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EAS passes by three to one margin

By Ron Anderson
Results of a poll conducted by Carolina Telephone in January show that 74.4% of the Hoke County customers who responded are in favor of establishing Extended Area Service (EAS) between the Raeford and Fayetteville exchanges.
Out of 4,853 subscribers eligible to vote, 3,297 responded to the polling.
Of those voting, 2,454 voted for EAS and 843 voted against the service.
The margin was three to one.
"This is the single most important step in changing our economy here that we could have taken,"

Economic Developer John Howard said.
"The community at large has reason to cheer for itself."
"There were a number of people working on behalf of this need, and if we can do it on our many other needs here, we can affect very positive changes in our community," Howard said.
The North Carolina Utilities Commission will make the decision as to whether EAS is established between the 875 exchange and Fayetteville.
The polling of Raeford subscribers was ordered by the commission on December 19.
Now that the results are in, the

Public Staff of the Utilities Commission will prepare motions to be filed with the commission.
"We're preparing a motion to file with the commission this week moving the commission to establish EAS between Fayetteville and Raeford," Utilities Commission Public Staff Communications Division Director Gene A. Clemmons said Tuesday.
Based on the solid support of the Raeford subscribers, the Public Staff will also be asking the commission not to conduct a poll of Fayetteville subscribers and to hold no other public hearings, Clemmons said.
"We hope that the poll will con-

vince the commission to approve it (EAS) without any further action," Clemmons said.
It is hoped, the commission will reach a decision concerning the service in a few weeks, he added.
"I don't know what their position will be. It's hard for me to speculate."
The Raeford polling represents "not the highest or the lowest interest I've ever seen," Carolina Telephone Vice President-General Counsel Dwight W. Allen said on Tuesday.
"Our recommendation at this point would still be to poll Fayetteville," Allen said.

Carolina Telephone believes that Fayetteville customers should be charged a fee based on a matrix charge for EAS.
Matrix fees are rates based on the telephone company's average of costs for all EAS services across the state.
"We think its inequitable and maybe even illegal to make one exchange pay a fee and not the other," Allen said.
"I don't see why Fayetteville customers should get free rates."
Carolina Telephone has proposed that Fayetteville residential customers be charged \$1.22 per month to connect the service.

Utilities Commission Public Staff members have argued that the additional charge to Fayetteville subscribers will generate \$1.8 million in additional revenue for Carolina Telephone.
Monthly rates of \$4.52 for residence customers and the \$10.78 for business customers in the 875 exchange will more than offset the telephone company's cost of providing EAS between Fayetteville and Raeford, the Public Staff has said.
Once EAS is established, the approximately 4,900 customers on the Raeford exchange would be able to call over 90,000 telephones for local rates.

County tables funds for EMS

By Ron Anderson
A request for tentative approval of funds to provide advanced training for 12 of the county's emergency medical technicians (EMT) was tabled Monday in an unanimous vote by members of the Hoke County Commission.
The 120-hour EMT advanced intermediate program trains medical technicians to administer drugs and electric shocks to heart attack victims, according to a proposal submitted by Emergency Services (EMS) Director William T. Niven.
"We're asking for tentative approval of the program so we can

get our ducks in a row," Niven said.
An interim approval of funds would give the emergency agency time to set up a program and apply for grants, Niven said.
"The chances of surviving a heart attack in Hoke County are zero to 3%," Medical Director for Hoke County EMS Dr. Ron Milewski said.
With more training and better equipment, the local EMTs would be able to increase those odds during the 20 to 25 mile ride to the nearest hospital, Milewski said.
Technicians trained under the

advanced intermediate program will increase a patient's survival rate to 35%, according to Milewski.
The new training gives EMTs the "same essential skills that a paramedic has," Milewski said.
Currently, county EMTs are certified only to administer cardiopulmonary resuscitation to heart attack victims on their way to the hospital.
With the advanced training, EMTs would be certified to administer drugs which would speed a patient's heart rate and to administer electric shocks with a

defibrillator machine, Milewski said.
A doctor would instruct the EMTs to administer the drugs or shocks via radio while the patient is on his way to the hospital.
Neither the drugs or defibrillator are currently being carried on the county's three ambulances.
EMTs would also be trained to administer drugs to diabetics and would be supplied with an instrument to remove foreign objects stuck in patients' throats.
"All you need is one tragedy in

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Downtown revitalization
Fire escapes such as this one at the old Raeford Bank Building are a rare site in Raeford. The shadows of the steel bands form an interesting study in black and white. We take a look at efforts to revitalize the downtown area on page one of section B in today's News-Journal.

Drainage repairs in budget limits

By Ron Anderson
The cost of correcting municipal drainage problems will be "livable," representatives of an engineering firm told members of the Raeford City Council Monday.
"We can solve most of your drainage problems with a cost I think most of you can live with," Hobbs, Upchurch, Inc. engineer David Upchurch told the councilmen.
The cost of solving those problems, however, was not presented at the meeting.
The firm will provide the city with those estimates as part of the second phase of the study.

Field studies conducted by the firm show the city's drainage problems may be solved by various methods, project engineer Gary Culp said.
"Some pipes along major drainage basins are too small," Culp said.
The installation of larger pipes will help solve the drainage problem in those areas, Culp said.
Other pipes need to be cleaned and a regular maintenance program established.
"I think we need to look at the

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60 years of service
Mayor John K. McNeill (right) presents Raeford Fire Chief Crawford Thomas (center) and Raeford Fire Department Captain Terry Tapp with a plaque commemorating the 60th anniversary of the Raeford Fire Department during a city council meeting on Monday.

Challenger disaster hit close to home for Hoke residents

By Ron Anderson
Like all Americans, Raeford residents Bill and Sarah Howell mourned the deaths of seven astronauts killed in the explosion of the space shuttle Challenger last week, but unlike most citizens, the local couple felt the loss to be a personal one.
The Howells, guests of shuttle pilot Michael J. Smith, witnessed the tragedy from bleachers located

three or four miles away from the launch site.
"The initial blastoff appeared to be all right," Bill Howell said.
"All of a sudden, one of the boosters went off to the right and the whole sky blew up," Howell said.
The Howells were part of an exuberant crowd before the explosion occurred, but soon the excitement turned into confusion when

an announcement came over the loudspeakers saying that there had been a major malfunction.
"It got mighty quiet," Howell recalled. "Disbelief is the best way to describe it."
After the incident, NASA officials moved the guests from the bleachers to an auditorium where an astronaut attempted to explain what had gone wrong with the mission.

When the briefing was over, "the only thing we could do was come home," Mrs. Howell said.
The Howells were among the 300 friends and family members of astronaut Smith who had traveled to Cape Canaveral to witness the shuttle liftoff.
The couple had watched Smith grow up.
Sarah Howell and Smith's mother, Lucille Saffit Smith, were

roommates at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro where they both graduated with degrees in education in 1941.
The two women remained friends after college, and the Howells frequently visited the Smiths at their home in Beaufort.
Although Smith's parents have been dead for years, the astronaut kept up with the Howells.
"Bill and I are older people, but

Mike had time for us," Sarah Howell said.
"We'll miss him (Smith), but America will be a greater loser than we are because he had so much to give to the space program," Mrs. Howell said.
"I think of them (the astronauts) as pioneers; they took a chance," Mrs. Howell said.
Both of the Howells think the

(See SHUTTLE, page 2A)

Full slates sets tone for May elections

Five local candidates threw their hats into the political ring on Monday, as filing for upcoming elections came to a close.
Democrats Barbara J. Buie, Wayne Mills and Joel Dial Jr., all vying for seats on the school board, were among the last minute filers, according to Hoke County Board of Elections Supervisor Carolyn Shook.
Democratic incumbent Cleo Bratcher Jr. filed for re-election to the Hoke County Commission.
Republican Julian H. "Buddy" Blue Jr. also filed to run for a seat on the commission.
Because he was the only Republican to file, Blue will not face primary balloting, but will be in the November general election.
"The filing was slow in the

beginning. I expected candidates to come in at the last minute," Shook said.
The terms of school board members Walter N. Coley, W.W. "Bill" Cameron and Robert A. "Bobby" Wright are expiring.
All three incumbents have filed for re-election and are being challenged by S. Brown Hendrix Jr., Charlotte R. Kelly, and last day filers: Buie, Mills and Dial.
School board members will be elected during the November 4 non-partisan elections.
County Commissioners whose terms are expiring are John D. Balfour, James A. Hunt and Cleo Bratcher Jr.
Balfour has announced his intentions not to run and Hunt and Bratcher are being challenged by

Mabel Riley, Tom Howell, Tommy Macko, L.E. McLaughlin Jr., Clyde A. Leach and last day filer Blue.
Since all of the candidates for commissioners are Democrats except for Blue, three Democrat candidates will be chosen to run in the November elections during the May 6 primary.
Three incumbents who have filed and are running unopposed in the election are Sheriff David Barrington, Clerk of Court Juanita Edmund and Coroner Frank Crumpler.
Incumbent District Court Judge Warren Pate has also filed for the Democratic Party nomination to the Cumberland-Hoke seat.
Pate is running unopposed for his first election to the seat.

Pate has served more than two years after being appointed to fill the vacancy of retiring Judge Joseph Dupree.
State Senator for the 30th District David Russell Parnell has filed for re-election and is being challenged by Republican A.C. "Ace" Parker, who has filed in Robeson County.
State Rep. Daniel H. DeVane has filed in Hoke County for re-election.
U.S. Rep. William G. Helmer, who represents Hoke County in the Eighth Congressional District, is running unopposed in the Democratic Party Primary, but faces the winner of the Republican Primary.



Last minute filer
Commissioner Cleo Bratcher, who looks over paperwork during a recent meeting, filed for re-election on Monday within hours of the deadline. Bratcher will run in the Democratic Party Primary May 6 in a field of seven candidates vying for three seats.

Around Town

By Sam Morris
Winter weather didn't stay with us very long. It did get down to around 9° last Monday night and it didn't get above freezing on Tuesday. It was still cold through Thursday, but started warming up Friday. There were many people on the golf course Friday.
The weekend was perfect and the thermometer climbed into the 70s on Sunday. As this is being written Monday afternoon, the temperature is 72°.
The forecast is for the same temperature for Wednesday and Thursday. Rain could come on Thursday. It will cool off for the

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