

# The News-Journal

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Covering Hoke County Like A Roof Since 1905

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## Nursing home plans delayed

By Sally Jamir  
News-Journal Staff Writer

Plans for a Raeford nursing home have been delayed due to a backlog of plan approvals at the Division of Facilities Services in Raleigh, a spokesman from the Autumn Care Corporation said last week.

Doug Suddreth of the Autumn Care Corporation said Thursday that the company was waiting on the DFS construction section to approve architectural plans for the home before beginning construction.

"We're waiting for the bureaucratic red tape to be cut so we can go forward," Suddreth said. "We're moving as quickly as we can."

He said the plans need to be approved as well as tests on sedimentation control by the Environmental Protection Agency.

The John M. Campbell construction firm in Monroe will be building the 70-bed nursing home. The zoning for the home was approved by the city council last year.

In late January, Suddreth said that he hoped they could begin construction within 60 days. But delays arose due to the numerous appeals made in the DFS office by corporations when the state denied them permission to build nursing homes in a specific location.

Autumn Care had originally not been able to proceed with construction because another nursing home company (Britthaven) had appealed a decision made against them by the state.

Construction of the \$1.4 million home will be overseen by the architectural firm of Wilmot and Bower, represented by Ed Williams and Jim Turner.

The building will total 22,000 square feet, have two nurses stations, a physical therapy room and a recreational area, Suddreth said.

Of the 70 beds, 24 will be reserved for those who need skilled care, eight will be for those who need rest home care and the remainder will be for those who need intermediate care, Suddreth said.

## Local beauty



Roses grace A.D. Austin's yard at 131 W. Edinborough Street. Abundant rain and pleasant weather this spring have helped produce jumbo roses with exquisite blooms.

## Agriculture in 'good shape'

By Sally Jamir  
News-Journal Staff Writer

Agricultural activity in the area is in "good shape" according to Hoke County Extension Director Willie Featherstone.

"The climatic conditions are good and the soil is warm and has moisture," Featherstone said. "If weather conditions stay the same, we'll be doing good."

Featherstone said that close to 50 percent of the tobacco crops had been planted through last week.

The planting schedule for tobacco crops was about two weeks behind, Featherstone said, because the young plants were slow "growing off" or in getting their length and size.

He said he is not sure of the reason for this but that he noticed some cold damage on some of the plants.

"One farmer in the area, James Warner, has clipped his tobacco four times this season," Featherstone said. "This will allow him to pull 20 percent more of the young plants for setting in the field."

Warner said this week that he was able to plant his 35 acres of tobacco in about two weeks after weather conditions were suitable.

"It stayed wet for a while," Warner said, "but when it dried up we could get the land prepared."

"We were able to move across it (the field) pretty quick and progressed real well."

Warner wasn't able to comment on what kind of growing season it might be, but admitted that "most

of the crops look good" and that farmers in the area "need a good year."

Besides cotton, Warner also grows corn, small grains and soybeans.

Another farmer in the area, Earl Hendrix, has used greenhouse-grown plants rather than those grown in beds in the field.

Featherstone said the plants for this kind of tobacco production are more expensive but that it may save the farmer some labor costs in pulling the plants and setting them in the field for the growing season.

"Most things were behind this year," Hendrix said, commenting on the start of the season, but says that progress in the field is good.

Hendrix also grows corn and soybeans as well as raising hogs.

"Most of the cotton is set and looks pretty good," Hendrix said. "Most of the corn is planted. A few of the corn stands of growth had to be replanted but most of it looks pretty decent."

Featherstone said that over half of the cotton is planted, about 75 percent of the tobacco is in and roughly 95 percent of the corn is planted.

Hendrix said the crops now need just enough moisture to get a good stand. The crucial time of the season when crops need water is June for corn, July for cotton and tobacco and August for soybeans, he said.

Commenting on the tobacco program, Hendrix said that a lot of farmers were disappointed this year because of the loss of lease and transfer program.

## Raeford gets new postmaster

Clara Robinson has been appointed Raeford's new postmaster. Robinson, 42, has served as postmaster in Wallace for the past four years.

"Since I've been told I was the Raeford postmaster I've been on cloud nine," Robinson said.

A native of St. Pauls, Robinson began working with the postal service in Patterson, N.J. as a distribution clerk in 1969. She was transferred to Fayetteville in 1974 and continued her work as a distributor. In 1975 she became a sorter machine instructor at the sectional center. Later she became a mail processing supervisor.

Robinson was acting postmaster in Maxton in 1979 and in Elizabethtown in 1980. In 1981, she moved to the system manager position at the Lakedale Post Of-

fice on Owen Drive in Fayetteville.

She was acting postmaster in Hope Mills for six months and in 1983 became postmaster in Wallace.

She is a graduate of Ann Chestnut High School, Fayetteville, and attended North Jersey Training School in New Jersey where she studied nursing.

Robinson has completed numerous postal courses. She is an advisory board member for the James Sprump Technical College in Kenansville.

She vows to be of service to the community saying that "if people are having trouble with their mail, I want to know about it."

"I keep an open-door policy," Robinson said. "If people want to see me, they can see me. I believe in pleasing the public."



Clara Robinson

Robinson has two daughters, Tracy Douglas, 18, and Gail, 22. She also has one grandson, Antoine.

Postmaster selections are made on the basis of merit from a list of qualified candidates submitted to the sectional center manager by a review committee.

## Cummings sentenced to death

Jury reaches decision after over two hours of deliberation

The courtroom was completely silent as each of the twelve jurors stood last week to deliver the death sentence to Edward Lee Cummings, convicted of first degree murder in Hoke County Superior Court.

The sentence was handed down last Wednesday after Cummings, 45, of Wake County, had been found guilty on May 4 of the 1986 slaying Karen Marie Puryear, 22, of Raleigh.

Judge Robert Farmer received the recommendation from the jury after two and one-half hours of deliberation.

Judge Farmer set July 10 as the execution date but defense lawyer Michael Boose said "nothing will happen" on that date, the execution being postponed until the case can be reviewed by the N.C. Supreme Court.

Cummings appeared to show no emotion while the sentence was be-

ing read, though earlier that morning during Farmer's charge to the jury, he appeared restless, quickly moving back and forth in his chair, causing Sheriff Dave Barrington and deputies in the courtroom to lurch forward in readiness on two occasions.

Faye Puryear, Karen's mother cried softly into the shoulder of her friend Carl Belch, having said earlier that the trial was a very emotional experience for her.

Prosecution lawyers Jean Powell and John Dickson were pleased with the outcome. They did not know at the time of sentencing what would be done with the trial for the murder of Teresa Puryear, Karen's sister.

Cummings was charged with slaying both Karen and Teresa last January after the bodies of the two women were found in shallow graves near McCain.

Before sentencing deliberations

began defense lawyer Michael Boose and James Parrish made motions to submit to the jury character statements on behalf of Cummings.

Farmer denied the motions and sentencing started at 10:30 a.m. Before reaching a decision, almost two hours into deliberations the jury came into the courtroom and asked Farmer if their decision had to be unanimous. Eleven out of 12 jurors had at that time favored the death penalty.

Boose stated later that he was surprised that "after 42 minutes they (jury members) went through 150 pieces of evidence and hours of testimony...and found him guilty of first degree murder."

Boose said that the sentencing decision was as equally surprising in that the jury "found that this murder was heinous and cruel

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## Lot size ordinance approved

By Sally Jamir  
News-Journal Staff Writer

Members of the Hoke County Planning Board last week approved a lot size ordinance for residential areas of the county.

The ordinance sets standards for residential development which are not covered in the subdivision regulations or the mobile home park regulations, according to Jim Dougherty of the N.C. Department of Natural Resources and Community Development.

Dougherty and County Manager William (Bub) Cowan were in attendance at the meeting in which board members approved of the ordinance and moved to pass it on to county commissioners for their review and action.

Dougherty said the ordinance includes zoning regulations relating to "how you can use land and how you can't use land" in residential areas.

The ordinance seeks to "prevent conditions which are a detriment to the public good" by including requirements for lot position, lot

size, septic tanks and public water and setback lines.

The ordinance requires that "every lot or space shall abut or front a street." The requirement, Cowan said, prevents developers from selling landlocked property.

Cowan said the ordinance requires soil conditions to be tested in order to make sure conditions are right for a septic tank. He said this requirement would need to be fulfilled before the deed for the land is recorded and would prevent the purchase of land before healthy sanitation conditions are guaranteed.

Requirements in the ordinance are "for the person's own protection", Cowan said.

"Health is the main concern" of the ordinance, Dougherty said in agreement. "The purpose is to set standards to protect people where they live."

In other business, board members considered a private roads provision as a revision to the

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Chamber of Commerce

Motivational speaker Kirk Woodward, left, front, speaks with city and county leaders Tuesday afternoon at the Chamber of Commerce office. Woodward was speaker at the annual Chamber Banquet Tuesday evening at the National Guard Armory. Pic-

tured left to right are: Mayor John K. McNeill, Woodward, Economic Development Commission Director John Howard, County Commissioner Tom Howell and past chamber president Terry Houston.

## Around Town

By Sam Morris

The weather has been nice for the past week and it seems that the cold weather has moved on for the time being. The 80-degree weather during the day and the 50-60-degree weather at night is fine.

According to some of the green thumbs people, we could use some rain. It seems that the top soil is becoming dry and a shower would help. All in all, the season has been very good.

Raz Autry said that his peach crop is tops and that he should have a record harvest. Of course this means that his golf partners will have peaches and cream this season.

The forecast is for maybe some rain Wednesday morning with cooler temperatures and then it will get back to the 80-degree mark

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