

## Board squabbles over appointments

### Commissioner cries racism in selection for library, senior services positions

BY JASON BECK  
Staff Writer

Monday night's county commissioners meeting became heated with one member of the board accusing other members of appointing committees based on race and geographic

location. Ellen McNeill says she just wants to inject new blood into county boards.

The spat began during the usually routine appointment of members to the library committee and the senior services committee. However, the ensuing discussion and voting

was far from ordinary.

Board members first tried to fill the vacant seat of Eleanor Gentry, who completed her term of service on the library board this month. The library board recommended the appointment of Janet Plummer.

Typically, the board of commissioners

appoints smaller boards' recommendations without further questions. However, Commissioner Ellen McNeill suggested filling the empty seat with Marie Daniel.

This didn't sit well with commissioner Jean Powell, who didn't under- (See *SQUABBLES*, page 5A)

## Gas prices set off panic

Blame greed, fear

BY JASON BECK  
Staff Writer

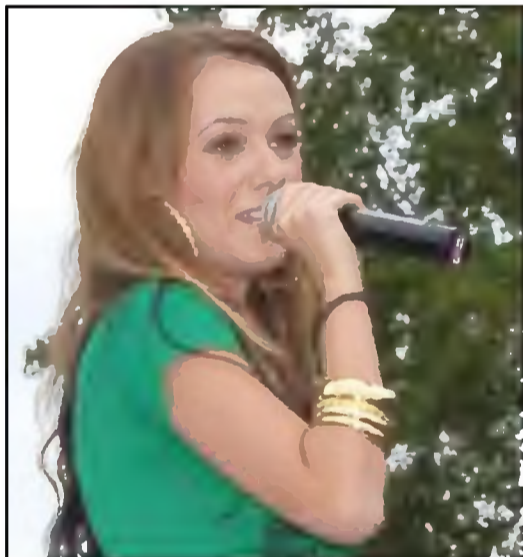
Citizens of Hoke County were in a panic Friday, acting upon rumors of \$5 a gallon gas and creating long lines at some area filling stations.

In the end, gas rose nearly 50 cents a gallon and some citizens took their rush to the pumps too far.

"We've got people cursing... 'I was here first,'" said Rich Karr, manager of Raeford's Food Stop. "A customer called the police earlier this morning.

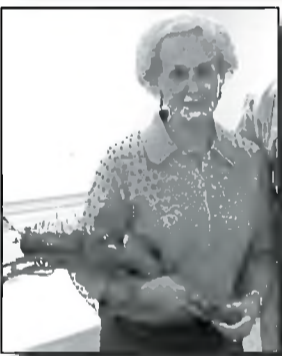
"It turns people... into something different," he said.

At Karr's store, the price (See *PANIC*, page 4A)



**Worked the phones**  
Hoke County High School students put their fingers to work and sent more than 70,000 text messages to a Fayetteville radio station, winning its texting contest and earning a free concert for the school. The station's program director Mike Tech joined principal Steve Hagen on the stage (top), and introduced Tynasha Keli (left), an up and coming R&B singer. At least some students seemed to enjoy it, as evidenced by student Lizzy Brewer from her perch in the sky. (Hal Nunn photos)

### This Week



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## Turkey Festival gets off to big start with parade

BY JASON BECK  
Staff Writer

It's official — the N.C. Turkey Festival is underway. The annual event kicked off Saturday with a parade through downtown, bringing hundreds out to Main

Street. Despite high gas prices, many came out to see the stream of floats, bands, fire trucks, politicians, beauty queens and no less than two turkey mascots.

"I love the Turkey Festival," said citizen Mary Cagle, who

watched the parade march by with her friends. "I look forward to this day all year for the Turkey Festival.

"It's real good, stepping up higher and higher every year," she said.

In all, between 80 and 85 floats and vehicles were in the

parade, about average from year to year. However, Melissa Tuel, executive director of the festival, said this year's crowd was better than ever.

"It was a wonderful turnout," Tuel said. "I bet there were over 1,000 children that participated, not to mention

the ones on the street." She said the school system was a part of this year's parade, making sure students from every school rode or marched in the event.

"Every school in Hoke County was represented," (See *FESTIVAL*, page 6A)



Clockwise from top: The Hoke High Band performs at the Festival review stand; the Turkey meets his (her?) public; seniors ride Senior Services float. (Beck photos)

## Raeford manager to leave for new job

BY JASON BECK  
Staff Writer

After serving Raeford for four years, Richard Douglas has resigned as city manager.

Douglas said yesterday he's taken the job as city manager for Selma, in Johnston County.

The West Virginia native came to Raeford in October of 2004 after spending four years as a city manager in South Georgia. He'll work until October 17, and then move to Selma.

"It's just an outstanding opportunity," Douglas said. "It was advertised and (See *MANAGER*, page 5A)

## Police seek help in robbery

BY JASON BECK  
Staff Writer

The Raeford Police Department is on the lookout for two men who robbed a local convenience store.

According to Chief Mike Dummett, the Food Stop #1, located at 513 West Prospect Street, was robbed at gunpoint

Sunday night at about 10:52. Though no one was injured in the robbery, an undisclosed amount of money was taken.

"We were told two black males came in at two different times," Dummett said.

The first man, wearing dreadlocks and a white (See *ROBBERY*, page 5A)

