

The News-Journal

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50¢

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RAEFORD & HOKE COUNTY N.C.

Wednesday, November 23, 2005

Commissioners avoid building sheriff's office

Move of sheriff's office to old health building will save \$1 million, sheriff says

BY VICTORIANA SUMMERS
Staff writer

Hoke's Board of Commissioners unanimously authorized relocating the sheriff's office to the existing Health Department building on East Central

Avenue. The change will save county taxpayers almost \$1 million and provide space for a new domestic violence division and the State Bureau of Investigation.

The county had planned to construct a new facility, but now, Hoke Sheriff

Hubert Peterkin says, the board will need to spend only approximately \$100,000 for renovations. After remodeling, the existing Health building would accommodate law officers all "under one roof," according to Peterkin, who requested the transition for the Sheriff's Office.

The current Health building would also provide a comfortable, expanded lobby for citizens waiting to see deputies. It would also include a glass privacy partition, separating deputy clerks efficiently and securely from the public in a larger room filled with workstations,

Peterkin said.

"We may not even need that much money for remodeling," Peterkin said. "I will get with Dennis Baxley (county building director) and come back with an estimate to the board."

(See SHERIFF'S OFFICE, page 4A)

Barber killed in Fayetteville

Raeford native's death shocks community



BY VICTORIANA SUMMERS
Staff writer

Creg Keith Johnson, a well known Raeford native and former Hoke County High School football player, was fatally shot some time between Saturday night and early Sunday in Fayetteville. His body was discovered on Sunday morning inside The Line Up barbershop on Yadkin Road where he was employed as a barber.

The slaying of the Hoke High graduate occurred at the small business located in the 6300 block of Yadkin Road.

According to Jamie Smith, public information officer for the Fayetteville Police Department, no arrest had been made as of this morning in Johnson's murder.

(See MURDER, page 7A)



Cotton pickin' youngun

Upchurch third grader Leah Canchola (above) displays her sample of cotton during an annual demonstration of cotton production at Edens Farms. At right, Cooperative Extension Agent Keith Walters shows how ginning works. The tour is part of Farm City Week activities and is intended to teach the variety of ways cotton and other crops are used in everyday life.



This Week



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Tryouts for museum play set page 4A

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Barnes dances in 'Nutcracker' page 4A

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Hayes comes through with 200K for streetscape

Transformation of downtown on schedule, moves next to removal of power poles

BY VICTORIANA SUMMERS
Staff writer

The sidewalks of Raeford's downtown streetscape are taking shape since construction began this summer — and so is the necessary budget.

The financial scope of the project has improved since Congress-

man Robin Hayes cemented more renovations with an additional \$200,000 in federal funding he acquired last week.

"This is one of the most beautiful messes I have ever seen," Hoke Economic Developer Don Porter said of the older sidewalks torn up that are being replaced with decorative, stamped tiles and

concrete. "Thanks to the efforts of Congressman Hayes, the state Department of Transportation, the N.C. Department of Commerce, the Raeford city council and the Raeford Downtown Revitalization Commission this project is taking form.

"We expect it to attract new economic development and to

enhance the businesses of existing merchants downtown."

With phase one already begun, the \$2.5 million project also includes a second and third phase. Metcon construction firm estimates the first phase will be completed by the end of April 2006.

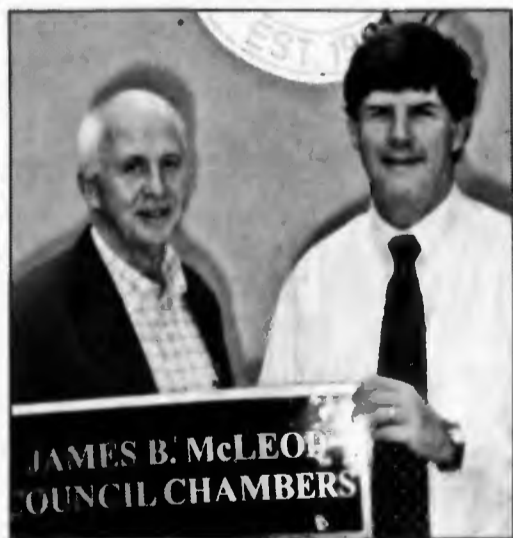
"I am pleased to announce this

important funding for the city of Raeford," Hayes said on Friday.

"Completing the downtown streetscape project will make Raeford more attractive to businesses and continue economic growth in the community."

Hayes said he secured extra federal funding from the 2006

(See STREETScape, page 5A)



McLeod, left, with McNeill and new sign.

Council hall named for retiring McLeod

In 34 years as a city councilman, he attended 408 scheduled meetings

BY PAT ALLEN WILSON
Editor

"Benny McLeod is one of my heroes," Raeford Mayor John K. McNeill III said at the longtime councilman's last city council meeting November 7.

After 34 years of service, McLeod chose not to seek reelection, and Buddy Blue ran unchallenged for the seat held by the longtime councilman.

McLeod, 68, has served as many years as he was old when he was appointed after J.D. McMillian's death left an empty seat. He had a young family — a wife, Linda, and two small daughters, Laura and Beth, to raise.

The City of Raeford honored McLeod by naming the room where he had met for so many years in his honor — the James B. McLeod Council Chambers. It was an action that took McLeod, who manages

Hoke Cotton Warehouse, by surprise.

McNeill recounted the number of meetings — 408 regularly scheduled with the number climbing to 500 or 600 to include called meetings — McLeod had taken part in.

"This is a bittersweet moment, bitter losing him as a councilman, sweet in the sense he deserves retirement," McNeill said.

(See MCLEOD, page 5A)

The News-Journal

News Other stuff

BY KEN MACDONALD
Publisher

Sunday was certainly ecumenical for me: it started out with Presbyterian Sunday school and worship; I was then on to a funeral; then to God's Deliverance Church for a meeting about house building in Mexico; and then to the community Thanksgiving service. Routine to poignant to heartening to, well, passionate if not surreal.

I say "routine" because the writers of our "resource material" had our middle school class studying Nehemiah and discussing the subtleties of exile when the following

insightful exchange occurred:

Me: "Johnny (name changed to protect the guilty), that's a 220-volt outlet; plug the air conditioner cord back in. If your fingers were to go across the prongs of that cord while it was half-plugged in, you'd light up like a Christmas turkey. Now in the next verse of Nehemiah 3..."

One of the kids: "Christmas turkey...? I thought we had turkeys at Thanksgiving."

Me: "Well, we do, but back when Charles Dickens wrote the Christmas story, the Christmas turkey caught on and..."
(See OTHER STUFF, page 4A)

Reconstruction continues of wreck that killed three

BY VICTORIANA SUMMERS
Staff writer

A trip from Greensboro to Fayetteville and back ended in tragedy as three former Hoke High School students were killed in a wreck in Guilford County last Tuesday night.

Hoke High School student Andrew Hicks said he has seen a lot of "sad faces" among students since the news broke that Carla Maria Marshall, Lynai Bree Thorne and Tiffany Helene Kittrell died in an accident.

"We had television crews arrive at school last Wednesday from Channel 11 and 5 to interview people," Hicks said. "I did not know them."
(See FATAL WRECK, page 5A)



Top of the morning... Gregor Rankine greets a cold Friday morning at the Raeford Post Office atop his father, Ian.