

# The News-Journal

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## Returns victorious

Hoke High Band Director Gary Stemple (center) and band members Teicher Patterson (left) and Ann Weathersbee display trophies won during the band's trip to the Gator Bowl over the weekend. The center plaques are

awards for placing fourth in field show competition and sixth in parade competition. Patterson and Weathersbee received top honors in drum major competition.

## 'Gator Bowl Band' is back

One hundred and six students and their 19 chaperones got off their chartered buses Monday morning as a very tired Gator Bowl Band returned to Hoke High School after four days on the road.

The Hoke High Marching Band pulled into the school parking lot at 8 a.m. and was greeted by parents, students and school officials. Among the first off the buses were the Trophy Carriers—the guardians of four honors captured by the band during competition associated with the Gator Bowl. Of 13 bands from around the U.S. invited to participate, the Hoke High Band placed fourth overall in field show competition and fifth in the parade competition. And Drum Majors Teicher Patterson and Ann Weathersbee placed first in both field and parade competitions.

Band Director Gary Stemple described the trip as "fantastic." And he thanked those who supported the band,

especially those who helped raise the \$44,000 needed to make the trip.

Stemple called the trip a "once-in-a-lifetime experience."

"It's an experience they'll carry with them their rest of their lives," he said. Several students agreed. "It was exciting," said Damon Dockery, whose favorite portion of the trip was the performance.

Stemple says he believes the band members enjoyed most being with each other, working with each other and meeting students from other areas of the country.

The band left Hoke County Thursday morning and arrived at their hotel that evening—just in time for practice. Friday morning brought another practice session, and the afternoon, the first competition. Saturday morning—another practice—this one with 1,400 other players from other bands. That evening, the band marched in the Gator Bowl Parade. Sunday,

brought still another "massed band" practice before the afternoon's pregame concert, and, finally, the Gator Bowl half-time performance.

Of course, the trip was meant to be fun as well as "games." The band spent one evening in Jacksonville's largest shopping mall and the better part of a day at Disney World.

Stemple says there were a few minor problems, most notably the heat. Paramedics were called to assist four or five members of at least one other marching band who suffered heat-related problems during the parade. And a few Hoke High students found the itinerary a bit tiring. Stemple said one highlight turned out to be an old fashioned nap.

Other than the obvious rewards of the trip, Stemple also cited "many compliments from people associated with the Gator Bowl, motels and restaurants on what a classy bunch of young people we had."

## More equipment needed for new dispatch system

Just minutes before the new city/county Central Communications system went into effect yesterday morning, Hoke County Commissioners approved spending approximately \$4,600 to buy new equipment and re-program other equipment to accommodate the new frequency soon to be used in law enforcement radio communications in the county.

Jimmy Stewart, communications director, presented proposals relating to the change in radio frequency, which officials said is required because Scotland and Hoke Counties have been broadcasting on the same frequency with "bleed-over" being experienced by both counties.

In a four-page memo to commissioners, Stewart said seven Midland mobile radios and three Motorola radios plus some other equipment can be re-programmed to accommodate the new frequency, but recommended the purchase of 12 new Midland radios to replace current crystal radios.

Chairman Wyatt Upchurch asked if this expenditure "is going to put the communications system in top shape or are we going to come back in a month or two?"

County Manager Cowan said he did not bring to the board today a proposal to replace walkie-talkies used by sheriff's deputies because that would cost an additional \$10,000. He said he planned to present that at a "more appropriate time."

Commissioner Mabel Riley asked Sheriff Alex Norton "isn't that walkie-talkie just as important to your men as the ones in the car?" He replied that it was.

Sheriff Alex Norton said later eight of the walkie-talkies in question are more than 15 years old and are in the shop more than they are in use. Commissioners decided to spend approximately \$2,000 to replace crystals in the walkie-talkies until new walkie-talkies are purchased.

Total cost of changing to the new frequency is to be shared with Scotland County on a 50/50 ratio, Cowan said, with a \$4,500 grant from the General Assembly to offset some of the expense. Hoke County's share will be \$4,625.40, Cowan said.

After deciding on that issue, commissioners then considered the purchase of a 60-kilowatt generator to provide emergency back-up power for the new communication system.

Jack Ellis, county maintenance supervisor, presented

proposals on both diesel and LP generators. Commissioners opted to purchase a 60-kw Onan LP generator at a cost of \$18,913.66 from Ezzell Electric Component Service. Installation costs and purchase of a 325-gallon tank bring the cost up to \$22,233.66.

At a previous meeting, commissioners had decided to purchase an 80-kw generator but at a recent meeting of Cowan, Upchurch and Ellis the decision was made to drop back to a 60-kw generator.

Ellis said although the 80-kw generator would give more capacity for the future, the 60-kw will work. It will operate the complete lower end of the sheriff's department building where the central communications system is located, he said.

With those two major expenditures, Cowan told commissioners capital outlay for the new system is already over the \$108,000 budget, but he expects some money to be left over from operational costs.

In other business, commissioners denied Maggie Hunt a variance from the Mobile Home ordinance. Hunt had requested a variance after she failed to renew her license to operate a mobile home park in the county, despite receiving four written reminders. Hunt told commissioners she simply forgot to renew the license this year.

Hunt's mobile home park had been "grandfathered" in when the ordinance was adopted. Her failure to renew her license meant she either had to bring her park up to minimum standards or seek a variance.

In other planning board matters, commissioners grappled with the issue of a conflict between what authority has been granted to the recently formed Raeford/Hoke Planning and Development Commission and what authority the County Commission has retained for itself.

That matter came to a head when commissioners were informed an item on their agenda regarding consideration of final plat approval for the O. L. Paul subdivision was moot because the planning board had already approved the request and the owner had recorded the property.

Billy Cox, of the county inspection department, who is also a member of the county subdivision committee, said he had denied a request from O. L. Paul but the joint planning board recommended approval at its December meeting.

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## Powell sworn in to office Becomes state's first female district attorney

In a history-making New Year's Day ceremony in the Hoke County Courthouse, Jean Powell was sworn in as District Attorney of Hoke and Scotland Counties.

Powell, elected last November to a four-year term as the District Attorney of newly created Judicial District 16 A, is the first female D. A. in the state.

The courtroom was packed Sunday as Superior Court Judge B. Craig Ellis of Laurinburg opened the first court session of the new judicial district for the 3 p.m. swearing-in ceremony.

Powell was introduced to the court by District Attorney Ed Grannis of Cumberland County. He presented her as "one of the most capable and qualified prosecutors in the state of North Carolina."

Powell has been an Assistant District Attorney on Grannis's staff since April 1978 and was assigned as the full-time prosecutor in Hoke County a few months later. She ran unopposed for the new D. A. slot after having been nominated for the

post by members of the Democratic Party's District Executive Committee in the two counties. She was also endorsed by the Bar Associations of both counties.

Powell has been second in seniority on Grannis's staff, after Assistant D. A. John Dickson. Her primary responsibility in Hoke County has been to prosecute cases in criminal court, on both the District and Superior Court levels. She also prosecutes cases in Juvenile Court.

After being sworn in by Ellis on Sunday, Powell said "It is a tremendous honor to be allowed to serve the people of Hoke and Scotland."

She then introduced to the court Mike Schmidt, also an Assistant D. A. on Grannis's staff. Schmidt was sworn in by Ellis as Powell's Assistant.

Powell, who selected Schmidt to be her assistant, said he has had a lot of prosecuting experience, particularly in trying drug cases in Superior Court in Cumberland County. She described him as "a man of high ideals and a true gentleman."



Jean Powell-sworn in

After the two had taken the oath of office, Judge Ellis told the assembled crowd, "This is a special day in Hoke County, Scotland County and the state of North Carolina." The ceremony was followed by a reception in the Courthouse lobby.

## N. Raeford Fire Dept. gets truck May mean lower insurance rates eventually in North Raeford

By June Lancaster  
News-Journal Staff Writer

It was celebration time at North Raeford Fire Station last Wednesday morning as the volunteers of the department took delivery of their brand new custom-built fire truck, the first new pumper the department has bought in 19 years.

First to take the truck out for a trial spin up Highway 211 was Leland Strother, North Raeford assistant chief, but others were eager to hitch a ride.

Buying the \$109,000 automatic transmission pumper took years of planning, years spent in figuring finances and looking at designs. Department officials spent the time deciding exactly what they wanted in order to serve the needs of their district, not only right now, but in the future also.

North Raeford Fire Chief Johnny Baker says he and others in the department spent two to three years looking at trucks, trying to decide exactly what they wanted. "You know, it's like building a house," he says.

"We're looking at the future. We didn't need that truck years ago, but we do need it today and we will really need it in the future."

The 1,250 gallon-per-minute pumper with its 1,000-gallon booster tank should go a long way to making North Raeford eligible for lower fire insurance premiums, Baker believes.

He has been looking at getting a lower fire rating for his district for some time, but says it is a slow process and you have to spend money to do it. With the new pumper, "We're looking at a savings in



## Pumper pride

Members of North Raeford Fire Department line up beside the new custom-built pumper the department acquired last week. Left to right are Assistant Chief Leland Strother; and Firemen Johnny Baker Jr.; David Frye; Jason Branch; Roy Harris Jr.; Vancleef Whittington; Ken Moser; Robert Colson; and Ron Fairbanks.

insurance premiums," he says.

Baker says his district has a class nine rating now, the same as other volunteer fire districts in the county. He said the city has a five or six rating which is a great savings to tax payers.

Ratings are determined in part by the equipment and the manpower a fire department has.

Baker thinks he'll be ready very soon to have someone from the Insurance Services Office come in and check out North Raeford to see if the district is eligible for the lower rating. He says the rating for his district was established when they had only one truck. Now, with the new pumper, "We're looking

conservatively at dropping to a seven or maybe a six," he says.

The only other pumper the department has could only pump 750 gallons of water per minute, Baker says. That is enough capacity for smaller buildings, but is not designed to handle larger buildings.

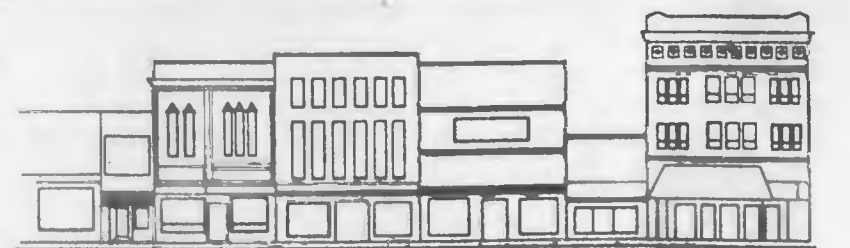
The new pumper will not only be able to handle larger buildings, but could result in a savings to the tax payers in the North Raeford Fire District, too.

That fits right in with Baker's plans. "It's a plan. It's like a puzzle. The pieces all fit together," he says.

The new piece of equipment is one piece of that puzzle, Baker says.

## Around Town

by Sam C. Morris



The weather over the New Year's weekend was wet. According to one person I talked with during the weekend we had over two inches of rain last week. Most of the time, when it is not a growing season, we don't realize when it is dry.

The weather Monday was cold and the temperature stayed in the 40s all day. The forecast had called for temperatures in the 60s.

The forecast is for cold weather Wednesday and Thursday with highs in the high 30s and low 40s. The lows will be in the 20s. It will get into the 50s by the weekend.

Last week I found a note on my desk that stated that Charles Landon Yarborough had been by the office to

see me and said to tell me hello. I hate I missed Landon. He lived here for many years and finished high school here. Landon now lives in Louisville, Ky and has published music over the past few years.

This writer had hard feelings toward Senator David Parnell when he voted to move Hoke County out of the Hoke-Cumberland judicial district. Of course he gave excuses, but they never did satisfy me.

Recently I read a letter in a daily newspaper written by Senator Parnell on the subject of the Hatcher-Jacobs affair in Robeson County. He stated that he had lived in that county all his life and hadn't seen all the corruption that newspapers were

allegedly playing up over the state by quoting Eddie Hatcher.

I admire David Parnell for his letter and I see, in him again, the man that I have supported for many years. It is hard to keep the good in a man, even if it might cost him a seat in the General Assembly.

Thanks David, you made a big step in making 1989 a happy one.

A man who worked here at The News-Journal many years ago passed away last weekend. Bill McFadyen sold advertisements for awhile before he went to Raleigh to work. He was in Raleigh when he got to the point where he was unable to continue to work.

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