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Edwards named health director

BY CATHARIN SHEPARD
Staff writer



Edwards

The Hoke County Board of Health voted to hire Helene Edwards, director of the Women, Infants and Children Program, as the new county Health Director.

The county commissioners officially welcomed Edwards to the po-

sition during their meeting Monday.

"It was a unanimous decision and she's been our interim for a while now," Commissioner Bobby Wright said. Wright serves on the county Board of Health, which

oversees the Health Department and made the selection.

Edwards has worked as a supervisor with the Health Department for 12 years. She earned a bachelor's degree from the University of North Carolina and holds a master's degree in nutrition. She has served as the interim director since former director Cynthia Oxendine was placed on

paid leave last year. Oxendine was fired in October.

Edwards thanked the board for supporting her during her time as interim director.

"I've sent a lot of things through for your approval and I do thank you," she said.

Keeping the Health Department from falling behind in billing again

will be one of the top priorities as Edwards steps in to the position.

"One of the things is to make sure our billing is kept on track and moving forward," she said.

At one point last year the department was more than \$100,000 behind in filing billing claims. Some claims were never processed or were (See HEALTH, page 3A)



Clockwise from top left: Kathy McMillan, Terrell McIntyre, Gilbert McGregor Sr., Ruth Pecora and George Autry; Kathy McMillan shows medal; McIntyre (center) with Elgin Blue (left) and Joe Alston.

First 5 inducted into Hall of Fame

Athletes, coach, principal honored in Hoke High ceremony

BY CATHARIN SHEPARD
Staff writer

Hoke County High School last week honored the first five members inducted into the school's Hall of Fame with a banquet and plaque presentation at half-court in the MacDonald gym.

Raz Autry, Gilbert "Gil" McGregor, Terrell McIntyre, Kathy McMillan and John Pecora became the first class inducted into the newly founded Hoke High Hall of Fame during a ceremony Friday on the high school campus.

George Autry, son of Raz Autry, accepted the award on behalf of his father. Autry served as principal of Hoke High from 1967-73 and was superintendent of Hoke County Schools from 1974-1983. He was instrumental in building the Hoke High football stadium, which is named for him. He also served on the board of directors for the state athletic association.

"He wants me to tell you that was a great time in his life to see teenagers develop into outstanding young men and women," George Autry said. "He also wanted me to say although his name is

on the football stadium, it took the whole community to get that project completed, and he especially would like to thank the late Leonard Frahm and C.D. Bounds for their leadership in making sure the stadium became a reality."

Inductee Gilbert McGregor played basketball at Hoke High from 1965-67. ACC coaches would pile in and watch Gil play in high school games, his father Gilbert McGregor Sr. recalled.

McGregor went on to play for Wake Forest University and then the NBA (See HALL OF FAME, page 6A)

Board says no to Aberdeen water request

Declines eminent domain

BY CATHARIN SHEPARD
Staff Writer

The Hoke County Commissioners voted unanimously Monday not to grant the town of Aberdeen the right to forcibly purchase Hoke County land to dig a new well.

Aberdeen Town Manager Bill Zell asked the commission to give the town eminent domain over a parcel of land along Highway 211 near the Moore-Hoke border so the town could add to its water supply.

The Nature Conservancy refused to sell the land it owns when Aberdeen representatives asked to buy it, Zell said. The Nature Conservancy, which is turning the property into a habitat for native wildlife and longleaf pines, bought the land using grant money from Fort Bragg.

"We did find out today though that the Army has (See COMMISSIONERS, page 4A)

Pierce announces

BY CATHARIN SHEPARD
Staff writer

State Rep. Garland Pierce announced recently he plans to run for a fifth term in the state House of Representatives.

Pierce, a Democrat from Wagram, represents state House District 48. The district was redrawn last year to include parts of Hoke, Scotland, Richmond and Robeson counties.

If reelected, Pierce would be the (See PIERCE, page 6A)



Pierce

This Week

Key Club formed at high school page 5A

City Council says no to rezoning for apartments page 5A

Step team wins page 3B

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We're on the web at www.thenews-journal.com
Read by 4,500 each week



Buses lined up for Vietnam vets' welcome home

All these years later, officials say, it's time to honor North Carolina's Vietnam soldiers

BY CATHARIN SHEPARD
Staff writer

North Carolina will welcome home thousands of Vietnam veterans next month at the Charlotte Motor Speedway, and local veterans planning to attend can catch a ride to the event on a charter bus.

The program organized by the USO of North Carolina

and Charlotte Motor Speedway with support from the N.C. Association of Broadcasters is set for March 31 in Concord. All veterans and their family members are welcome to attend the event, which will feature live entertainment, salutes to veterans and more.

Your Tours Unlimited owner Wilbur Bell, a veteran

who retired from the Air Force, is donating the use of four buses for the trip so veterans in the area can attend.

"I just thought this was a good opportunity to give back," he said. Bell said he hopes to take at least 200 veterans to the celebration.

The event will offer a welcome home that's long overdue, Hoke County Veter-

ans Services Officer Freddie McPhaul said.

"As most people realize, Vietnam veterans, when they came home, they weren't received as most veterans are received now. They were scoffed at, spit upon, frowned upon," he said.

McPhaul is hoping local veterans' organizations and the city and county will of-

fer donations to cover the expected \$1,100-\$1,200 fuel cost for the trip. Otherwise, there could be a small fee to cover the fuel bill.

"If he gets enough donations, he'll try to do it free of cost, but in the wake of that, we're letting veterans know there may be a \$10-15 fee per head to offset (See VETS, page 6A)

OTHER STUFF

BY KEN MACDONALD

Isentropic lift is what happens when a warm front meets a cold body of air, rises up, gets dense, and drops its moisture as rain. Chair lift is where you're sitting, if you're dense, when you're on a youth group ski trip and this happens.

Fortunately, I'm not that dense, so, clad in Gore-Tex, I was watching from the sidelines as kid after kid descended in the rain from the foggy heights of

the ski slope, and on reaching the steepest part, collapsed into a ball of exploding snow, toboggans, poles and pride.

Yes, that's right. Not much has changed since you were a youth and went on trips with your church.

Except for maybe what they sing in the van on the way there.

"Let's punch Captain Crunch, Then we'll eat his face for lunch, (See OTHER STUFF, page 5A)

Hodges is Citizen of the Year

The Raeford Kiwanis Club named Jean Hodges as its Citizen of the Year during its 88th anniversary celebration Thursday.



Jean Hodges

sional and civic organizations, both in Fayetteville and Hoke County.

She served as a Hoke County commissioner, one year as chairman, and is currently a director for the Hoke County Community Foundation, Partners in Education, Cape Fear Botanical Garden, and the N.C. Turkey Festival, for whom she's served 27 years. She is regional chairman of Liberty Hospice and a past director of Carolina Horse Park, among numerous positions. (See CITIZEN, page 3A)