

The News-Journal

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RAEFORD & HOKE COUNTY N.C.

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Raeford fire department gets state grant

By VICTORIANA SUMMERS
Staff writer
The City of Raeford Fire Department is the recipient of a state grant for more than \$40,000 to help local firemen and women fight fires on the

front lines, according to State Fire Marshal Jim Long.

"The bravery shown by these men and women should be supported with the best equipment and supplies needed to do their jobs right and do

it safely," Long said. "I am proud that we have this grant program in place to provide departments like this one with much-needed funds to continue its good work."

"I intend to continue supporting

our fire and rescue organizations across this great state."

The grant required a match of local funds of \$19,000. Unilever Personal Care USA, a major industry in Raeford, also contributed \$2,000 to

assist in the effort. Unilever, although reliant on Raeford's fire department, also employs its own industrial fire suppression team for its facility on South Main Street.

(See GRANT, page 7A)



Taylor Bates (left) and Victoria Trujillo check in voters at the poll.

Students' election a lot like adults'

While Hoke County adults were going to the polls last week, students at East Hoke Middle already knew the winners — of their own election anyway.

In the eighth grade, says Sue Evans, a social studies teacher who helped organize the election along with social worker Teresa Maxwell, students held registration, created ballot boxes and voting booths, and manned the polls on election day.

In key local elections, the results of the students' voting closely approxi-

mated that of adults: the \$20 million school bond passed, Sheriff Hubert Peterkin was reelected, Jean Powell, Ellen McNeill and Tony Hunt were elected to the Hoke Board of Commissioners and two of the same candidates picked by adults made it to the Board of Education. In the eighth grade election incumbent Tom Pilkington was picked over Della Maynor-Bowen.

And the students did it with no call for a recount and no allegations of voting irregularities.



East Hoke Middle School eighth-grader Kela Kennedy casts her vote.

Hargrove protests firing

By VICTORIANA SUMMERS
Staff writer

Raeford resident Jackie Hargrove Rushing has been ousted from her job as child-care specialist with Child Care Connections after eight years of service.

Formerly serving for 35 years as an owner of a child daycare facility, Hargrove was instrumental as a task force member in establishing Smart Start (Hoke County Partnership for Children). She has also served as president of the Hoke County Child Care Association, which she helped found with assistance from a Fayetteville organization 25 years ago.

Since her dismissal, Hargrove has been sent a letter by County Manager Mike Wood, informing her she must resign from the Smart Start board. Since Hargrove is no longer president of HCCCA, Jean Squier, Executive Director of Hoke County Partnership for Children notified

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This Week



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Luke McNeill awarded in comeback

Poor health stopped videographer, but return brought Paul Green Award

By VICTORIANA SUMMERS
Staff writer

Four years ago, Raeford videographer Luke McNeill says he went home to die after being diagnosed with an incurable, macro-bacteria respiratory condition.

In spite of his disability, he has resumed his career today as a state award-winning videographer and photographer, zooming in on the Hoke community.

The retired grocer affiliated with the McNeill family's Home Food Super Market for 37 years, said he basically gave up. From 220 pounds,

he dwindled to 154. A history and nature videographer since 1988 and a former news reporter stringer for WTVD TV in Durham, the 80-year-old McNeill said he even gave away all his cameras. Then, he said, with the support of wife Phyllis, his health made a dramatic comeback and so did his career.

In October, the North Carolina Society of Historians honored McNeill with the prestigious Paul Green Multimedia Award. The late Green, playwright of the outdoor drama, "The Lost Colony," also achieved brief

fame as a screenplay writer in Hollywood.

"I do not know what turned me around," McNeill admits. "I got to feeling better, and I got the chance to start over."

"Since then, I have been sleeping in my recliner chair, and I am doing pretty well. It is hard to breathe when I lay down flat in bed, but my videos keep me going."

With his recovery and renewal in videotaping, McNeill indicated the Paul Green plaudit is special to him. It is one of three awards named in honor of Green (See MCNEILL, page 8A)



Luke McNeill with wife Phyllis, and a Sprint phone book cover he shot.

Class of '69 gets promised award



Charles Fields, current Hoke High Bucks football player Bryant Locklear, Barbara Creech Lippard and Billy Jacobs in the sports stadium the class of '69 helped to build.

By PAT ALLEN WILSON
Editor

Black, white and Indian students went to school together for the first time in

Hoke County in 1968.

That year, blacks from Upchurch and Indians from Hawkeye joined the white students of Hoke High to be

the first to graduate as an integrated class in 1969.

Raz Autry was the principal. Billy Jacobs, a student from Hawkeye, was among the more than 200 graduates of the class of '69. He said Autry was strict, and he doesn't remember any problems or fights.

Autry, who became the principal in 1967, said his students increased from 633 to 1,750 with the integration move. He combined the goal of building a sports stadium with what he called "goof-off days" — when students worked on fundraisers for the stadium.

At that time, students (See CLASS '69, page 6A)

New Parks and Rec complex dedication ceremony held

By VICTORIANA SUMMERS
Staff writer

Hoke board of commissioners recently held a dedication ceremony for a future Parks and Recreation complex two miles south of Raeford. The venture will ultimately encompass a Parks and Rec center, nature trails, ball fields and possibly a separate senior citizens center.

Located on 90 acres acquired on Highway 211 South, the multi-million dollar project is in the planning phase at this time, according to Hoke commission chairman Bobby Wright. Purchased from Raeford residents Fred and Lewis Holland, the land cost the county \$450,000, equaling \$5,000 per acre.

Wright said the Parks and Rec building was not placed in this year's budget, but it will likely be allocated for 2006-07.

"Right now, we are focusing on trying to get the prop- (See RECREATION COMPLEX, page 6A)