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This week

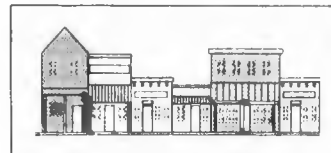
Driver leaves scene after pedestrian is struck page 3A

15th Annual N.C. Turkey Festival photos page 1,2B

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Around Town



By SAM C. MORRIS
Contributing Editor

Hurricane Floyd didn't bring the expected high winds to North Carolina, but it did bring heavy rains. As this is being written Monday, most power has been restored in Hoke County. Many in Raeford still do not have cablevision. My part of the city was lucky. We didn't lose power or cable service. Most of the damage at my house was broken tree limbs. Most of the deaths in the state were due to flooding. Many people lost their homes and all their belongings. Let's hope that the forecast of more rain will not add to the problems. We in Hoke County can be thankful that we were spared heavy damages.

The forecast for the remainder of the week, Wednesday through Saturday, calls for the highs to be in the high 60s to the 70s. The lows for this period will be in the 50s and maybe in the high 40s. After Wednesday there isn't much chance of rain.

Sometimes when things like the above happen, we can be surprised. Last Wednesday a knock came on my side door. There stood Don Foster and his daughter and he asked my wife if there were any heavy items that they could help us move to prepare for the storm. Even though we try not to consider ourselves as "old folks," we did appreciate Don and his daughter thinking of us. Yes, there are still a lot of good people in this country. Thanks Don!

Even though the Turkey Festival Parade was postponed, most of the other events went on as scheduled. The main street attractions drew many people to the city on Saturday.

I would like to comment that the City of Raeford crews went beyond their call of duty (See AROUND, page 6A)



Do the funky turkey
She frugs, she funks... See the back page for the rest of two-year-old Parker Crow's story/dance.

Thousands throng to gab, feast at Turkey Festival

By VICTORIANA SUMMERS
Staff writer

Oh so fine... fair weather and buckets of good will opened the 15th annual N.C. Turkey Festival on Friday. It was short notice after some of the festival activities were either cancelled or postponed due to Hurricane Floyd.

But, no mind. Senior citizens from Raeford and some as far away as Savannah enjoyed the concert series on the Library stage on Friday.

Kids out of school from Floyd shared bleachers with their elders.

"We skipped nursery school to attend the Turkey Festival," Christy Burrow said on Friday.

Her niece and nephew Trey and Jasmine Long accompanied her in their strollers, along with grandmother Katy Long and great-grandmother Annie Rogers, all of Raeford.

Saturday was the highlight of the festival, as almost 120 vendors set up food and arts and crafts booths. Visitors and locals strolled, trotted, boogied and shagged their way along where the turkeys were the stars and guests wore "Looking Fine" shirts in honor of the Raeford bird.

"These people are what it's all about," President Judy Pittman of the Turkey Festival committee said. "People are really enjoying it." (See FESTIVAL, page 7A)

Title search reflects confusion on lease

By VICTORIANA SUMMERS
Staff writer

Will the real owner please stand up?

It was on September 7 that Hoke County Commissioners voted to approve a lease between

the county and Robert Locklear to rent a 2,400 foot building on Fayetteville Road in Raeford.

According to the county, the Probation Department would be housed in the new suite of offices, enlarging their space by (See LEASE, page 7A)



One-hundred-eleven years of living
Nancy Ray celebrated her 111th birthday party Saturday. See article, page 7A.

Sheriff Davis cleared

By VICTORIANA SUMMERS
Staff writer

It's over. The final word is in on the official SBI report regarding the Hoke County Sheriff's probe.

According to the SBI investigation, allegations about Sheriff Jim Davis, concerning possible misuse of county funds, have proven unfounded.

District Attorney Jean Elizabeth Powell, Judicial District 16A for Hoke and Scotland counties, released her findings on Tues-

day. She reached her decision after reviewing facts garnered in the final SBI inquiry submitted to her office.

"There is no basis for criminal charges or additional actions by the District Attorney's office," Powell declared.

The initial investigation stemmed from allegations reportedly lodged against Davis by former Hoke deputy Gary Hammond. Powell confirmed Hammond had originally filed the complaint with the DA's office that led to the ensuing month-

long investigation.

Earlier, Davis had described Hammond as a former "disgruntled employee." Last week, Davis had expressed a positive attitude, saying he believed there would be a favorable outcome.

"It's clear we've (Sheriff's Department) been exonerated of any allegations of wrong-doing or impropriety," Davis said on Tuesday. "We are satisfied with the outcome of the investigation and the actions by the District Attorney's office."

(See SHERIFF, page 8A)

Hurricane! '99



At 2 a.m. Thursday, these windswept trees and shrubs were visible evidence of the strongest gusts in western Hoke County just as Floyd was making landfall on the North Carolina coast.

Floyd's victims recoup, firefighters forged paths

By VICTORIANA SUMMERS
Staff writer

Hoke County was in the bull's-eye target for the path of Hurricane Floyd last week, and County Emergency Management Coordinator Al Schwarzbher had the National Hurricane Center map to prove it.

Just six days later, Hoke is recovering from a milder encounter with Floyd, while other parts of North Carolina, walloped by the 115 mile-per-hour tropical storm, are suffering as the death toll rises from continued flooding. (See HURRICANE, page 10A)

By VICTORIANA SUMMERS
Staff writer

See hurricane aftermath photos on pages 4A and 5A.

All through the night, 200 storm troopers scoured Hoke County last Wednesday.

But, this was no militia. It was man versus nature as volunteer firefighters gathered from around the county to fight the merciless winds of Hurricane Floyd. Local firefighters said many risked their own limbs to clear the way for emergency vehicles, enabling citizens to drive safely to work the next day.

How did firefighters feel after the ordeal? (See FIREFIGHTERS, page 9A)

Pan Am committee tours horse park

By PAT ALLEN WILSON
Editor

The Five Points Horse Park came closer to reality Saturday as the 230-acre site was toured by a Pan American selection committee as a potential location for competition in 2007.

In addition, a ground breaking was held for the planned steeplechase track—the future site of the world-famous Stonybrook Steeplechase in April of 2001.

The non-profit Sandhills Equestrian Conservancy was created last year to fund and design a world-class equestrian event facility. Last year, the Conservancy selected and financed acreage in western Hoke of rolling fields, woods, a small wetlands area, two ponds and some tobacco barns with the goal of conserving as much of the natural setting as possible.

More than a half million dol-

lars has been raised for the facility which will require another \$2 million to become reality. Plans are for the park to be developed to include five major equestrian events: three-day eventing, combined driving, steeplechase, hunter/jumper and dressage.

Plans are for the park to have, in addition to the steeplechase track, 50 stall barns, a covered arena, dressage areas, van and trailer parking, and a recreation vehicle park. The wetlands area is to be preserved.

Planners, headed by Lafreda Williams, vice president of the Conservancy, don't doubt that their "field of dreams" will happen. "Even if we don't get the Pan Am games, the horse park will still be a reality," Williams said.

Raleigh Mayor Tom Fetzter accompanied the Pan Am committee as they flew by helicopter to the park in the Five Points community on Calloway Road.

He said the Five Points Horse (See HORSE PARK, page 8A)

Consent agenda criticized, downtown stay is urged

By VICTORIANA SUMMERS
Staff writer

One spectator took a look at the lengthy consent agenda prior to the County Commissioners

meeting on Monday night, noting the absence of items on the regular agenda.

"This meeting won't last more than two minutes because they (See COMMISSIONERS, page 10A)