

The News-Journal

If it happened, it's news to us

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This week



Young songsters perform wherever they go page 1B

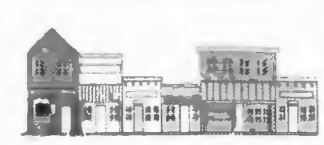
JROTC cadets master summer camp skills page 8A

County to move two offices to armory page 4A

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Around Town



By SAM C. MORRIS
Contributing Editor

The weather for the past week has been as nice as anyone could ask for. The rain stopped for a few days and the temperatures have been in the 80s during the day. As you read and listen to the weather reports for the entire United States, you wonder how some people can endure it. In Texas and Oklahoma they haven't had any rain for over two months. In other places it is flooded and some states have been fighting forest fires for several months. Mother Nature has something in store for all of us.

The forecast for the remainder of the week, Wednesday through Saturday, calls for the highs to be in the 80s and the lows in the 60s. It is possible for rain about any afternoon.

Linda Steed, Centennial Chairman, asked that the following notice be run in this column:

Those former members of Raeford United Methodist Church who would like to attend the centennial dinner-on-the-grounds following church services on November 5, 2000, please contact Alma Ferguson at 875-2743 or the church office at 875-2111 no later than Oct. 14. We need to know the number planning to attend the catered dinner. Thank you.

Tom Squier, Veterans Service Officer for Hoke County, was by the office last week (See AROUND, page 10A)

911 tapes raise questions over chase

Officers defend their actions at scene after suspect kills himself

By VICTORIANA SUMMERS
Staff writer

Law enforcement transmissions and other comments heard on Hoke Emergency 911 recordings, as well as witness accounts, appear to indicate a fleeing

Raleigh man may not have received medical attention in an attempt to save his life after he shot himself at the end of a high-speed pursuit last week.

Red Springs police say Anthony Lee Scarboro, 20, shot himself last Tuesday evening after leading several law enforce-

ment vehicles from Robeson County on a chase that began in Lumberton and went through Red Springs before ending with the fatality in southern Hoke County on Hilltop Road. He was driving a stolen car, they said.

The Hoke Emergency transmission tape

from that evening indicates a time period of almost 14 minutes between when a Red Springs officer told Hoke's 911 dispatcher/operator of a 10-50, the code indicating an accident, and another voice said the driver was still breathing.

The tape raises questions about whether a Red Springs rescue worker was denied (See DEFENDS, page 7A)



Big Day

East Hoke Middle School is ready to play its first football game on a new field, constructed complete with bleachers and an electronic scoreboard. The game, against a Laurinburg team, will be played today because East Hoke was stood up after a scheduling misunderstanding yesterday. But cheerleaders Jasmine Marcano, (left to right) Roshawnga Peoples, Alison Dover and Heather Ramsey practiced anyway, and so did these players: Mark Spann, Quannelle Brooks, Lucio Miguel, Josh Roberts, and Jeff Huey.

Leaders respond to Davis' probe

Chairman Leach offended by charge against McLaughlin

By VICTORIANA SUMMERS
Staff writer

With the culmination of the SBI probe last week that was called in February by Sheriff Jim Davis, Hoke Commission Chairman James A. Leach voiced indignation on Monday over criminal allegations reportedly told by Davis to the SBI that involved Commissioner L.E. McLaughlin Jr.

District Attorney Jean Powell said she found no foundation — "not one shred of evidence" — to support any of Davis' accusations. She dismissed the SBI investigation, determining no criminal misconduct ever oc-

curred.

According to SBI documents, Davis said he suspected former Hoke chief deputy Hubert Peterkin of being involved in an alleged drug conspiracy with McLaughlin. Repeated phone calls to Davis for comments on the SBI investigation have gone unanswered during the past week.

McLaughlin, a retired U.S. Army major and winner of numerous regional civic awards, is presently recovering from surgery. McLaughlin said he was not surprised he became a "target for Sheriff Davis," saying he is an outspoken critic of Davis' managerial practices and budget (See RESPOND, page 9A)

Football player's death shocks family, friends

Was grandson of House of Raeford owner

By VICTORIANA SUMMERS
Staff writer

Members of his football team served as pallbearers at the funeral of 17-year-old Will Johnson after he died at a football game at Harrells Christian Academy Friday night. He was the grandson of House of Raeford owner Marvin Johnson.

Young Johnson died after he successfully executed a tackle on an opposing player at a home game, colliding with the other player. He is thought to have suffered from a fatal cardiac concussion due to the impact.

"It was not the other boy's fault," Johnson said. "It was just one of those oddball things that could not be helped."

"His heart just stopped beating and they could never get it started."

According to Johnson, rescue workers began administering medical treatment to his grandson in an attempt to revive him; the game continued. When spectators and school officials realized how serious the injuries might be, the game was halted. It ended with 33 seconds remaining to be played.

Johnson was transported to Sampson County Hospital in Clinton, where he was pronounced dead. According to preliminary findings from the Sampson County medical examiner and forensic office, he is thought to have died from the cardiac concussion, which is very rare, said Johnson. An autopsy is being completed to pinpoint the cause of death.

"He got hit just right to cause his heart to stop," Johnson said. "They never could get his heart back to beating."

"He made the tackle and got up," Johnson said. "He walked two or three steps — he told the coach (Bron Thompson) he had to leave the game. He just collapsed, and fell face down on the field."

Academy headmaster Jackie Parrish said all athletic and after-school activities at the school were canceled this week out of respect to Johnson. A conference is slated with football players, parents and physicians on Thursday night to discuss the future of the football program, Parrish said.

Two crisis intervention counselors and a minister were available for the students on Tuesday morning.

"He was one of our very best athletes and comes from a family that puts God and family first — school and athletics next," Parrish said. "Will seemed to have the same character; he seemed to have the same feelings of the rest of his family did."

(See JOHNSON, page 10A)



Will Johnson was 'as good a person as you will find.'

Speeding deputy's car goes out of control in curve, collides with another vehicle

Witnesses say a Hoke County Sheriff's Department patrol car was speeding when it went out of control, traveled across a median, and struck a pickup before coming to rest in a woodline alongside U.S. Highway 401.

The accident was reported at 9:20 Saturday night. Deputy

Suzanne Burrow, 27, was the only reported injury. She was taken to Cape Fear Valley Medical Center by ambulance and was later released.

State Trooper G.L. Roth's report states Burrow's 1994 Ford patrol car was traveling northwest on U.S. 401 Business at a

high rate of speed en route to assist another deputy on a domestic call. The car's speed was estimated at 75 miles per hour, according to the report.

As Burrow attempted to merge from 401 Business to U.S. 401, she lost control of her vehicle. It (See WRECK, page 9A)

Auditor reports city is financially sound

By PAT ALLEN WILSON
Editor

The City of Raeford is fiscally sound, CPA Frank Baker reported when he gave his annual audit report for the year FY 1999-2000 at Monday night's council.

"The city is doing a pretty good job; that hasn't changed," Baker said. "Accounting proce-

dures are running along nicely." Baker reported "no major problems in accounting, only two minor ones," which he said were already corrected.

The town's general fund balance is well over legal requirements by the state although "a little low for the average small town" at the time of the audit, according to Baker. "It's nothing to worry about," he said.

Mayor Bob Gentry said the positive report "reflects on our good health."

In other business, councilmen voted to expand the inspections department and amended the dog ordinance.

The changes in the inspection department were approved after a brief closed session. The city now contracts the county to do (See AUDIT, page 10A)