

The News-Journal

If it happened, it's news to us

75¢

No. 16 Vol. 108

RAEFORD & HOKE COUNTY N.C.

Wednesday, June 26, 2013

Fields flooded, trees down

Farmers hope for drying, but more showers forecast

BY CATHARIN SHEPARD
Staff writer

Severe summer storms have drenched Hoke County and much of North Carolina multiple times in the last several weeks, sparking thunderstorm warnings, tearing down trees and

power lines and repeatedly flooding agricultural fields during an important growing period.

"It's slowed the wheat harvest, delayed planting soybeans, some cotton has drowned," Hoke County Agricultural Cooperative Extension agent Keith Walters said Tuesday, minutes

after another severe storm moved through Raeford.

Farmers haven't been able to get their machinery through the fields to apply fertilizer or pest control, and the fields are too wet to harvest or plant, Walters said. There isn't much the farmers can
(See FLOODING, page 6A)



Weather unleashed

Top: The Williamson Farm on Bethel Road looked lakeside after Sunday night's rainfall. National Weather Service radar estimated 6-8 inches of rain in southeastern Hoke County. FCI measured over 5 inches of rain.

Middle: Yards along Scurlock School Road were under water just before dark Sunday.

Bottom: This was one of many trees that fell in a storm Tuesday afternoon. It fell across Elwood Avenue in town.

Below: Cicero Beatty Road washed out.



Judge weighs in on proposed district changes

BY CATHARIN SHEPARD
Staff writer

North Carolina State Senate conferees have not announced whether they will include a budget amendment filed by a representative from Stanly County that would merge Hoke's judicial district with another two-county district.

The amendment filed by Rep. Justin Burr, a Republican representing Stanly and Montgomery counties, would combine judicial district 16A, which includes Hoke and Scotland counties, and judicial district 20A, which includes Richmond and Anson counties. It would also make Stanly

County – currently part of district 20A – its own separate district.

The amendment was part of the proposed budget that passed the state House of Representatives earlier this month and is now under discussion by state senators. Burr did not respond to requests for comment about the matter.

Rep. Garland Pierce, a Democrat representing Hoke, Scotland, Richmond and Robeson counties, said the issue is still under discussion.

"I have not heard any change. I know there's a lot of arguments from the bar (association)," he said.
(See JUDGE, page 4A)

Soldier killed by I.E.D.

A Fort Bragg soldier who lived in Hoke County was killed last week after his Humvee ran over an improvised explosive device, according to officials.

Chief Warrant Officer Lee James Williamson, 44, a member of the Blackfeet Native American Tribe of Montana, died last week from



complications related to a traumatic brain injury that occurred when the military vehicle he was riding in hit the explosive device, according to a press statement. The

Department of Defense did not release details on where or when the incident happened and had not released information confirming
(See SOLDIER, page 6A)

Sex assault of child investigated

The Hoke County Sheriff's Office is investigating a reported sex assault against a nine-month-old child, according to a press release.

Investigators responded to a call in the evening hours of Monday, June 24 that an infant had been sexually assaulted.

The child was transported to Moore Regional Hospital and then transferred to Chapel Hill for a forensic investigation, authorities said.

By Tuesday afternoon no arrests had been made in the case and the investigation is ongoing.

This Week

Virgil's Drive-in founder dies
See page 3A

Organization releases draft transportation plan
See page 4A

Help kids go to camp
See page 4A

Calendar 2B
Classifieds 5B
Deaths 3A
Editorials 2A
Legals 3-5B
Worship 2B

Hoke buses to get GPS

BY CATHARIN SHEPARD
Staff writer

Starting this fall, all Hoke County Schools buses will be equipped with advanced GPS systems that will allow supervisors to pinpoint the exact location of any bus at any given moment.

The Board of Education voted unanimously this month to approve buying the

roughly \$48,000 system for the school district's 90 active buses. The Synovia Solutions system could provide a savings of over \$72,000 a year in payroll, fuel and wear and tear mileage reductions on the fleet, Transportation Director Robert Creech said.

"The main purpose of this is to decrease transportation cost," he said. "You'll actu-
(See BUSES, page 6A)

OTHER STUFF

BY KEN MACDONALD

My idea of a video game is weather radar. When the sky gets dark, I fire up wunderground.com and start tracking. Touch me—I am a paid member and I get a few extra frames in the loops.

Sitting there at the kitchen table with the laptop open, I entertain my family with, "I'm guessing the rain will

reach us in 14 minutes, maybe 15." Thirteen minutes later, I'm like, "We should see some heavy rain within about one minute." And when giant pellets of rain hit the skylight 60 seconds later, I want affirmation—something like, "Wow, he's a genius!"

Instead I usually hear,
(See OTHER STUFF, page 6A)



Sunshine too

Though many areas are flooded, the sun has come out too, and Ryan Edwards, 4-year-old son of Scott and Melody Edwards, enjoyed it in his front yard recently along Bethel Road. (Ken MacDonald photo)



0 4879 05505