

The News-Journal

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RAEFORD, NORTH CAROLINA

25 CENTS

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Nurses' aid program jeopardized by lack of teachers

Almost 20 years passed before Dahlia Singletary walked back into a classroom as a student.

The working mother of three said if nurse's assistant classes were not offered locally, she might not have her degree or new job.

But now the popular program may fizzle if another teacher cannot be found.

Sandhills Community College Hoke Center may look small, but its contribution to the community isn't, say former students.

Singletary worked for 19 years with a laboratory while rearing her children. Then, with one at home and two at college, the chance came for her to make a career change.

"There are lots of jobs out there. There's just not enough people in this field right now," Singletary said of the health industry.

While the rest of the country worries over rising unemployment rates, the health industry booms. And some Hoke residents could boom with it.

According to 1990 Census data, about one-fifth of Hoke Countians live below the poverty level. Only 8.36 of Hoke's adult population graduated from college.

Singletary and her colleagues said Sandhills' (See NURSES, page 11)

Board kills transfer station Fires County Manager Reed

After months of study and the subsequent purchase of 20 acres of land, the Hoke County Commission turned down a conditional use permit for its own waste transfer site Monday night, effectively ending the project.

The Commission also fired County Manager Barry Reed, citing "an accumulation of things." Reed had already turned in his resignation — a week ago — effective April 30.

The transfer station the commission rejected was a key part of Hoke's plan to dispose of garbage for the next 21 years. It would have been a collection and compaction site for the County's garbage. Garbage trucks would have unloaded at the site so more efficient tractor trailers could truck the garbage to a landfill in Cumberland County. Reed predicted the scrapping of the site could ultimately cost the county \$5 million or more over 30 years.

The Commission took the action following a recommendation by the Raeford-Hoke Planning Board, which was concerned about the proximity of a food processing plant to the site, off US 401. Planner Karen Burd said the Planning Board based its recommendation largely on the advice of a food science expert from the N.C. Cooperative Extension Service in Raleigh.

John Quinn, owner of food manufacturer Quinn Specialties, told commissioners he asked the food science expert to attend the Planning Board meeting because he was concerned the transfer site would harm his business.

Hoke Cooperative Extension director Carol Birkhead read a prepared statement saying the expert's appearance violated Extension policy because local Extension officials weren't notified. Had they been, she said, they would have provided a balanced panel. She said the person who spoke admitted he didn't know what a transfer station is.

"The solid waste system depends on this site. This has costly ramifications for the County if the project doesn't go through." —Reed

Commissioner Cleo Bratcher first moved to deny the conditional use permit for the station, but his motion died for lack of a second.

He said he wanted to heed the Planning Board. Commissioner Tom Howell then moved to grant the permit, and the move was seconded by Riley Jordan, but the subsequent vote was two to two, Bratcher and James Leach opposing. Because Chairman L.E. McLaughlin was absent for health reasons, the tied vote meant failure for the permit.

Ironically, Bratcher was a member of a Commission committee that recommended purchase of the site last year.

The committee recommended the concept for the transfer station to cope with the imminent closure of the Raeford-Hoke Landfill.

Another committee member, Tom Howell, visibly disgusted with the Commission decision, resigned from the committee after Monday's vote.

"We have got to have a site for a transfer station," he said before the vote. "We've got some serious time problems here."

Reed said after the meeting, the County will have to truck garbage directly to Cumberland County in the short term, bypassing the more efficient transfer station. He predicted the County will end up building a transfer site at the landfill on available land there, but at a cost. He said monitoring requirements (See COUNTY, page 6)

Zoning change approved for planned shopping center

With a recent controversy over denying the location of a shopping center still fresh on their minds, Hoke County Commissioners quickly approved the rezoning of land along US 401 Bypass to permit construction of another shopping center Monday night.

The 21-acre tract of land is at

401 and Johnson Mill Road, near the Hoke-Cumberland county line. Unlike the previous shopping center, access to the site would be from a side road, not US 401. The concern of traffic congestion and other problems caused the Raeford-Hoke Planning Board and Hoke Commission to turn down the previous

shopping center, also near the county line. Hoke citizens, anxious for development and an increase in the tax base, reacted vocally when the previous proposal was first killed.

At Monday night's meeting Planner Karen Burd made it clear (See BUSINESSES, page 5)



Alice in Wonderland? No, just 4-year-old Brittany McManus enjoying the Madhatter mural at the Hoke Health Department. Brittany accompanied her aunt, employee Blaire Smathers at the Department's Health Week luncheon Tuesday. The mural was painted by a Hoke art student.

Health Center works to counter health issues pressing County

AIDS, pre-natal health problems and heart disease press upon Hoke County.

Officials hope people will take the time this week, Public Health Week, to find out what services are available here and take a closer look at the county's pressing health issues.

"It's all about teaching people to take care of themselves," said Michelle Kralicek with the Hoke County Health Department.

Kralicek, a recent addition at the department who serves as the center's health educator, said people should find out more about preventive health methods. "We try real hard to offer things not just for our

clients, but for the general public," she said.

One issue on the rise is childhood immunizations. During recent years Kralicek said the fear of childhood diseases faded, and parents became lax in immunizations of their children.

"People think polio no longer exists."

But the very real threat still exists, she said, and parents need to take advantage of increased immunization funding to care for their children.

Parents need also worry about sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) in Hoke.

As a former AIDS task force worker, she said more (See HEALTH, page 4)

Police warn illegal parkers

Chief James Murdock with the Raeford City Police warns careless parkers around town to expect more parking tickets if they don't start complying with parking laws.

Murdock said many park illegally in town by making a left turn and parking in the wrong direction in parallel spaces.

Also, with spring and summer rains approaching, Murdock reminds drivers that if you operate windshield wipers, you must also burn full (See POLICE, page 14)

Around Town

By Sam C. Morris

The rain last Friday left the fields wet again and it seems that before they can get dry enough to plow, it rains again. The temperatures have been about normal for this time of year. We did have a low reading on Sunday morning and Lauchlin Macdonald said that he saw frost at his home. After the cold night the temperatures got near 70. On Monday and Tuesday we saw high readings in the 70s and 80s, and lows in the 50s.

The forecast calls for the temperatures to drop into the 60s Thursday and Friday and the lows will be in the 30s and low 40s. On Saturday we will see 70 on the thermometer. There is a chance of more rain on Wednesday.

If the weather stays fair and the temperatures remain warm, we should have plenty of peaches this year. Other farm products cannot be planted because the

fields have been too wet to get the farm machinery working. So let's hope that the rain and cold weather will go away for a few weeks.

Have you purchased a ticket to the affair which is sponsored by the Hoke County Democrats Friday night? The event will be entitled "A Night To Remember," with Speaker of the House Dan Blue of Raleigh as the featured speaker. Time of the event will be 7 p.m. at the West Hoke Middle School.

I will say that rumors are going around that some other top-notch speakers will be on the program and I am not talking about politicians. Maybe it will be worth your time to attend this event.

Tickets are on sale at Howell Drug Co. or they can be purchased from officials of the Hoke County Democratic Executive Committee.

(See AROUND, page 7)