

The News-Journal

The 43rd issue of our 84th year

RAEFORD, NORTH CAROLINA

25 CENTS

Wednesday, February 3, 1993

Building inspector is overworked; but he'll have to wait for help

If you need an inspection in Hoke County, expect a two- to three-day wait. The Hoke Board of County Commissioners denied the Planning Department's request for an additional building inspector at Monday's meeting.

Last year the Board budgeted \$20,726 to pay for an additional inspector, but with the 3-2 vote, the spot will remain unfilled for another 30 days.

County Planner Karen Burd told the Board one inspector just cannot handle the load anymore as residential development skyrockets across the county. Inspections requests, which were answered on the same day, are now delayed until the one inspector can get there, often for two to three days.

The average number of daily inspections

jumped from last year's 11 to 19, with a more recent average of 34 in the first part of 1993.

"It's just we have one inspector and we have only so much we can do," Burd said.

The current inspector, Billy Cox, already pulls overtime, often working until 7 p.m., she said. He receives compensation time rather than overtime pay, but since he's the only one, Burd said he

doesn't get to use that time.

"He's essentially working for free," she said.

Commissioner Cleo Bratcher said he agreed the county needs a second inspector.

"There's no way Billy can do all the inspections he needs to do," he said. "At this time we need to go ahead and get the inspector we (See INSPECTOR, page 12)

County halts construction on Five Points compactor site

Work halted Monday on the county's newest garbage convenience center in Five Points as commissioners ruminate whether to move construction to a different location. If the Board approves a move, the county stands to possibly lose about \$73,000 due to contractual obligations.

The Board of Commissioners voted in the Monday meeting to stop construction of the Five Points site until February 15 after a family said it doesn't want the convenience center next to its property.

Franklin and Romus Stephens, who own property adjacent to the new site, asked the Board to reconsider building the site near their property for health reasons.

Franklin Stephens, who underwent kidney surgery, said he worries the site will attract flies and produce a foul odor. He said his health was not good enough for him to live through an unpleasant situation.

County Manager Barry Reed said the family's concerns over the future site's sanitation were understandable, but not applicable to manned convenience centers.

After Reed tried to clarify to Board Chairman L.E. McLaughlin and the family the differences between a center and the loathed "green boxes," or dumpsters, Jordan moved to temporarily stop further construction.

Although the Stephens don't want the Five Points site near their home, other residents don't mind living near a center.

On Tuesday morning, a neighbor of the Bowmore convenience center site said she's had no problems with the center adjacent to (See COUNTY, page 12)

McNeill says she'll retire again

Mary Archie McNeill is retiring again.

Well, sort of.

The long-time music instructor-turned-college-administrator said on March 31 she will step down from her position as director at Sandhills Community College and become just a private citizen.

A very active private citizen.

"I don't even know how to lean back in this chair," she said in sincere modesty when posing for a picture.

(See MCNEILL, page 13)



Mary Archie McNeill



Deer grazing atop a service station: hard to imagine if you hadn't seen them in their glory days (right) above the Graham Service Station on Main Street. These deer may end up back in their original place after restoration, now in progress. Doing the work is Ingeborg Katolik, well known in Hoke County for her European castle, under construction in Rockfish. She is shown with a painting she restored; pieces of the deer are visible in the foreground.

Landmark deer may finally get new life

After nearly 20 years, two dormant deer will be brought to life.

No, a miracle drug wasn't created, but some Hoke Countians may call it a miracle.

Following a letter-writing campaign by concerned citizens to the *News-Journal's* Sam Morris, a disjointed group contacted the

school system and was given the go-ahead to have two sculptured deer that once adorned a local service station restored.

Ingeborg Katolik, known in the Rockfish area for her construction of a European castle in Hoke County, will tackle the restoration project of the two deer which stood atop the

Arch Graham service station.

When she's through, the deer may be put back in their original place, though that's unsure at this point.

The saga of the missing deer unfolded in Morris' Around Town column in January.

The first mention of the forgotten bucks came in early January when

Gladdie Harrison wrote in after seeing a Luke McNeill videotape on area history showing the January 1985 removal of the deer.

Harrison said that video raised her curiosity about the fate of the deer.

"I was interested in them just (See DEER, page 5)

Scholarships to boost Tech Prep

Hoke High students will have an option next year to take part in one of the hottest educational programs in the U.S. — technical preparation or "tech prep."

To entice them into the program a group of local businesses has teamed up with

Sandhills Community College to offer \$1,000 college scholarships to students who travel the tech prep track and graduate from Hoke High with at least an 85 average.

Dr. John R. Dempsey, president of Sandhills, told the Hoke Sandhills campus advisory board last week enough Hoke

businesses pitched in to make the scholarships possible.

"We hope this will be an incentive to embark on a tech prep program," Dempsey told the board.

"Whether they (graduating high school seniors) come to Sandhills Community (See TECH PREP, page 12)



John Dempsey makes announcement last week

City Council seeks protection from liability of taxi service

Raeford City Council is trying to figure how to save taxi service in Raeford, but limit liability to the City posed by taxi drivers.

Three drivers have complied with the City's directions to apply for permits, but of them, only one is "close to complying" with state law, said Raeford Police Chief James Murdock.

The greatest sticking point is liability insurance. Murdock and City Attorney Palmer Willcox said state law requires taxi drivers obtain commercial insurance as "carriers for hire."

Murdock said he's heard estimates of premiums costing as high as \$3,000 per year. That, he says, effectively limits the

ability of drivers to make a profit.

Willcox told Council it may have to enforce insurance regulations even though it could be a burden to drivers. "I'm afraid it's going to get tough because you're going to have to do this," he told city councilmen.

He said several drivers in Raeford had only personal liability insurance, which wouldn't cover the injuries of passengers in an accident.

City Council began talking about the taxi situation after Willcox told the board in an earlier meeting the City wasn't following through on inspections required of drivers in the City's ordinance. He told the board last month he was concerned the ordinance (See CITY, page 5)

Around Town

By Sam C. Morris

The weather over the weekend was nice and the rain has finally stopped.

A cold front came through Monday night and the thermometer dropped into the 20s.

Tuesday was a cold day with the temperatures in the 40s, but with the north wind it felt colder.

I was talking to Robert Gatlin last week and I asked him what his prediction on snow was for this year.

He replied that he wouldn't predict snow for this year.

I don't know if this is good or bad, because he missed his prediction last year.

The forecast for the remainder of the week calls for the temperatures Wednesday through Friday to be in the high 50s and the lows in the 30s; Saturday will be in the high 40s and the lows will be in the

30s. We should have rain on Saturday.

Helen Huffman, a director of the Raeford-Hoke Chamber of Commerce, called me Monday and she asked that I mention about the upcoming Legislative Breakfast sponsored by the chamber. The affair will be held Saturday, February 13 at the Wagon Wheel Restaurant. Time will be 8 a.m. Tickets are on sale at the depot. The price of the tickets are \$5 for chamber members and \$6.50 for non-members.

So if you have either requests or quarrels with the members of our legislative branch, then go to this meeting. Maybe they can tell you what district you are in!

Mary Matherly was by the office last week and she had a couple of receipts that she found which belonged to her (See AROUND, page 13)