

# The News-Journal

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RAEFORD, NORTH CAROLINA

25 CENTS

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## Republicans, Indians gaining voting strength in Hoke

It's a slow change, but it's a trend: the Republican Party is gaining ground in Hoke County. According to Hoke election records, the GOP has gained members steadily over the past four years, even after records were purged following the 1988 presidential election. At this time in 1988, Republicans made up 6.8 percent of the voting population; now it makes up

just over 11 percent of Hoke voters. The Democratic Party, which still holds sway over Hoke politics, fell from 92.46 percent of all voters to 86.30 percent in the same period. Another voting block that has increased steadily over the years is those who belong to neither party: unaffiliated voters. In April of 1988, only 66 people had registered

without a party membership. Now that number is up to 237—2.6 percent of the voting rolls. This year, Indians have gained a little ground, while blacks and whites have fallen slightly. Since April 1990, 194 Indians have registered to vote in Hoke, bringing their percentage of the voting population up from 8.08 percent to 9.37

percent. Indians and blacks lost voters from their ranks after election records were purged following the 1988 presidential election. From April 1988 to April 1990, Indians lost 132 voters while blacks lost 512. Whites, who still make up the largest voting (See ELECTION, page 5)



### Hood ornament

"Atticus Fetch," a mixed Boston terrier goes along for the ride whenever Harless Wright has any sort of tractor duty to perform at his SouthHoke farm. The dog's been

riding atop the tractor from his puppy days. He doesn't seem to mind the engine's heat, and hasn't noticed there's only one seat on the tractor.

## Attendance lines drawn for Rockfish

### Will be county's only mainly white school

School Board members last night voted 3-2 to draw attendance lines for Rockfish Hoke Elementary School, now under construction in eastern Hoke County. Carved out of Scurlock Elementary's attendance zone, Rockfish will be the only school in Hoke County with a majority of white students. The school will be 63 percent white, 32 percent black and five percent Indian, according to figures compiled by a committee charged with proposing attendance lines for the school. Rockfish School will relieve only heavily crowded Scurlock School which houses 894 students on a campus designed for about 400. Scurlock's student population will drop to around 525 as Rockfish takes 369 students. Thus, the addition of Rockfish School will also change the racial ratios at Scurlock, making it a heavily black school. According to school data, Scurlock's ratios

will change from 37 percent white, 55 percent black and seven percent Indian to 19 percent white, 71 percent black and 19 percent Indian. John D. McAllister and Charlotte Kelly, who voted against the plan, said they preferred a plan that would better balance the racial numbers. McAllister warned the approved plan would start Rockfish off "behind the eight-ball" by putting it far out of racial balance. The plan he and Kelly preferred would place more blacks in Rockfish School, but would mean more bus travel for some students, particularly in the Tylertown area. It was that extra travel time that two board members — Chairman Shirley Gibson and Bobby Conoly — objected to. However, Gibson said, the ratio of races "isn't ideal, obviously, for all of us." Board member Dwight Oxendine said he (See SCHOOLS, page 5)

## Candidates tackle the issues

This week, The News-Journal presents a list of five questions posed to candidates for Hoke County Commission, District Attorney and Register of Deeds. What follows are their answers, beginning first with candidates for Commission.

### What is Hoke's biggest problem? How do you plan to meet this challenge?

**Charles Crowder:** Many of the problems in Hoke County stem from being a poor county. I would work to recruit new industry, as this would increase the tax base, as well as create new jobs. This would also help keep taxes down for the citizens of Hoke County.  
**Jean Hodges:** Hoke County's biggest problem is the economy. Good edu-

cation, good law enforcement, adequate fire protection and recreational facilities all contribute to our quality of life and all depend on a sound economy.

I would like to help create a sound, viable plan to increase business and industry which includes building a trained, educated employment base. It's imperative that we expand our area with the right type of economic growth, broadening the tax base rather than increasing the taxes.  
**Maggie Hunt:** Hoke's biggest problem is rapid growth in the eastern part of the county by Cumberland County developers and residents. The commissioners must be ready to accept this growth and prepare for the future.  
1. New economic planner must work with the developers in the eastern part of the county to ensure good communication between commissioners and new industry.



2. Provide water and sewage to new industry.  
**Elizabeth Jones:** Illiteracy and the welfare programs. I think we need to educate the people in the work force better. Make it mandatory that children stay in school and to check on our social services recipients a little closer. This would be a start. Next thing we need to do is to make available more shopping places so our revenue will stay here.  
**Riley Jordan:** Apathy, reluctance to get involved, district — get people involved in talking with each other — various (See ELECTION '92, page 8)

## Hoke Rescue Squad marks 30 years

### Last charter member calls it quits this year

The Hoke County Rescue Squad is 30 years old in 1992 and marked the occasion with a retirement party for its last charter member.

Jim Wade, who called it quits in February, was also honored as Squadman of the Year.

Wade has been an officer in the squad over half of his three decades as a member, serving in such capacities as vice-commander and treasurer.

The Rescue Squad was formed in 1962. It began as a civic project by the Raeford Moose Lodge which organized and maintained it. Its first piece of equipment was a Lentz Mortuary ambulance. In 1965, it became an independent non-profit organization. Other milestones:

- 1971 — An open house was held at a newly constructed Rescue Squad building on Adams Street, the site currently in use.
- 1973 — Hoke's first "jaws of life" tool (and one of the first four purchased in N.C.) was purchased and classes began to familiarize members with its use. The tool is



25 years ago: Eric Allen, commander (left to right); Jim Wade, vice commander; Neil Smith, executive vice commander with the Squad's only vehicle.

used to pry victims from vehicles.

- 1975 — The Squad began and completed its first emergency medical tech course certifying members for basic life support. Also that year, Squad members began using pagers.
- 1976 — Heavy Rescue — extrication, rescue from high-up places — was added.
- 1981 — The Squad's building was expanded. Second jaws of life tool purchased.
- 1982 — Water rescue was added

using boats and diving equipment.

- 1991 — Another heavy rescue vehicle added to serve growing county.
- Last year, it answered 573 calls performing such duties as:
  - assisting Emergency Medical Services with ambulance calls
  - providing ambulance service when EMS is on other calls
  - responding to vehicle accidents

(See RESCUE, page 4)

## Leadership Hoke groups detail ideas on education, recreation

Over the past week, *The News-Journal* interviewed five participants in the first annual Leadership Hoke institute. These, the first of a series of interviews, are aimed at letting institute participants share a little of what they learned while preparing case studies of important aspects of the county.

All five of the participants were impressed with the program. All agreed Leadership Hoke's biggest contribution was getting to know leaders in the community.

"It educates you as to who to see if you've got a problem," Don Sanderson said.

"I might have been too quick to judge some of them," Kent Vesser said of government employees.

None felt the program made him an instant leader, but Sanderson said it would be much easier to take on leadership in the community. "I feel better prepared if that was the route that I wanted to take," he said.

Leadership Hoke is sponsored by the Raeford-Hoke Chamber of Commerce and Sandhills Community College; participants have spent one full day each month since August making themselves familiar with aspects of Hoke County — its government, history, schools, economy and more.

### Taking on the schools

Wowra, personnel manager at House of Raeford's turkey plant, describes himself and his two partners as community leaders.

"I think you're seeing three guys here who give a lot of time and effort," he said near the end of an interview Friday.

### By Sam C. Morris

The weather did warm up last week and the weekend had temperatures in the 80s. The 60-degree temperature Monday felt cool and with the wind out of the north it was unpleasant at times. The rain Sunday night was needed, but we can use some more.

The forecast calls for the thermometer to start rising again. The highs on Wednesday and Thursday will be in the high 70s and on Friday and Saturday the readings will again be in the 80s. The lows will mostly be in the 50s for this period. Rain is forecast for Friday and Saturday, but only showers.

The forecast for Easter Sunday is for the highs to be in the 70s and the low will be in the 50s. We could have some rain on Easter Sunday.

Most churches in the city and county should be crowded on Easter, as the little children show off their Easter outfits.

Even so, with Ken Tedder, production manager at Hoke Rubber Co. and Kent Vesser, personnel manager for Burlington Industries, the three at first seemed an unlikely group to study education in Hoke County.

Look again. (See LEADERSHIP, page 12)

## Around Town

With the lovely forecast the Easter Parade at church this Sunday should bring out many who wouldn't attend at other times.

The cold weather hurt some of the crops and it also hurt some of the azalea bushes around the city. The warm weather last week brought out most of the azaleas and they are now on display at most homes in the city.

It seems to me that more and more people are taking care of their yards and lawns than ever before. Of course the advertised gardens are beautiful, but if you will take the time and drive around Raeford you will see some beautiful azalea bushes and many other plants and flowers. This is a good advertisement for Raeford. Keep it up!

Politics is on the minds of many of our citizens. It seems that there is a (See AROUND, page 16)