

The News-Journal

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RAEFORD, NORTH CAROLINA

25 CENTS

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If bond issue passes, Hoke Center gets \$300,000

When Hoke voters go to the polls November 2, they'll help decide one bond issue that will have a direct impact on Hoke County if passed.

A portion of \$250 million from the issue will go to renovations of Sandhills Community College's Hoke Center.

The portion totals \$300,000 and is one of more than 75 projects designated for funding by the issue.

If the county cooperates, SCC would like to renovate the old Turlington School, which currently houses Cooperative Extension programs.

The Turlington move would allow SCC to expand

not only physically, but in programs offered.

According to a press release by SCC, the school would have the space to expand its computer facilities and introduce other curricula such as English and mathematics, and more technical courses such as cosmetology and heating and air conditioning.

Another project on the SCC bond wish list is extension of a second Small Business Center to Hoke.

"In short," Halstead said, "passage of this critical bond issue will allow us to do what we're already doing much better, and it will let us expand our (See BONDS, page 7)



Mixing pleasure with business

Hoke year-round school students, on break from their studies, enjoy a hayride at Camp Rockfish during a week of intersession activities intended to combine fun with learning. At the same time, other Hoke students were working in seminars to learn about the environment (more photos, page 6).

Commission moves to dissolve Raeford-Hoke Planning Board

The tombstone could read January 4, 1988 to April 12, 1994 for the Raeford-Hoke Planning Commission, which received its death sentence Monday night in a 3-2 vote from the County Commissioners.

Within an hour County Commissioners Riley Jordan, James Leach and L.E. McLaughlin voted to give the City of Raeford its mandatory six-month notice of intent to dissolve the commission.

Both City Council and the County Commission appoint members to the board, and it is funded 25 percent by the City and 75 percent by the County.

Commissioners Tom Howell and Cleo Bratcher voted against the dissolution.

Also dissolved was the joint position of planning director.

Monday's vote was the final blow to the Planning Commission, which has been under

attack by the majority of the County Commissioners for months.

Jordan said dissolution of the joint board was the only legal way to regain control over the office of planning director.

He said the controversy with the planning director came over "having a high salaried person not responsible to the County Commissioners or the county manager."

(See PLANNING, page 14)

Landfill closes; garbage goes to Montgomery

Monday marked the end of the Hoke County landfill. In its place a jointly operated city-county temporary transfer station began loading garbage for transport to Montgomery County.

The switch from landfill to transfer station relieved the county's immediate solid waste problems while the county awaits completion of a tri-county project with Bladen and Cumberland counties.

Earlier this year Hoke officials joined forces with the two counties to handle its garbage for the next 20 years.

Under the agreement the solid waste from all three will be pooled

together to be used as fuel for a cogeneration facility at the DuPont factory in Cumberland County.

Waste that proves unusable will be brought to the Ann Street landfill in Fayetteville.

The \$58 million project will be capable of processing 120 tons of refuse per hour, converting 70 percent to fuel.

Hoke found itself in a dilemma when the landfill neared closure earlier this year.

When the closure became eminent, Hoke hoped to carry its waste to Cumberland County. But Cumberland County could not get a permit to accept out-of-county waste in time to meet Hoke's needs.

Raeford came to the rescue with an expansion of the temporary waste transfer facility it already planned to accommodate the city's 60 tons of garbage and the county's 480 tons of weekly refuse.

County Manager Mike Wood said the switch over was "going great because of the city-county collaboration."

The landfill outlasted original (See LANDFILL, page 7)



A truck is loaded with local garbage for transport to Montgomery County; no longer will garbage be buried in Hoke.

McNatt is guilty

Receives life prison term

William Earl McNatt will not die for killing prominent Raeford citizen Tom Cameron. But he may spend the rest of his life in prison. Last week a Scotland County jury found McNatt guilty of Cameron's murder; he was sentenced to life in prison for the beating death of the 75-year-old man. He has not yet been sentenced for an armed robbery charge in the case.

The afternoon sentence came after the jury asked Superior Court Judge William Gore if it could specify a sentence of life in prison without parole.

Gore ruled the jury could not make such a designation, only the death penalty or life in prison.

After about another hour of deliberation, the jury returned a life in prison sentence.

District Attorney Jean Powell pleaded for the death penalty in what she called an "up close, personal" crime.

"You can see the pain and fear in the victim's eyes. You can feel the victim's blood. You can hear the victim's moans," Powell said of the beating of Cameron.

"You can see and hear and feel the results of what you're doing when you beat him," she said. "The defendant apparently likes to inflict pain. You begin to realize and understand the meanness of William McNatt and what he did March 1991."

The jury seemed swayed by Powell's call for the death penalty when she explained he exhibited a pattern of violence which was epitomized with the murder of Cameron.

The testimony of three men was entered into evidence as a display of McNatt's disposition toward violence.

Cameron died of a broken jaw and blows to the head, injuries prosecutors called a "fingerprint crime" for McNatt.

Kelvin Midget, Leroy Pillsbury and James Bain said they were each attacked by McNatt, who broke their jaws and severely beat each man.

One of the men, Bain, said he was attacked by McNatt just two months before the Cameron murder.

The emotional call of Assistant District Attorney Mike Schmidt seemed to move the jury, one juror even breaking down in tears when he asked them to take five minutes and visualize the murder of Tom Cameron. Prosecutors continued to paint a picture of a violent monster without guilt for his crime.

"You have a chance to see him for what he is," Schmidt said. "Remorse — not hardly. What lurks in his heart is evil and he enjoys what he does."

McNatt's cousin, James Harris, who entered a plea bargain with the state, described in detail the spring murder and the callousness of the man after the killing.

Harris, of Lake Elizabeth Road, testified to accompanying McNatt and another cousin, Bruce Harris, to the pond off June Johnson Road Cameron co-owned in northern Hoke. James Harris, 22, and Bruce Harris, 28, were charged earlier this year in conjunction with the murder.

James Harris was accused of stealing Cameron's gold watch, car keys and wallet while being armed with a .22 rifle. Bruce Harris was charged with first degree murder, injury to personal property and armed robbery.

He said the other two men attacked Cameron and beat him to death after Cameron asked them to leave and return the fish they caught to his pond. He stood and watched, he said, as the pair then robbed Cameron of a watch and money.

Later that evening he said McNatt divided up the money into threes. Bruce Harris awaits trial.

Around Town

By Sam C. Morris

On Monday the high was about 50 degrees. After the warm weather of the past few days, this felt like winter. We had some rain last Friday and again Monday morning. The temperatures began to rise Tuesday and the rains left also.

The forecast calls for the highs Wednesday and Thursday to be in the low 70s and the lows will be in the 40s. Friday and Saturday we will see the highs in the high 70s and the lows in the 50s. There isn't much chance of rain during this period.

Maybe we will have fall weather from now on.

I was talking to Sandra Kelly last week about the Hoke United Way Campaign. She is an officer and director of the United Way and she said that pledge cards and other information about the

drive will be put in the hands of most local businesses this week or next. When you get your information, get it to your employees as soon as possible.

If you don't receive a kit of information or if you are an individual send your contributions to the Hoke United Way, P. O. Box 914, Raeford, N. C. 28376.

I don't know how far the farmers are with the picking of cotton, but several fields between Raeford and Arabia have been picked. There are trailer loads of cotton at the gin and I don't believe that the rainy weather has slowed down the ginning.

Benny McLeod, manager of the Hoke Cotton Warehouse told me last Friday that they were very busy and they expected to stay that way for several weeks. I don't know what the yield per acre is for this year, but the stalk doesn't look as (See AROUND, page 14)