

The News-Journal

If it happened, it's news to us

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On vacation?
Hoke's top stories
are on the web
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This week



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for festival
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Woman hit
by car twice
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300-year-old report
tells of vanishing
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Around Town



BY SAM C. MORRIS
Contributing Editor

We are still getting rain about every day. Someone was by the office Monday morning and she said that there was a heavy rain in the western part of the county Sunday afternoon. There wasn't enough to measure in the rain gauge in Raeford. This has been happening all this summer. Heavy rain in places. Anyway, the temperature has cooled off somewhat in this part of the state. Maybe we will have an early fall.

The forecast for the remainder of the week, Wednesday through Saturday, calls for the highs on Wednesday and Thursday to be in the 80s and the lows in the 60s. Friday and Saturday the highs will be in the 70s and the lows in the 50s. There is no rain forecasted.

The big week for many people in Hoke County starts Thursday. This marks the beginning of the 17th Annual North Carolina Turkey Festival. Thursday there will be music at the Library Stage during the day and this will be followed by the parade at 5:30 p.m. The Opening Ceremonies will be at the Library Stage beginning at 10 a.m. Friday.

There will be music on the stage Friday and Saturday. The Beach Concert will be Saturday night from 8:00 p.m. to 12:00 p.m. at Armory Park. Friday night you can get the (See AROUND, page 5A)

Hoke reacts with prayer for victims

People seek comfort, understanding

By PAT ALLEN WILSON
Editor

"There are no words adequate enough to describe the events of the day — the horror, the tragedy," said the Rev. Kevin Campbell, minister at Raeford Presbyterian Church.

The minister spoke for the people of a community and a nation who were seeking to understand terrorist attacks in New York and Washington yesterday morning that have left untold numbers dead and injured.

The specially called prayer service at Raeford Presbyterian was one of many held across the city and county in response to the disaster.

"The disaster is going to bring us together," said Susan Patterson, a secretary at Sandhills Community College, whose church, Tabernacle Baptist, held a prayer vigil.

"I felt sick in the pit of my stomach for the people who died today and the families who were pulled apart," she said on learning of the terrorist attacks. "I started praying immediately after I saw the first pictures of it." Patterson added, "The way I feel is God is

trying to bring this country back. He is trying to turn the U.S. around to put Him first instead of everything else first and Him last. I believe that."

Classes at SCC were canceled because students could not concentrate on their studies. Around town, many laborers went home for lunch to watch TV, some returning to work with portable TVs and radios.

Angel Li, proprietor of Li's Palace, left the radio on a news station so diners could keep up with the news. A hush fell over the restaurant, she said, when President Bush addressed the American people.

Li said her family — siblings and parents — called from Hong Kong concerned about her family and the situation here. "I told them we were still trying to digest it," she said.

"I know America is going to do something," Li added.

The day's events were discussed by shocked residents in businesses around the city and county. "That's a shocker," said a man in a local convenience store who did not want to be identified. "I don't think it would (See PRAYER, page 9A)



Reggie Pickler and son Johnathan at a prayer gathering Tuesday night.

West Hoke seeks municipality of its own

By VICTORIANA SUMMERS
Staff writer

Five years ago a group of west Hoke taxpayers began discussing incorporating the area serviced by the West Hoke Volunteer Fire Department. Now the vision of a new city is growing under the leadership of the Rev. J.R. Monroe, and co-organizers Mary Fowler, Johnny Kershaw and Matthew Ray.

They seek to create a "entity" separate from the county to include a portion of Blue Springs, all of Quewhiffle and Raeford No. 4 voting precincts.

It will ultimately be up to the state legislature to decide if the city becomes a reality, but these citizens hope to make history in western Hoke County by forming another municipality, Monroe said.

"Moore county has its Pinehurst Village, so Hoke's new town could be named, West Hoke Village," Monroe said. "One of the primary reasons we are planning

a second city in Hoke is because it is the only county in the state with just one active municipality, the county seat of Raeford.

"The vast majority of the people residing in this area do not know we are planning a new city. We want to get the word out."

According to Monroe, western Hoke's population has almost tripled during the last three years.

He said West Hoke Elementary School and the Turnpike Road area would become the central point where the city would originate, and the L.E. McLaughlin farm would also be included in the new municipality.

"Our population is multi-racial in western Hoke," Monroe said.

"If you go door-to-door you meet black, Jewish, Hispanic and white folks. By incorporating, we could pull resources from state and federal grants, pumping money into our city without going through the county commissioners or Raeford officials.

"This would encourage more growth and prosperity."

Monroe said another plus would be that citizens are entitled to elect their own officials.

"We would bypass the commissioners and have our own mayor and city council in place," Monroe said. "To form a new city will be a challenge, but it is not impossible.

"Hoke's children are not reaping what they need from the county. We would like to offer them a city where recreational facilities are available."

Monroe envisions a recreation center, and is considering the site of a private park currently owned by Willie McCaskill, former elections board chairman. No post office is planned, and he said the new city would use county water. Plans include establishing a police force and building a town hall, Monroe added.

In order for the state to consider their proposal, (See MUNICIPALITY, page 10A)

Turkey Festival begins tomorrow

Going ahead on schedule

By VICTORIANA SUMMERS
Staff writer

It will be something to gab about when thousands of guests enjoy the 17th annual North Carolina Turkey Festival in Raeford starting tomorrow. Watch out because fans will get their feathers ruffled if anybody tries to mess with the traditional mascot of the three-day event known merely as "The Turkey." At least 6-foot-3 inches of lean bird, beak and feathers, The Turkey will flap his wings along Main Street during the afternoon parade at 5:30 tomorrow afternoon.

Prior to the parade, Thursday has been named

Classroom mobilized for Hispanics

By VICTORIANA SUMMERS
Staff writer

Hoke County Schools is entering its first partnership with Sandhills Community College and House of Raeford that is designed to bridge the language barrier between Hispanic parents of school-age children and Spanish-speaking who that are looking for a job without comprehending

English. With this goal in mind, the school board voted unanimously on Tuesday evening to sell the House of Raeford a surplus mobile classroom unit for one dollar, a historical vote linking a mobile classroom to the Hispanic and English-speaking communities.

House of Raeford agreed to pay all costs associated with moving, relocation and setting up the (See MOBILIZED, page 9A)

City's audit favorable

Raeford city councilmen heard a favorable audit report of the city's financial books from CPA J. Frank Baker Monday night.

Baker had no complaints with the city's bookkeeping and told the mayor and council members the city staff calls him periodically with questions. "I'd rather answer questions than write negative comments later," he said.

Baker said the general fund

balance was at a "very safe figure" of approximately 40 percent of current year expenditures.

The state recommends at least 27 percent remain in the general fund balance and will intervene if it gets below eight percent.

This fiscal year, councilmen passed a general fund budget of almost \$3 million leaving the property tax rate at 47 cents per (See AUDIT, page 12A)

Kiss sparks brawl at Hoke High

By VICTORIANA SUMMERS
Staff writer

A kiss between Hoke County High School senior Marcus Holcombe and his 16-year-old girlfriend, Maria Oquendo, eventually resulted in a brawl and four arrests.

Apparently after the (See KISS, page 9A)



Pretty and dangerous

Lizzie Brewer shows a rattlesnake found dead in the highway in western Hoke. This rattler was in the freezer 24 hours before Lizzie was allowed to touch it; nerve reactions from a snake can cause it to strike for 24 hours after it has been dead. The dangers of poisonous snakes are explored on page 11A.