

# The News-Journal

If it happened, it's news to us

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## This week

Think you know  
our town? You  
could win  
page 1B

Man sentenced  
for 1988 murder  
page 3A

## Next week

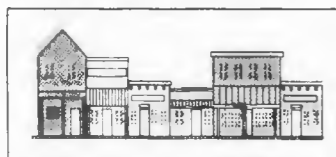
West Hoke Middle  
claims two  
conference  
championships

L.E. McLaughlin  
awarded for civic  
contributions

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## Around Town



By SAM C. MORRIS  
Contributing Editor

The weather has been nice for the past week. There has not been any rain and this is nice for the people that are in the flooded areas of the state. The rain has caused many parts of the county to be infected with mosquitoes. It hasn't been as bad in the city because of the spraying. Maybe the county will be sprayed in the near future.

The forecast for the remainder of the week, Wednesday through Saturday, calls for the high Wednesday to be in the 50s and the lows in the 30s. Thursday the high will be in the 50s and the lows in the 20s. Friday and Saturday the high will be in the 60s and the lows in the 40s.

Every year Mary Alice and I look forward to the "Trick or Treat" children on Halloween. This year we didn't know for sure when they would come by the house. Many places had informed citizens that it would be on Saturday night and others staged the event on Sunday. We were prepared Saturday night and the children in our part of town did not disappoint us. We had over 25 to come by the house, so we didn't turn on the lights Sunday night.

I believe that the children this year were the best behaved than any other year. They were all dressed in costumes. (See AROUND, page 7A)



Raeford Police Detective Greg Thomas with marijuana plants seized in a multi-million dollar drug bust that occurred Monday on Rockfish Road. Two suspects were arrested during the raid. (Photo by Victoriana Summers)

## Raid on growroom nets \$2.3 million in marijuana

By VICTORIANA SUMMERS  
Staff writer

"Monday was a good day for us," quipped a Hoke County Sheriff's official.

However, deputies said it was probably a very bad day for two men who were apprehended during an all day search and seizure operation for marijuana.

Chief Deputy Hubert Peterkin of the Hoke Sheriff's Department said the magnitude of what he termed as a "huge" seizure of marijuana plants in Hoke County is still sinking into his mind.

Peterkin said a mid-morning raid on November 1 conducted in the Rockfish area revealed an elaborate, large scale growing operation. Sheriff's undercover

detectives, along with the SBI, and the Raeford Police Department coordinated the massive search and seizure.

"We seized approximately \$2.3 million of street value in marijuana plants and marijuana seedlings that were growing indoors," Peterkin said. "That's even a low estimate of its value. It was absolutely amazing. The operation inside this home was so sophisticated and extremely professional. We have never seen anything like this before."

Steven Snow, 32, and James Phillips, 30, of 290 Rockfish Road, were arrested at their home, where the marijuana was growing indoors. Law officials said there was a family living there with children present in the home

at the time of the raid.

Both suspects are charged with two counts of drug trafficking, possession with intent to sell marijuana, maintaining a drug dwelling and possession of drug paraphernalia.

Peterkin said Snow and Phillips were each placed on a \$35,000 secured bond.

During the "extensive" search that occurred at 10:45 a.m. on Monday morning, Sheriff's detectives said 475 plants of marijuana, ranging from seedlings to large three-foot-plus high plants, were confiscated growing in pots, as well as large quantities of marijuana buds that had been harvested.

"There were so many plants (See DRUGS, page 11A)

## Thomas out, Mills elected

By VICTORIANA SUMMERS  
Staff writer

#4 turned out to cast their choices for candidates.

Candidates were hoping no one would rain on their parade. However, as election day opened in the City of Raeford's municipal race, voter turnout was somewhat impeded early morning by pouring showers.

As the weather improved during the day, Director Carolina Shook of the Board of Elections said people seemed to think the voting at the polls picked up, too.

Despite extensive publicity generated for the City Council race, election results showed only 29.7 percent of the voters participated in the election. It represented a total of 762 voters, eliciting 30.8 percent of the voters in Raeford Precinct #1; 29.5 percent in Raeford Precinct #2 and 19.5 percent in Raeford Precinct

### Comparison count

In a comfortable landslide victory, incumbents John O. Jordan, who garnered 543 votes, and Earl McDuffie, Jr., who netted 394 votes, returned to office for another four year term to pass into the new millennium.

Clyde A. Thomas Jr., the third City Councilman who was seeking re-election, missed a bid to keep his seat by a fairly narrow margin. He earned 271 votes. However, newcomer Wayne Mills, capturing 335 votes, slid into the third seat on the council. Mills unseated Thomas by only 64 votes.

The other two candidates vying for seats unsuccessfully included: Jim White, who received a sizeable 247 votes, and Brent (See ELECTION, page 10A)

## Hunters shoot dog ordinance down

By VICTORIANA SUMMERS  
Staff writer

"He thought he was being bulldogged and that we were going to charge too much."

The proposed Hoke County Dog Ordinance got shot down primarily by hunters, who attended the County Commissioners meeting, where a public hearing elicited varied opinions from the citizenry.

"I'm a new dog owner myself," County Commissioner Cleo Bratcher Jr. said after the commissioner didn't approve the ordinance. "One man came up to my barber shop and was going to drag me outside of the barber shop!"

Bratcher referred to the suggested fees in the proposed ordinance that included an annual charge of \$10 for un-neutered or un-spayed dogs, or \$5 for animals that were neutered or spayed.

Over a hundred people appeared for the public hearing, with some of the crowd overflowing into the hallways at the County Office Building in Raeford.

The common cry appeared to (See DOGS, page 11A)

## Turkey Festival's rescheduled events coming up

Most of the events for the 1999 NC Turkey Festival went as scheduled despite an untimely visit by Hurricane Floyd. A couple of events, however, were postponed because of the weather and have been rescheduled, just in time to celebrate the upcoming holiday season.

The North Carolina Turkey Festival Christmas Parade is scheduled for Saturday, November 13, at 10: a.m. in downtown Raeford.

This is the first time in 16 years that Raeford has held a Christmas parade. The parade route will begin at Turlington

School on West Prospect Avenue, and approximately 100 entries will travel down Main Street and back to Turlington, led by Grand Marshal Jean Powell.

Santa Claus will also be there—along with floats, marching bands, local celebrities, and

more. The traditional Stuffin' and Stompin' dinner, co-sponsored by the North Carolina Turkey Festival and the Raeford Woman's Club, will be held on Friday, November 12 at West Hoke Middle School from 4:30-8 p.m. Tickets for the turkey dinner with all the trimmings are \$5

each and are available at the Depot and from any Raeford Woman's Club member; or they can be purchased at the door.

You may plan to eat in or take out. If you eat in, you will receive an additional treat - musical performances by the Modern Knights and the Wild Mustangs.

## McNeill honored for 50-year career

By VICTORIANA SUMMERS  
Staff writer

A woman of substance... What challenges are left uncharted for Betsy Ann McNeill?

Could she become the next mayor at the young age of 73? After all, it would be following in the family tradition of her father, the late Alford F. Cole. He was formerly a mayor of Raeford and first civil defense director of Hoke County.

However, for McNeill, widow of the late Ken McNeill, and daughter of the late Retha Jenkins Cole of Fairmont, she's thrilled to be recently recognized by her peers on a national level.

McNeill was honored at the 82nd annual meeting and exhibition of the American Dietetic Association, which was held in Atlanta, Georgia on Oct. 16. Presented with an embossed plaque,

McNeill was one of only 136 certified dietitians across the nation that were bestowed the meritorious honor for "50 years of service."

"Betsy Cole McNeill, this is given in recognition of valued support of or organization initiatives and activities," said President Ann Gallagher of the ADA.

Still a registered and license dietician, McNeill serves as a guest speaker at the Hoke County Public Library and visits homes upon request to assist with nutrition planning. Friends still call her for special recipes even though she professes she's not a gourmet cook.

A native of Raeford, McNeill was born in the "Dixie Smith" historic home and descended from prominent lineage, receiving a refined upbringing. Some might have considered McNeill (See MCNEILL, page 12A)



Raeford civic leader and socialite Betsy Ann McNeill was recently recognized by the American Dietitians Association. (Photo by Victoriana Summers)

## City considers crackdown on junked cars

In a discussion that ended rather quickly, City Council members briefly talked about amending the City Code for Motor Vehicles before tabling the motion until further information could be gathered.

Council members, after hearing complaints from several Raeford citizens, decided the City code should perhaps be amended to better deal with current motor vehicle problems. City Manager Mike McNeill said that according to all the complaints City Councilmen have received, citizens want something done about the abandoned and junked motor vehicles that are being left unattended in nearby neighbors' yards.

As the Code stands now, someone from the Hoke County Health Department would have to declare a vehicle a health or safety hazard before a City official would have permission to remove the abandoned or junked car from (See CRACKDOWN, page 11A)