

The News-Journal

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RAEFORD, NORTH CAROLINA

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Hoke Appreciation
Celebration
April 1 6 p.m.
New Armory

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25 CENTS

'Workfare' program considered by Hoke DSS

By Warren Johnston

A proposal to develop a Workfare program in Hoke County is being studied for recommendation by members of the Department of Social Services (DSS) citizen advisory board.

If approved by the board, the plan would be recommended to the Hoke County Commission for funding in July.

Under the proposal, which could eventually provide job training for hundreds of Hoke County's residents now on the welfare rolls, about \$8,700 in local tax funds would be needed to match state and federal money.

The entire program would cost about \$33,000, but Hoke County's

portion would be only 25% of the cost, DSS Director Ken Witherspoon said.

Workfare has been tried in other counties, including neighboring Moore County, and welfare rolls have decreased, Witherspoon told board members during a meeting Monday.

"The program has the potential to move people off welfare into the job market," the DSS director said.

One question about the program in Hoke County is whether jobs would be available once a person was trained.

"Now that we have an economic development commission, I feel better about the job opportunities

here," Witherspoon said.

In addition, Hoke County is developing more Day Care Centers to keep children of workaged mothers, who are now receiving public assistance.

These are some of the statistics, which are being considered by DSS board members:

•Hoke County DSS currently has a \$7.5 million overall budget, which is expected to increase during the upcoming fiscal year.

•Workfare is designed to reduce the number of persons receiving Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC). The local budget for AFDC could increase in July to about \$220,000, which is almost 16% of an overall

\$1.4 million budget, which serves about 490 residents. Only a portion of these would qualify for workfare.

•Workfare could also decrease the number of local residents now receiving food stamps. The local budget for that program could be about \$85,000 next year. The overall Hoke County food stamp budget is currently over \$2 million.

•Training for recipients of the workfare program could be coordinated through the Hoke County branch of Sandhills Community College.

"About three years ago, I had reservations about workfare," Witherspoon said, noting that he considered the program to be

punishment for being on welfare rather than a way to improve skills.

"Now, it seems to be a good way for a person to go from receiving welfare to earning a living in the job market," Witherspoon said.

While receiving training under the workfare program, a person would not be paid, but would continue to receive public assistance.

Once the person was trained and found a job, welfare would not be needed.

There is another danger of Hoke County not going into the workfare program.

There is always the possibility that persons receiving welfare benefits in surrounding counties,

which start workfare, could move to Hoke County to avoid the program.

North Carolina Governor James G. Martin is attempting to get half of the state's counties to start the program during the next fiscal year.

Workfare is also being pushed by the Reagan Administration.

In other business during Monday's DSS board meeting, members resolved for consideration a proposed budget to be submitted to the Hoke County Commissioners.

The proposed budget calls for about a 12% increase in overall administrative and public assistance. (See WORKFARE, page 2A)



Little natural help

Hoke County peach growers may have been helped by the recent freeze. Last weekend's cold hit while blossoms were in full bloom and little damage was

done to the trees. The cold may have aided efforts to thin peach buds.

Freeze may have helped peaches

Although it could be another two days before the extent of damage is known, Hoke County peach farmers may have gotten a helping hand from the recent freezing weather.

About 20% of the blossoms on local trees appear to have been damaged by last weekend's cold snap, Hoke County Extension Chairman Willie Featherstone said.

Peach growers will have to thin about 50% of the blossoms on trees in the coming weeks, and that

job may have been made easier by the freeze, Featherstone said.

"It could have saved them a little labor,"

Friday's cold did little damage to the trees because of a strong wind, but on Saturday, a "killing" frost did damage some blossoms, Hoke County grower Raz Aury said.

In order to produce larger fruit, growers prune small peach buds after they have formed.

Aury thins up to 80% of the buds on his 10-acre orchard.

"We could have escaped this time. It could have saved me some labor," Aury said.

Aury and other growers are predicting a good crop this season, if the weather stays above freezing.

Last weekend's freeze came at a good time for growers because the trees were still in full bloom.

Had the freeze hit two weeks later, the trees would have been forming small peaches, which are more susceptible to cold damage.

Last year's crop was devastated (See FREEZE, page 2A)

Vandals hit Hoke High food

Vandals broke into the Hoke High Gibson Cafeteria and destroyed a walk-in cooler of food last week.

The perpetrators apparently entered the lunch room and climbed through a ceiling to gain access to the kitchen area, school Food Services Director Clara Pope said.

The incident was the second at the school in the last week.

Raeford Police Chief Leonard Wiggins said the vandals broke into the building sometime last Wednesday night.

The break-in was discovered Thursday morning by a school janitor, Ernest Lott.

Contents of a walk-in cooler were sprayed with a CO2 fire extinguisher, and all of the food had to be thrown out, Pope said.

Turkey, potatoes, and dressing had been prepared for lunch on Thursday. None of the food was able to be served, Pope said.

A desk in the office of the kitchen was also ransacked. Papers were removed and thrown on the floor, Pope said.

Students were served pizzas, which were scheduled for the menu on Monday.

The vandals also entered a teacher's lounge during the night, Wiggins said.

While in the lounge, the intruders took bolt cutters and cut the locks off of a vending machine.

Wiggins said the case is still under investigation.

An investigation is also continuing into the cause of a fire that was apparently set in Room 22 of the

McDonald Building on Sunday, March 16.

The fire, which began on a desk, completely destroyed the contents of a room used to instruct handicapped students in life skills.

In an unrelated incident, three Fayetteville residents were arrested for shoplifting on Saturday.

Wiggins said Ralph Walker, 35, Kimberly Melvin, 23, and Brenda Melvin, were arrested at 5:35 p.m. and charged with stealing five pairs of jeans from B.C. Moore's Department store in the Edinborough shopping center.

The three were placed in jail under a \$200 bond and later released.

In another shoplifting incident, (See FOOD, page 2A)

No probable cause found in case against officer

District Court Judge Beth Keever last Thursday found no probable cause to issue an arrest warrant for an ex-Raeford police officer accused of assaulting Willie Howard Graham on October 3.

Graham, 27, Rt. 3, Raeford claimed that two of his front teeth were knocked out and another one chipped during his arrest on October 3, 1985 by law enforcement officers from the police department, the sheriff's department and the highway patrol.

Included in the officers making the arrest was ex-police officer Rodney Collins, who resigned from the force in December to work in a turkey hatchery.

District Attorney Ed Grannis Jr. asked for the probable cause hearing after a State Bureau of Investigation probe into Graham's

assault complaint was completed.

Graham, who is serving a one-year prison term at McCain for charges stemming from the incident and a probation violation, testified that after he was stopped on State Road 1320 near Upchurch Jr. High School on October 3, "five or six of them (law enforcement officers) jumped on me."

Graham said he didn't notice that his teeth were missing until he looked in a mirror at the prison. He also said he was unsure which officer allegedly hit him.

Grannis called SBI Special Agent P. M. Boulus to the stand. Boulus conducted the investigation and interviewed all the officers involved, plus people who knew Graham before his arrest on October 3.

One of the people interviewed by

Boulus, North Carolina Probation Officer William Lester, said the last time he had talked with Graham in July, 1984, Graham had "rotten stubs."

Another person interviewed by Boulus, Ernestine Watkins, said Graham had "snags" for front teeth.

Boulus said Raeford dentist Dr. Mark Thompson removed stubs from Graham's mouth after his arrest.

Both Thompson and his associate, Dr. Lawrence Bullard, said Graham's teeth were badly abscessed and had been in that condition for years.

Sheriff Dave Barrington, who also testified at the hearing, said that when he came upon the scene

(See OFFICER, page 2A)

NC Turkey Cooking Contest slated for Raeford Sept. 18

Hoke County will host the finals of the annual North Carolina Turkey Cooking Contest, the N.C. Turkey Federation has announced.

The event, which will feature the five top turkey cooks in the state, will be held on September 18 on the grounds of the Hoke County Library and will kickoff the second annual North Carolina Turkey Festival.

Last year the cooking finals were held in Raeford and drew one of the largest crowds ever to see the event.

More than 1,000 spectators showed up for the contest.

Festival and contest promoters expecting the 1986 event to have increased attendance.

Music, more food sampling, a cooking seminar and entertainment are on tap for this year's contest, which is sponsored by the Turkey Federation.

Over \$1,000 in prize money will be offered to the five finalists who will take part in the September 18 event.

Deadline for submitting recipes is July 15, and the contest is open to all North Carolina residents, except N.C. Turkey Cooking Contest Committee members and their families.

Entries need not be original, but contestants are responsible for complying with any applicable copyright restrictions.

Contest entry forms are locally available throughout Hoke County and from the Raeford-Hoke Chamber of Commerce and the Hoke County Extension Service.

The finals of the cooking contest will follow opening ceremonies for the second turkey festival, which will run through Saturday, September 20.

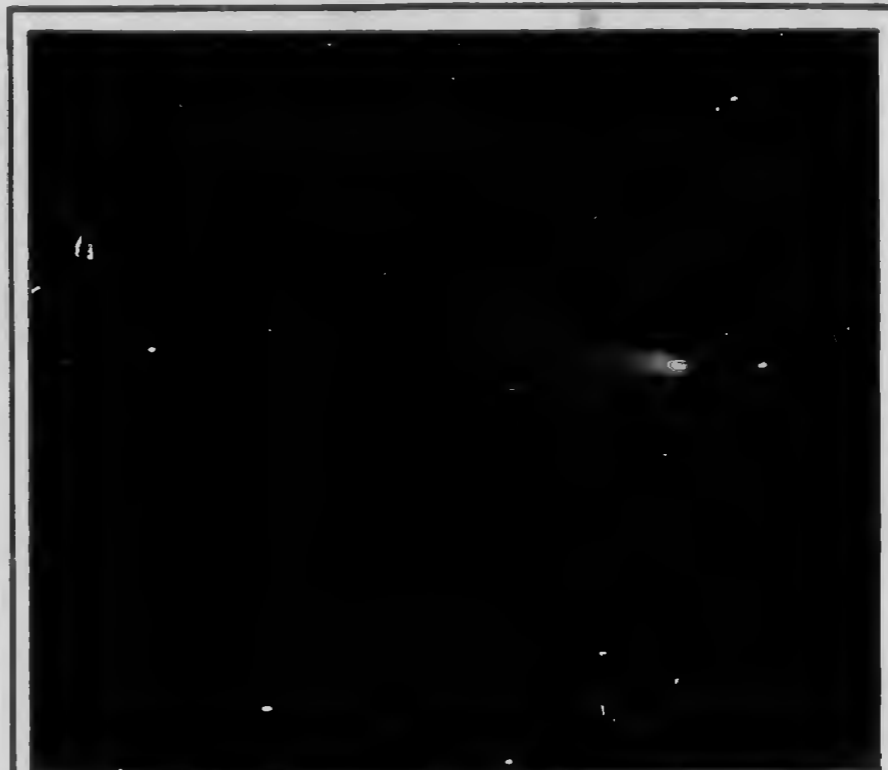
On tap for the first day of the three-day event in addition to the cooking festivities, is a parade, a turkey stuffing (dinner) with new improved streamlined service and a turkey struttin' (square dance).

On Friday, golf, bridge and tennis tournaments will fill the day which will be topped off by a concert, featuring bid named entertainment at the old National Guard Armory Park.

On Saturday, Main Street will be closed from the library to the old Aberdeen Rockfish Depot and the day will be filled with continuous music, food, dance, arts and crafts.

About 20,000 attended last year's first event.

Larger crowds are expected for the second annual statewide festival.



Blazing across the morning

Halley's comet puts on its best show prior to this week's full moon. Hope Mill's photographer Jim Skinner, who works at Fuberge in Raeford, caught the comet about 5 a.m. on March 8. Skinner used a 135 mm lens to take this photo with a three and a half minute exposure. Moonlight is now blocking the comet, but by April 6 it will reappear in the local sky and will be visible until April 21.

Around Town

By Sam Morris

The weather over the weekend has turned to winter even though spring came in Thursday. The temperature Saturday morning had a low of 24° and someone said that it was down to 20° on Sunday morning. It was in the 40s Saturday but the wind made it feel much colder. The temperature Sunday afternoon was in the 60s.

The forecast is for the weather to warm up for the remainder of the week and there is no mention of freezing temperatures.

Have you bought a ticket to win the Hoke Diamond? There will be only 750 tickets sold for the diamond so this will give you a good chance to win. The odds will only be 750 to one.

Some people have asked me where to buy tickets, so I will run the following places that I know (See AROUND, page 3A)