

# The News-Journal

The Hoke County News - Established 1928

The Hoke County Journal - Established 1905

Volume LXXVII Number 26

RAEFORD, HOKE COUNTY, NORTH CAROLINA

\$10 PER YEAR

25 CENTS

Thursday, October 17, 1985



## Community interests

About 300 Hoke County residents turned out last Thursday for a community meeting on extended telephone service (EAS) with Fayetteville. Here some of those attending listen as Economic Developer John Howard fields questions about the proposed service. Howard and other supporters are hoping

over 1,000 local customers will turn out for a meeting before the Utilities Commission scheduled for Burlington School on October 29 at 7 p.m. to express interests in EAS. The group was told the service is essential to the county's future and is worth the proposed \$4.52 monthly rate increase.

## EAS meeting draws support

By Ed Miller

Most of the nearly 300 attending a community meeting last Thursday night appeared to strongly favor the extended area telephone service (EAS) between Raeford and Fayetteville.

Only two of those present at the two-hour hearing held at the J.W. Turlington School spoke against the proposition.

Ray Evans, one who opposed EAS, said in his experience with the North Carolina Utilities Commission, rate hikes attached to proposals of more service may start low and become high as the services are offered.

According to Evans, a \$4.52 rate hike would be placed on Raeford telephone subscribers and would be linked to the number of phones in the house.

Raeford-Hoke Economic Development Commission Director John Howard told Evans the proposal for a rate hike is tied to the number of phone lines running into a residence or office, not the number of phones.

Howard said residential subscribers will have to pay more than the expected \$4.52 if there is more than one telephone number in a house.

For residents with just one number, or line in the residence,

the charge will remain at \$4.52, said Howard.

"I agree that that's how it is now, but just wait until you get it in," said Evans.

Most other comments at the public gathering were positive, although some Hoke residents questioned why subscribers to the 875 telephone exchange would have to foot the entire bill for EAS.

Howard said if phone rates in Fayetteville have to be raised, the 875 exchange would not get EAS.

State Representative Daniel H. DeVane said he agrees the \$4.52 is a "rip-off, but we found out right quick we couldn't get it (EAS) done for nothing."

"Don't let \$4.52 stand between you and prosperity," DeVane said to the roaring approval of the crowd.

"I think, in a lot of ways, this could be the turning point for Hoke County," Howard said.

"This is something that may not come around again soon," said Howard.

Thursday night's meeting was set to hear the public's reaction to the EAS proposal, said Howard.

If Raeford expects to get the service, people in the Fayetteville exchange need to be excluded from a vote, said Howard, adding that the only way for that to happen is to

add no additional costs to Fayetteville subscribers.

"We have no reason to believe that 90,000 people in Fayetteville should want to vote for this thing (EAS), especially if it means an increase to their bills," said Howard.

"We can reasonably expect that at least those of us in the 875 exchange will get an opportunity to vote by way of our bills," Howard said.

One member of the public who is in favor of the measure told a local support team that getting EAS will take work.

"I want you to fight the Utilities Commission and Carolina Telephone. I want you to fight the hell out of them," he said.

"If you don't want anything left here for your children, fight to stop it," the man said.

According to some members of the local support team, and some members of the public, telephone rates were slated to go up anyway when new "digital switches" are installed in Raeford for the phone system.

The switches are due to be installed in Raeford in 1986, said Howard.

According to the Economic Developer, if EAS is voted into Raeford, it will be installed and implemented in 1987.

(See EAS, page 2A)

## 401 moved back 2 years

By Ed Miller

Efforts to have U.S. Highway 401 four-laned between Raeford and Fayetteville were pushed back at least two years last week as members of the North Carolina Board of Transportation approved a new 10-year Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP).

Although the time table of the four-laning project has been pushed back, 401 is still on the TIP, according to Yvette Ruffin of the North Carolina Department of Transportation (DOT).

Right-of-way acquisition is now to begin during fiscal year 1989 with construction to start in 1991, Ruffin said.

The spokesperson said apparently, the road will be dual laned in two phases over a total of 10.1 miles.

There will be more right-of-way acquisition in fiscal year 1993 with more construction in 1994, she said.

Highway 401, which is now estimated to cost \$15.5 million, just regained its position on the TIP last year.

According to last year's program, right-of-way solicitation was to begin in fiscal year 1987 with construction to begin in 1989.

The state's fiscal years start on July 1, so fiscal year 1989 will begin in the summer of calendar year 1988.

"We're having a funding crunch," said Ruffin when asked why the project was pushed back.

She said priorities for the TIP were set by Board of Transportation members resulting from what was said in staff recommendations and what was said in public hearings held across the state earlier in the year.

"Some of our projects had to be pushed back," said Ruffin.

There are also problems with funding from federal levels, said Bill Jones, another DOT spokesman.

The federal government gives each state so much money to spend on highway improvements then comes back and tells them how much of that amount they can spend, said Jones.

There were 120 other projects "deferred" by the Board of Transportation, said Jones.

There were 75 projects that were added or expanded also in the program, he said.

"I don't think there was a person who said: Hey, let's push 401 back," said Jones.

"There are no bad projects on the TIP," he said.

"Highway 401 is an important project," said Jones, adding that he thinks the 120 deferred projects will not be put off again.

According to a release from the Department of Transportation, the total price tag of all the projects is \$3 billion.

During the next fiscal year, over \$350 million will be spent on interstate, primary and urban road systems.

"The Board of Transportation has assembled a TIP that is fair to everyone and makes the most of available resources," North Carolina Governor Jim Martin said last week.

"Its keystone is balance. The board managed to balance North Carolina's rural, suburban and urban transportation needs, and then balanced their solution against the budget," Martin said.

DOT board members also changed the way they schedule construction, said State Transportation Secretary James E. Harrington in the release.

Board of Transportation officials have tried to guess what the spending limit will be from federal officials and budgeted construction and right-of-way acquisition accordingly, said Harrington.

The reason for the estimation by the board is so there will be no overspending of allotted funds, said Harrington.

In a statement during June of this year, Jim Sughrue, of the DOT, said that last year's Board of Transportation overspent federal allotments by some \$147 million.

That means the money to pay for the overspending had to be pulled from this year's budget.

The current Board of Transportation did not create the problem, but they have to deal with it, said Sughrue.

Almost all board members were replaced with the election of Governor Jim Martin last year.

## New residences could mean more to county than light industries

By Ed Miller

From a taxable base standpoint, Hoke County would do just as well with a residential development as it would with a small industry, a local financial expert says.

Only 30 houses built at a cost of \$75,000 per house, would be equal to a small industry being built in the county, said Frank Baker, Vice-President of Pittard, Perry and Crone Accountants.

A 75,000 square foot building, built on a basis of \$30 per square foot, would cost about \$2.25 million, said Baker.

That square footage price would be about right for a "shell building," said Baker.

Thirty homes built at \$75,000 apiece would equal the same amount of taxable base for the county, he said.

A home of about 2,000 square

feet would cost about \$75,000 today, Baker said.

That type of housing construction can be seen currently at Cliffdale West, a housing development just across the Hoke-Cumberland line, said Baker.

According to the accountant, the industry search currently ongoing in Hoke County is good for the tax base, but not an answer to the complete spectrum of economic problems here.

"If an industry is built here, it's helping the tax base, but that's all. I suggest that's a band-aid approach," said Baker.

What would help this area the most is for an industry to locate here and for the employees, especially managers, of the industry to also live in Raeford or Hoke County.

The Raeford-Hoke Economic Development Commission and

Economic Developer John Howard have been working to make Hoke County the kind of place conducive to industry and residential occupation.

"I think the first step to getting people is to get the telephone link-up with Fayetteville," said Baker.

"Four-laning 401 is a logical second step," he said.

"I think it will come as we get more numbers (in the county)" said Baker.

Of the proposal to get extended phone service, Baker said: "I am very much in favor of this extension. If we don't get it, I think we will have missed a great opportunity."

According to Baker, Hoke County is a good place to live for military personnel and employees of Ft. Bragg.

One couple Baker spoke to said (See RESIDENTS, page 2A)

## Raeford resident injured in Virginia bus accident

A tour bus, carrying a number of Raeford residents, ran into the back of a dump truck loaded with rocks near the Virginia state line last Friday, injuring at least one local woman.

Passengers on the bus had been touring Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, and the Dutch Country.

The driver of the bus, 30-year-old Ronnie Crabtree, of Fayetteville, has been served with a warrant charging him with reckless driving, according to Gene Perkins, a Virginia State Trooper.

The bus was chartered through an Asheboro company, Carolina American Tours for a senior citizens group from Lillington and Raeford.

The bus was traveling along Interstate 95 when the wreck occurred at about 3:30 p.m., just over two miles north of the North Carolina state line.

One Raeford resident was reported to be among the 41 passengers injured.

Harriet Mauney, 69, of Raeford, was treated at the Richmond Hospital, in Richmond, Virginia during last weekend and

released Monday.

Only five of the 41 injured had to be hospitalized.

According to Perkins, the bus was traveling at about 50 miles per hour when the accident occurred.

A Virginia Highway Patrol safety team is looking into the mechanical condition of the truck, said Perkins, adding that weather had nothing to do with the wreck.

A passenger on the bus, who was sitting behind Crabtree, saw the truck in front of them and was not sure whether or not the driver saw it.

Crabtree, who suffered the most serious injuries from the accident, was reported to be in stable condition Monday at the Medical College of Virginia Hospital in Richmond.

The driver suffered a broken arm and a broken leg.

Crabtree was pinned in the bus by the steering wheel after the wreck, passengers say.

The cause of the wreck was unknown as of Tuesday afternoon, according to Clarence McGill, President of Carolina American Tours.



Talking about saving lives Hoke County EMT-I Don Woody talks with a group of local youngsters about saving lives. Woody is demonstrating on a model how to give CPR (cardiopulmonary resuscitation) to an infant

during Emergency Services Week. We take a look at some activities of the week on page one of today's section B.

## Around Town

By Sam Morris

The weather has been perfect for the past week. It is cool at night and then the temperature gets into the 80s during the day. The little rain last week helped some and you don't need air conditioning or heat at this time of year.

The forecast is for rain Wednesday and the temperatures to drop into the 70s for the remainder of the week.

Now the playoff in the American and National League pennant races is about as tight as one could hope for in a baseball series. Toronto has a 3-2 lead over Kansas City as this is being written Monday afternoon. They will resume the playoff in Toronto Tuesday night.

In the National League playoff, the Cardinals and the Dodgers are tied at 2 games each. They are playing at this time so one of the teams will also have a 3-2 lead.

The World Series should be super, no matter which teams are in the finals.

The meeting held at the J.W. (See AROUND, page 12A)