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RAEFORD, NORTH CAROLINA

25 CENTS

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Rockfish-Hoke completion date now estimated to be April 1

Hoke School officials hope they won't be fooled April 1. That's the tentative deadline for completion of the Rockfish-Hoke Elementary School.

Assistant Superintendent Don Steed said setbacks ranging from bad weather to steel construction plagued the project, but construction is moving right along.

"The two major setbacks were steel erection

and the weather. We've had some terrible weather," he said. "I think over 60 percent of the problem has been weather."

Weather caused problems, he said, but workmanship hasn't.

"I think the quality of work is superb, even though it's taking longer than we originally anticipated. We've had no problem with any of the prime contractors. We're very pleased with

Ratley Construction and Owen Smith Architects, the firm which oversees the project."

As of Friday, Steed said the last portion of the school was enclosed with windows, and contractors hope to turn the heat on sometime this week.

Steed said once the heat is turned on, the project will progress more quickly.

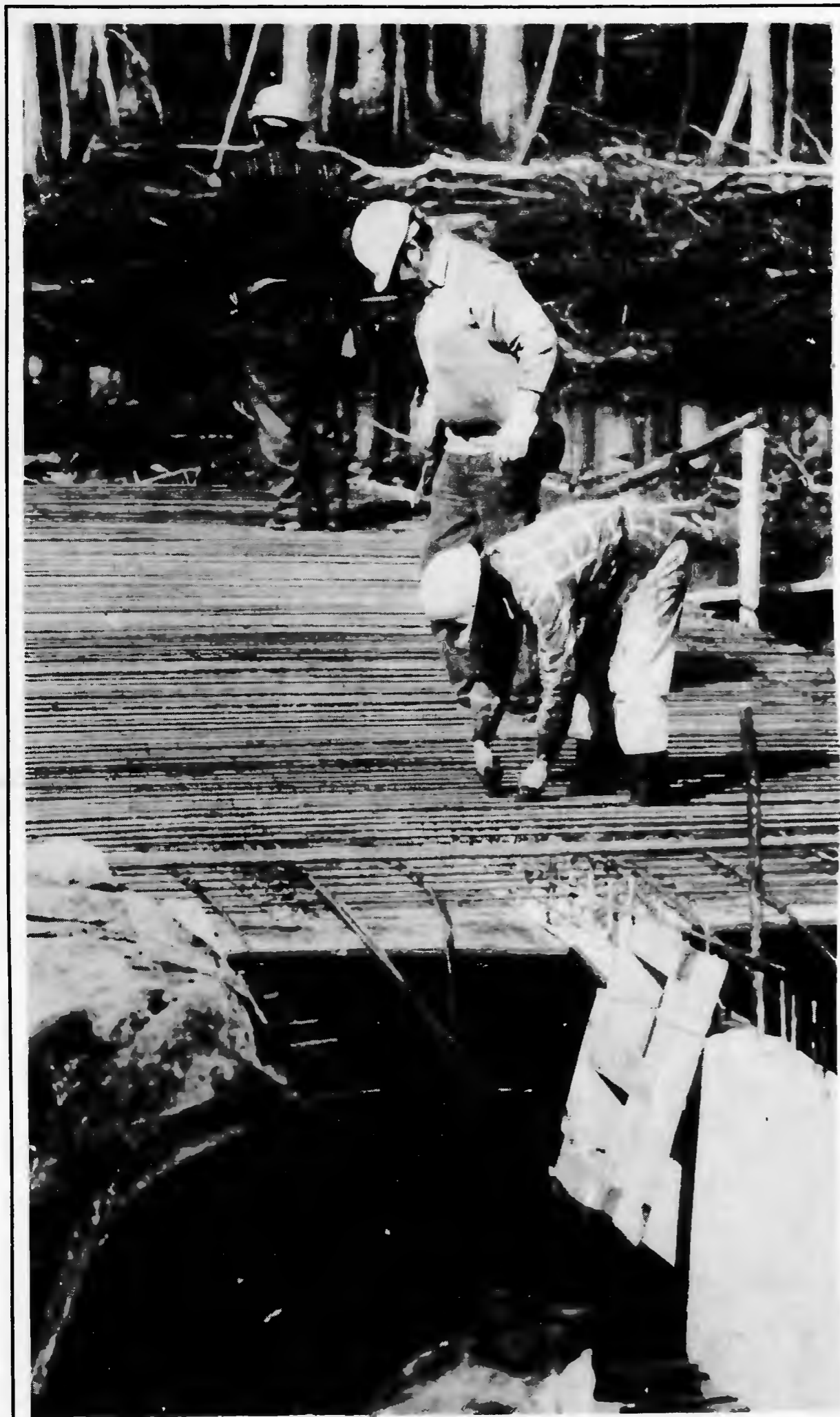
"It'll dry out the entire structure, and then they can start hanging light fixtures, painting and

doing ceiling work."

Then rooms can take on the more "scholarly" look as workers hang chalkboards and interior doors.

He said he anticipates crews will complete about 85 percent of the building by this week before turning on the heat.

Once most of the interior construction is (See ROCKFISH-HOKE, page 8)



Workers prepare a bridge for concrete on a new section of US 401 where widening is in progress.

401 widening still on schedule

Construction to widen Highway 401 between Raeford and Fayetteville is still on schedule according to officials.

Buck Clark, an engineer for the Division of Highways, says widening to four lanes of the first section — from Seventy-first High School

to Wayside Rd. — should be completed in December.

The remainder should be completed in 1994.

Hoke studies joining regional jail facility

Sheriff says proposal too costly

The Hoke Board of Commissioners will look into joining a regional jail center to form the third such center in N.C.

According to a tentative list of options for the County to address the growing need for jail space, an independent assessment firm recommended for Hoke to join with Stanley, Richmond, Anson and Montgomery counties in constructing the facility.

Howard Geisler of GSA, LTD. in Cary, the research firm which studied Hoke's jail, said regional jail facilities already exist in the state and in Virginia, where the state government provides counties with financial incentives to join a regional system.

"The idea is a facility designed for a given group of counties designed to meet their specific needs," he said.

The Hoke jail currently has bed space for approximately 28 inmates, he said. According to Schwarzbher, the jail is over capacity with 62 people.

Geisler said GSA numbers were conservative, but he said Hoke would still need at least 45 beds in the jail by 1997, and projects a need for 116 beds 10 to 20 years from now.

He also predicted a need to expand the size of the jail from its current 4,500 square feet to at least 27,000 square feet as soon as possible and to 44,000 square feet in the next 20 years.

"In square footage, the jail is very inadequate," Geisler said.

County officials agree the county needs more

jail space, but did not decide what to do about the overpopulated facility.

Sheriff Wayne Byrd and Chief Jailer Alex Schwarzbher long complained of overcrowding in the Hoke jail, but both said the GSA estimates of the county's future needs falls short of reality.

Byrd and Schwarzbher said they were not contacted to provide accurate information for the study.

Geisler said a new jail could accommodate 10-year jail population projections at the price of about \$3 million to \$4 million.

"The options tend to be to build a new jail, not add on to the existing facility," Geisler said.

But where to put that new jail remains a question.

Byrd and Schwarzbher said if the county joins with others to build a regional facility the costs for the county would increase while administrative control would decrease for Hoke.

Both also mentioned the possibility of needing more space than would be provided in that type of contractual arrangement.

GSA officials told the commissioners under the proposed concept, Hoke and all counties involved would take part in the administration of the facility. Another concern mentioned by Byrd is transportation costs of prisoners, which he said would be absorbed by the district facility.

"There would be no other cost than the per diem costs," GSA representatives said.

The group said Hoke and the other proposed (See COUNTY, page 5)

Hoke Schools may attain full accreditation next year

Hoke schools may gain full accreditation if scores continue to rise as in this year's Report Card, issued by the Department of Public Instruction. But the system must make up for lost ground to avoid losing its partially accredited status, Superintendent Dr. Bill Harrison said.

School systems must meet at least 75 percent of criteria set by the state for full accreditation. This year Hoke met approximately 63 percent of the 34 standards.

Harrison said school officials looked to meet 75 percent of the accreditation standards over a three-year period.

"My hope was that we would increase the

number of standards met by 10 percent this year," Harrison said. But the system surpassed that goal with a 15 percent increase in standards met, leaving only 12 more percent before receiving full accreditation. And Harrison thinks Hoke can get off the partially accredited list next year.

"If we can get 12 percent next year, we'll be fully accredited. We're closer, we exceeded our goals this year and our goals are realistic."

Although Hoke's overall scores remain below state averages this year, the system made substantial gains in the four core subject areas, according to the report.

(See SCHOOLS, page 4)

Woman shot, fleeing in car

A 17-year old Raeford girl was taken to Cape Fear Valley Medical Center Monday afternoon after being shot, deputies said, by her boyfriend.

The girl, Stephanie McCain of Iris Street was released from CFVMC Monday evening and reported in fair condition.

According to Hoke Sheriff's Deputy S.C. Todd, McCain argued with her boyfriend in Queenmore, who then allegedly shot her through the back windshield of her car. The girl drove to the Robbins Heights area.

Todd said she was shot with a .25 caliber automatic weapon in the back (See CRIME, page 3)



A Raeford woman was shot in the neck while driving this car Monday afternoon.

Around Town

By Sam C. Morris

The rain and cloudy weather came to an end last Wednesday afternoon.

The sun came out and many people were blinded when it first broke through the clouds. I didn't hear from anyone to say if this was a record without the sun shining, but I did get a call from Mary Peele last Thursday night and she stated that since the day after Thanksgiving we have had one full day of sunshine. Of course we had sunshine for parts of a day, but only one since Thanksgiving. Maybe a record was set.

The past few days have had high temperatures in the 40s and 50s and the lows at night have been in the low 30s. On Sunday and Monday morn-

ings, there was a big frost and the windows of cars had a nice coat of ice on them.

The forecast calls for temperatures Wednesday and Thursday to have highs in the 40s and the lows will be in the 30s and low 40s. On Friday and Saturday we will see the highs in the 50s and the lows in the 30s and low 40s. There is a chance of rain Thursday night and Friday morning.

We have finally been a few days without the flag flying at Crumpler's Funeral Home. I can't remember as many deaths as we had from just before Christmas until a week ago. (See AROUND, page 12)