

The News-Journal

The Hoke County News - Established 1928

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RAEFORD, HOKE COUNTY, NORTH CAROLINA

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Thursday, May 10, 1984

McPhatter, DeVane lead ticket

Local incumbents retain seats

There were few upsets in the Democratic Party Primary election, as unofficial returns show local incumbents have apparently been returned to office following Tuesday's balloting.

Although the Hoke County Commissioners' race was close, returns show Neil McPhatter and Wyatt Upchurch will retain their seats.

State Rep. Danny DeVane, along with incumbent reps. Sidney

Locks and Pete Hasty, were also apparently returned to office.

In a race, which hinged on the Hoke County vote, incumbent Superior Court Judge Lynn Johnson defeated District Court Judge Charles Guy to retain his 12th Judicial Circuit seat.

During the primary, about 49% of those registered in the county voted.

None of the local Democratic nominees have opposition in the

November general election.

In the Hoke County Commission race, McPhatter lead the ticket and finished the race with 2,196 votes and Upchurch was a close 81 votes behind with 2,115 for his first election.

Upchurch was appointed to the commission in 1982 to fill the spot vacated by Danny DeVane who was elected to the House of Representatives.

Former commissioner, Mable

Riley finished third with 1,704 votes and 411 behind Upchurch.

There will be no runoff in that race, Hoke Democratic Party Chairman Harold Gillis said.

Harry Dew had 381 votes in his bid for a seat on the commission.

In the race, McPhatter carried six of the county's 14 precincts, Upchurch captured seven and Riley one.

McPhatter had his strongest showing in Raeford five, while Up-

church ran well in Raeford one and two.

Riley took the Puppy Creek Precinct.

In the Register of Deeds race, incumbent Della Maynor carried all but one precinct and soundly defeated challenger Hazel Niven by more than a two to one margin.

The final tally was Maynor 2,621 votes and Niven 1,047.

Maynor will begin serving her third term in office.

The Superior Court Judge race in Cumberland and Hoke counties provided local excitement for those watching the returns.

Cumberland County returns showed that incumbent E. Lynn Johnson had a slight edge over District Court Judge Charles Guy by about 300 votes and the focus of the race shifted to Hoke County.

Johnson, who was in Raeford (See ELECTION, page 10A)

Around Town

By Sam Morris

The weather has been perfect, as far as I am concerned.

I talked with Mr. and Mrs. Neill L. McFadyen about their trip to England recently that commemorated the sailing of the ships to Roanoke Island 400 years ago. First are the comments of Mrs. McFadyen (Mary Virginia).

"To celebrate America's 400th Anniversary of the coming of the English to America more than 200 North Carolinians including Gov. and Mrs. Jim Hunt, Sec. of Transportation and Mrs. Bill Roberson, Sec. of Cultural Resources Sarah Hodgkins and Mr. Hodgkins flew to England on April 24.

"We landed at London's Heathrow Airport and traveled by motor-coach to Winchester, England, where we spent the night. The highlight of this first stop was visiting the beautiful Winchester Cathedral.

"On Thursday we drove through the Dorset countryside to Sherbourne to tour Sir Walter Raleigh's home, Sherbourne Castle. From there, we continued on our drive to Plymouth - the site of the main event.

"On Friday, the beautiful harbor of Plymouth, from where the early settlers sailed to settle Roanoke Island, was the setting for Gov. Hunt to unveil the plaque commemorating the historical event of 400 years ago.

"Gov. Hunt made a most inspiring speech and the whole occasion was thrilling.

"After two days of sightseeing in Plymouth - everything connected with Sir Walter Raleigh and our early history, we journeyed to London.

"Sunday morning, on the way to London, we stopped at Exeter Cathedral for a special memorial church service. This service, too, gave recognition to our early history and was most impressive and reverent. Former Senator Lindsay Warren of Goldsboro read the scripture.

"We spent Monday and Tuesday in London and had many interesting experiences with free time for seeing all the famous 'spots'. We visited the British Museum of History and the King's Library where Sir Walter Raleigh's papers concerning the colonies were displayed.

"On Tuesday evening we were guests at a reception given by U.S. Ambassador and Mrs. Price at the American Embassy.

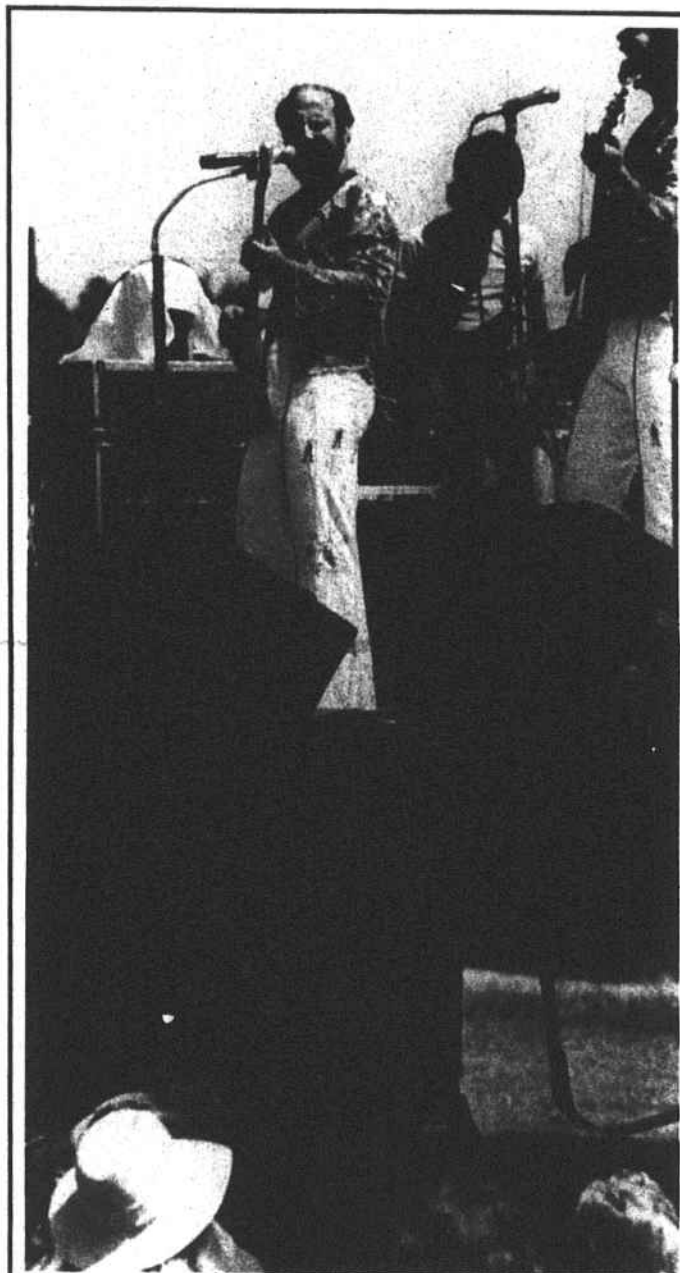
"On Wednesday a.m., we departed for home after a wonderful visit and a great experience in our history.

"Our leader and the overall chairman of the three year celebration of the Roanoke Voyages is former Senator Lindsay Warren of Goldsboro. He is doing a wonderful job."

Mr. McFadyen (Neill) tells about Plymouth, the English countryside and the English people. His comments follow:

"Plymouth is located at the mouth of the river Plym which is at the South end of England. It is a city of some two hundred thousand people. The harbor (spelled harbour in British English) is excellent. International seagoing trade is accommodated there and a large naval base is located in one

(See AROUND, page 11A)



Singing their brains out

Members of the Embers keep Hobnob festival goes entertained Saturday afternoon as they give this song their all. About 300 fans gathered at the old National Guard Armory Saturday to hear a wide variety of music by the well-known performers. The Hobnob which concluded Sunday with the opening of Picture North Carolina at the Hoke County Library was termed a "success" by festival chairman Mary Archie McNeill.

Chamber leader's last rites are well attended, Raeford stores close Mon. in honor of memory

The Raeford Presbyterian Church was filled to capacity and local businesses were closed for

one hour Monday as mourners attended the last rites of Raeford-Hoke Chamber of Commerce Manager Earl N. Fowler.

The 55-year-old Lumberton native, who died Saturday of an apparently self-inflicted gunshot wound, had served as manager of the Chamber since September 6, 1977.

During the services Monday, Fowler was described by the officiating ministers as a "friend to everyone and a man who loved life."

Prior to joining the Chamber, he had been on the board of directors and president of the organization.

Most of Fowler's working career was spent with the A&P corporation, where he served as district supervisor in Burlington.

Fowler was a graduate of Lumberton High School, and he attended the University of Indiana before joining A&P.



Earl N. Fowler

Bond nears halfway mark, for jump school operator

By Ed Miller

Less than half of the bond needed to free parachute jump school owner Gene Paul Thacker from the Hoke County Jail had been raised Tuesday, a county magistrate said.

Thacker, who is charged with cocaine trafficking, had raised almost \$202,000 of the \$500,000 needed for his release, Magistrate E.G. Inman said.

Most of the money had come from Cumberland County residents, and the majority of the funds were pledged using homes as security, Inman said.

Thacker had also received a sizable cash pledge from Union County, other courthouse sources said.

The jump school operator was arrested last Wednesday at the Raeford-Hoke Airport by State Bureau of Investigation (SBI)

Agent M.D. Robertson and Hoke County Deputy Lt. C.E. Harris on a fugitive warrant from the state of Florida.

A Florida grand jury indicted Thacker along with 41 other persons in April. He is charged with one count of trafficking and one count of conspiracy to traffic cocaine, the indictment says.

"We are going to allege that he (Thacker) accepted money for providing a landing strip," said Florida Department of Law Enforcement (DLE) Special Agent Supervisor Phil Ramer Tuesday.

According to Ramer, a Florida grand jury called a number of witnesses and they implicated Thacker.

Ramer could not comment on the actual testimony of the witnesses.

According to Florida DLE officers, Thacker allegedly allowed

the unloading of 1,600 pounds of cocaine at the Raeford Airport on June 15, 1983. The drugs would have a street value of approximately \$14 million.

Thacker was arraigned Thursday before District Court Judge Warren Pate on the charges.

In that hearing, Pate denied a request from Thacker's attorney Randy Gregory of Fayetteville to reduce the bond. The judge noted that the defendant is a licensed pilot and could leave at will.

Pate added that he would entertain a new motion for bond reduction if any new evidence emerged.

Another unsuccessful hearing before Pate was apparently held quietly on Friday in a second bid for a bond reduction, sources say.

Unless the bond is made, Thacker will remain in jail until May 31 when he will appear in

(See THACKER, page 11A)

Airport commission appointed

By Ed Miller

The final two members of the Raeford-Hoke Airport Commission were named Monday during a regular meeting of the Hoke County Commission.

The appointments, after almost nine months of negotiations between the city and the county, are expected to clear the way for the future operation of the airport under the guidance of the five-member commission.

L.E. McLaughlin of Bowmore and Merrienne Baker were the appointees to the commission that will govern and make rules and regulations for the airport.

Baker and McLaughlin join John Plummer, the appointment from the Chamber of Commerce, and City Council appointees, Frank Baker and Wayne Byrd.

According to County Manager James Martin, the next step in the process is getting the commission organized.

Martin said further that after the approval of the proposal, County Commissioner Chairman John Balfour and Mayor John K. McNeill would probably get together with the Airport Commission and hold an organizational meeting.

There was no speculation as to when this meeting might take place.

In other business, the commissioners again put off approval of the First Responder Program because of questions over insurance costs.

The program was presented to the board at the April 23 meeting. If the plan was implemented, county volunteer firemen, who are specially trained, would be allowed to respond to emergencies close to them.

Hoke Firemen's Association President Bobby Strother said the time it takes for emergency personnel to reach an accident victim

could cut from as much as 15 minutes to four minutes.

Under the program, volunteer members will not transfer victims but will administer first aid treatment only until the appropriate transportation arrives.

During the last Board of County Commissioners meeting, the insurance issue was raised and county firemen as well as county officials have been working to resolve the matter.

Such questions as, is the program wanted by all the firemen of the county and what is the county's liability in the case of mishap, must be answered.

Strother submitted a petition signed by all the fire chiefs in the county, as well as the Director of the Hoke County Emergency Medical Service and the Hoke County Rescue Squad Commander endorsing the proposed program.

James Martin said that getting

(See FIRST, page 11A)



Inside Today

Vital service

These members of the Raeford Woman's Club dressed as flappers during a 50 year anniversary festivities. The club will be celebrating 60 years on Friday. We take a look at the club's history on page 6 of today's News-Journal.

Picture

Picture North Carolina, a black and white photography exhibit, is on display at the Hoke County Library. We take a look at the winners and others in section B of today's News-Journal.