

VIEWPOINTS

We Get Letters

Citizen takes a stand against Robbins Heights 'war'

Dear Editor:
Due to some situations I am involved in around the county I have hesitated to write this letter for several weeks. I realize now this letter is more important than any negative thought. This letter is to help us see we are one, and if I have a problem you have one also. If I need help you need to help me.

I have friends who live in the Robbin Heights community. They have worked hard all of their lives to buy their home. They have put a fence around their property, but across the street there are activities in houses they never imagined when they moved to their new home. My friends are in church almost every Sunday. The daughter is the organist for three choirs. The father is the lead singer for the male chorus and the gospel choir. The mother sings in the gospel choir. The son plays the drums. I know they pray.

Several weeks ago within yards of their home one young man was mur-

dered and two others were shot in a drive-by shooting. This is "one" of the murders that has happened in their community from a drive-by shooting, or some other type of murder.

My kids knew some of the others that had been shot or killed in Robbin Heights before and mentioned it to me. I felt compassion and prayed for the family. But this time it was different. I was directly involved. I had to hurry to the hospital when I heard about the incident. I saw the mother that didn't know if she should stay at the hospital with her son in surgery who had been shot or go home and deal with her other son's death. I saw my family and my nephew deal with his being shot. Shot with a rifle that is illegal to use. I could not believe there was that type rifle in Hoke County. Also, this rifle had been used in shooting concerning drugs in a drive-by shooting in Hoke County, according to rumors I heard. The situation became a reality to me that night.

Yes, I will continue to pray, but

action needs to go along with my and your prayers. I have heard the people in Robbin Heights are surrounded by at least two gangs, drugs flow freely; people who live in the community have to be careful in reporting incidents to the police.

They need help. I thought about the war we are facing now in Afghanistan. The Army, the Navy, the Marines, whomever the United States needed to protect the USA and end the war was sent there. They became one unit with one purpose when they entered the war zone, that's the only way you can win.

I ask the Chief of the City Police, Chief High and the Hoke County Sheriff Davis to become a unit with one purpose and go into Robbin Heights and end this war.

The difference in this war is the "Enemy" is drugs, guns and other problems I can't imagine.

Thank You,
Shirley Ferguson

Stauffer family says community provided comfort

To the Editor:

A note of thanks! To the City of Raeford Police Dept., the Hoke County Sheriff's Dept., the NC State Police, the City of Raeford, Hoke County Rescue Squad, The Raeford Fire Departments, along with the surrounding Police, Fire, and Emergency Departments, Crumpler's Funeral Home, the Raeford United Methodist Church, the Rev. Richard Vaughan for the beautiful ceremony. Also Jane Britt and the RUMC Preschool children: Jeffery, Sam, Katlyn, Nikki, Noah, Kelsey, and Will (for all the cards and hugs), Jimmy's Produce and the countless others who helped put the food baskets together, The Jameson Inn (Laurinburg, NC) management and staff, Hoke County High

School, VFW #10, the American Legion Post #20, The 118th MP Corps from Fort Bragg. The News-Journal and The Fayetteville Observer for their stories of Cliff's life and coverage of the accident that caused his tragic death, and all the surrounding communities that were so kind and caring when we lost our precious son on February 18, 2002.

When Cliff Stauffer was tragically killed in an auto accident week before last, the love and respect you all showed him truly touched our hearts. When we arrived in your town, grieving and sad, you took us in and treated us like family!

It was as if we had belonged to you as much as our son did. Cliff loved you all and it shows that you returned

that love with vigor. It seems not only did Cliff make us proud, he made you proud also! He truly loved his family, country and community, and protecting all three is what he did and loved best.

When it was time to leave for Houston, it was comforting to know that Cliff's wife and daughters would continue to be watched over and cared for by his wonderful friends and colleagues.

We, his family, miss him dearly, as we know you do; but remember he's watching over the streets of Heaven and waiting to meet with us again!

With love and gratitude,
The Stauffer Families

Firefighter's plea: don't delay emergency vehicles with red lights

To the Editor:

I am a firefighter of 15 years and I live here in Hoke County.

I would like to say to all here in Hoke that when you see an emergency vehicle running red lights, would you all give that vehicle the right of way.

Here in Hoke County the firefighters do not stay at the fire department so they have to go to emergency scenes from home or from wherever they are when the call comes

in. It is so hard to get to an emergency call when you are blocked by cars that will not get out of the way. In an emergency time may be a matter of life or death.

I would like to say that all of the emergency personnel here in Hoke County are some of the best that I have worked with and thank you all for being there for us.

The firefighters here in Hoke County are all volunteers who put

their lives on the line every day to save lives and property. The firefighters don't get paid for it and hardly even get a "thank you" for what they do.

I can say this: when an emergency call comes in, the firefighters are always here and on the way to the call.

M.E. Rich
A Hoke County firefighter

Pharmacy's professionalism noted by mental health nurse

To the Editor:

Hoke County is going through rough times; a time where there are job layoffs, high rate of unemployment and a political war going on. In spite of all the above, there is a place where you can get your medical, social physical and spiritual needs met. That place is Barbee Pharmacy.

As a mental health nurse at Sandhills Mental Health Center in Hoke County, I have developed a rapport with the staff at the pharmacy. My clients often tell me of the prompt,

courteous and professional attention given to them when they visit the pharmacy. I would like to especially thank them for taking the time to call the mental health center when there is a need to clarify a prescription. Often, a phone call can prevent a lapse in medication.

On behalf of Sandhills Mental Health Center Hoke-Unit, I would like to personally thank Mr. Barbee for his assistance with the medication program. I would also like to commend the staff for taking the time to

go that extra mile in providing assistance in serving our special needs population.

It is comforting to know that our clients and the Hoke County community can continue to count on Barbee Pharmacy for outstanding served and support.

Respectfully yours,
Mildred Alleyne BS, RN
Mental Health Nurse
Sandhills Mental Health Center

Mourner disappointed Hoke provided no funeral escort

Dear Ms. Wilson:

I am writing to express how disappointed I was in our sheriff's department. On Sunday, March 3, after the funeral service for a family member, which was held in Scotland County, we had to travel across three counties to the gravesite. One of the counties happened to be Hoke.

When we left the church, a Scotland County deputy escorted us to Hwy. 15-501. The funeral procession then entered into Hoke County with

no escort from "our" Sheriff's Department. When we reached Moore County there were two deputies stopping traffic for the procession to proceed down US Hwy. 1, then lastly there was a deputy from Richmond County to meet us at the line.

As a citizen of Hoke County, I found this unacceptable. I was very impressed with the other three counties, for they represented their departments well. I have read and heard other stories where Hoke County

deputies did not assist in other cross-county processions as well. Are our deputies so busy that they couldn't spare just one car? This might seem to be something of no importance to many people, but it let me know that our Sheriff's Department is not "up to par" with its surrounding counties when it comes to something of this nature.

Thank You,
Angela Chavis-Cummings

Illiteracy takes personal as well as societal toll

To the Editor:

Do you realize how much your literacy skills enhanced your life? If you didn't have these skills would your lifestyle be greatly diminished? Would you feel inadequate or become hostile? Would you feel isolated from the dominant reading/technology society? You might even begin to think of yourself as "just plain dumb."

We can introduce you to hard-working adults, living in poverty be-

cause of illiteracy, or persons who use 'I can't' or 'I'm sorry' at the same rate that readers use 'the' or 'and.' We can show you what your life might be like without basic literacy skills. Yet, we believe that adult illiteracy is a solvable problem.

Beyond the personal toll of illiteracy, there is a cost paid by society. The trained mind solves problems differently and often more effectively. Individual empowerment translates into community empowerment. Dr.

Frank Laubach coined more than a cliché when he suggested to the people of the Philippines that "Each One Teach One."

Will you teach just one adult to read? For more information, contact Hoke Reading/Literacy Council at (910) 875-2145 or hrlc@coastalnet.com.

Barbara J. Buie
Executive Director
P.S. Thanks Mr. Autry

Local government meetings listed

Listed here are the regularly scheduled Hoke and Raeford meetings. Meeting dates and times may be changed due to holidays and other conflicts.

County

The board of commissioners meets the first and third Mondays of each month at 7:30 p.m. Public input sessions are held immediately after business is conducted during the first-of-the-month meetings.

The planning commission meets the second Thursday at 7 p.m. The board of adjustment meets the first Wednesday at 7 p.m.

County meetings are conducted in the commissioners' meeting room of the Pratt Building at 227

North Main Street.

The board of elections meets the second Tuesday of the month at 5 p.m. in the board of elections office in the Pratt Building.

The Raeford/Hoke Economic Development Board meets the second Tuesday of each month at 8 a.m. in the Depot (Chamber of Commerce Building).

The Hoke County board of education meets the second Tuesday of each month at 7 p.m.

The phone number for county offices is 875-8751.

City

Listed here are the regularly scheduled City of Raeford government meetings.

Meeting dates and times may be

changed due to holidays and other conflicts. (September's meeting has been rescheduled to September 10 due to the Labor Day holiday.)

City of Raeford council meetings are held the first Monday of each month at 7:30 p.m. However, this month's meeting will be held the second Monday, September 12, at the usual time.

Board of adjustment and planning board meetings are held when there are matters before the boards to be addressed.

The planning board meets the third Tuesday at 6 p.m., and the board of adjustment meets the second Monday at 6 p.m.

All meetings are held in the Council Chamber, City Hall, 315 Main Street. The phone number is 875-8161.

Meet HUBERT A. PETERKIN People's Choice candidate for Hoke County Sheriff



Fairness, Experience & Professionalism

Saturday, March 9th, 2002

11 am to 4 pm

HAWK-EYE INDIAN
CULTURAL CENTER

(located in Antioch)

1448 John Road, Raeford, NC

For Information Contact

Rev. Elisha Dial

843-3505 or 843-9484

This advertisement was paid for by the committee to elect Hubert A. Peterkin