

The News-Journal

'If it happened, it's news to us'

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In

Burlington gift
gives United Way
a huge boost
5A

In



Thanksgiving
horse show
a success
Page 1B

Index

- Calendar 2B
- Classifieds 9B
- Deaths 4A
- Editorials 2-3A
- Engagements 4B
- Legals 8B
- Public Record 4A
- Religion 6A
- Socials 3-4B
- Sports 7A
- TV listings 5-6B
- Weddings 3B

Around Town



By SAM C. MORRIS
Contributing Editor

It's just three weeks until Christmas, but the weather feels more like the 4th of July. The 80 degree readings are not right for this time of the year. We need rain badly and according to the weather forecaster on Monday, we might get some on Tuesday. Let's hope so!

The forecast for the remainder of the week, Wednesday through Saturday, calls for the highs to be in the low 60s or high 50s. The lows for the period will be in the 30s. We could have some frost, but it seems like the rain will miss us again.

The Christmas lights are burning on Main Street. Many people are doing their Christmas shopping early. One thing to remember is that there are many people out in the parking areas of shopping malls that will break into your car and take your packages. So if you are going to leave packages in your auto, then lock them in the trunk of the car so they can't be seen.

Also, as a letter from the (See AROUND, page 9A)



From left, Tony Hunt, Charlie Daniels and A.E. McLaughlin were sworn in as commissioners Monday night. (Pat Allen Wilson photo)

McPhatter named manager

By PAT ALLEN WILSON
Staff writer

After three commissioners were sworn into office Monday night, they and two others on the board elected James Leach to serve as chairman and agreed that Bernice McPhatter should continue as county manager.

Tony Hunt and Charles Daniels were sworn in for their first terms on the board. L.E. McLaughlin is a longtime member. The trio defeated Jean Hodges and Tom Howell in the May primary and had no opponents in the general election.

It will be Leach's second year to serve as chairman. He was nominated by Hunt, who was then elected as vice chairman.

"Thank you for another year," Leach said. "I hope this year we can do some things for our kids and senior citizens. I'd like to focus and do more for the youth and senior citizens so they may have a better life in this county."

McPhatter, 42, served as finance director and interim manager since July 31, when Mike Wood resigned. She has been a county employee since 1979 and was named finance director in 1995. She will continue as fi-

nance director and will be paid \$70,000 annually for those duties.

Linda Revels, who had served as interim county planner, zoning director and interim clerk to the board since Wood's resignation, was named county planner and clerk to the board. Her salary has not been announced.

Commissioners met for more than an hour in closed session to discuss the manager and planner positions and salaries.

During the open session, commissioners voted to exclude from budget amendments that portion (See MCPHATTER, page 10A)

Cable improvements outlined

By KRISTIN GUTHRIE
Staff writer

Time Warner Cable System Manager Eric Collins visited the City Council meeting Monday night with up-to-date information on the company's plans to change Hoke County's cable network from microwave to fiberoptics by the end of September. With the new system in place, Collins said Hoke County's cable customers can expect to pick up 60-some channels using just basic service, up from the current 30-some.

This new system using fiberoptics is, according to

Collins, the latest and greatest in cable network. He said customers could see some outages from time to time, but nothing like the down time they currently experience. Weather will not affect channel reception with fiberoptics, in fact, Collins fielded a question from a City Council member and said, "We've never had a problem with lightning... even with direct hits."

Fiberoptics should bring more consistent reception and an increased number of channels available with the basic service, but better doesn't necessarily mean more expensive in this case. According to Collins, rates are

not scheduled to increase for basic service. On the other hand, customers may see a hike in charges for the extras.

For example, CNN, the Discovery Channel and TBS service will go from the current \$1.50 to \$1.60; standard service will rise from \$14.08 to \$15.30; and Disney, Cinemax and Showtime will all increase from their current rate to \$11.95 apiece. Other more fortunate customers will see a decrease in rates, such as: \$12.95 to \$11.95 for HBO; and \$11.40 to \$8.00 for additional premiums.

Hourly service charges will (See CABLE, page 10A)

Emu strains owners' patience

By PAT ALLEN WILSON
Staff writer

"It has been a nightmare," Christine Davis says about her family's experiences with CeCe the emu.

Last year, in November, CeCe was found running around town. She was captured and Christine and her husband, Ken, took care of the prehistoric, flightless bird until the owner could be found. An owner was located, but he never showed up to claim CeCe. The Davises kept her until she fled the 10-acre fenced-in area where she had stayed with other emus.

Right before Thanksgiving, six months after she left the



CeCe the emu

Davises' ranch in West Hoke. CeCe was back in town— exactly a year from her previous visit.

CeCe was herded into Raeford's ballpark, where she roamed around for a time.

Ken and Christine were leaving the state for the holiday when they learned that a wayfaring emu had turned up in town. They (See CE CE, page 8A)

St. Andrews receives \$5 million

By KNIGHT CHAMBERLAIN
Editor

St. Andrews Presbyterian College received the largest gift in its 39-year history last Thursday when a local foundation pledged \$5 million to the school over a five-year period.

James L. Morgan, chairman of the Laurel Hill-based Morgan Foundation, told an audience of 250 gathered at the private school that, "The time is right to make an extraordinary commitment to St. Andrews."

The Directors of The Morgan Foundation see this as a vote of confidence in the college and its future.

President Warren Board an- (See ST. ANDREWS, page 8A)

Sheriff's status still undecided

By PAT ALLEN WILSON
Staff writer

The Hoke County Board of Elections dismissed complaints of election violations on November 3 by Jim Davis in his bid for sheriff. However, his opponents have filed appeals with the state Board of Elections, leaving it unclear when Davis will take office. He would have been sworn in this past Monday.

The next state Board of Elections meeting is scheduled for January 5, 1999, but the Davis campaign is asking for a special hearing to resolve the matter as quickly as possible.

At the end of a preliminary hearing that lasted four hours Friday, the county board voted 2-1 to dismiss 19 complaints filed after the general election. Eight-

teen complainants said that Davis, a Democrat who ran against Wayne Gardner, an unaffiliated candidate, went into polling places on election day. Gardner himself filed a complaint with the state board saying the ballot box from Raeford #5 arrived at election headquarters unlocked, and he asked for a recount. Davis defeated Gardner by 265 votes.

The county board had received the complaints shortly after the election but certified the results on November 9 anyway. The following week the state board ordered the county board to retrieve Davis' certification, and hold a preliminary hearing to investigate the complaints.

Three additional complaints were filed that stated Davis was (See STATUS, page 9A)



A bus leaving East Hoke Middle School was hit by a car (top) Tuesday, injuring six children. Rescue workers (below) take an injured child to a waiting ambulance.

Children injured in school bus wreck

By PAT ALLEN WILSON
Staff writer

Six children received injuries when a car struck their bus in front of East Hoke Middle School yesterday afternoon.

One EHMS student was treated at the scene, and five were taken to Cape Fear Valley Medical Center for treatment: all were released and returned home.

The bus, driven by Lisa Locklear, 34, of Red Springs Road, pulled onto U.S. Highway 401 from Club Pond Road and was struck by a northbound 1990 Cadillac Seville driven by Adam Brock Leftwich, 17, a resident of Eulon Loop.

Leftwich, a student at Hoke County High School, received cuts and bruises that were de-

scribed as minor. Locklear was taken to an area hospital later last night.

The car struck the rear part of the bus on the driver's side. Leftwich braked in an attempt to miss the bus.

Locklear was charged with failure to yield to a stop sign by State Trooper E.D. Pender, who investigated the accident.

The accident occurred at 2:45 p.m. as EHMS students were being returned to their homes.

Firefighters, rescue and EMS personnel, Sheriff's Department deputies, Raeford police and state Highway Patrol personnel arrived at the scene to assist where needed.

Some at the scene complained that the intersection is dangerous, especially for buses taking children home from school.