

The Progress

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David Hodgkins returns as town manager

By Mary Beth Phillips
Staff Writer

Town manager David Hodgkins officially returned to the job Friday, after taking the week to satisfy himself that conditions would be right for him to continue as town manager.

Hodgkins resigned under pressure on June 8, after a visit that morning from commissioners Mark Silver-Smith and C.T. Moore. Hodgkins said he was led to believe he would be fired at the meeting if he didn't resign.

At a special meeting on June 15, the majority of the board, led by Commissioners Leavy Barbee and Bill Case, asked Hodgkins to come back. Silver-Smith was the lone dissenting vote.

However Commissioners Jan

Faulkner and C.T. Moore did not vote, which is considered to be consent under parliamentary procedure.

Faulkner said later she didn't vote because she had hoped to have a formal meeting with department heads before asking Hodgkins to return. She said she was generally satisfied with his performance, but she wished he would be more aggressive about certain things.

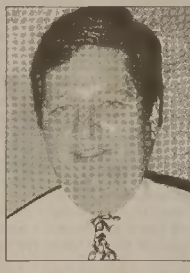
"There is a communication problem here. We need to run this board as a team," she said, referring to Monday's visit to Hodgkins without the consent of three of the board members.

Asked why he didn't vote yes, Moore had no comment except to say, "I carried out the will of the board."

At a March 2 work session, the commissioners had outlined a list of

'I have spent a tremendous amount of time dealing with commissioners one on one. That's fine sometimes, but it takes up so much time that you can't do what you need to do.'

—David Hodgkins,
Town manager



eight things for Hodgkins to complete within 60 days. Silver-Smith had said Hodgkins was on a probationary period for that time but Mayor Gordon Cromwell had said

he was not. Ms. Faulkner said Hodgkins accomplished most of the things that were on the list, although it may not have appeared that way because

some of the things were tabled. The water contract Hodgkins brought from Durham has been sitting on the table for over a month, since the May 11 meeting.

"He generally did a good job," Faulkner said. "He was always honest when asked a very direct question. In my opinion, he passed the test."

"David did prove himself in a lot of areas," said Commissioner Bill Case. "Some areas could have used some more improvement. But I think he's going to become a stronger manager through this."

Hodgkins said he has completed all eight of the items, but received resistance from certain board members on putting them into policy. "I wrote a memo to the board weeks ago outlining what has been done in each of those areas," he said.

Hodgkins said he returned to work under the condition that he will be allowed to perform his job with less interference.

"I have spent a tremendous amount of time dealing with commissioners one on one. That's fine sometimes, but it takes up so much time that you can't do what you need to do."

I have had people bothering me about issues that are not within their purview. It is important that I have that commitment from them, that they're not going to waste my time. A lot of that could be dealt with a quick phone call, not a two-hour visit. If that is accomplished, it will allow me to focus on critical issues that I have tried to spend the time on."

Hodgkins said 90 percent of the problem has been from one commis-

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OSHA fines Wilkerson \$3,500 Two men died at company

By Mary Beth Phillips
Staff Writer

The J.F. Wilkerson Contracting Company received three citations and a fine of \$3,500 on June 1, the result of a Department of Labor OSHA inspection of an accident in December.

Two workers had been electrocuted on Dec. 18 after the boom of a backhoe struck a power line, sending current through a pipe that the men were handling. Rogelio Pallego, 43, and Pedro Munro, 24, both of Durham, died after the accident.

Greg Cook of the Department of Labor said the investigation was thorough, taking about six months. "We were careful about the way we conducted the inspection," he said. "It was very detailed." Inspections usually take from four to six weeks.

The citations included providing better training or "instructing employees about the recognition of unsafe conditions," Cook said. The second was that the excavator used during the project was too close to the power lines and third, the foreman at the job site did not conduct adequate inspection of the area.

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Beverage truck driver charged in death

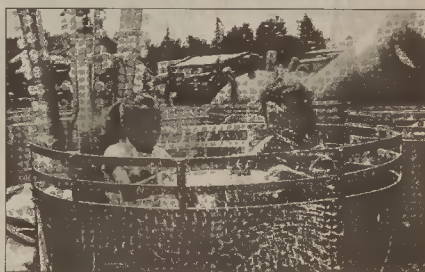
By Mary Beth Phillips
Staff Writer

The driver of the Long Beverage truck involved in a fatal accident June 1 was charged with misdemeanor death by motor vehicle on Thursday, June 18.

The accident, which occurred about 3:50 p.m. on Monday, June 1, resulted in the death of Terrence Lamar Cantrell, 33, who had been driving a white 1989 Chevrolet S-10 pick-up truck west on Morrisville-Carpenter Road toward Davis Drive. Cantrell reportedly had to be extricated from his truck by fire fighters. He was airlifted by Life Flight to Duke Hospital and died at Duke.

Garland Brown, 37, of Prospect Hill, had been driving the tractor trailer truck east toward Chapel Hill Road on Morrisville-Carpenter Road when his truck dropped off the right side of the road onto the shoulder, came back onto the road, crossed the double yellow center line, and struck Cantrell's vehicle.

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PHOTOS BY MARY BETH PHILLIPS

Morrisville Festival days

Laura Schoedler and Sammi Levy (left) enjoy the Tubs of Fun ride at the Morrisville Day in the Park Festival held last weekend. More than 17 rides, including Moon Walks, Frolic and the Ladybug, were featured along with 75 crafts booths and a variety of food from crawfish to frog legs. The ReMax balloon (below) gave fest goers a birds eye view of the town.



County honors Morrisville teachers

By Mary Beth Phillips
Staff Writer

Two Morrisville Elementary School teachers were recognized recently for excellence by county-wide organizations.

Fourth grade teacher Roger Mitchell was one of four Wake teachers selected in the Teaching Excellence program by the American Association of University Women, an organization that promotes equity for women in education and recognizes teachers who provide a leadership role and commitment to quality education. Counselor Barbara Hinkel was

named Counselor of the Year for the Wake County School Teacher of the Year program. The Morrisville Elementary publishing center was also recognized on the county level as an excellent PTA project. The publish-



Roger Mitchell

ing center allows students to practice their creative works in hardcover-wallpaper-book bindings.

Both teachers started with the year-round program at Kingswood Elementary School before it was moved to Morrisville. Both had other experience teaching in Wake County Schools.

Mrs. Hinkel said her counseling program more than some in other schools is proactive. "We do more classroom kinds of things, not stomping out fires after they have happened," she said.

She is always open to visits from students and parents, but her rigor-

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'Mafia' letter sent to all residents of Morrisville

Broadwell calls it a conspiracy

By Mary Beth Phillips
Staff Writer

Margaret Broadwell said she has referred a letter that was distributed to all postal addresses in the Morrisville city limits to legal authorities, calling it "absurd" and "part of a continuing conspiracy to discredit me."

The letter was written by Robert Markham Pace, who spoke during the public comment portion of the May 26 board meeting. Though Pace now lives in Durham, he was raised in the Cedar Fork area of Morrisville and said the community is "dear to my heart."

In the letter, he referred to Mrs. Broadwell as "Her Imperial Majesty the Empress Margaret" and called three of the current town board members her "mafia," including "the yankee carpetbagger commissioner, the one with the hyphenated descriptive phrase preceded by David [sic]."

In the letter, Pace said, "It is known that the empress wishes to abolish the position of town manager and have the mayor run the town—with herself as mayor of course."

He also said, "The recent petty and mean spirited insult to Ernest and Evelyn Lumley by removing the name 'Lumley Park' from the town park is a prime example of political vengeance gone wild."

Pace asked for the right of recall

'...removing the name 'Lumley Park' from the town park is a prime example of political vengeance gone wild.'

—Robert Markham Pace,
from his letter to the town

for town board members.

"If this existed, 'good-bye and good riddance' would be quickly said to the three stooges of the Empress Margaret," the letter stated. "It was clearly said in the past election to 'Her Imperial Majesty' but, it seems obvious that her 'loyal subjects the three' do not understand that she is the FORMER mayor as they carry out her edicts."

The letter refers to commissioners Jan Faulkner and Bill Case, who were elected with Mrs. Broadwell's support in the last election. The "yankee carpetbagger with the hyphenated last name" refers to Mayor Pro Tem Mark Silver-Smith, who is in his third year of service on the board.

Mrs. Broadwell said, "The letter was clearly sent as part of a continuing conspiracy to discredit my

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Fired police chief still wants hearing

By Mary Beth Phillips
Staff Writer

A hearing for former police chief Bruce Newnam was aborted after the resignation and subsequent rehiring of the town manager, his lawyer said Friday.

A hearing had been tentatively scheduled for June 18 with Morrisville Town Manager David Hodgkins and Morrisville Town

Attorney Frank Gray, said Richard Gammon of Raleigh. The hearing was to discuss the firing of Newnam on April 30 Hodgkins formally returned to work on Friday, June 19. (see related story on page 1)

Gammon said Newnam is considering a suit against the town for firing him without due process. He said he will make every attempt to set a hearing date for early July.

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