

# The News-Journal

The Hoke County News - Established 1928

Volume LXXVI Number 10

RAEFORD, HOKE COUNTY, NORTH CAROLINA

\$10 PER YEAR

The Hoke County Journal - Established 1905

25 CENTS

Thursday, June 28, 1984

## Seattle trip on tap for officials

Hoke County taxpayers will be picking up the tab for our commissioners and county manager to travel to Seattle, Washington for the National Convention of County Commissioners.

Rooms for one night for one person are \$75, said County Manager James Martin.

The county will be spending \$2,128 on air travel tickets, said Martin.

Some commissioners will be staying as long as eight days taking a vacation, said Martin, but most are staying five.

According to Martin, wives and guests of commissioners will not be paid for by the county and neither will hotel accommodations before or after the conference.

## Around Town

By Sam Morris

The weather has cooled off somewhat from last week, but I can't remember any hotter first two weeks in June. I just hope that this isn't any sign of what the remainder of summer will be like.

The rain helped the crops and things will do fine if we continue to get a few showers. Graham Clark was telling me Sunday that some parts of Robeson and Bladen counties haven't received any of the rain that hit Hoke County.

The forecast is for temperatures to be in the 80s during the day and in the 60s at night for the remainder of the week. Anyway, summer came in officially on June 21.

Earl McDuffie, owner of Edinborough Restaurant, was by the office Monday to tell me facts about the Annual American Legion Golf Tournament. Before talking about the tournament he related to me the following story.

Earl said that the Rev. Arthur Winstead, pastor of the Raeford United Methodist Church came by the restaurant Monday for lunch. Now at the restaurant a table is located in the back and has been designated the "Liar's Table," because of some of the wild tales that come from the people that use the table. It seems that the Rev. Mr. Winstead sat down at that table on Monday.

According to McDuffie, the preacher said that the folks at the table were well behaved and he didn't feel any worse from the experience.

Now my question is? Who was at the table when the preacher was eating?

A write-up and picture appears this week on the social page of the (See AROUND, page 10A)

## July Fourth is honored

The office of *The News-Journal* will be closed next Wednesday to allow staff members to celebrate the Fourth of July holiday.

In order to take the day off, the newspaper will be printed Tuesday morning, which is a day earlier than normal.

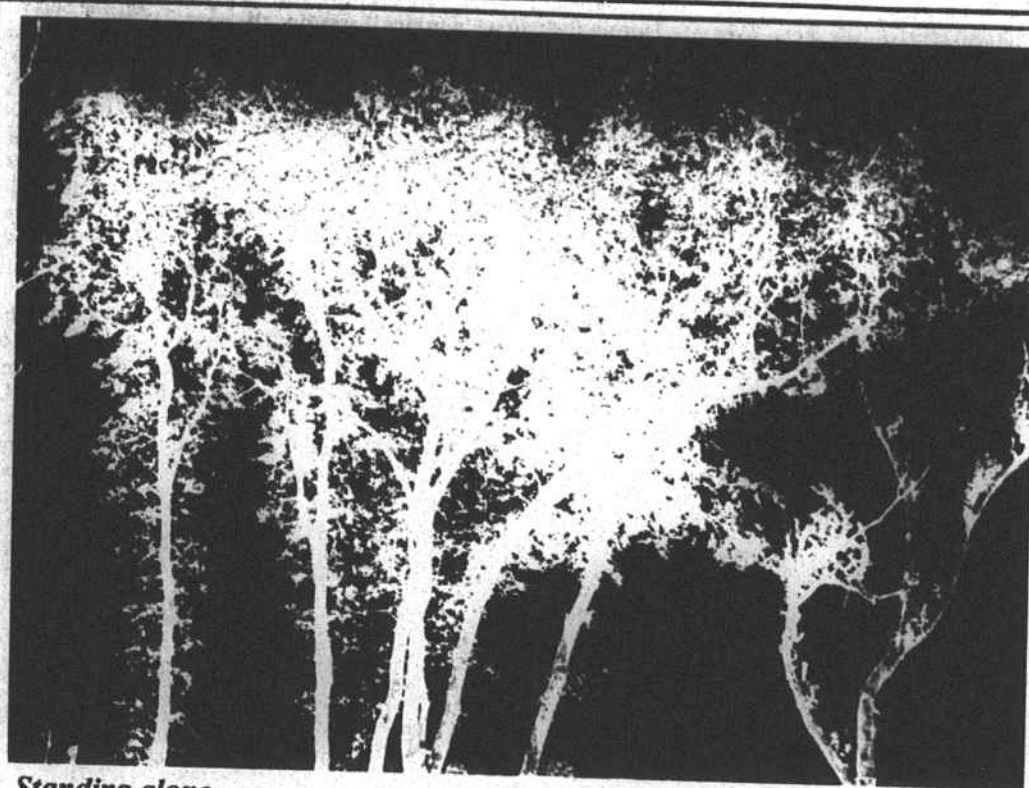
All deadlines for news and advertising will be moved up one day.

The deadline for classified ads will be 5 p.m. on Friday. Legal advertising must be in *The News-Journal* office by noon on Friday.

Letters to the Editor must also be received by noon on Friday.

In addition to *The News-Journal* closing, city, county and federal employees will have the day off, which includes the Post Office and the landfill.

The city's banks will also be closed.



### Standing alone

The only thing for acres around was this clump of trees standing in the middle of a Hoke County field. When the wind blows, these trees know about it. On any hot summer day, these trees can be seen waving in the slightest breeze, if one can find them.

## Interim budget passed to wait out state

By Ed Miller

In an apparently unprecedented move, members of the Hoke County Commission passed a 30-day interim budget to keep the government running while legislation affecting the county's finances is pending in the state General Assembly.

"I don't believe we have ever done this before," Commission Chairman John Balfour said.

Under North Carolina law, the county must have a budget for the coming fiscal year by July 1. The interim budget apparently meets the requirement.

Legislative action going on now in Raleigh may have an effect on this year's county budget, Balfour said.

"We could approve the present

budget and next week the numbers will change," the commission chairman said.

The approved interim budget appropriates funds for operating the county another month before a final budget must be submitted.

"A lot of counties are adopting interim budgets now," Balfour said, adding that he had just returned from a meeting of county commissioners from all over the state.

The commission budgeted \$713,164 in the interim general fund, \$75,859 in revenue sharing and \$56,385 to be put into the facilities fund.

All the money used in the interim budget comes from the fund balance, Finance Officer Charles Davis said.

No tax revenues can be used in an interim budget, he added.

Commissioner Wyatt Upchurch suggested that the temporary budget might hinder operations within the different departments of the county.

"As far as what they would like to do, yes; as far as what they can get by with, no," Davis said.

The interim budget originally totaled \$428,826, but was raised to the present level because commissioners were concerned that possible expenses could arise and cripple the final budget.

### UCB offer nixed

On another subject, the commissioners passed a motion declining an offer from United Carolina Bank (UCB) to use an abandoned

downtown branch for a local college satellite.

"If I remember right, we can use the armory cheaper. We have tax dollars to consider," said Upchurch.

Previously released figures from a Southern Pines architecture firm said that the old National Guard Armory would cost about \$50,000 less to renovate than the old Bank of Raeford.

Commissioners also passed a resolution supporting a bill pending in the state Legislature that will end a moratorium on nursing home construction.

There is a possibility of a new nursing home coming into the county if the moratorium is lifted, said Balfour.

On still another matter, acting on a motion suggested by Vice-

Chairman James Albert Hunt, the commission accepted the lowest bid for this year's county audit.

The firm of Daniel, McFadyen and Sumner offered a bid of \$3,600 for auditing the total budget and this bid was accepted.

Buie, Norman and Company and Pittard & Perry offered bids of \$3,980 and \$5,000 respectively.

Balfour said these were maximum cost bids.

County Commissioners went into a budget work session in the special meeting Monday night, but ended it after finding their efforts frustrated because of their inability to know what state legislators are doing and how their decisions may bear on Hoke County.

Currently under consideration is a \$5.1 million budget, which includes a nine cent tax rate increase. (See CITY, page 11A)

## Jump school owner may seek day in Florida courtroom

By Ed Miller

Raeford jump school owner Gene Paul Thacker may turn himself in to Florida authorities to face alleged charges of cocaine trafficking, his attorney said Monday.

"We are working on getting his bond arranged in Florida now," said Fayetteville attorney Randy Gregory.

Thacker is now out of jail on \$250,000 bond pending charges that he allegedly turned his back while an airplane loaded with co-

caine landed at the Raeford Airport.

Thacker is officially charged with trafficking and conspiracy to traffic in cocaine.

As per a condition of his release, Thacker has been reporting to the Hoke County Courthouse every morning so law enforcement officials can see that he has not left the area.

During a bond reduction hearing just after Thacker's arrest, Superior Court Judge E. Lynn Johnson voiced fears that

Thacker, a licensed pilot, could leave the area at will.

A "Governor's Warrant" could arrive in the county by June 29 that will automatically order Thacker taken into custody, Assistant District Attorney Jean Powell said.

There is no bond on such a warrant, Powell said.

If the warrant is not here by the end of June, another 30 day extension will be granted, said Powell.

There have already been two extensions granted on the warrant (See THACKER, page 11A)

## Fayetteville man caught, charged with truck theft

By Ed Miller

A Fayetteville man was in the Hoke County Jail Monday under \$6,500 bond charged with stealing a truck, a spokesperson for the Hoke County Sheriff's Department said.

Raeford Police Sergeant Rodney Collins and Patrolman Dick McNeill caught and arrested William David Hill on Saturday after spotting the allegedly stolen truck, which was worth about \$4,500, Police Chief Leonard Wiggins said.

Hill, 25, is also wanted in Scotland County after he apparently walked out of a courtroom while he was awaiting trial, Wiggins said.

In an unrelated incident, a Red Springs man was the victim of theft, and was left \$1,245 poorer last Sunday after his van was broken into.

Robert Locklear left his van in the yard of Carson Locklear while the two of them worked around in

the yard, Hoke County Sheriff's reports show.

Locklear reported that the two men later did some work in Red Springs.

After arriving back at the van, Locklear found one window half down and the rear door open, reports say.

According to reports, the truck was locked, but there was a one-half inch crack left in the window. The Sheriff's Department is investigating the matter.

A Hoke County Club, Center 1001, was the scene of an apparent car theft June 17, according to reports.

Charlene Terry, of Southern Pines, told deputies that she had given her car to Willie Howard McNeill because she was in the hospital.

McNeill allegedly drove the car to the club with some friends and allegedly left it with the keys still inside, reports say. (See THIEVES, page 10A)

### Future park

Recreation officials hope to have converted this grassy area into a baseball diamond by the fall.

## Fall opening possible for Burlington park

Recreation and Parks officials are hoping that construction on the proposed Burlington Park will begin around September 1.

The County Parks Department will have to file a "soil and water conservation plan" at least 30 days before construction is to begin on the 6.7 acre park, Hoke County Parks and Recreation Director Denise Melton said.

The department has received a \$20,000 grant from the federal government that must be matched with an additional \$20,000 from the county, Melton said.

The county's share of the money

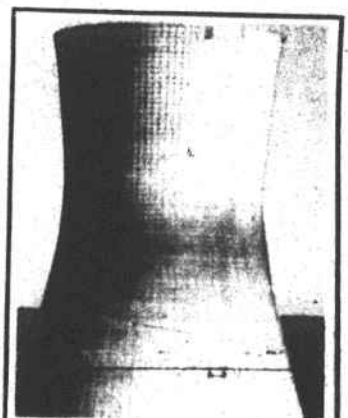
has already been budgeted.

The money has to be spent by December of 1985, Melton said.

According to Melton, "\$40,000 will be cutting it real close."

Although county officials have all but refused to offer county labor to construct buildings on the park site, Melton said she is still hoping to be able to use it for the concession stand construction.

The Parks and Recreation Department will be contracting the landscaping work that must be done with bids to be accepted as soon as the soil and water application is approved.



### Inside Today

The cooling tower of the Shearon-Harris nuclear power plant looms. Standing 526 feet high, the tower cools the water that drives electricity making turbines. On page one of section B of today's *News-Journal*, we examine the plant, the tower, and some Raeford folks who are helping to build one of the largest nuclear power facilities in the world.