

Editorials

Commission grounded by no appointments

Almost four months ago, members of the Raeford City Council and the Hoke County Commission got fired up about joining hands on the operation of the airport.

During September, city and county officials adopted a plan for the future of the airport which followed closely one that had been recommended by a Blue Ribbon Study Committee.

That committee cranked up for action in late 1982 and completed its work by last August. Their recommendations were the first to come out of several years of false starts launched by other citizen study groups.

Under the approved plan, the facility would be called the Hoke-Raeford Airport and operating costs would be split between the city and county on a 50-50 basis.

Five residents were to be appointed by the city, the county and the Chamber of Commerce to serve on an airport commission. That

group would oversee the general operation of the airport and would be provided an annual budget.

The action taken by the two political bodies was heralded by backers of industrial development as being a step in the right direction.

Industrial developers feel that a well-run and modern airport, which is capable of handling corporate jet traffic, is an essential element needed to attract large employers to this county.

With the action taken in the fall by the elected officials, it appeared that perhaps a new day was dawning in Hoke County's efforts to garner new jobs, more residents and a higher tax base.

In November, when elected officials said they wanted to take their time choosing the right members for the important airport commission, there was still hope that strong efforts to attract industries here might be forthcoming.

It was not too far-fetched, then, to believe that old business, like the airport, would be put in order before the close of 1983, and the county could move forward to new matters in 1984.

However, that was November, and now it is January and no one has been appointed to the new airport commission.

In fact little has been said publicly about the airport since before Thanksgiving.

Although it is hoped that city and county officials might get around to appointing the airport commission this month, their past reluctance to move has already dragged an old matter into the new year.

The elected officials' failure to act speedily on the airport may also have fouled up the time table for the new commission.

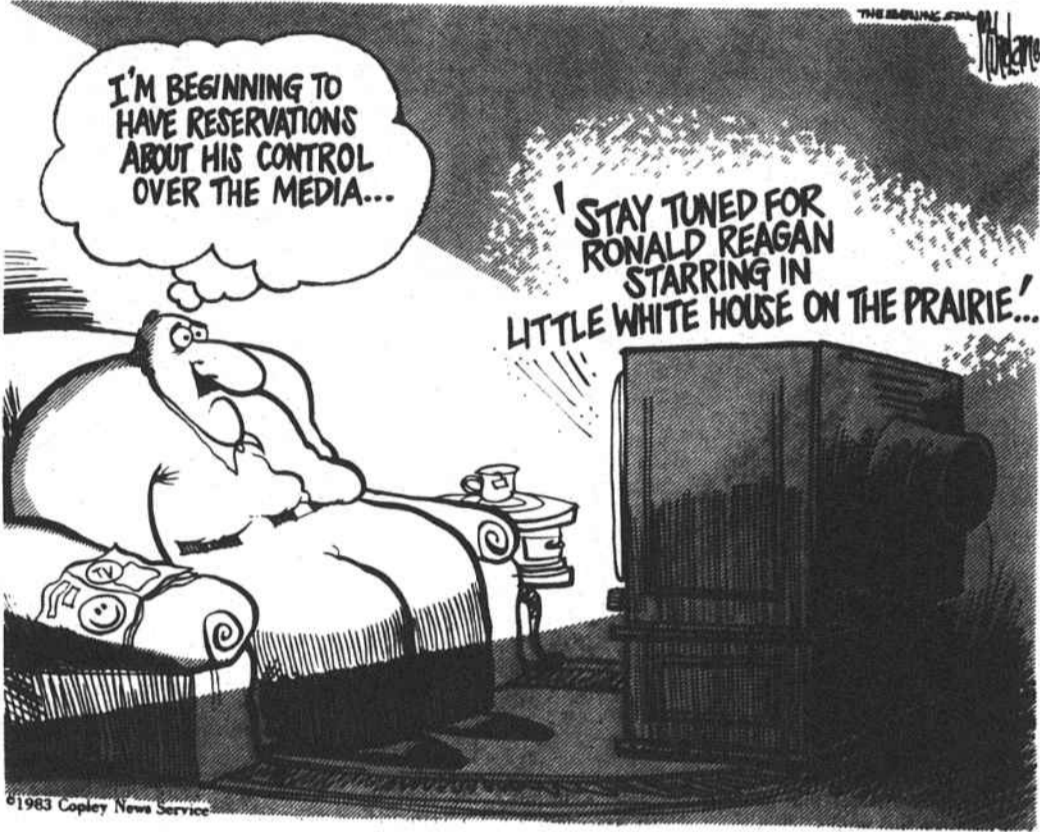
Back in November, it was hoped that the airport commission members could start the new year getting organized and could have full control of the facility by early spring.

By spring the newly appointed group would not only have been familiar with the airport operations, but they would also be in a position to file applications for state and federal facility improvement grants.

If grant applications are not filed on time, improvement projects at the airport could be delayed for another year.

We urge both city and county officials to give the appointment of an airport commission top billing in the remaining meetings both groups have during this month.

To allow the appointments to drag on longer, could make the airport just another dead issue and will continue to be a waste of the tax dollars now being spent to maintain it.



Farewell given 1983 bloopers

By Richard A. Viguerie
A Happy New Year to All, including even...

Barbara Honneger, who, before embarking on her planned investigation of the Shroud of Turin, said, "Reagan is planning coerced body-part donation. And eventually coerced whole-body donations."

The media consultant who asked a "focus group" what they thought of anchorwoman Christine Craft; "Is she a mutt?" he suggested.

The staff member of the Maryland Center for Public Broadcasting, who broke into *Mister Rogers' Neighborhood* to say, "This program is a piece of c--p."

Senate Chaplain Richard Halverson, who, on the last day of the 1983 session, asked God to support "the senators who face the reelection next November, for their staffs and all who support them" and to "provide the finances necessary for them to do their best."

Governor Mario Cuomo (D-New York), who said, "What I'm doing is making dozens and dozens of decisions, and I love it...I could spend the whole day making important decisions. What you don't have time to do is think. You're so busy doing, that you don't have the time to think."

Howard Cosell, who called the Washington Redskins' Alvin Garrett "a little monkey" and described the death of Chicago Bears owner George Halas as "inevitable."

Senator "Fritz" Hollings (D-South Carolina), who said that whether they live under communist rule has little effect on the people of Grenada, who just go on "singing" and "playing the banjo."

The woman in Washington, D.C., who spotted George McGovern campaigning and said, "That's a senator. I've seen him before on TV. I know who it is. That's Birch Bayh."

Supporters of a "nuclear-free zone" in Chico, California, who proposed a fine and six-month jail term for anyone convicted of detonating an atomic bomb within the city limits.

Dennis Sobin, a candidate for the Washington, D.C., school board, who offered a year's membership in a "swingers" club

in exchange for a \$100 contribution. He lost.

Dan Rather, who, when a television reporter tried to interview him on the street, said, ("Expletive deleted) you."

The Canadian firm that accused two American companies of putting cheap toilet seats on the Canadian market. The type of unfair competition alleged by the Canadians is known as "dumping."

The Soviet producers of the documentary "In the Middle of America," which showed an "abandoned" steel mill (abandoned because it was Sunday) and showed homeless men in Kansas City, Kansas, with the White House in the background.

The vice president of the Burning Tree Club, who explained that only one of the club's 600 members was black because minorities "don't play golf."

The District of Columbia Court of Appeals, which ruled that lethal-injection drugs used to carry out the death penalty must be "safe and effective."

The President of Angola, who jailed four people and suspended 32 others from the ruling party for putting on a sketch that was intended to make him laugh. He said the jesters "used the right to criticize incorrectly."

Employees of the Commonwealth of Virginia, who made 2,500 calls in one month to a pornographic telephone service in New York.

A senator's press secretary, who returned a call from "Mike Wallace" only to discover that a practical joker had left the number of the pornographic telephone service. "I listened long enough to make sure it wasn't Mike Wallace," he said, "then I hung up."

Newsweek, which devoted 13 pages to its special report on Hitler's diaries.

The man in England who killed his wife and dumped her body in a bog, then confessed to the crime when a well-preserved head was found there 22 years later. As it turns out, the woman's head had been there 1,600 years.

The Houston man who stabbed himself during a robbery because "He forgot to turn the knife downward."

And the *Dallas Morning News* sports staff, which, in picking winners, was beaten two weeks in a

row by Kanda the Great, a year-old gorilla.

To one and all, better luck this year!



Letters To The Editor

Thanks for help

To the Editor:
The Raeford Woman's Club would like to thank the local people for supporting "Share Your Christmas."

The donations from local churches, civic organizations and individuals enabled us to help many families have a brighter Christmas.

Thanks to Raeford Woman's Club members and other volunteers that helped prepare the bags that we passed out to the families.

Also, thanks to the Hoke County Library for the use of their facilities and *The News-Journal* for their news coverage.

Sincerely,
Clara Pope, President
Raeford Woman's Club

Kudos for collectors of roadside garbage

To the Editor:
A couple of weeks ago, someone or some organization picked up roadside trash between Kings Road and Davis' Bridge.

I counted 38 large bags in about two miles and realize much work went into this effort.

My congratulations to those that accomplished this, and my encouragement to do so on other Hoke County roads.

Thanks,
Robert L. Fox

Christmas Seals still need help

To the Editor:
On behalf of the American Lung Association of North Carolina, Mid-State Region, which serves Hoke County, we would like to express sincere appreciation to the many people of our county who have contributed to the 1983 Christmas Seals Campaign.

The response has been very good considering the tightness of the economy, however, we still have a long way to go to equal our goal of last year which was \$1,840.

Even though the 1983 calendar

(See LETTERS, page 3)

New York for Christmas was worth price

By Warren Johnston

We had thought about going to New York City for some time. It had just been one of those planned trips that never gets taken.

"I would like to see New York sometime," my wife had said about three years ago.

"Let's skip Christmas and go to New York," I said this past December.

We didn't really skip Christmas. We just held down the present giving.

Instead of the lavish gifts we normally give, we sent out "Season's Greetings" cards with a note enclosed which explained that we were going to the Big Apple.

The cards said something like: "Merry Christmas. There will be no gifts this year. We're going to New York."

I thought the cards would be a comfort to all our relatives, who could read the messages on Christmas morning as they sat around the tree. I was sure they would know we were going to have a good time on our trip, and that would be present enough.

Now that the mist of the holiday spirit has cleared, I'm not so sure the cards brought the vicarious pleasure we intended. Some of the thank you notes have been a bit snippy.

"You won't believe what we have in mind for you next year," one note said.

"We may regret skipping Christmas," I told my wife. "It might have been easier to cut back on the April Fool's Day expenses and gone to New York in May."

Of course, my wife reminded me that we did not celebrate April Fool's Day, and we wouldn't have saved a cent by cutting it out.

The Puppy Papers

Once the decision was made, we began putting the word out around town that we were going to New York.

"New York," somebody said. "What'd you lose up there?"

"Boy, I sure didn't lose anything up there. You wouldn't catch me going to a big place like that. No sir, not even on a bet," he added.

Others suggested that if we were serious about wanting to go to New York, the local mental health unit might be a better place to spend a week.

"You know, it's cold up there, and there sure are a lot of Yankees," another friend warned, adding that he had to think hard to come up with something good to say about the city.

"The best thing I can think of about New York is that it's up there, and we're down here," he said.

Some warned about the hazards of crime in the city, and suggested that we might be hit over the head and robbed.

"Are you sure you want to go to New York?" I asked my wife.

Although I used to know my way around the city 15 years ago, I was getting a little nervous about the trip.

Perhaps it had changed. It was heading downhill the last time I was there.

"Hey, come on. It will be great," my wife, who had never been to New York, said. "You're not letting all this talk get to you, are you?"

As soon as we arrived, I found that New York had changed. It was cleaner. People were friendlier, and there were "I love New York" signs everywhere.

Fifteen years ago it was difficult to get New Yorkers just to "curb" their dogs. On trips in the past I had missed seeing most of the sites because I had to look down to make sure I didn't step in anything.

Today, thanks to a campaign by the mayor's wife, New York dog owners are not only curbing their animals, but they are also "scooping the poop." It is not uncommon to see a fashionable Fifth Avenue resident, dressed in mink, carrying a little shovel and a piece of newspaper as she makes the rounds with "Fifi."

Subways are still covered with graffiti, but the scrawlings now have some redeeming artistic quality.

Even during rush hour, most city dwellers are polite and will give up seats on buses and trains to elderly and handicapped riders.

New Yorkers now seem to like New York.

"I still think we shouldn't have skipped Christmas," I said to my wife as we waited for the plane to take off on the flight home.

"I think some of our relatives are pretty angry about the cards," I added.

"Maybe we could send them a little something for April Fool's Day," she suggested.

It was a good idea, and thinking about it during the flight made me feel less guilty about exchanging their Christmas for a good time in New York.

After all, it'll probably be the first April Fool's Day present they have ever had, I thought.

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