30 days, the doors to this scout hut will be slammed shut for the last time.

Waste Probe Awaits Results

By Sherry Matthews

The results of samples taken two weeks ago by state and local health officials at a suspected Hoke County battery burial site should be completed by Friday, Hoke Health Director Lloyd Horne said.

The battery site is one of three areas in Hoke County that has been under the scrutiny of state officials for the past month as containing toxic and cancer causing substances.

Results of tests taken for Polychlorinated Biphenyls (PCB's), which were also taken two weeks ago, are expected to be finalized by Wednesday, Horne said.

Some PCB samplings taken from the sites earlier, which are located in the Ashley Heights and McCain areas, have shown low to mid level readings of toxic chemicals, officials have said.

The lead samplings were taken from an alleged battery burial site in the Ashley Heights area, which is approximately 60 yards from a well which had been used, until recently, to serve a nearby mobile home park.

Transformer salvage business owner Woody Wilson Jr. of Goldsboro admits burying battery

casings in the Ashley Heights area prior 1980.

Wilson claims that he buried just the battery casings at the site and under the direction of Hoke Health Officer Mike Wood.

Horne denies that Wood directed Wilson to bury the casings.

According to Horne, Wood "did not tell Wilson to bury the batteries."

Wood, however, was aware that the batteries had been buried "after the fact," Horne said, adding that the matter was turned over to the "proper state authorities."

The actual burial site of the battery casings was also not known to health officials until recently, Horne said.

The investigation into the three sites began after health officials received reports of late night burnings from area residents.

Health officials believe that electrical transformer parts and oil from electrical units were being burned.

An Ashley Heights area location and a site within half a mile of McCain Hospital have shown evidence of melted metal and heat damage to the surroundings.

Until all the test results are in, (See LAB, page 7A)

Foreclosures Levied Against Commissioner

By Sherry Matthews

United Carolina Bank has begun foreclosure proceedings on three tracts of land owned by Hoke County Commissioner James Albert Hunt.

The three tracts of land are located in the South Hoke area that Hunt recently renamed Huntsville.

Hunt's garage and land adjoining that property will be up for sale to the highest bidder during a public auction to be held at the Hoke County Courthouse on June 27.

Under North Carolina law, Hunt has until then to catch up the payments he apparently has neglected.

"We did it exactly like we would for any other customer," UCB president Robert Conolly said, adding that there was no prejudice shown one way or the other.

Hunt, vice-chairman of the Hoke County Board of Commis-

(See HUNT'S, page 7A)