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Around Town



By SAM C. MORRIS
Contributing Editor

We finally had a few days where the thermometer didn't reach 100 degrees. One night the temperature was in the 60s. Saturday night we had about eight-tenths of an inch of rain. There were four days last week when the thermometer registered 100 degrees or more. For about 30 days we have had 90 degree weather. I can't remember the hot days and nights staying around for that long.

The forecast for the remainder of the week, Wednesday through Saturday, calls for the highs to be in the 90s or high 80s and the lows to be in the 70s or high 60s. There is a chance of rain for Thursday and Friday.

Don't forget the 85th Anniversary celebration of the North Carolina Cooperative Extension. The celebration be held on Tuesday, August 24 from 3:00 to 5:00 p.m. It will be held at the Hoke County Center at 116 West Prospect Avenue.

Exhibits will be set up the entire day which depict the efforts of the North Carolina Cooperative Extension over the years. Refreshments will be served.

If you would like to have more information, call Betty Green, County Extension Director, at 875-3461.

(See AROUND, page 10A)



Out with the old...
Tyrone Lilly of Lilly's Welding and Repair, works to remove a section of a flag pole in front of the Raeford Post Office — and draws a crowd in the process. The Post Office now sports a new pole. The old one was donated to Hoke County Emergency Services for its new location at the old National Guard Armory.



County to bait industry, business with policy on incentives

By PAT ALLEN WILSON
Staff writer

County Commissioners agreed unanimously Monday night to hire an attorney to help them lure new industry and business to Hoke.

Ernest Pearson of the Sanford Holshouser Law Firm of Raleigh has been hired to draft an industrial recruitment incentive policy.

He will bill the County \$2,500 plus expenses for the firm's services.

After an Oregon-based firm passed over Hoke as a possible site for its expansion, Doobie Leach, chairman of the Raeford/Hoke Economic Development Board (EDB), said a lack of incentives played a key role in the \$80 million industry's decision not to locate here.

County Manager Bernice McPhatter, a member of the EDB, introduced the proposal to Commissioners. She described the policy as "hopefully one to enhance economic development in the future for Hoke."

Commissioner Chairman James Leach joins the EDB in the belief that the county hasn't been competitive regarding enticements for industries to re-

locate or locate here. "It is vital to have something in place—we have to be competitive," he said. "I think now we'll be real strong and ... be on the right track in recruiting industry."

James Leach added, "We're seeking long-term industry—small or large."

Doobie Leach called the County Commissioners' action "outstanding." He added, "We are

very pleased the County has chosen to hire Ernest Pearson. We think Commissioners have taken a serious stand on economic development and applaud their efforts."

The EDB was created in November of 1997 after Hoke almost landed a \$400 million mini-steel mill for the Dundarrach/Arabia area. (See INDUSTRY, page 9A)

Planned mobile home park fails first hurdle

By PAT ALLEN WILSON
Editor

After several residents told Hoke County Planning Commission members they were concerned about their property values being lowered, Commission members voted

to recommend that County Commissioners deny a request from Joe Gillis to change the zoning of a 107-acre tract of land on Phillippi Church Road from RA (residential agriculture)-20 to RMH (manufactured home park).

RA-20 calls for a minimum

lot size of 20,000 square feet and mobile and manufactured housing is allowable in that district under conditional permit use.

Gillis said he had no problem with the 20,000 minimum-square-foot-lot size requirement. (See PLANNING, page 9A)

Marijuana seized after sky sweep discovery

By VICTORIANA SUMMERS
Staff Writer

State and local law enforcement officers discovered a bumper crop of marijuana plants last Thursday during a county wide aerial, drug search.

However, instead of awaiting harvest, these giant plants were burned.

"We recovered plants that were ranging from 10 to 13-feet high," a Sheriff's undercover detective said. "It was placed into evidence."

"The investigation is ongoing regarding suspects."

The recovered marijuana, estimated to be worth \$23,000, was spotted growing in a secluded woodland of the Antioch community in Hoke County.

This one-day long operation was conducted by the SBI,

Raeford Police Department, Hoke County Sheriff's Office and agents from the North Carolina Joint Counter Drug Task Force.

Hoke County Sheriff James A. Davis said he kept an eagle-eye on the seizure mission.

"This drug eradication project is an ongoing effort with the counter drug task force and the SBI," Davis said. "This is part of a long range project to address the concerns of citizens of the county about drugs."

Davis urged the unity of all local citizens in helping find the sources for drug smuggling.

"Absolutely, we need the cooperation from our general population to fight against the growth of illegal drugs, the manufacture and distribution," Davis said.

"We're slowly developing rela-

Summers joins NJ staff as reporter

Victoriana Summers has joined the staff of *The News-Journal* as news reporter. A native of Fayetteville, Summers brings 20 years of photo journalism, feature writing and news reporting experience to share with local readers.

Summers more recently served as editor of *The Harnett County News*, where she was employed for almost five years. Initially hired as a news reporter in 1993, the journalist covered county government, school board meetings as well as Lillington

Town Board affairs. She was active in Harnett community civic activities, named as Board of Director for the N.C. Cooperative Extension Service, The American Heart Association, The Humane Society of Harnett County and publicity chairman of the Lillington Business Professional and Women's organization.

While affiliated with *The Harnett County News*, Summers was awarded The Media Excellence 1997 honors by the Association. (See REPORTER, page 10A)



Victoriana Summers

Architect hired for complex

Hoke to spend \$1 million on offices

By VICTORIANA SUMMERS
Staff Writer

In a show of solidarity, Commissioners voted on Monday night to select Boney Architects of Raleigh to conduct architectural planning and design for the new \$1 million County Governmental Complex. The future governmental facility will house an administrative headquarters,

slated for a 20-acre campus located just off Highway 211 in Raeford.

"I think the citizens trust the Commissioners to do the right thing for this County," Commission Chairman James A. Leach said. "I think our leasing space will pay for this building."

What County agencies will be provided space at the new administrative headquarters, (See OFFICES, page 9A)

Task force targets local teacher shortage

By KRISTIN GUTHRIE
Staff writer

Astounded by the teacher shortage with which Hoke County began its school year, Board of Education Member Russell Smith decided to organize a task force designed to combat recurring problems with teacher recruitment and retention.

The Task Force Regarding Teacher Recruitment and Retention, as Smith calls it, met for the first time a few weeks ago just to lay the foundation for what the task force would strive to accomplish.

Smith, along with Personnel Director Sharmaine Butler, a local principal, three teachers and (See SHORTAGE, page 9A)

Teal is finance director

By PAT ALLEN WILSON
Editor

Dale Teal has been hired as City of Raeford finance director. He will replace Helen Huffman, City employee of 25 years, who announced her resignation, effective September 1, more than a month ago.

Teal is currently the Hoke County tax assessor. He turned in his resignation there on Monday.

In announcing Teal's hiring, City Manager Mike McNeill said (See TEAL, page 10A)



Dale Teal