



The News-Journal

The Hoke County News - Established 1928

The Hoke County Journal - Established 1905

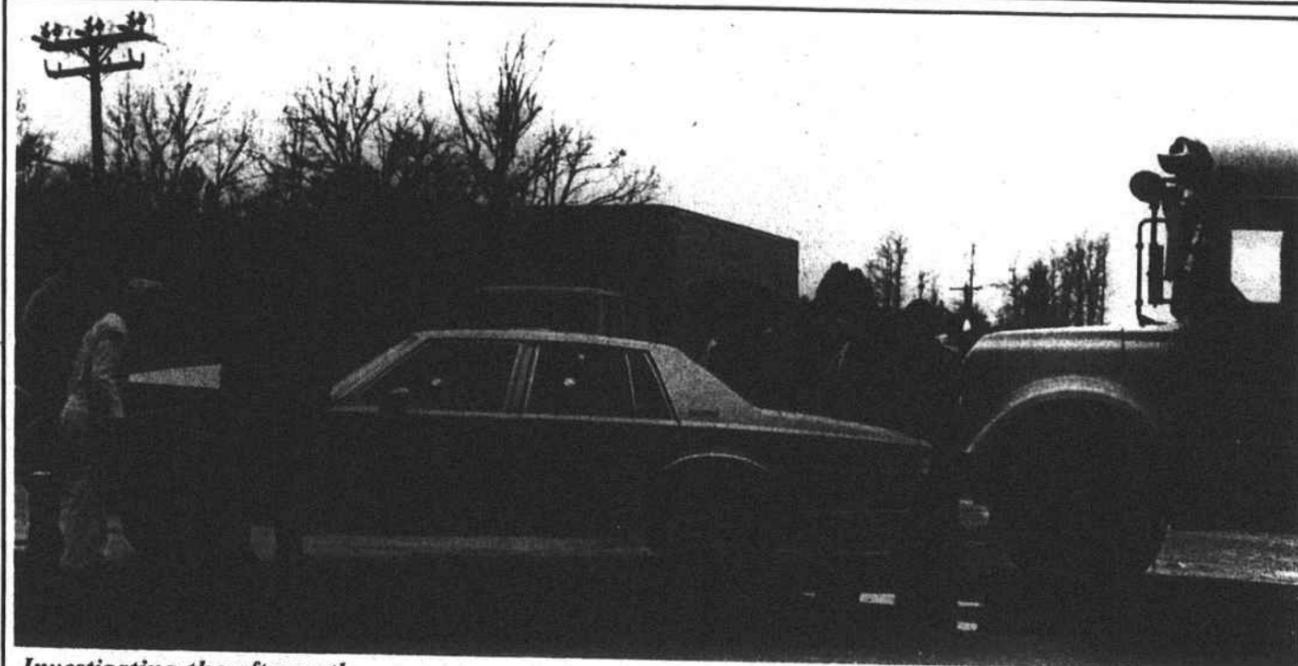
Volume LXXV Number 34

RAEFORD, HOKE COUNTY, NORTH CAROLINA

\$10 PER YEAR

25 CENTS

Thursday, December 15, 1983



Investigating the aftermath

School officials and county rescue squad personnel look over the scene of Monday afternoon's accident involving two cars and a school bus loaded with 33 children on their way home from school. No children were injured in the accident, Finance Officer Don Steed said. Witnesses say the bus was hit when a car driven by Lanie McNair apparently failed to yield the right-of-way at the intersection of Highway

401 one mile from Raeford. The McNair vehicle apparently hit a car headed towards Laurinburg. When the two front ends slammed together, the cars spun around and the McNair car hit the front end of the school bus. Steed said that the bus was at a "complete stand still" when the car struck. State Trooper Scott Burgess, who investigated the accident, could not be reached for comment.

Armed Holdup Suspect Jailed

By Sherry Matthews

A Fayetteville man was in jail this week after being arrested Thursday and charged with the November armed robbery of a Raeford finance company.

Michael Reynolds, 31, was arrested by Raeford Police and charged with the November 3 armed robbery of the Raeford Safeway Finance Company, Chief Leonard Wiggins said.

Reynolds was taken into custody by local officials shortly after being tried in Cumberland County District Court on unrelated charges, Wiggins said.

Officers returned the Fayetteville suspect to the Hoke County Jail. His bond was set at \$10,000 and had not been posted on Tuesday, a spokesman for the Sheriff's office said.

"The arrest comes after a whole lot of leg work and many hours of investigation," Wiggins said.

"Our constant investigation into this matter made it possible for us

to make the arrest," Wiggins said. Officers believe Reynolds entered the Safeway Finance office armed with a "blue steel pistol" and forced two of the three employees in the office to lie on the floor.

The third employee, a female, was made to open the cash drawer and give the robber the money, Wiggins said.

The culprit fled on Main Street and ran around the back of the building taking with him over \$900, the chief added.

"From the time we got the call until we made the arrest, our investigation was constant," Wiggins said.

Although the Red Springs Safeway Company was robbed a week earlier, Wiggins would not comment on a possible connection between the two crimes.

"I just could not say if they were related."

Reynolds is expected to be arraigned on the charges in Hoke District Court this week.

Committee Views Turlington As School Survey Begins

By Sherry Matthews

Although members of the long-range facilities planning committee inspected "probably the worst conditioned school" last Tuesday, "no recommendations" will be made on the school's needs until all seven educational facilities have been "checked out," Committee Chairman Bobby Gibson said.

"We do not want to make any final decisions or recommendations until we have had a chance to look at all the schools," Gibson said.

Gibson and 17 other committee members visited J.W. Turlington Elementary School last Tuesday. "Turlington is probably going

to be the worst school we see, condition-wise," Gibson said.

The school, which houses some 800 students, was "actually" designed for about 500 children, Turlington Principal Emma Mims said earlier.

"We found the school very overcrowded and in a run down condition," Gibson said.

"The condition of the school is really no one's fault. The building is old and over-filled with students," Gibson said.

On the tour, Gibson and the committee spotted "evidence of recent ceiling leaks" and inadequate space.

"Some parts of the building did not look bad, but a large portion

was in very poor condition," Gibson said.

"Turlington was not in good shape when I was on the school board. Now there are twice as many students and twice the facility problems," Gibson said.

Although Gibson apparently has formed a personal opinion on Turlington, he and his committee have not "officially discussed" the school's condition.

"I am sure everyone who went through there came to their own conclusions, but as a group, we have not discussed it," Gibson said.

The 21-member committee is expected to visit the remaining six

schools and the administrative building by January 31.

"I don't anticipate any real decisions being made on any of the schools until after we have inspected them all and held the four public hearings," Gibson said.

"We want to see for ourselves and seek the public's opinion before any big decision is made," Gibson added.

Hoke County Commissioners and Board of Education members appointed the 21-member committee to determine a comprehensive building plan for the seven county schools.

"Right now, we are just looking over the facilities and generally going over their condition. We are

trying to get some idea of what needs to be done," Gibson said.

"We are really just in the preliminary stages. We want to educate ourselves on what really needs to be done," Gibson said.

Although both county boards are supporting the facility planning committee, Gibson believes the findings may be "financially" more than the county can afford.

"Quite frankly, I don't think Hoke County will be able to do everything financially that we are going to find necessary," Gibson said.

"Our committee is going to have to set some type of priorities and go after the things we can afford," Gibson said.

"We are looking for the most practical solutions. We may have to temper those solutions on what the county can actually do," Gibson said.

"Everyone is working real hard on this. We want to do the best we can," Gibson said.

The planning committee is scheduled to visit McLauchlin and South Hoke within the next two weeks.

"Nothing will be determined until we have had a chance to look at all the schools and discuss our findings," Gibson said.

"This is not something you can complete in a hurry. It is too important."



Inside Today

A house full
Maggie Smith, who is 96, is still caring for "her children" and expects a big crowd for Christmas. She has 13 children, 52 grandchildren, 80 great-grandchildren and nine great-great grandchildren. We take a glimpse at the life of this amazing Hoke County woman on page one of Section B in today's News Journal.

Around Town

By Sam Morris
The rain came again on Sunday night and there were puddles standing in the driveways, so it must have rained very heavy during the night. From reports it must have been heavier in the Arabia section of the county than it was in Raeford. Someone said it rained over three inches there.
I ran into Robert Gatlin, the weatherman, early Monday morning, but he didn't say anything about a record rainfall for the night. Of course he might have had other things on his mind at the time.
The forecast is for clearing by Tuesday and maybe more rain later in the week.
(See AROUND, page 11A)

Unsolved Break-ins Mounting In Hoke

During a five-day period last week, Raeford and Hoke County residents were plagued by eight break-ins and thefts, local authorities say.

As of press time, none of the crimes had been solved.

From December 6 until December 11, the county had begun investigations into six break-ins, enterings and larcenies while the Raeford Police were investigating two weekend crimes.

Last week's activities brings the total of reported unsolved incidents to more than 20 for December and over 30 since mid-November.

On December 6, Queen City Construction reported to county law enforcement officers a break-in at their offices at the Old Truck Stop on U.S. Highway 401.

Sheriff's reports show that someone apparently broke into the office building during the night and took over \$600 in property including two batteries, a radio speaker, an electric heater, 10 bags of ice and a checkbook containing 260 checks.

The investigation into the December 6 break-in is continuing, the report indicates.

Also on December 6, Rayburn Maynor of Rt. 1, Shannon reported that someone had taken over \$300 in property from his home.

The report shows that someone apparently pushed the back door of the Maynor home open and broke loose a night latch that was attached to the door.

A television, a shotgun and a digital clock were among the items reported missing.

No suspects had been found in the case, but the matter is still being investigated by sheriff's detectives, the report shows.

An \$800 "portable generator" was reported stolen the following day, December 7, by Billy Lee Williams of Rt. 1, Aberdeen.

The generator was apparently removed from Williams' pack house.

An investigation into the larceny is being investigated.

On December 6, Michael M. Bell (See BREAK-INS, page 2A)

Funeral Director Charged In Insurance Sales Probe

By Sherry Matthews

The North Carolina Insurance Commissioner's Office is continuing an investigation this week into the "insurance activities" of a local funeral home operator arrested last Thursday, Assistant District Attorney Jean Powell said.

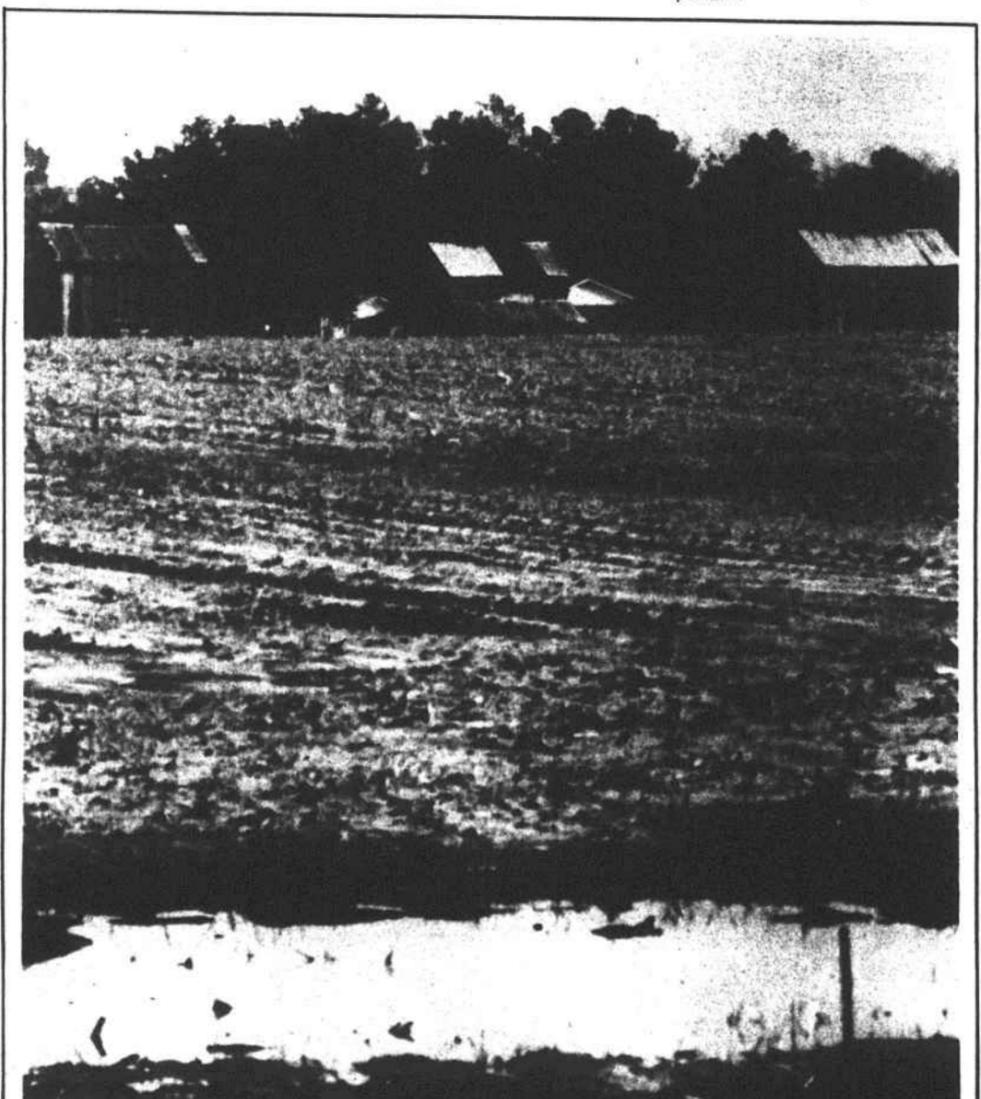
Robert Lee Doby, 48, operator of Raeford's Doby Funeral Home, was arrested last Thursday and charged with six counts of writing insurance policies without being a licensed agent, Powell said.
Doby was arrested and placed

under a \$1,800 unsecured bond but was released the same day.

According to Powell, Doby was apparently writing insurance policies for Carl Virgil, also of Raeford.

Virgil, 55, was also arrested last Thursday and charged with three counts of permitting Doby to negotiate insurance policies.

Virgil, an Raeford insurance agent, was allowing Doby to work for him although he apparently knew Doby was not a licensed agent.
(See DOBY, page 13A)



Soggy December

These fields are too wet to plow after Monday's downpour. With the additional rain expected to fall before the end of the month, December promises to be one of the wettest in recent memory. After lagging far behind during the dry days in August and September, Hoke County is nearing the 52 inch mark for the year as a result of the recent rains.