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Representation, not districting is important, say Indians

An Indian group that formed late last year says its push for racial representation on the Hoke County Board of Commissioners has been misunderstood as an attempt to cut Hoke County into districts.

What they want is representation, members said at a meeting Monday night; their top priority right now is getting one of their members elected to the Board of Commissioners, not passage of the referendum — or of districting.

Representation has been denied to Indians beyond the Board of Commissioners, Civic Club members said.

"There's a lot of boards that there's no Indians on," said Della Maynor-Goude, a member of the Civic Club and up for re-election as Hoke's Register of Deeds.

For instance, members said, there are no Indians on the Planning and Development Commission, which makes recommendations to

commissioners on planning and zoning in the county.

"With 3,200 Indians in Hoke County, we ought to be entitled to at least one position on the board," said Elias Rogers, another active member of the Club.

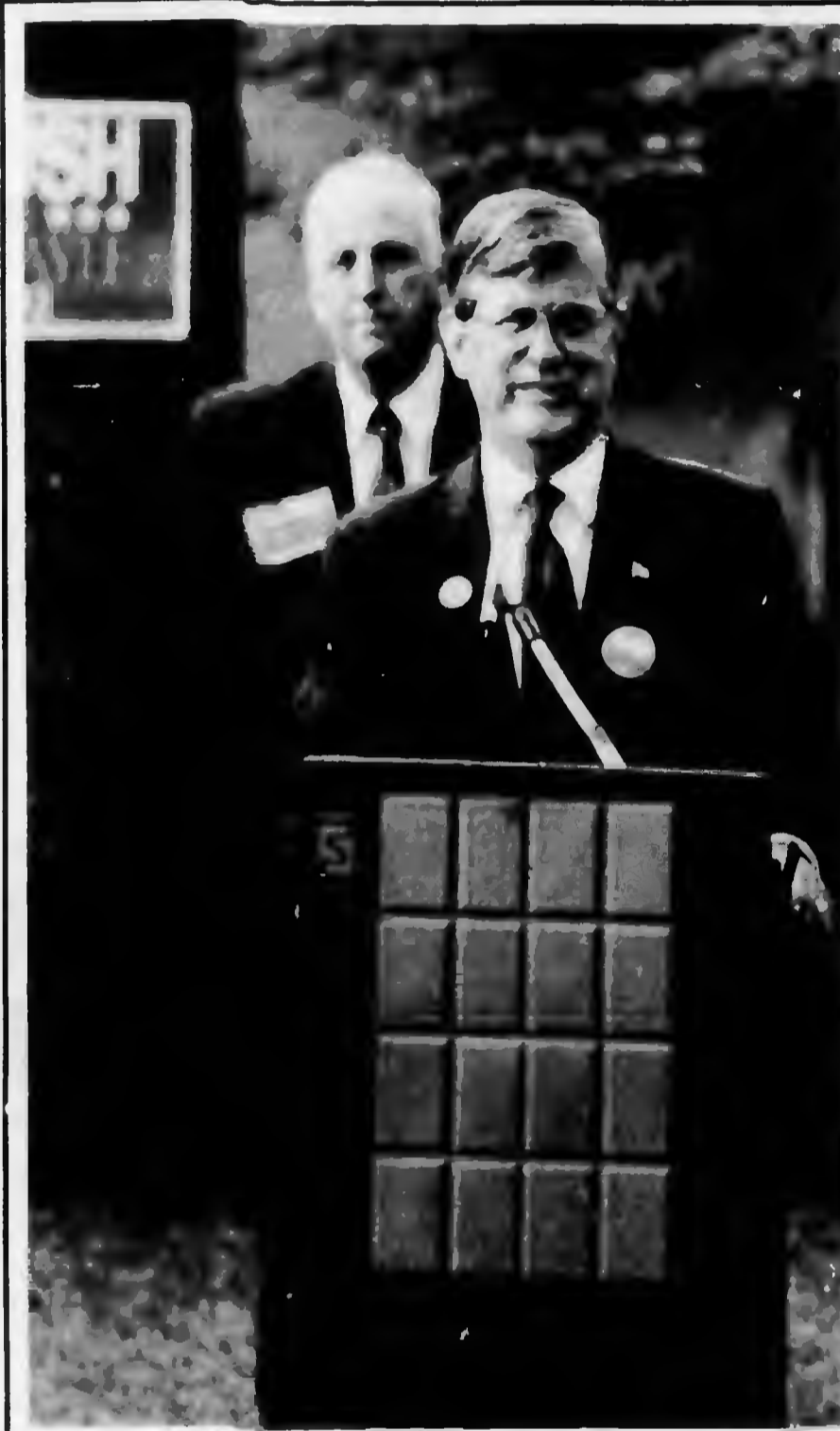
Indians make about 14 percent of Hoke's population, but only about 9 percent of the county's voters. Only 848 Hoke County Indians were registered to vote as of April 4, according to

Board of Elections records.

Members say they didn't bring up the possibility of cutting Hoke into districts in the first place; they just wanted fair representation when they first approached commissioners on November 18.

More than 50 Hoke Indians came to the county board's meeting that night to ask commissioners to give them a seat on the board.

The group — led by Della Maynor-Goude, (See REPRESENTATION, page 14)



Martin speaks to crowd assembled at Hoke Library.



Martin with local Republican, Buddy Blue.

Martin pays Hoke Bush campaign visit

It's not often that a North Carolina governor visits Raeford, and when one does, politics are probably the reason.

That was certainly the case yesterday as Gov. Jim Martin and a big entourage swept into Raeford about 5 p.m. Martin and fellow Republicans held a pep rally on the lawn beside the Hoke County Public Library on Main Street.

The governor is stumping across several counties for George Bush and Dan Quayle in their presidential re-election bid.

"In two days we'll hit maybe 15 or 16" counties, he said, after several notables, including John McCain, GOP senator from Arizona, finished brief, upbeat speeches.

McCain recalled years he and Martin spent in the House of Representatives "doing the Lord's work in the city of Satan," just before he railed against further cuts in the defense budget.

"I don't want to see Fort Bragg closed," he said. "I don't want to see Fort Bragg reduced further."

He cited the military's work in the Gulf War as the kind of thing a strong defense is for.

"They went over and they got the job done...with a minimum of

(See MARTIN, page 12)

County signs garbage deal

Nets 21-year outlet for trash

Hoke County has solved its trash problem for the next 21 years.

That's how Barry Reed, Hoke's county manager, looks at the signing Friday of pacts with Bladen and Cumberland Counties, and with a Houston-based energy company.

Wyatt Upchurch, chairman of Hoke's Board of Commissioners, joined chairmen from the two counties and BCH Energy Corp., in signing a 21-year deal in which each county will send its trash to a Fayetteville site where a computerized plant will sort it and recycle what it can.

The un-recyclable trash will be divided: that which can, will be burned to make steam to run DuPont's Fayetteville polymer plant; trash that can't be recycled or burned will be buried in Fayetteville's Ann Street landfill.

One of the most startling aspects of the deal, Reed said, is how quickly it developed. "This project has gone from conception of just the idea to signing of the contract in just a year," he said. "For government, that's breakneck speed."

Reed said that speed came about because of cooperation between the three county governments, the need to act quickly and the merits of the multi-million dollar project. "It's just a super idea, it just makes a lot of sense," he said.

Why was trash such a problem for Hoke County?

First, the county landfill is just about filled.

Second, the state has put tough new laws in place that make it very expensive to dig new landfills, or even to run old ones. They also require local governments to recycle a certain amount of trash.

"We can't continue doing what we've been doing," Reed said.

One advantage of the pact, Reed said, is Hoke citizens will not be forced to change the way they deal with trash.

Citizens "will not have to recycle as part of a mandated program," he said, "because recycling will get done."

"So it's a convenient solution."

Reed said it's also the cheapest solution he's seen "for a county like Hoke."

The contract calls for Hoke to pay BCH Energy \$35.15 a ton for doing away with the county's trash. "New Hanover, they have \$60 a ton and they have mass burning," Reed said. "That doesn't have any recycling."

The trash pact will mean higher bills; but they would have been even two to five times higher than that, though he couldn't say exactly what trash bills will look like in the future. "I think it's a great deal," Reed said.

In addition to paying to get rid of the trash, Hoke will also build a transfer station to collect all of the county's garbage from its "convenience centers" — huge trash compactors, two of which have been opened. BCH will haul the trash by truck from the transfer station to the separating plant in Fayetteville.

Steam produced in a boiler heated by a new furnace will run DuPont's plant and produce electricity in a turbine generator.

BCH claims the deal will save Bladen, Cumberland and Hoke Counties over \$100 million over the life of the 21-year contract, and produce 500 tons less air pollution than the current oil burner.

Three jurors picked in murder trial

After a day and a half of questioning, lawyers have agreed on three of the 12 jurors needed for the trial of Kerry Morston, who is accused in last year's murder of Ed Harris, a Southern Pines police detective.

"Theoretically, we could get over this week," Jean Powell, one of two prosecutors in the case, said of the jury-picking process.

Powell (Hoke's District Attorney), her assistant William Farrell (head of the state Attorney General's special prosecutions unit), and Morston's lawyers, Woodberry Bowen and Ken Ransom of Lumberton, have questioned 18 possible jurors so far, she said.

The two teams of lawyers get 14

automatic "challenges" to prospective jurors who they think might not judge fairly in the case.

Plus, any potential juror who is related to either the accused or the victim, or who expresses an opinion on the case, can be excused by either team without penalty.

Jurors who are excused "have served their jury duty," Powell said, and can't be called again for jury duty for two years.

The lawyers must pick 12 jurors and as many alternates as Superior Court Judge Craig Ellis says are needed, she said.

Picking a jury for this case is slower than for most cases because (See TRIAL, page 10)



Sheriff Wayne Byrd (right) escorts Morston into the courthouse Monday morning.

Year-round school on table for discussion

The Chairman of Hoke's Board of Education has proposed that the county's schools look at changing the school calendar so school will run all year long, without a summer break.

That doesn't mean more days in school; under Chairman Shirley Gibson's proposal, students would still spend 180 days in class.

Gibson thinks year-round school — run in nine-week quarters with three-week breaks — might work better for Hoke County than the traditional two-semester system.

The plan could raise test scores, Gibson said, because students would be tested on about two months of material at a time, not four.

"I feel like this is going to be a real

"We have to be willing to take a risk in order to improve"

—Hank Richards

chance for us to bring up the scores," Gibson said Monday.

A key component in Gibson's proposal, which one might say is on the drawing board, is "remediation and enrichment" programs during each of the three-week breaks between quarters.

Students who didn't do well during a nine-week quarter would have one, two or three weeks to catch up, Gibson said. Meanwhile, gifted students would have those same three weeks to get ahead.

Another big part of Gibson's proposal is before- and after-school day care, so parents could get year-round care and supervision for their children.

Gibson cited a number of advantages to her proposal: less student and teacher burnout due to more frequent breaks, no lost time during the start of school as students wait for textbooks (and all the other little delays that Gibson says accompany the start of the school year), and less time spent reviewing old material because students won't have spent two and a half months forgetting what they learned before summer vacation.

Gibson said she already sees one problem that would be created if the

new system were installed; teachers who spend summer vacation at college pursuing advanced degrees would be at a loss, she said.

"I'm hoping that our teachers would be available to volunteer for this," she said.

Gibson suggested trying the proposal on a pilot school, possibly South Hoke Elementary, whose test scores are mostly lower than the rest of the county, or maybe at the new Rockfish Elementary, likely to open next year.

Hank Richards, principal of South Hoke School, was open to the possibility of year-round school, though he cautioned the county should not jump into it without research.

(See SCHOOL, page 12)

Around Town

By Sam C. Morris

I ended my item about weather last week with the comment, "Maybe all the cold weather has left for the year." Well, I was wrong. The temperatures have been in the 60s during the day and the lows have been in the 40s and 30s. We had one and one-half inches of rain and it has helped. The storm early Saturday morning was accompanied by lightning and it did some damage in the county.

The forecast calls for the weather to remain cool for the weekend; Wednesday through Saturday we should have highs in the 60s and low 70s and the lows at night will be in the 30s and 40s. We could have some rain Thursday.

If the temperatures remain on the cool side, we could have the first below normal monthly reading in many months.

Most of the farmers in the county

report that their corn crop is up and doing fine. Most fields that are being used for tobacco are now filled with machines and people planting. This should go on for this week and maybe next week.

Eddie Baker told me Sunday that it will be a week or so before he starts planting cotton.

Last week I wrote that Raz Autry would like for people to check their attics and basements for old wheelchairs. Last Friday morning he called and said that Mrs. Neill McFadyen had two chairs for him to pick up. One of the chairs is electrically operated and it was used by her son, Bill McFayden. Everyone who knew Bill will know that he would be pleased to know that his chair will be used by someone who couldn't afford a (See AROUND, page 12)