

# Viewpoints

## Downtown commission attacking problems

Members of the Raeford Downtown Revitalization Commission seem to be headed on the right track in their efforts to rejuvenate the Main Street business district.

The newly appointed group is planning a series of quick moves which will demonstrate that a fixup movement is underway, and will encourage merchants and property owners to join the push.

One of the first things on the agenda are signs marking the shopping area with a downtown logo. The same symbol would also be used to designate parking and for directional signs.

Merchants will be asked to ban together and to advertise products under the downtown banner in an effort to sell the district as one shopping area.

Property owners will be given ideas for restoring buildings to the original facades, and will be encouraged to help themselves by taking advantage of low-interests loans and federal tax credits.

Downtown Raeford is the traditional shopping district for all of Hoke County, and because of its economic contributions to the community, the area is worthy of the restoration effort. If Main

Street is allowed to continue to slip into disrepair, not only will a great portion of Hoke County's heritage be lost, but the county's largest contributor of sales tax dollars will also be gone.

Main Street Raeford is the face of Hoke County, and as we move forward to improve the quality of life here, we need to put forth a well washed and sparkling appearance.

An economically vibrant downtown does not mean other businesses in the county will suffer. There are strong needs for new services, which could draw sales dollars back from Cumberland, Robeson, Scotland and Moore counties.

Local markets are wide open for shoe repairs, office supplies, baked goods, records, books, movie theaters, bowling alleys, motel rooms and specialties shops. All of these businesses could be located in the downtown area, and all would generate new sales dollars.

We applaud the efforts of the Downtown Revitalization Commission, and hope the group will move quickly to erect signs indicating the improvement push is underway.

We encourage merchants and property owners to join the self-help movement and to begin building restorations.

The time has come to remove the dirt from our nose and to repair broken teeth. It is time for downtown Raeford and Hoke County to smile again.

## EAS briefs are worth reading

Elsewhere in today's *News-Journal* we have included the opposing arguments in the case now pending before the North Carolina Utilities Commission to obtain extended area telephone service between the Raeford and Fayetteville exchanges.

Both legal briefs are presented to give readers an exposure to all sides in the case, and the arguments are being run in the newspaper with limited editing to allow the attorneys' words to stand on their own merit.

The briefs are summations of the cases presented to the commission earlier, and are in fact closing arguments by Public Staff Attorney Jimmy Little and Carolina Telephone Counsel Dwight Allen.

We believe the briefs will clarify many questions on EAS and are worth the effort to read.

The arguments also raise questions, which only the utilities commissioners can answer.

We encourage you to get a cup of coffee, sit back and dig in.



## Mildouson crowd puts on show

When Ireni asked me to go Christmas shopping, I felt like the man who was to be tarred, feathered and run out of town. He said, "if it all the same to you I had rather walk."

If it all the same to her I rather stay home.

However, on one of our outings I am leading the charge to go. The Mildouson Home Demonstration Club is an active group of women who know how to have a big time. Their Christmas party where the husbands, boyfriends, or just friends are invited is the highlight of the season.

At one time there were two main events where the men got an invitation. The encounter with the play "Chorus Line" broke up the happy two-year events. Most of the folks who attended the show are just getting their eyeballs back in shape. Ladies of the Mildouson Club should be paid by the playhouse. When word got around about the members attending the opening night's performance the show was booked solid for the rest of its' run.

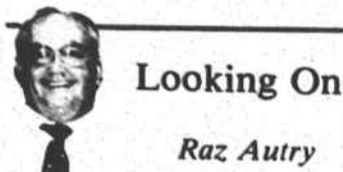
Reverend Ben still gives me that blank look when I ask him about it.

Katherine Ferguson, the incoming president of the group is demanding everyone go immediately to a revival meeting if the club ever slips up again and goes to a four-letter show.

In fact she fired my buddy Theresa McBryde as the social director since she was responsible for booking the show. I tried to get Mrs. Ferguson to retain Theresa, but to no avail.

Explaining to her the age of the members and husbands required a little recharging now and then did no good. Madam President is a stubborn lady. She has lived with my farming cohort Ben too long to change. The semi-annual meetings are sure going to be dull. Anticipation adds to the spice of life.

Closing out the year at the Western Steer the other evening, gave the guests a sample of things to come. Each lady in the Club has a secret pal to whom the partner



gives gifts all year. Pals become known to each other at the Christmas party.

Women are a lot smarter than men. They kiss and hug each other when their secret is out. If a man did those antics he would be labeled or locked up. Now I am into the hugging and kissing but not with a man.

A doctor friend of mine who wore a mustache caused me to come as close as I ever have to kissing a man. When he got about two stiff drinks he would get so close to my face when he was talking his mustache would be tickling my nose. The choice of the listener was to bend over backward until one looked like a pretzel with the middle broken out or kiss him in the mouth. I have visited the chiropractor several times over the years.

When the secret pals were revealed, the guests were given a gift. The man was to draw a number out of a hat and when the number was called he received a package which had the corresponding number.

Much to my dismay I was framed. I accused Theresa of being the brains behind it because her devilish grin gave her away. When my number was called I was presented two pairs of Playboy Briefs, one blue and one pink.

Tom Jones looked like the cat who swallowed the canary when I held them up for all to see. I misjudged Tom, he wasn't guilty only envious. He knew I could get in them, and he couldn't.

For some of you readers who are less informed, Playboy Briefs are fancy jockey shorts. If one wore them in public he would get arrested for indecent exposure. I have them safely locked away, if some of you reckless souls want to borrow a pair give me a call, better

still check your P.O. box carefully you may receive a Christmas gift.

Curtain calls are usually limited to Broadway plays. These ladies used them for the last event of the evening. They resort to gambling. Bingo, Santa Claus or whatever name is applied to little cards covered with corn, buttons or small pieces of paper is still gambling.

No one enjoys the game of chance more than me. I would get better results playing the slots at Reno or Las Vegas than I would winning their little game.

Ireni called the numbers, and I had the only card with the names in Greek. I couldn't read them much less win. Tom Jones and Gene Maxwell didn't win anything either. They protested, but it didn't do any good. Their claim of cards with July symbols drew absolutely no sympathy.

It really didn't bother me the prizes weren't all that great. Who needs a tour of Theresa Dress Shop or a free afternoon of smelling the flowers in Kathleen Jones' florist.

One dandy of a prize was helping to decorate John and Pat Howard's Christmas tree. The catch was the winner had to furnish the tree. A grand prize which is always the last card was still downtown Raeford accompanied by John Jr. Blue.

A great evening came to an end with all of the men lining up at the cash register to pay. Ireni had slipped me a \$20, some of the men weren't so lucky. My friend Jack Pope tried to pay with a ticket which read "good for one motor overhaul."

Gene Maxwell offered to fix any toilet in the house in exchange for the price for his meal.

Walter Malone got desperate. He offered a one way ride to the Florida Keys. The last time I saw Buddy McGirt he had Hildegard trying to explain to the cashier in German, why he didn't have any money.

What a fine evening. Bring on the show Katherine, I can't wait to talk to the new social director.

## Letter To The Editor

### Christmas parade need in Hoke Co.

To the Editor:

I was disappointed to learn that the city of Raeford will not sponsor a Christmas parade this year.

I have grown up in this city, and I am very proud of Hoke County and the progress that the city and county have made in the last few years.

However, I feel not having a Christmas parade is a step backwards.

In October, we had the Turkey Festival; it drew much attention all over North Carolina and most of the South. We had a parade which was quite colorful and exciting.

If we can have a Turkey Festival Parade, why can't we have a Christmas Parade? The Christmas parade is something that everyone (young and old) looks forward to.

The parade does not have to be a Hollywood pageant. It could be just something the kids of Raeford would enjoy.

I remember when I was younger, and I saw the clowns, floats and then best of all — Santa Claus?

The parade just made the Holidays a joyous time of high expectations; It made faces light up with radiant smiles and young hearts beat with happy thoughts.

I understand that parades are expensive and the city probably doesn't have the time; but would you consider a change of thought-

so that at least the kids will be happy?

Let's do something for our generations. Let's have a Christmas parade!

Sincerely yours,  
Robyn Hardin  
age 15

**Letters Policy**  
Letters to the editor are encouraged and welcomed. Writers should keep letters as short as possible. Names, addresses and telephone numbers should be included and all letters must be signed. Names will be printed; however, other information will be kept confidential. We reserve the right to edit letters for good taste and brevity. Letters should be received by *The News-Journal* by noon on the Monday of the publication week.

# 1929 was good year for Christmas in Hoke County

The Christmas rush has put me off my schedule. "I'm off my schedule, and I don't have a clue about what to write," I told my wife.

She suggested I check into what was going on in Hoke County in 1929. "They had a lot of fun back then."

I followed her advice and dug out the old *News-Journal*. Here is some of what I found:

In early December, the Raeford Woman's Club and the Raeford Kiwanis Club got together to start a "Christmas Cheer Fund" to help needy families in the community.

Several "pitiful" cases of starving families were targeted as being recipients of food, clothing and money raised by the Cheer Fund. Names of the contributors were published in the newspaper.

Local residents donated sacks of flour, bushels of potatoes, toys, clothes and money to make the first drive a success.

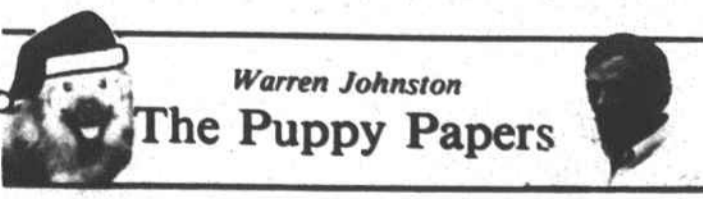
The Christmas Cheer Fund was undoubtedly the forerunner to the present Share Your Christmas Drive.

In 1929, local deputies were out to spoil good times. "Deputy Sheriffs W.R. Barrington and J.O. Dudley have been active during the past two weeks, breaking into plans for Christmas hooch of a number of illicit operators," the newspaper reported.

"During the two weeks from December 9-21, they destroyed six establishments and captured one alleged operator."

"Down on Raft Swamp, below Bethune's Bridge and near the Robeson County line, they captured two stills within 200 yards of each other and evidently operated by the same parties."

"They captured a complete outfit on James Creek in the Little



River Township and destroyed 300 gallons of beer."

Other stills and beer were found near Rockfish Station, in Puppy Creek and Quewhiffle. Cato Evans was arrested and charged with the Rockfish operation, the newspaper reported.

There was almost a white Christmas in 1929.

A light snow fell on the Sunday before the Wednesday Christmas, but the weather warmed and melted the white stuff covering the ground.

A Christmas Cantata was held on Sunday before Christmas at the Raeford Presbyterian Church with members of choirs from the Raeford Baptist and Raeford Methodist churches taking part in the program.

"Owing to the snow, sleet and cold weather, a small crowd was present, but those who attended are loud in their praise of the program," the newspaper reported.

In the *Lumber Bridge News*, it was reported that the local school closed on December 21 for the holidays with a big party.

"A Christmas tree, which was thoroughly showered with presents from Santa's bag was enjoyed by both faculty and students."

"Santa was too busy to be present, but each student was

remembered. Fruit and candy were served to all present."

It was also reported that: "Mr. N.H.G. Balfour, Miss Balfour and Dr. and Mrs. Thomas Stamps were Christmas shoppers in Fayetteville on December 18."

During the Christmas holidays in 1929, the Woman's Club sponsored a Christmas tree contest among merchants in downtown Raeford.

Trees were placed on the sidewalks in front of the stores and decorated by the merchants with lights, "which showed in many colors and made a very pretty scene, especially at night."

A prize of \$5 was presented to the Empire Cafe for the best tree.

"On Christmas Eve, the chapel at the mill village was warmed and decorated. Seventy-five children gathered to sing Christmas songs, hear the Christmas story and each received a stocking filled with fruit, candy and raisins. Each also received a pair of hose and a toy given by the school children."

"From the cloth contributed by the merchants, 21 dresses had been made by kind, loving hands and were given to the little girls. You may imagine how happy they were. Besides these there were 10 or 12 other children, who received Christmas presents suitable to their needs," the newspaper reported.

Christmas passed quietly in 1929 in Hoke County, as residents prepared for the coming of the new year.

"The young folks were eagerly awaiting the arrival of the new year. At midnight, they journeyed downtown and rang the bells." Happy holidays.