

# The News-Journal

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75¢

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RAEFORD & HOKE COUNTY N.C.

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## Sheriff, DA announce arson task force

By VICTORIANA SUMMERS  
Staff writer

Sheriff Hubert Peterkin and Hoke District Attorney Kristy M. Newton announced this morning they have established a special arson task force to address the "severe problem" associated with 40 fires that have destroyed dwellings during the past two

years across the county.

Major Freddy Johnson, Hoke fire marshal and chief of operations at the Sheriff's Office, first addressed the problem at the Hoke commissioners' retreat last month.

A special reward fund is also being set up with moneys donated by the state and other agencies for information from witnesses leading to the cap-

ture the arsonists, according to Peterkin.

"Somebody is going to jail," Peterkin warned. "One of the arsons involved the church, Helping Hand Ministries, which was burned to the ground on Highway 211 West.

"I am concerned that sooner or later we will have an arson crime committed

that will cost the lives of homeowners or our firemen who are overstrained fighting these fires deliberately set."

Informing the arson task force, Peterkin and Johnson are joined by two other arson investigators at the Hoke Sheriff's office, special agents from the State Bureau of Investigation and the Hoke district attorney's office.

Johnson, echoing Peterkin, said specific arsonists are already suspected in "at least 12" of the fires determined to be arson-related.

"We are organized to respond at a moment's notice so the entire task force can respond; depending on the severity of the arson," Peterkin said. "We will investigate residential and commercial

arson incidents.

"We have seen a significant increase of arson fires over the past 12 months."

Some of the fires involved occupied dwellings, "but one family was at home at the time the fires were set," Peterkin added. Many of the fires were set in the Puppy Creek Fire District. (see ARSON, page 5A)

## Soldier strangled

Man charged in bride's death

By VICTORIANA SUMMERS  
Staff writer

The brief marriage of two soldiers who met while stationed in Iraq, but were recently stationed in separate states, ended with the slaying last week of 26-year-old Sgt. Dahlia S. Newman in her home in the Wayside community.

Newman was assigned to the U.S. Army's 18th Support Group (Airborne) at Fort Bragg. Newman was allegedly killed by her husband, a U.S. Army soldier stationed at Fort Stewart, Georgia, according to the Hoke Sheriff's

(See SOLDIER, page 5A)



The Newmans. Right, Nancy Hare and Pup-Pup stroll down a street in quiet Windward Oaks where Sgt. Dahlia Newman was strangled.



### This Week



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## County doubles efforts to build more schools

Plans to buy acreage at Sandy Grove

By VICTORIANA SUMMERS  
Staff writer

Hoke commissioners and the Hoke Board of Education have doubled up efforts to accommodate growth in the county.

By acquiring donated land for at least one future elementary school near Scurlock and extra land purchased for another school building adjacent to Sandy Grove Elementary School, the two boards hope

to keep up with the student enrollment escalation, according to Commission Chairman Bobby Wright.

To move forward with the most recent request from the school board, commissioners voted unanimously yesterday in a recessed meeting to acquire 30 acres that adjoins Sandy Grove Elementary School in Arabia. The board approved purchasing the land for \$350,000, which will (see COUNTY, page 6A)

## DSS finds partial solution to subsidize more childcare

By VICTORIANA SUMMERS  
Staff writer

For the first time in Hoke County government, the local Department of Social Services will request the county to subsidize the state's childcare program where working families and single parent students are given priority to utilize daycare providers.

This request was driven by a childcare crisis in Hoke during the 2005-06 fiscal budget when cutbacks occurred in childcare subsidies on the state level. Hoke's Department of Social Services was forced to cut 180 children who were enrolled in daycare services from the program in mid-January.

Hoke currently does not contribute any portion to the state's childcare subsidy allocation of \$1.7 million, which is received by Hoke's DSS, according to Hoke DSS interim director Barbara Brooks and Commissioner

Charles V. Daniels, a DSS board member.

"We are going to request that the county contribute \$100,000 in our next year's budget to help fund childcare," Brooks said. "That is our objective.

"The county would not be adding any money. They only allocate \$45,000 for our Work First program annually, but that is not for daycare subsidies," she said.

"A group of our childcare providers recently came to the commissioners to ask for money for the program."

Daniels said he thinks the board might look favorably on the DSS's request for additional childcare funding for 2005-06.

Brooks said childcare services are being restored this month to some children, bringing relief to 40 more families in need of childcare. She is contacting families who may enroll in the program (see CHILD, page 6A)

## 4 for sheriff, 10 for commissioner

Filing for county offices ended at noon yesterday; the race is on

By VICTORIANA SUMMERS  
Staff writer

In a local election filing period packed with challengers, the Hoke Board of Elections tallied four candidates, including incumbent Sheriff Hubert Peterkin, who filed for Hoke sheriff by the noon deadline yesterday.

Stacking up to seek three commissioners' seats available for the Hoke Board of Commissioners were 10 contenders.

Among the commissioners candidates are incumbents Jean Powell, vice chairwoman of the board, and Bill Cameron are seeking second terms. Charles V. Daniels currently fills the third available seat, but he filed on Monday to run for sheriff.

Daryl Simmons also filed for sheriff. Simmons did not list a business affiliation or any phone numbers when he filed yesterday. A Red

Springs resident, Simmons listed Cope Road as his address.

"The filing period went fine. It was smooth." — Board of Elections Director Caroline Shook

Filing for commissioner this week were Tony Hunt, a former commissioner, an ordained minister and school teacher, and west Hoke resident Charles Patterson, a local businessman and mobile home park owner.

Frank Crumpler, co-owner of Crumpler's Funeral Home in Raeford and Red Springs, also filed unopposed on the Democrat ticket as the incumbent coroner. Crumpler has served as coroner of Hoke for 46 years, according to Caroline Shook, Hoke's board of elections director. He will be

the Democrat-nominee elect on the November ballot.

"The filing period went fine," Shook said. "It was smooth."

Deciding the outcome of the May primary and November election will be 21,250 registered Hoke voters with more expected to register.

All candidates running in the race are Democrats with the exception of Tim D'Annunzio. He is the sole Republican seeking a commissioner's seat. Without Republican Party opposition, D'Annunzio becomes the Republican nominee elect, appearing automatically on the November election ballot.

Jockeying for the position as sheriff of Hoke at a time when the population is exploding is Peterkin, who is seeking his second term of office; Daniels, a former Raeford constable; Simmons, and retired Raeford assistant (see FILING, page 8A)



### Fat Tuesday

Sandy Grove pupils held their own Mardi Gras as they learned the New Orleans holiday originated in France where people begged on this day.