

The News-Journal

The 12th issue of our 84th year

RAEFORD, NORTH CAROLINA

25 CENTS

Wednesday, July 1, 1992

Board of Education names new principal for East Hoke Middle

Students of East Hoke Middle School will start the next school year with a new principal.

The Hoke County School Board voted unanimously to hire Ron W. Alexander to succeed Randy Bridges, who will transfer to Hoke High School as principal.

Alexander says he's anxious to begin work on July 1.

"I'm excited and look forward to the challenge," he said.

Although he said he has no specific plans, he said he anticipates positive changes in the school.

"I look forward to planning with the school advisory team and look at ways to boost up test scores and involve the community," he said.

He says he hopes to establish more specific criteria to measure student performance.

"I'm glad to see Hoke County has a committed school system," he said, "and that it is growing and I look forward to growing with it."

Alexander may grow with the school system, but he may not be growing with the neighborhood.

Currently, Alexander does not plan to move to the area. "I haven't got specific plans to move at this moment," he said. "I'm waiting for a meeting with the superintendent on that issue."

The one-time teacher worked in Hoke County at the Samuel Leonard School as an instructor for grades four through six. He also taught in the Hope Mills area as a special education teacher for

grades seven and nine.

"I spent almost ten years as a teacher," he said. He also worked with the Cumberland County School system as an administrator.

He served as assistant principal at Southview Junior High School for 12 years and associate principal at Westover Senior High School for three years. Alexander also officiated several sports, including basketball and baseball at the college level and down. He also enjoys golfing.

Forces square off over medical center

Public meeting draws nearly 100

The Raeford-Hoke Chamber of Commerce played referee Tuesday night in the tug-of-war over a building that now houses Dr. Bob Townsend's office but is a critical component of a proposed medical center.

Sponsoring a public forum, the Chamber, Jean Rowell said, hoped to dispel misconceptions and rectify miscommunications plaguing the proposed medical center.

Controversy surrounds a plan outlined by the county, endorsed by the Chamber, and formulated by the North Carolina Medical Society and the Office of Rural Health and Resource Development which would bring three new doctors and a physician's assistant to the Hoke community.

"We viewed this as a critical shortage in the area," Dr. E. Harvey Estes said to the crowd packed in the library conference room.

Estes, a representative of the NCMS, said luring physicians to open family practices, especially in rural areas, proves difficult for most communities without a program similar to the new proposal.

Raeford's two family practitioners approach retirement while North Carolina's medical schools produce fewer graduates in family medicine each year, making replacement prospects appear dim.

"We spent twelve to fifteen years trying to recruit someone," Townsend said. "This kind of program could interest more young doctors into entering rural health care."

Jim Bernstein of the Office of Rural Health and Resource Development said Raeford and Hoke (See MEDICAL, page 5)



Younger Snead



Bob Townsend

New doctor entrenched despite the controversy

As the battle continues for ownership of the Hoke County Medical Complex, Hoke's newest doctor remains entrenched in her practice.

Dr. Karen Smith said that while officials argue over control of the medical building, she's not about to leave the area.

"The main point is that I had made a commitment with Dr. Townsend," she said. "I know the building's important but it's coming via him." Smith said she feels

(See DOCTOR, page 5)



Karen Smith

County sets tax rate 8¢ higher

To the chagrin of many residents, Hoke County Commissioners approved an increase in the tax rate for the next fiscal year.

The county will operate under the new budget, approved Monday night, beginning today.

Under the new budget, Hoke residents will pay eight cents more in the tax rate in the 1992-93 fiscal year, increasing the rate from 72 cents to 80 cents per \$100 property valuation.

In the original budget proposal, County Manager Barry Reed recommended the construction of three new parks. However, commissioners slashed the parks system after many citizens expressed disapproval at a public hearing on the issue.

Although the manager suggested that funds be removed from the adult day care service provided for in the 1991-92 county budget, commissioners held funds tight after hearing the pleas of the only

Hoke resident who uses the service.

"All I'm asking is for help to keep her in the day care," said Helen Towner, a Quewhiffle resident whose mother-in-law suffers from Alzheimer's disease, "so we can keep her out of a nursing home because of the great expense."

Commissioner Tom Howell said, after listening to Towner, "If she's already in care and it appears to be in the best interest of the individual, then we need to continue this service."

Towner said her mother-in-law participates in an adult day-care program in Southern Pines, which allows she and her husband to continue to work and care for his mother.

"It's remarkable what they can do for her," she said. "We'd rather keep her in a day care because it's less expensive."

(See COUNTY, page 5)



Hot!

John Shepley takes a break in 90-degree weather after fighting a fire that destroyed a workshop off South Parker Church Road Tuesday. Puppy Creek Fire Chief David Willis said the blaze apparently was sparked by a hot lawnmower that had been recently parked inside the frame and aluminum building, owned by Alfred Long Jr. Rockfish and Hillcrest firemen and Hoke Rescue also responded.

City raises tax rate two cents

Raeford's city manager cut some things out, but the budget City Council approved Monday night still raises taxes two cents; it also calls for a two dollar increase in garbage fees.

"I've talked to a bunch of people," Councilman Steve

Phillips said, "and I haven't talked to one who wants a tax increase."

Mayor Bob Gentry indicated the increase was necessary, but agreed taxpayers are weary: "You see employees driving vehicles home ... it always grates on people," he said.

"We're going to become more involved in equipment needs," Phillips said. "I'm new at it. I wish I had more time to get into it, but I personally plan to get more involved," he said.

Gentry asked Phillips, "After (See CITY, page 5)



'Sammy Claus' is coming

If you see a man in a red suit looking like a summer Santa walking around Raeford, don't rub your eyes. It's Sammy Claus—the area's newest entrepreneur.

He survived two wars (Korean and Viet Nam) and now the Army retiree is home to see if he can survive the Raeford economy.

Sammy Lee, a.k.a. Sammy Claus, walks around town spreading Christmas cheer in the summer to promote his line of Christmas music tapes.

"In 1962 I penned my first song," said the former Army paratrooper. "It was called 'How does love begin'. It didn't turn out that good."

He said he did not pick a Christmas theme then, but gradually

worked into holiday music.

The 62-year-old songwriter said he started composing songs with musician Carlton Moody, who performs music and the vocals.

He said they collaborated on some Christmas music and then "that's all he'd let me write."

He said he's written a dozen Christmas songs, and so he sports a red outfit emblazoned with holiday slogans to promote his tapes.

"What I'm doing is selling them locally," he said. "I've got them in stores now, in Top Sound Music and Video, and Small World Book Store. I sell each one for six dollars."

Sammy Claus said that no one (See SANTA, page 5)

Woman shot in Hoke cabin

A Cumberland County teacher vacationing at a Hoke County cabin was fatally shot in the head last Wednesday.

Beth Marie Murillo, 35, of 1101 Paddington Place, Fayetteville, was shot in the right temple about 2 a.m. on Wednesday, and taken to Cape Fear Valley Memorial Hospital by her husband, Eric Murillo.

She died in the intensive care unit Thursday morning.

According to Hoke County Sheriff's detective Mike Underwood, no arrests have been made.

The fifth grade teacher was killed behind the Twelve Oaks subdivision.

(See CRIME, page 14)

Around Town

By Sam C. Morris

The weather now feels like summer is here. The temperatures have been in the high 80s this week and the lows at night have been in the high 60s. We did get rain last Friday night. I have had reports that it rained from 3 inches to 5 inches in the county. The high figure came from around Five-Points in the Quewhiffle township. I haven't heard of any hail damage to crops in this county.

The forecast Wednesday through Saturday calls for the temperatures to range from the low 90s to the high 90s during the day and the lows at night will be 70-degree weather.

There is a chance of rain about any afternoon, but Wednesday and Thursday are the best bet. Yes, summer has arrived.

July 4th comes on Saturday and this will cause businesses to close either on Friday or Monday. The News-Journal will be closed on Friday. The banks will also be closed on Friday. You will have to check as to when other businesses in the county will close.

I haven't heard of any kind of celebration for July 4th in Hoke County. Most of us don't think of the 4th as anything but another holiday. Anyway, we will see the flags waving up and down Main Street. This is more than is done in many cities and counties across the state.

When you publish a newspaper it surprises you sometimes as to what will catch people's eye in an edition. (See AROUND, Page 9)