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Hoke schools may get funds for building

By June Lancaster
News-Journal Staff Writer

Hoke County schools have been designated as second in the state on a priorities list for critical need funding, Superintendent Dr. Bob Nelson reported to the Board of Education at its July 14 meeting.

As a result, there is a strong possibility Hoke County schools will receive more money from the state for school construction than was previously thought.

"Within four weeks we will know how much money," said Nelson.

At that time, the board will look again at the plans for construction and renovation of the seven Hoke County schools drawn up by Boney Architects and possibly upgrade them.

Meanwhile, the board approved the schematics submitted by the architects enabling the company to proceed with the design development phase of the project.

In other action, the board considered inquiries from Parent Teacher Associations at West Hoke, South Hoke and McLaughlin schools about the possibility of the PTAs funding the cost of air-conditioning those schools.

The superintendent noted that parents are concerned about the heat factor in schools and said, "People are demanding air conditioning." Nelson indicated the school system will eventually be forced into total air conditioning.

Board member Shirley Gibson questioned the energy cost of air-conditioning the schools. In response, business manager Don Steed quoted figures supplied by CP&L indicating it would cost \$283.50 a year for each unit installed.

Steed and board member Eddie McNeill said they thought the increased energy cost would actually be less than the CP&L estimate.

The board voted to accept the offer of the PTAs to fund air conditioning with two provisions. One being that the units become the property of the school board when installed. The other being that energy conservation steps will be taken if costs become unmanageable.

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Bountiful harvest

Ireni Autry displays a basket of peaches that were grown in her husband's peach orchard. Raz Autry, her husband, is one of the two major peach growers in Hoke County.

Peaches

Growers have bumper crop

By June Lancaster
News-Journal Staff Writer

Summertime means peach time in the Sandhills. Hoke County has two major peach growers, Raz Autry and Marshall Parks, and for both men this is a very busy time of year.

Both men report the weather this year has been perfect for peaches and they are experiencing bumper crops.

What started as a retirement hobby for Raz Autry and as an additional business for Marshall Parks, who operates a store and a restaurant, has become a full-time occupation for both men during the peak of the peach season.

Raz Autry, who started his peach orchard in Arabia eight years ago, says peach growing is a risky business and very dependent on the right weather. His orchard has produced only three crops in the last six years.

For two straight years, his crop was killed in the spring by cold weather. This year the weather has been perfect.

Autry has ten acres under cultivation and grows several varieties of freestone peaches. Autry has 700 trees producing 1500 bushels of peaches this year. Some trees average five to six bushels each, Autry said.

Marshall Parks is in his first year as a peach grower. He bought the J.H. Poole orchard on Highway 211 West in April.

He says the orchard is about 50 years old but has been neglected. He estimates that it will take a year or so to get it in shape. Despite that, Parks

reports an unusually big crop this year from his 45-acre orchard.

Both Autry and Parks say everyone is waiting for the Georgia Belle peaches to be harvested.

"There has never been a peach like it!" Autry said. It is a tender, soft peach with white meat and is very popular in Hoke County.

Peaches on both growers' stands now are selling for \$12 a bushel, but Autry says the Georgia Belle peaches will be \$14 a bushel and should be on the stands the last week of July.

Both growers operate their stands seven days a week during the peak season.

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County releases recreation money for Rockfish Park

By June Lancaster
News-Journal Staff Writer

Mamie Bundy, chairman of Rockfish Community Committee, persisted in her efforts to get Hoke County Commissioners to release \$5,000 from the recreation reserve fund to begin construction of Rockfish Park at a commissioners meeting on Monday night.

After much discussion, the board voted to release the funds under the supervision of County Manager Cowan and Hoke County Parks and Recreation Director Denise Rice Melton.

Mrs. Bundy said her committee had been frustrated in their efforts to get a park started in their community, said to be the fastest growing area in Hoke County.

The committee had expected to receive park funds for the park but that money was spent on the Armory Park light renovation project.

According to a memo to the county manager from Denise Rice Melton, the Hoke County Parks and Recreation Commission recommended the allocation of the \$5,000 from the recreation reserve fund to the Rockfish Community Committee.

During the commissioners meeting, it was pointed out the Rockfish Committee had attended four meetings with the Parks and Recreation Commission but very seldom were there enough members of the commission in attendance to have a quorum. Mrs. Bundy said the chairman of the commission was not present at three of the four meetings she had attended.

An additional concern of the Rockfish Committee is the use of the proposed park land as a dumpster site. Mrs. Bundy said there were anywhere from six to 16 dumpsters on the site and they were "nothing but an eyesore in the community."

The Rockfish Committee plans call for the first phase of the park development to be a ballfield. Tennis courts are proposed in Phase II of the park development.

Jesse Wheeler, a member of the

Rockfish Committee, told the commissioners that a Fayetteville contractor said he'd build a ballfield for \$5,000. County Manager Cowan cautioned that grading of the site would need to be done and that could result in greater expense than realized by the committee.

At this point, Mrs. Bundy understands, Mr. Wheeler is going to obtain an estimate from the contractor and present it to the county manager and the Parks and Recreation director for their approval so the committee can go ahead with the project.

Commenting on her efforts to get the park project off the ground, Mrs. Bundy said, "It's for the people in the community and to get some sort of organized activity down here."

In other action, the commissioners authorized the county manager to make application for \$13,650 in federal funding for the Highway Safety Project. The money will cover the cost of name signs and posts for all intersections in the county.

Tax Collector Dale Teal presented a written request from Ken Witherspoon asking that he be released from a tax penalty of \$152.07. The penalty was assigned for non-payment of taxes which resulted from errors in appraising Witherspoon's property. After discussion, the board voted to grant the request.

In other action, the board approved giving the Administrative Review Committee of the Hoke County Planning Board authority to act on requests for 50 foot waivers for minor subdivisions.

Dale Teal presented a report on fire district tax collections as requested by commissioners at a previous board meeting.

The report shows Crestline and Rockfish districts have the highest collection rate at 92 percent of levy. Next is Puppy Creek with 88 percent, then Pine Hill with 87 percent. Tyler Town has an 81 percent collection, North Raeford 78 percent, West Hoke 77 percent, An-

(See COUNTY, page 8)

Residents view North as hero

Oliver North is as much a topic of conversation in Hoke County as he is elsewhere in the nation. The marine lieutenant colonel has garnered a lot of support and is viewed as something of a hero for his role in the Iran-Contra affair.

A group of men who regularly gather for coffee and conversation in the Wagon Wheel restaurant were discussing Ollie North just last week.

"I'm for him 100 percent!" declared Frank Bristow.

"With all the popularity he has right now, he should run for some office," said George Boahn.

"He's not doing anything that everyone else hasn't done--he just got caught!" said Bruce Beidleman.

D.L. Minshew views the con-

gressional hearings as an attempt by a Democratic congress to disgrace the president. Minshew, who has watched the hearings on television, views North as "an intelligent actor with excellent timing."

Boahn said North "was given jobs no one else could do. He's a real live Rambo!"

The men at the coffee table say 95 percent of the people they've talked to about North view him as a hero and are in favor of him. They see him as a lieutenant colonel with extraordinary power.

Boahn said he'd heard no negative comments about North and added, "One responsibility of a man is loyalty. He has to follow orders--legal or not."

Buddy Blue agreed. "If you're a

lieutenant colonel on the White House staff you're going to do what you're told to do and not question the morality of it," he said.

Blue also said he thinks the hearing is, "a show trial to embarrass the president."

Minshew and Blue agree congressional hearings can be staged and they believe this one is.

At the barber shop next door most customers think North is telling the truth, according to father-and-son barbers Matt and Glenn Thompkins.

Ninety nine percent of their clients have been for North, the men said.

Only one of their clients thought North was lying, the men said, and that was a woman.



Accident

A 1976 Ford comes to a full stop in Mitchell Tyler's yard on Monday morning. The car's driver, Elizabeth Watkin Allmond, died in Moore County Regional Hospital.

Woman dies in wreck

Driver had a history of strokes

A 73-year-old Raeford woman, Elizabeth Watkin Allmond of 1402 Moore Street, died in Moore County Regional Hospital Monday after having been involved in a car accident on Bethel Road at 9:30 a.m., according to Raeford Police Chief Zeke Wiggins.

The woman, who had a history of strokes, was driving erratically on Dickson Street.

Her 1976 Ford crossed Haris Avenue, went into the driveway of Sandhill's Auto Parts, then struck a sign pole and a tree on the left-hand side of the road.

After traveling some 300-400 feet on Dickson Street, the Allmond car then went into the driveway of Mitchell and Carol Tyler's residence at 222 Bethel Road.

The Allmond car hit the Tyler's 1986 Mercury before finally coming to a stop on the Dickson Street side of the house.

Mrs. Tyler had just got out of her car and gone into the house when the accident occurred.

Chief Wiggins estimated damages to the Tyler car at \$4,000 and to the Allmond car at \$3,000.

Summer school enrollment up

Just because it's summer doesn't mean school isn't in session. Summer school is becoming bigger each year in schools throughout the state and Hoke County is no exception.

At Scurlock and Turlington schools 242 students are enrolled in a state-funded summer school which is part of the state's basic education program.

Summer school started July 7 and runs until August 7 for these students who attend either morning or afternoon sessions of three hours each. Both schools also provide lunch and transportation for the summer school students, also funded by the state.

In addition, there is a federally funded migrant summer school program at both Turlington and Scurlock for enrichment only in which 14 children are enrolled.

At Hoke High School, 59 students in grades 9-12 are enrolled in a six-week summer school which began June 29 and ends August 7. In high school the students pay tuition to attend summer school.

The high school summer school students are taking remedial English, social studies or math classes. There is a summer nutrition program at Hoke High also and about half of the summer school students are eating lunch in the cafeteria.

The summer school classes at all three schools are held in air-conditioned classrooms.

Barbara Lupo, lead teacher of the Scurlock summer school, and Emma Mims, principal at Turlington, both emphasized the "hands-on" activities in which summer school students are involved. These activities are in part designed to enhance the student's

(See SCHOOL, page 8)

Around Town

By Sam Morris

The weather last week was nice. The temperature was in the 80s during the day and it dropped down into the low 60s at night. It felt almost like fall of the year early in the morning. This kind of weather kept away the afternoon thundershowers.

The forecast is for this week to be different on Monday, the thermometer recorded temperatures in the mid-90s. Someone said that it could be near 100 degrees on Tuesday. Also the bad note is that no rain is in the forecast. Since this is July, maybe we should be prepared for this kind of weather.

Last week in this column there (See AROUND, page 8)



Elections

Earl McDuffie Jr. (left) and T. Joseph Upchurch filed for re-election to Raeford City Council last Wednesday. McDuffie is seeking his second term on the council. Upchurch is seeking his fourth term. Both men will be running for four-year terms. The election will be held Tuesday, November 3.

