

The News-Journal

The Hoke County News - Established 1928

The Hoke County Journal - Established 1905

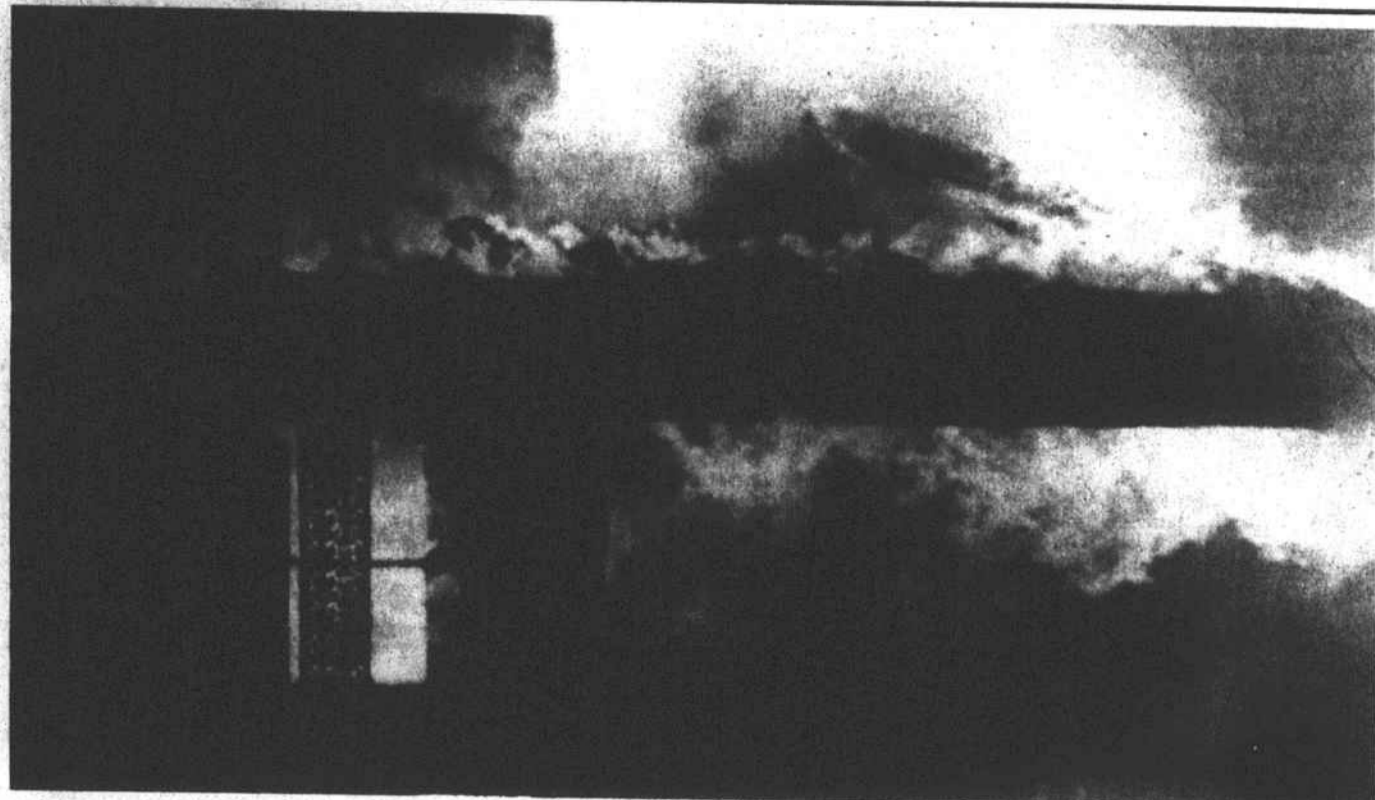
Volume LXXVI Number 29

RAEFORD, HOKE COUNTY, NORTH CAROLINA

\$10 PER YEAR

25 CENTS

Thursday, November 8, 1984



Raging out of control

The home of County Commissioner Neill McPhatter raged uncontrollably well into the afternoon Tuesday. No one was home at the residence when the blaze started. The dwelling was destroyed in the fire. Commissioner McPhatter said on the scene that there had been an electric heater plugged in at the home during the early morning, but he had taken the heater with him when he left. The blaze was reported around 9 a.m. This is the second fire to strike a Hoke County Com-

missioner this year in a area of the county where there is no rural fire department. An apartment house owned by Commissioner James Albert Hunt burned in the same area of the county earlier this year. Firefighters from Antioch, West Hoke, North Raeford, Raeford and Wagram assisted in fighting the blaze. Members of the Hoke Rescue Squad were also on the scene. On Tuesday the cause was still under investigation.

Photo by Pam Frederick

McNeill, Gibson win board seats

Two political newcomers received the most ballots Tuesday for the two vacant seats on the Hoke County Board of Education, after about 63% of the local voters went to the polls.

Former school teacher Shirley Gibson and grocer Eddie McNeill out polled incumbent Ruth McNair and Social Services worker Charlotte Kelly to win the seats on the board.

McNeill captured seven of the county's 13 precincts and received the most absentee ballots to lead the race with 2,945 votes.

Gibson finished 341 ballots behind McNeill with 2,604. Gibson, who ran well countywide, was winner only in her home precinct at Antioch.

Although she got the most votes in four precincts, Kelly was third in the overall balloting with 2,296 votes.

McNair, who was seeking her third term on the board was last with 1,908. She took the most votes only in the Buchan Precinct.

McNair was the only black on the board. Both Gibson and McNeill are white.

"I was pleased with the turnout and with the support I received," McNeill said Wednesday.

"I am going to work to serve all of the residents in Hoke County," he said.

The final tally on the race did not come in until around 1:45 a.m. Wednesday, when the returns from predominantly black Raeford Precinct 5 were counted.

Raeford 5 had the second highest percentage of voters in the county to turnout for the election. In that poll, 70%, or 620, of the 885 registered voters casts ballots Tuesday.

Both Kelly and McNair lead the voting in Raeford 5.

McNeill won the predominantly white Raeford Precinct 2, which had the highest voter turnout. There, 74% of those registered voted.

The most voters cast ballots in the county's largest poll, Raeford 1.

(See DEMOS, page 10A)

Former Teacher of Year fired by school board

By Ed Miller

The Hoke County Board of Education terminated the employment of former Teacher of the Year Ethelyn Baker Monday night, noting that she had "neglected her duties."

Tuesday morning, the former West Hoke teacher said she will appeal the decision.

The vote came after a two-day closed hearing last week and one

hour and 15 minute executive session Monday.

Prior to the two-day closed hearing last week in which testimony was heard for and against Baker, a Professional Rights Committee (PRC) had recommended that Baker's employment not be terminated.

"In my opinion, this is what teachers throughout the state are facing. I'm just an example of the

kinds of problems that are happening statewide," Baker said Tuesday.

According to Board of Education members, Baker's employment was terminated because of "inadequate performance, neglect of duty and failure to fulfill the duties and responsibilities imposed upon teachers by the General Statutes of this state."

A hearing was held last week on the Baker case during which the Board of Education acted as a jury, said Board member Walter Coley.

During that hearing, 73 documents and 24 witnesses were presented by Superintendent Dr. Robert Nelson, Board Chairman Bill Cameron said.

Baker presented four documents and 17 witnesses, said Cameron.

Many of those documents presented by the superintendent at the hearing were not presented before the PRC, said Baker.

Also, many of documents presented by the superintendent had no original copies to back them up, Baker charged.

West Hoke Principal Milton H. Williams was keeping a file of notes and sending memorandums to Baker for the last two years,

Baker said testimony given during the last hearing revealed.

She never received those memorandums, Baker said.

None of those original notes nor the file could be produced during last week's hearing, Baker said.

Baker quoted Williams as saying the original notes had been destroyed after they were typed.

Williams made his recommendation (See FORMER, page 11A)

Around Town

By Sam Morris

The summer weather left over the weekend and most folks had to turn the heat on in their homes. It was still a little cooler than expected all day Monday. There still hasn't been much rain in the area and it is still dry around the county.

Maybe the hot weather has gone for the year and we can get used to the cooler weather. In talking to some people that attended the football game over the weekend they said it was cold and one person said that he came down out of the stands and stood away from the wind. I believe the temperature at Chapel Hill was a high of 51 degrees Saturday.

I hope by the time you read this column that all the political ads (See AROUND, page 12A)

Thanksgiving N-J early

The News-Journal will be printed one day earlier during the week of November 19, so that the staff can be off for Thanksgiving.

In order to make the change, all deadlines will be moved up by one day.

Classified advertising must be received by Friday, November 16 at 4 p.m. Legal advertising must be turned in at noon on the same day.

Weddings and engagement announcements must be in the office by Wednesday, November 14, at 5 p.m.

Other news items will be due on Monday, November 19, by noon.

Deadlines for display advertising will be noon on Monday, November 19.

The office will be closed on Thanksgiving, but will re-open on Friday.



A new face

New Hoke County Manager, William K. Cowan, attends his first County Commission meeting. Cowan, formerly of Concord came here as County Manager on November 1.

No action taken on development group

By Ed Miller

For the second straight month, the Hoke County Commission failed Monday to make appointments to a proposed development board which will take on the industrial recruitment effort for the county.

"We can't make up our minds who we want to appoint," Commission Chairman John Balfour said, when asked why the question was not considered at the meeting.

Two appointments were made by the Raeford City Council Monday night to accompany appointments already made by the Raeford-Hoke Chamber of Commerce.

"I think some representation

should be from out in the county," Balfour said.

"This is a county as well," he said.

There has been concern in previous county commission meetings that the interests of the county may not be fully represented among a group mainly composed of in-town Raeford residents.

Some out-of-town dwellers feel the City of Raeford gets everything, and the county gets nothing, Balfour said.

If the residents in the county do not feel they are being well represented, it is going to be hard to sell some of them on the idea of an Industrial Commission working

for the common good, Balfour said.

According to the Chairman, the County Commission will make appointments to the industrial group at their November 19 meeting.

Park phased

In other action at the Monday meeting, the commissioners voted to refuse all bids received recently

on the construction of Burlington Park.

"I guess we did not accomplish much in the re-bidding," Balfour said, noting that recent re-bids totalled to more than was budgeted for the proposed baseball-softball park scheduled to be constructed on state Highway 211 West.

The lowest bids would bring the cost of the park to \$48,137, (See BURLINGTON, page 11A)

TV cable rate hike rejected

Following a lengthy debate, members of the Raeford City Council refused to take action Monday night on a requested rate increase from the city's cable television franchise.

Alert Cablevision is asking for a rate increase and is decreasing programming, council members said following a second request from the cable firm to increase the basic rate from \$8.60 to \$10 per month.

"I might be willing to grant the increase, if you left ESPN (the sports network) on the air and correct the reception problems," Councilman Bob Gentry said.

In addition to the basic rate hike, Alert is removing ESPN and the Cable News Network (CNN) and offering the programming as a premium option for a separate fee.

With the cost of the premium channels added to the increased rate, the new charge for cablevision would be 51% higher than the current price, Gentry said.

"I think it is too high," the councilman said. "A 51% increase bothers me."

ESPN and CNN have been

replaced as of Monday with Channel 18 from Charlotte and with the Christian Broadcasting Network (CBN), Alert spokesman Harrison Daniels said.

Daniels said the firm had been receiving "a number" of calls from other areas requesting CBN.

Alert serves five municipalities in this area and decisions about programming were based on what the company believed the majority of viewers wanted, Daniels said.

Local calls indicate that Raeford viewers want ESPN and not CBN, Councilman Vardell Hedgpeth said.

Council members will review recently passed federal legislation, which allows cable companies to raise rates by 5% each year.

The new law does not allow a firm to put in a rate hike in violation of an ordinance like the one which governs the agreement between Raeford and Alert, City Manager Tom Phillips said.

Another attempt for the increase is expected to be made by Alert during the December council meeting.

In other business, Franklin Teal and Hedgpeth were appointed to hold the city's positions on the new industrial development commission.

Teal and Hedgpeth will join Gerald Wright and Tom Howell, who were named by the Chamber of Commerce as that group's representatives.

During Monday's meeting, members of the Hoke County Commission failed to act on appointing members to the group.

The commission is expected to act on the matter during the November 19 meeting.

In addition to making the appointments to the new board, the city council members also voted to recommend that the city manager and the county manager serve on the body as ex-officio members.

Other business

In other business, the council took action on these matters:

• Approved the new ordinance governing the joint operation of

(See CABLE, page 12A)

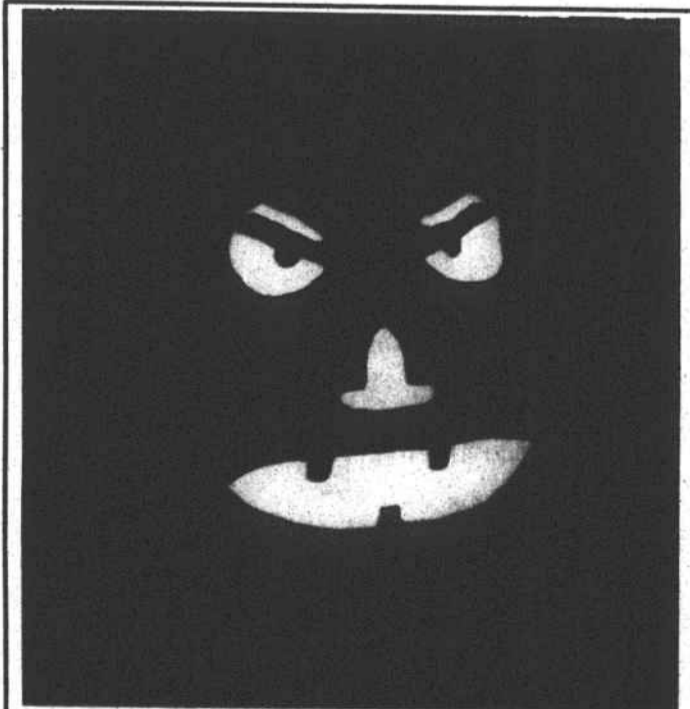


Photo by E. W. Miller, III

Welcome to my nightmare

Imagine waking up in the middle of the night and seeing this horrid face above your bed. It happens. There is no body to accompany the face, in fact, there is no head to put the face on. There is just black with the face of the demon glowing. That time of the year around the end of October is when one might expect to see the face. According to reports, he is seen only around Halloween and not again until next year. We take a look at other Halloween madness on page one in section B of today's News-Journal.