

# The News-Journal

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## Summer reconnaissance

Warm weather and no rain has apparently gotten this rabbit out looking for lush green grass. If the present drought continues, the rabbit may have to search out of the Hoke County area. Unwatered

lawns around the county are beginning to look like August, although it is barely June. Photographer Lin Webb captured the rabbit posing in an indecisive stance.

## Central dispatching being eyed for Hoke

By Ed Miller

Although no proposals have been made, officials in Raeford and Hoke County have been discussing the merits of a centralized dispatching system for all law enforcement, fire and rescue units in the county.

Currently, the Hoke County Sheriff's Department dispatches county fires, the Hoke County Rescue Squad, the Hoke County Ambulance Service and its own department.

The Raeford Fire Department and the city police are dispatched from the Raeford Police Department.

"If consolidation can improve this system and get good service, I favor the move," said Hoke County Manager William Cowan.

"I would welcome a joint operation," Hoke County Sheriff Dave Barrington said.

Hoke County Emergency Services Director William Niven said: "I think we need it."

If the logistics could be worked out to the best advantage for the city, Raeford Police Chief Leonard Wiggins would be in favor of the move, he said.

"I have seen central dispatch systems that work very well," said Raeford City Manager Tom Phillips.

According to Phillips, the Wadesboro Police dispatches for all of Anson County.

The Montgomery County Sheriff's Department does all the dispatching for the county which includes five towns, 10 fire departments and multiple rescue units, said Phillips.

According to all sources, some major changes would have to be made for the switch to take place.

If the switch is made, a positive result would be that deputy sheriffs, now serving as jailers, Police Information Network (PIN) machine operators and dispatchers would be able to function solely as jailers.

"A centralized system would free up my jailers," Barrington said.

"I don't know of anyone who uses dispatchers as jailers," said Phillips.

Capital outlay for the system may be high initially, said Phillips.

According to the city manager, there would probably be too many calls for the dispatchers to record by hand, as is the current practice, so a "logging machine" would have to be purchased, he said.

Other costs mentioned by the manager would be a new radio system so everyone could be on the same frequency, and a place to house the dispatchers, Phillips said.

Also, according to Phillips, there would possibly have to be two dispatchers on duty at all times.

"The idea has been thrown around," said Barrington.

"It would be an advantage to me, but I would want them (the dispatchers) in my office," said Barrington.

"I would like for them to be sworn deputy sheriffs," he said.

According to Barrington, the system would create a need for four new dispatchers.

That would cost the county and city, or whoever pays for the system, about \$53,940, said Barrington.

The sheriff figured \$49,940 in salaries and \$4,000 for uniforms, he said, adding that his figures were based on officers that passed the basic law enforcement program.

About \$12,400 is the basic salary for a deputy in Hoke County, he said.

"It would be a more efficient system," said the sheriff.

People who dispatch for the system would have to know the law as well as the county, said Barrington.

Police Chief Wiggins said he would require that dispatchers know the city just as well as the county.

"I think it would be advantageous to the city and county and emergency systems," said Barrington.

(See CENTRAL, page 2A)

## County gives mobile home park ordinance final approval

By Ed Miller

A mobile home park ordinance which was given final approval Monday will require all park owners to register with the county prior to July 3.

Park owners will have 30 days to request a license, Planning Board Chairman Brown Hendrix Jr. said Monday.

In a recent public hearing held on the ordinance, park owners and dwellers, and some park neighbors voiced opinions on the ordinance draft in the presence of the county commission and the planning board.

Objections voiced by owners included the five-acre minimum park size, lot sizes of 7,500 square feet, paved streets, buffer zones around parks and a grandfather clause re-

quiring an old park to be brought up to the new standards if expansion is undertaken.

Before final presentation to the county commission, planning board members changed the lot size requirements to 6,500.

The board also changed the grandfather clause to say, "existing parks that do not meet lot size requirements will be grandfathered in as long as they meet the health and safety standards set forth in this ordinance."

In place of a buffer zone, "a barrier, divider or appropriate fence can be used when real estate is unavailable," according to Hendrix.

The minimum park size and the paving requirement remained the same, Hendrix said.

Also inserted into the ordinance was a schedule of fees to be charged to owners.

Initial licenses will cost owners \$1 per unit with a minimum of \$10, according to the schedule.

Park inspection fees will be \$25 for owners with less than 13 unit and \$2 per unit for those with over 13, according to County Manager William Cowan.

For the owner of the mobile home to be placed in a park, an individual inspection fee of \$35 will be charged.

### School funds lobbied

In a presentation at the commission meeting, the Hoke County Board of Education turned over their adjusted budget to the commissioners.

Board of Education Chairman Bill Cameron told the commissioners and about 30 members of the public that the budget had been "prepared under careful consideration."

There is a 10.6% increase in the local portion of the budget, said Cameron.

According to board member Walter Coley, 55% of that 10.6% is due to salary increases suggested by the state.

School Superintendent Dr. Robert Nelson justified the increase by pointing out that a sound public education system is crucial to future growth in Hoke County.

"All planners, futurists and builders emphasize that a strong public school system is an absolute requirement for there to be in-

dustrial and economic development," said Nelson.

"We must make sound decisions now regarding our public schools if we seriously seek industrial and economic improvement for Hoke County," he said.

Nelson, quoting Lt. Governor Bob Jordan said that \$1 invested in education returns \$3 in the economy.

According to the superintendent, the money invested last year by the commission in the schools is paying off.

"Our students, in head-to-head competition with other students from other schools, are coming off as winners. In mathematics competition; from a state track championship to the first 'double superior rating' in band and choral

competition in Charlotte, our pupils and our teachers are bringing home the blue ribbons," said Nelson.

"We are showing improvements as a result of your investments," said Nelson.

"The 1985-86 budget which we present to you is an extremely conservative, carefully examined, no-growth, hard-times document. It contains no new services, no new personnel. In more than 15 years of dealing directly with boards of education in developing budgets, I have never seen a board do a more conscientious job than this board in presenting a budget which attempts to balance the interests and needs of the governing bodies, the

(See SCHOOL, page 2A)

## City adopts \$2.2 million budget

By Ed Miller

Following a public hearing, members of the Raeford City Council adopted a \$2.26 million budget for the upcoming fiscal year.

The spending bill includes no increases in ad valorem taxes, but does provide for hikes in fees for municipal services.

According to Raeford City Manager Tom Phillips, the major changes to the budget were the

reduction of a item that would have bought a new truck for the street department from \$38,000 to \$10,000; \$30,000 taken out of the Utilities Fund budget and placed into a capital reserve fund and the removal of revenue that would have come from a plan to raise garbage collection rates to \$3.50 per month.

Residential garbage collection rates will increase from \$1.50 to \$2.50 per month.

According to the budget presented by Phillips, taxes will not go up in Raeford for the coming year.

What will rise are water and sewer rates for city dwellers.

The bills for customers who use less than 3,000 gallons of water per month will rise about \$.30 or from \$5.95 per month to about \$6.25, Phillips has said.

Commercial and industrial users (See CITY, page 3A)

## Around Town

By Sam Morris

The weather has definitely turned summer before the official date of June 21. The 90 degree weather makes it seem like the middle of July. It will remain this way all week according to the forecast. It doesn't help much for the sun to go down, because we don't get down any lower than the 70s at night.

We need rain badly. The grass that was green last week, now has a brownish color to it in the sunshine. The crops that came up with the last rain now need more rain to make a crop.

Jaybird McLeod said Monday that it should rain before long.

(See AROUND, page 3A)



### Sauce pot

Pots were brimming with turkey and barbecue sauce Thursday as the first annual Turkey Pickin' drew a crowd of about 600. More on the event and the depot restoration raffle on page 1 of Section B in today's News-Journal.

## Thacker is cleared

By Ed Miller

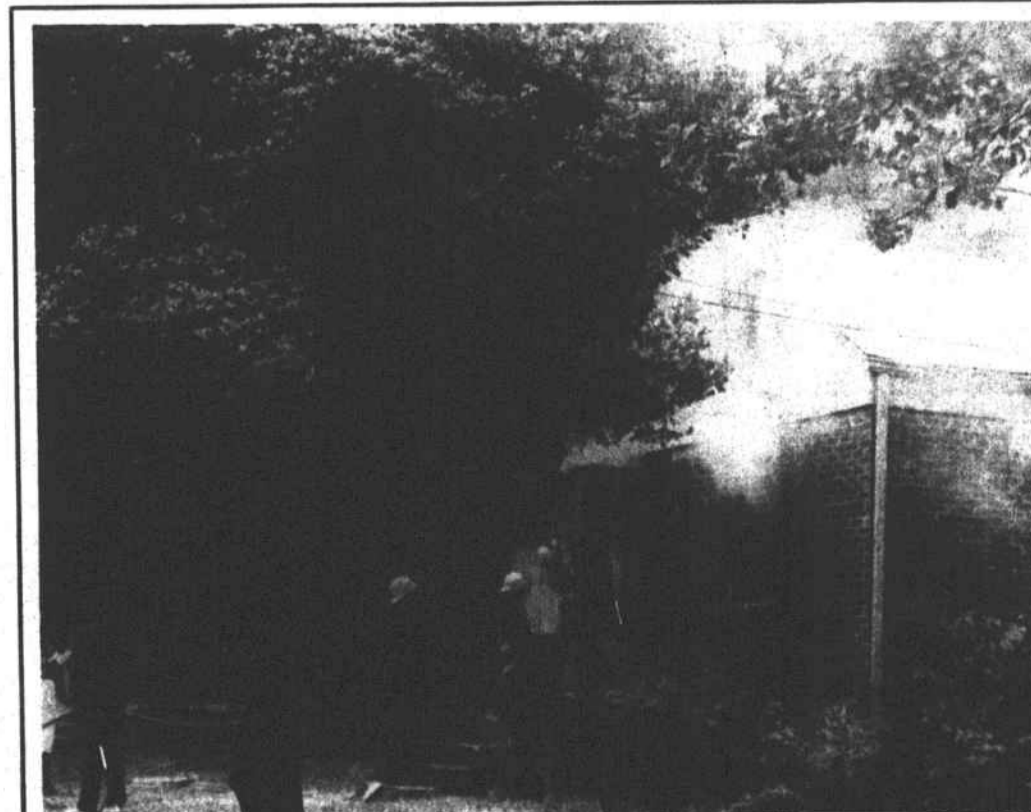
Raeford Aviation owner Gene Paul Thacker was acquitted last Wednesday of all charges against him by a Florida circuit court jury.

"It feels good to be a free man, and you can print that," Thacker said Tuesday just before taking a group of practicing parachutists up.

Thacker said: "I don't control people who land here (the Raeford-Hoke Airport)."

Chances are, anyone who wanted could land a plane full of pot at the airport and "I would never know," he said.

Thacker had been charged with (See THACKER, page 12A)



### Room damaged

Raeford firemen doused the flames which broke out in this 113 Wright Street house on Friday. The fire damaged a room on the rear of the house used as a den. The dwelling was occupied by Zedell Barker at the time of the fire, which started around 12:30

p.m. About 15 firemen responded, along with rescue squad personnel and EMS workers. There were no injuries reported, and the cause of the fire had not been determined Tuesday.

Photo by Pam Proffitt