

The News-Journal

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75¢

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RAEFORD & HOKE COUNTY N.C.

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Hoke High SAT scores see small gain

By JASON BECK
Staff Writer

Hoke County's SAT scores are lower than the state average, according to statistics released yesterday by the N.C. Board of Education. However, both the average score

and number of students taking the test did increase for 2007.

At Hoke High School, 165 eligible seniors, 52 percent, took the SAT. Last year only 48 percent took the aptitude test, which features math, writing and critical reading skills. Hoke's average grand total score

was 1284, up from last year's score of 1281. The state average grand total for 2007 was 1486.

"We are happy about our test scores this year, across the board," said Lora Hodges, an assistant superintendent for Hoke County. "We are gaining on some of the counties

ahead of us and leaving some of the counties behind. I think we are making forward motion."

Hoke's scores are comparable with those across the region. In neighboring Robeson County, 42 percent of eligible seniors took the test, achieving an average score of

1279, a decrease from last year. More than half of Cumberland County's eligible seniors took the SAT, garnering an average score of 1395, also a decrease overall from the year prior.

In 2006, the new writing portion (See SAT SCORES, page 7A)



A Stonewall firefighter hoses down the remains of an abandoned mobile home Monday after a fire completely destroyed the structure. Assistant Chief Kenneth Kunze said there is no indication of how the blaze began, but that the trailer was completely engulfed by the time firemen arrived. Firefighters from Rockfish and Puppy Creek provided mutual aid to help keep the flames from spreading to a dry wooded area nearby.



Kelvin Smith takes a seat in court.

Smith gets life

Jury foreman: he wasn't shooter

By JASON BECK
Staff Writer

At only 25-years-old, Kelvin Smith will spend the rest of his time on Earth in prison. A jury handed down the life sentence Monday after a lengthy deliberation that started last week.

The sentence was the least Smith could have received after being convicted of first-

degree murder in connection with the shooting death of April Pate, a young mother from Hoke County. The jury could have handed down the death penalty.

District Attorney Kristy Newton said she was pleased with the results of the case, even though her office sought the harshest sentence.

"We are very grateful (See LIFE, page 4A)

This Week



Class of '67 holds reunion page 1B

Hoke step team travels to Delaware page 1B

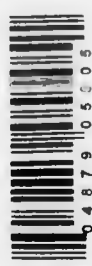
Rountree to head bank branch page 8A

Bucks football opener is Friday page 6A

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Two area soldiers killed by explosions in Iraq

STAFF REPORTS

Two 82nd Airborne soldiers with ties to the area were killed in Iraq last week in separate explosions. Both have a wife and children living in Raeford.

Staff Sgt. Sandy R. Britt, 30, of Apopka, Fla., and Sgt. 1st Class. David A. Heringes, 36, of Tampa, Fla. died from

injuries suffered after explosive devices detonated near their patrols.

Britt joined the army in 2003 after serving in the Navy as a diver. He was an Infantry Squad Leader with 1st Battalion, 325th Airborne Infantry Regiment, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 82nd Airborne.

The paratrooper was on

patrol near Baghdad last Tuesday when his vehicle was hit by an improvised explosive device. He later died from his injuries, according to a Department of Defense news release.

"Staff Sergeant Britt represented what is expected from 82nd Paratroopers and the Corps of noncommissioned officers," said Staff Sgt. Larry

Coburn, Britt's former team leader. "His willingness to serve his country and lead great soldiers is just two examples of the type of soldier Britt was.

"Britt was prior service Navy before joining the Army, and coming to the 82nd Airborne Division, which showed his dedication and loyalty to his country,"



Britt Heringes

Coburn said. His fellow soldiers also (See SOLDIERS, page 7A)

Sheriff talks with Senator Dole about immigration woes

By JASON BECK
Staff Writer

Issues over immigration were brought to the forefront in Hoke County last week, as Federal agents made at least one arrest, and local law enforcement leaders discussed the growing problem with crime in the Latino community.

Immigration and Customs Enforcement agents arrested 28 illegal immigrants suspected of identity theft in a sting across several counties including Hoke, according to Richard Rocha, an ICE public information

officer.

In Raleigh, Sheriff Hubert Peterkin and several other area law enforcement officials met Thursday with Sen. Elizabeth Dole to discuss how the federal government can assist with illegal immigrants who break the law.

According to Peterkin, law-breaking immigrants are causing a big problem in the county.

"When we catch them doing things wrong they are filling up our jail, taking up space, and the process to get someone deported is a long lengthy one," he said. "Fifteen to 20 percent

of our jail population is illegal immigrants, and we are building a new jail. We cannot keep filling our jail with these people.

"I tell my deputies do not stereotype anyone, but if someone commits a crime we have to prosecute them to the fullest extent of the law," he said. "They are promoting gangs in our community, they are moving large quantities of cocaine in our community, they are molesting our children."

Since 2000, the Hispanic population has increased by 80 percent in Hoke County, according to statistics

recently released by the U.S. Census Bureau.

Dole said local law enforcement agents are feeling the immigration situation first hand.

"When it comes to enforcing our laws, our sheriffs are literally on the front lines, and they must have the tools to bring justice to illegal aliens who are committing crimes, such as drinking and driving, drug smuggling and gang related activities," she said.

Peterkin said much of the problem exists due to a communication (See IMMIGRATION, page 8A)

Police chase man through town

By JASON BECK
Staff Writer

A Fayetteville man allegedly led Raeford Police on a pursuit last weekend through town, crashing a stolen car and running on foot before being collared. Police later realized he was carrying a semi-automatic assault rifle.

Jonathan Robert Ingram, 23, of Fayetteville was arrested early Saturday morning



Ingram

and charged with speeding to elude arrest, possession of a stolen motor vehicle and possession of a stolen firearm.

According to Major Wagner L. Baskett, Raeford's assistant police chief, officers got word of a stolen (See CHASE, page 7A)

The News-Journal

News Other stuff

By KEN MACDONALD
Publisher

Order whenever there's a death nobody ever brings food?" my wife asked.

The first ham arrived so early there was room for it in the fridge.

It was followed by salads, chicken, fruit, more ham, pies, cakes and even utensils, napkins and paper towels.

In the days as my mother's death neared, our family was showered with so much kindness it became the main topic of conversation.

"Have you ever noticed that on Law and

Her point wasn't that the show is unrealistic, but that people in New York City, where the show is set, are to be pitied. In the South, casseroles are as predictable as death and taxes (and far more appreciated). We had to set up two coolers, and the kindness was just beginning.

There were flowers, cards, phone calls, visits.

(See OTHER STUFF, page 8A)