

# The News-Journal

If it happened, it's news to us

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## This week



Teen court gives  
youthful offenders  
second chance  
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Two Raeford men  
charged with theft  
of vehicles  
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Confetti, balloons  
make first day of  
school fun  
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## Around Town



BY SAM C. MORRIS  
Contributing Editor

We had a few days when the thermometer reached a high of 80 or so degrees. Then the mercury moved back into the 90s. We have been getting some rain and it seems to keep the grass growing and it still has a green color. I asked a farmer Sunday about the rain and the crop situation, and he said that most of the crops in the area were good. Let's hope that it will continue this way until harvest time.

The forecast for the remainder of the week, Thursday through Saturday, calls for the highs to be in the low 90s or high 80s. The lows for the period will be in the 60s. As usual, there is a chance of thunder storms almost any afternoon.

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Becky Jones left a note and an obituary on my desk last week. The note said that Pam Frederick had called to inform her of the death of Cassie Wasko of Pittsboro.

This was a shock to me as Cassie had worked as a reporter for The News-Journal in the late 1970s. She left here and returned to Pittsboro, where she was born, to work for the Chatham County News-Record. At the time of her death she was the director of the Chatham County Council on Aging. Cassie was also on the town board of commissioners and mayor pro tem.

I will never forget that Cassie was the first person to (See AROUND, page 5A)

## Schools take risk to fund teacher pay

BY KRISTIN GUTHRIE  
Staff writer

After the Hoke County Commissioners agreed to fund only two-and-a-half percent of the proposed four percent supplement increase for Hoke County

teachers, the board of education voted unanimously to dip into the fund balance and pay the remaining one-and-a-half percent.

Board members initially were hesitant about such drastic measures, but in the end they all agreed that the county must

offer higher teacher supplements if they wish to recruit and retain higher quality teachers. "We normally would never touch fund balance," Hoke County Finance Officer Carolyn Olivarez said, "but we know we need to have quality teachers in our classrooms." She said that a four

percent raise is a "good way along," but that they still need to do a little better.

Last year, neighboring Cumberland County paid \$2,978 for teacher supplements, while Moore paid \$1,765, Robeson spent \$1,250 and Scotland County allot-

(See SUPPLEMENTS, page 9A)



### Eager to start

Gage Lowery is about to begin his education and awaits further instructions at West Hoke Elementary School Monday. His mother, Betty, fills out paperwork in the background. All schools in Hoke, except Hoke High School, began the new year Monday. Hoke High's year begins the first week of August.

## Hardaway's petition qualifies her for ballot

BY VICTORIANA SUMMERS  
Staff writer

Betty L. Hardaway, a tele-evangelist and owner of Hardaway's Herb Garden in Raeford, has qualified to compete in the Hoke County Commissioners' race in the November general election. She will be making dual history in Hoke — all in 2000. According to Hoke's Board of Elections officials, Hardaway will become the first African American female on the ballot in the election for the commissioners' race, and has successfully petitioned as the first Unaffiliated candidate to vie for a commissioners' position.

"I want to thank all my supporters who helped make this all possible," Hardaway said. "I'm very excited about running in the November election."

"I do give all the praise to the Lord for this accomplishment."

Hardaway expressed her intentions to

be nominated by petition in a letter to the elections board on May 8. She devoted seven weeks to obtaining signatures from voters in support of her campaign for c o m m i s -

sioner. "It took a lot of work for Mrs. Hardaway to gather enough signatures," election boards director Caroline Shook said. "It also required a lot of work for the board of elections to verify the authenticity of all of the names. There were stacks of pages."

"We verified there were enough regis-

(See HARDAWAY, page 8A)



Betty L. Hardaway

## Health board wants county to reconsider director's pay

BY PAT ALLEN WILSON  
Editor

Disgruntled board of health members voted last week to present a resolution to county commissioners requesting the county fund the full salary requested for Health Department Director Don Womble for FY year 2000-2001.

A health board budget committee had requested \$61,581 for Womble, a request that was approved unanimously by other members of the board, including Chairman Tony Hunt, who signed a change

order required by the state, and Commissioner Cleo Bratcher.

However, wearing another hat as county commissioner vice chairman, Hunt recommended that a merit raise of \$5,608 be cut in half, bringing Womble's salary down to \$58,777.

Both Bratcher and Hunt voted to pass the county budget that included the reduced merit raise for Womble, but it was Hunt who was credited with reducing Womble's salary.

Womble told health board members (See HEALTH, page 7A)

## Owner of The Haven clashes with state over wounded fawn

BY PAT ALLEN WILSON  
Editor

Linden Spear has a passion for caring for the helpless animals that share this planet with us. Sometimes it seems she tries to save every animal that crosses

her path. Spear and her husband operate The Haven, a no-kill animal shelter located on Fulford McMillian Road.

It was only natural that Spear try to save a fawn brought to The Haven on July 5. A couple had the 10-pound, speckled animal

on the floor of their van. It had evidently been hit by a car, and an injured hind leg "was just hanging by skin and fur," according to Spear.

"The couple was "very nice and desperate to get some help," (See DEER, page )



### Home destroyed by flames

A home located at 351 Creech Road (off South Old Wire Road) in Antioch was destroyed by fire yesterday at about 10 a.m. The dwelling was almost entirely engulfed in flames when firefighters arrived. No one was at home when the fire started and no injuries were reported. (Photo by Pat Allen Wilson)

## County employees net \$750 each increase in pay

BY VICTORIANA SUMMERS  
Staff writer

The ways and means of salary increases for all county employees were debated by Hoke County Commissioners until the last day before the 2000-2001 budget was sealed. Commissioner Cleo Bratcher Jr. challenged the board on June 30 during a recessed meeting from June 22. With one day left until the July 1 deadline, he urged reconsidering the final budget already adopted that gave only a \$750 cost of living adjustment to every employee. Bratcher swayed the opinion of Vice Commission Chairman Tony Hunt, who re-evaluated giving equal COLAs to all employees for one year.

Upon Bratcher's suggestion, Hunt moved to offer a three percent salary increase to employees who would be entitled to (See SALARIES, page 8A)

## County gradually tuning salaries to study's results

BY VICTORIANA SUMMERS  
Staff writer

County employees' salaries are being boosted gradually in a procedure that's based on a May 1999 survey from DMG-Maximus consulting firm in Raleigh. DMG was hired by Hoke in an effort to "achieve certain objectives." According to DMG's final report, its scope of study included developing a pay system for Hoke, which "would enable the county to recruit, retain and motivate employees." DMG's mission also defined job duties, responsibilities and expectations, as well as developing job classifications.

According to DMG's background information, this compensation and classification plan was formulated through "interviews with county officials, department heads and selected employees," (See MAXIMUS, page 9A)