



The News-Journal

TURKEY
FESTIVAL
PREVIEW
INSIDE!

If it happened, it's news to us

50¢

No. 25 Vol. 97

RAEFORD & HOKE COUNTY N.C.

Wednesday, September 8, 2004

Kidnapped girl returned safely from S.C.

Amber alert issued after teen disappeared, man arrested in North Charleston

By VICTORIANA SUMMERS
Staff writer

The ordeal was over on Thursday evening for the Gonzalez family. Their 13-year-old daughter, Zuleyma, was safely returned to Raeford after allegedly being kidnapped by a family acquaintance early on Wednesday morning and held hostage in South Carolina.

"I knew him and fed him. How could he do this?"

— Adela Petana

However, her parents did not report Zuleyma missing until 3 p.m. Wednesday. They verified a family friend, Samuel Ramos Pedraza, who was demanding a ransom, had allegedly kidnapped her that morning.

"The man called them and assured them he would return their daughter," Sheriff Hubert Peterkin said. "They hoped he would, but when he did not then they contacted us."

In a massive manhunt, deputies canvassed area homes door-to-door seeking information, continually patrolled the county, and used dogs for tracking.

"All of our resources were used," Sheriff Hubert Peterkin said of the two-day crisis.

Ramos, 31, of Turtle Lane in Red Springs, is charged with first degree

kidnapping. He will be extradited from South Carolina later this week.

A telephone call apparently placed from South Carolina led Federal Bureau of Investigation agents, U.S. Marshals, and the North Charleston police to rescue Zuleyma in North Charleston on

Thursday after they initially thought the pair was in a shopping center. First, they found the white Nissan truck belonging to Ramos. They apprehended Ramos after surrounding a residence in that city where the pair was staying. The Hispanic man was captured with "very little" resistance.

Peterkin added.

Reunited with her family at the Hoke Sheriff's Office, Zuleyma was accompanied by a female Hoke sheriff's officer on her journey from North Charleston in a Hoke Sheriff's vehicle. She was also assisted by a caseworker from the Depart-

ment of Social Services upon her arrival in Hoke. The social worker interviewed the family prior to releasing Zuleyma into her parents' custody.

An Amber Alert issued at the request of Peterkin and tips provided to Hoke (See KIDNAPPED, page 8A)



Above: Zuleyma holds a Teddy bear given to her by detectives. Right: Adela Petana (left) and Abel Gonzalez are overcome with emotion as they are reunited with their daughter.



This Week



Memories of Hoke upbringing page 1B

Final disbarment for Southerland page 4A

Bucks win another one page 6A

Hoke's SAT average slips 34 points in 2004

By VICTORIANA SUMMERS
Staff writer

While the North Carolina average for students taking the SAT college entrance exam increased by five points in 2004, the average score of Hoke County students plummeted by 34 points this year.

The average on Hoke students' scores

also represented a significant decrease compared to other school districts in the Cape Fear Region, according to statistics released by Gov. Mike Easley and Mike Ward, state superintendent of the Department of Public Instruction, last week.

The state's average was 1,006 of a possible 1,600 perfect score with scores steadily climbing for the past 10 years by

42 points. This compared to the higher, national average of 1,026 this year, which remained unchanged from 2003. Wake County, one of the more affluent counties in the state, topped the rankings in N.C. with an average score of 1,063.

Two parts comprise the SAT college admissions test, math and verbal, each with a possible score of 800 points.

"While the SAT was never designed to offer state-to-state comparisons, the trend over time shows that North Carolina is making substantial and sustained improvements compared to the rest of the nation," Ward said.

"The participation rate, along with the increases in scores, show that (See SAT SCORES, page 8A)



The Moving Wall during a stop in California.

Moving Wall opens here Monday

By VICTORIANA SUMMERS
Staff writer

Its appearance in N.C. is rare, but volunteers from Hoke County and the City of Raeford will host The Moving Wall beginning Monday.

The Vietnam veterans' memorial will be here from daybreak Monday through the 20th celebration of the N.C. Turkey Festival on September 16, 17, and 18.

A tribute to servicemen who died during the Vietnam War, the wall will be available for viewing around the clock and will be hosted by volun-

teers for its eight-day stay. On the wall, consisting of 18 partitions, more than 58,000 names of fallen soldiers, marines, sailors, air force military personnel, medics and nurses will be displayed.

The wall, stretching almost 300 feet, will be erected in the large field behind the Raeford Hoke Chamber of Commerce (See MOVING WALL, page 8A)



Kenneth Floyd

(See MOVING WALL, page 8A)

Index

- Births.....3B
- Calendar.....4B
- Classifieds.....6-8B
- Deaths.....8A
- Editorials.....2-3A
- Engagements.....3B
- Legals.....4-6B
- Public Record.....5A
- Religion.....2B
- Schools.....7A
- Socials.....3B
- Sports.....6A
- Weddings.....3B

Hoke's top stories are on the web; send us stories, subscribe
www.thenews-journal.com



The driver of this pickup was injured and gasoline spilled into Big Middle Swamp Creek when the vehicle careened out of control through a bridge guard rail yesterday morning. The fuel spill was contained. See story on page 5A.

12-year-old boy killed in hunting accident

By NATALIE BAKER
Intern reporter

The weather wasn't the only thing that brought a dark cloud over West Hoke Middle School Tuesday morning. Sixth grader Allen Michael Jacobs, 12 - years - old, died Monday afternoon while hunting with relatives near Maxton in Robeson County.

Allen's teachers and classmates will not forget the "Pencil Champ," given this title because he was the reigning champion of the pencil thumping game — and he is also remembered as the student who kept a big smile on his face. His memories will linger with papers yet to be graded, pencils yet to be broken and an empty desk that will leave an imprint of loss in his teachers' and fellow students' minds.

Allen was an "inquisitive and extremely positive" child who was very kind and loved nature, Carrie Tripolone, his homeroom, science and social studies teacher, said. A classmates commented on his kindness. When they played the pencil thumping game, he broke three of her pencils but by the end of the day had replaced them with three pens. (See HUNTING ACCIDENT, page 4A)