

The News-Journal

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Hunt pleas to driving violations

Hoke County Commissioner James Albert Hunt plead guilty to careless and reckless driving and was fined \$100 Tuesday in Robeson County District Court in Red Springs.

Hunt, who was originally charged with five counts of moving violations, changed his plea from not guilty to guilty of just the one charge because he needed to "get the case out of court and out of the news," he said.

Hunt was alleged to have led Robeson County Deputy Sheriff Mitchell Norris on a high speed chase through parts of Robeson County.

Hunt maintained that he was near Fayetteville and nowhere near where the chase was to have occurred.

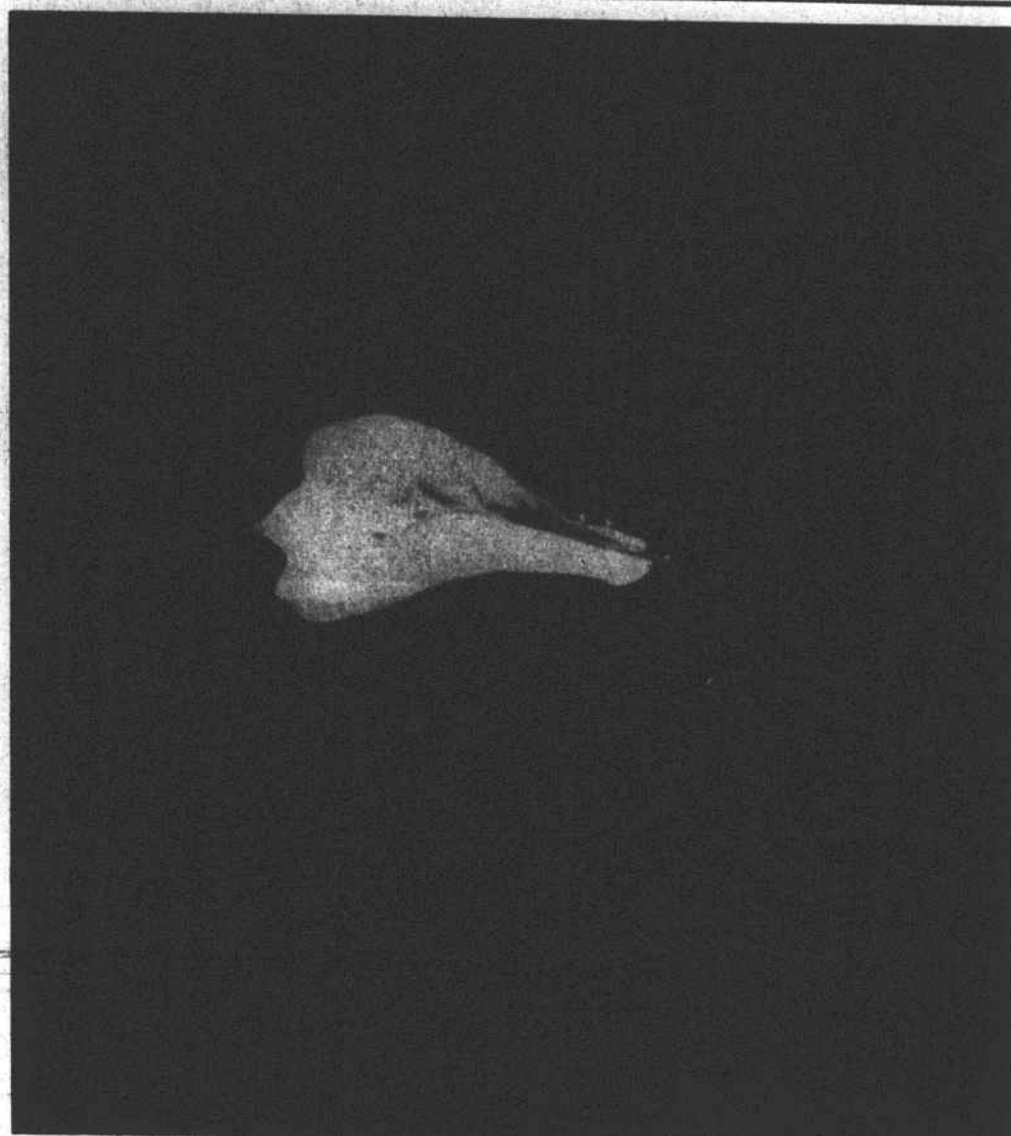
The Vice-Chairman of the Hoke County Commission was also charged with speeding in excess of 100 miles per hour, failure to stop for a blue light and siren, driving left of center and a stop sign violation.

Those charges were dropped by Robeson Assistant District Attorney Bill Hough.

The car Hunt was driving was not the color, make or model of car Norris allegedly chased, said the commissioner.

Judge Charles G. McLean said that both sides would have had trouble presenting their cases if it had gone to trial.

The case was delayed three times because of witnesses or attorneys not showing up and although Judge McLean had ordered the trial to be held at 11:30 Tuesday morning, District Attorney Hough did not call the case until about 3:30 Tuesday afternoon.



A rare sight

This lone leaf floating on an Arabia area pond is a rare sight these days. The way the trees have been shedding their summer foliage lately, it is difficult to find just one leaf to photograph.

Photo by Becky Jones

Foster homes critical here

A critical shortage of approved foster care homes has developed in Hoke County, and some children now being taken into protective custody are having to be housed in surrounding counties, a spokesman for the Department of Social Services (DSS) said last week.

Currently there are 26 children, who have been removed from their parents in Hoke County because of sexual or physical abuse and placed in foster homes, DSS Director Ken Witherspoon said.

Two children, who were taken into protective custody last week, had to be housed in another county because there was no adequate space available in Hoke County, Witherspoon said, adding that because of recent publicity about child abuse the number of local cases is increasing.

"In the last 90 days, we have had seven children taken into custody," the DSS director said.

"It's almost a life and death situation for the children when we are looking for foster care. Other counties help out a lot," he said.

County social workers hope more qualified foster parents will respond to a call being put out for help.

"We need people waiting, licensed and approved to be foster parents," Witherspoon said. "The shortage is critical."

On October 30, DSS staffers are holding an open house from 4 to 6 p.m. for county residents interested in becoming foster parents.

"We're hoping people will come by and talk about foster care, and then pick up an application,"

Foster Care Social Worker Linda Cromartie said.

In November, DSS will hold a group orientation session for those persons interested in becoming foster parents.

In order to qualify, applicants must be between the ages of 25 and 55, and must have been married for at least three years.

"There is a good two or three month training period. Fire and health inspections are conducted on the homes," Cromartie said.

Workshop sessions are held. Parents are assigned homework. Round table discussions are conducted about children and how to handle different situations that might come up.

"Most of these children have problems. We prepare the foster parents to handle them," Cromartie said.

Subsidies of \$165 per month are paid to the foster parents for the support of the child.

Most of the children who need foster homes now in the county are younger. Most fall in the age group from infant to four years old.

Once a child is in the foster home, efforts are made to hasten the process of determining the fate of the ward, Witherspoon said.

If the child can be returned to the natural parents, then that determination is made as soon as possible, he said.

"We give parents every chance possible to regain custody. We give them every right to fail," the DSS Director said.

Parents are evaluated on a basis of how the child was treated prior to DSS custody, and how well they (See FOSTER, page 3A)

Raeford conducting probe into condition of sewer system

By Ed Miller

Raeford workers under the direction of City Manager Tom Phillips are conducting an extensive investigation into the condition of the municipal sewer system and hoping to eliminate trouble spots.

Phillips is working now with Asheboro Engineering firm Moore, Gardner and Associates, on getting a set of procedures for the evaluation, he said Monday.

The Raeford system has been

under fire from the state Department of Natural Resources and Community Development (NRCD) for discharging high levels of pollutants into Rockfish Creek.

In the past, the failure of local industries to pre-treat discharges has been blamed for the problem; however, speculation is that large amounts of ground water seeping into the system through poorly maintained pipes may also contribute to city treatment woes.

A moratorium on future in-

dustrial development was recently lifted by NRCD, but state officials have warned the city sewer discharges are still "just below" the safe level.

City officials hope the evaluation will help narrow the search for more than 1 million gallons a day in extraneous water flowing into the Raeford system.

"If we find that we are qualified to do the evaluation, it will save between \$30,000 and \$40,000 for the city," Phillips said.

Although Phillips was uncertain whether or not city personnel would qualify for the evaluation, he was already getting ready for an inspection of the system.

Last week, the city's Utilities Department was reorganized, said Phillips.

Raeford now has a Utilities Director, Jerry Jackson, that answers directly to the City Manager.

Formerly, there had been a superintendent in charge of collec-

tions and another in charge of water pumps and the sewer plant, Phillips said.

Those two superintendents were governed by City Engineer Bill Sellars.

By combining the two positions, Sellars is now free to spend more time with his other responsibilities and to keep a close eye on some street paving that will begin soon in Raeford, said Phillips.

"This (reorganization) is not a punishment for anyone," he said.

"It is a positive reorganization to address a specific problem."

As a part of the new personnel system, Phillips has created a two man inspection team that will soon begin looking into manholes all around town to try and find trouble areas in the sewer system.

There has been a water flow meter purchased by the city that will immediately calculate the amount of water flowing through a manhole, Phillips said.

(See CITY, page 2A)

Around Town

By Sam Morris

Maybe the beach resorts reduced prices too early this year. The weather for the past two weeks has been just like summer. It has been more like baseball weather than football weather in this section of the country. Last week it was hard to realize that a football game in Denver was being played in the snow.

I believe that we can expect to go from summer into winter, without any fall weather. The old folks used to tell me years ago that a bountiful nut crop meant a cold winter ahead. The pecan and hickory trees are loaded this year. So far, three limbs have broken on my pecan tree. So according to this sign, get prepared for the worst.

I read the column "Looking On" by Kay Thomas last week in this paper and was prepared to write a check to the Hoke Historical Association, but something stopped me. It was the amount for which to write the check to the association. Would \$10 be just for me, or for me and my wife?

After talking with Kay this week, it seems that a \$10 check would cover a family. So if you are interested in Hoke County History, send a check to the association. The address is: Hoke Historical Association, P.O. Box 426, Raeford, NC, 28376.

(See AROUND, page 2A)



Helping with a loan

This witch outside the Raeford United Carolina Bank Main Street branch might be offering customers a special potion to help obtain the right loans. The way interest rates have been dropping lately, the brew could be working. The witch is actually part of the banks' Halloween decoration.

Photo by Pam Frederick

Four injured in wreck

By Pam Frederick

Four passengers were injured in a two-car accident Sunday afternoon on SR 1105, 6 miles east of Raeford.

A 1977 Luv pick-up driven by Jannette Jackson, Rt. 1, Shannon was hit when a 1980 Volvo driven by Hattie Ferguson Kells, Rt. 1, Red Springs, crossed the center

line, the investigating officer said.

The passenger in the Jackson car, Dorothy Mae Jackson and the occupant in the Kells car, Joseph Ellison, of Pittsboro were also injured.

State Trooper Benjamin Burr, who investigated the accident said Mrs. Kells was charged with driving left of the center line.

Man nabbed for third break-in

By Ed Miller

A Raeford man, who was out of jail on bond after being charged less than 30 days ago with breaking into two county businesses, was back in custody Tuesday charged with breaking into another local firm.

Robin Wayne McVicker was under \$25,000 bond in Hoke County Jail after being arrested last Wednesday night as he allegedly attempted to elude officers at the Hoke Concrete Works, Raeford Police Chief Leonard Wiggins said.

According to Wiggins, Raeford Police Patrolman J.R. McNeill was on patrol when he found a break-in at the Concrete Works office building.

While he was looking through

the building, two suspects ran from the premises.

One of the suspects made a get away; however, McVicker was captured by McNeill a short distance from the building, Wiggins said.

McVicker, 18, has not yet identified the other suspect, Wiggins said.

Before last week's arrest, McVicker was out of jail on \$10,000 bond after being arrested and charged with taking part in a breaking, entering and larceny at the Universal Sporting Center and, on another identical charge at The Little Whale Restaurant, according to previous reports.

There was a total of \$8,888.20 in guns, knives and ammunition taken in the Universal robbery and

No voter registration needed for President

By Ed Miller

People who moved into Hoke County before October 8 and have never been registered to vote, can go to the Hoke County Board of Elections and vote for president.

They can vote for president, but that is all, said a Board of Elections spokesperson Monday.

This is just one of three special conditions under which non-registered persons can vote, said Board of Elections representative Caroline Shook.

A second special condition applies to persons who gained their citizenship to the United States the day before the election.

Those persons can also go to the Board of Elections and vote for president only, Shook said.

They have to come in the day before the election, she said.

A third and final special condition applies to some military personnel.

According to Shook, if a person (See REGISTRATION, page 3A)



Inside Today

Candace Cameron loves her cattle. Today on page one B of The News-Journal, Candace and her father, Bill Cameron tell how a hobby is passed from father to daughter and how fame may be within the grasp of a young Hoke County resident, after a little work.