

# The News-Journal

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RAEFORD & HOKE COUNTY N.C.

Wednesday, July 23, 2014

## Governor appoints Hoke judge

### McCrory critics question selection but local officials offer praise

BY CATHARIN SHEPARD  
Staff writer

Gov. Pat McCrory this week appointed a new district court judge for Hoke County, replacing the now-retired Judge John Horne Jr.

Michael A. Stone, proprietor of the Law Firm of Michael A. Stone, PA lives in Hoke County with his family and has law offices

in Fayetteville and Laurinburg. Stone will serve as district judge for District 16A, which currently includes Hoke and Scotland counties but will expand to include Richmond and Anson counties in 2015.

Stone, a Republican, said he has worked in private practice for 19 years. He earned his bachelor's degree from Methodist University and earned his law degree

from Campbell University's law school. He lives with his family on the Bayonet golf course in Hoke County. Most of his legal work has been in high-level criminal cases and personal injury cases.

Stone said he is in the process of winding down matters with his private firm and preparing to step into his new role. He will likely be sworn in within a few weeks.

The new judge said he's excited

about the appointment. He has not served in a public official capacity



Stone (Photo by Laurinburg Exchange, Civitas Media)

before, he said.

"I'm looking forward to the next stage of my legal career," Stone said.

Stone previously worked for Hatley & Stone, PA and Stone & Associates, according to the governor's office.

The North Carolina Bar Association reprimanded Stone in 1998 for reportedly not attending (See *JUDGE*, page 4A)



#### Getting ready

Don Steed Elementary first grade teacher Courtney Williams was one of dozens of teachers in Hoke County Schools getting an early start to the upcoming school year. Her daughter Ella, 3, came to work with her while she started preparing her classroom. Teachers officially return August 18 and school starts August 25. (Catharin Shepard photo)

## Teen shot dead in S.C.

A 16-year-old who lived in Raeford was shot and killed in South Carolina last week.

Shyheim Kennedy, originally from Chester, South Carolina, was shot and killed there on July 16. He was found in a public roadway, dead of gunshot wounds, according to reports.

Chester investigators have arrested a teenage suspect in the case. Last Friday, authorities arrested Robert Isaiah Graham, 17, on charges of murder and possession of a weapon during a violent crime.

Kennedy, who moved to Raeford about a year ago to live with a family member, attended Hoke High. The teen was reportedly home visiting family over the summer when he was killed.

A funeral service for Kennedy was held Monday at the chapel of King's Funeral Home in Chester.

## Woman charged with break-ins

Deputies with the Hoke County Sheriff's Office have arrested a woman for allegedly breaking into several vehicles in Raeford.

Investigators arrested Jasmine Harris, 21, of the 100 block of Gillespie Lane in Raeford in connection with two separate reports of items stolen from vehicles on Blackhawk Lane. Harris was (See *BREAK-INS*, page 4A)



Harris

## Local woman killed in Fayetteville wreck

A woman from Raeford was one of three people killed in a four-car collision last week in Fayetteville.

Laytosha Readdy McNair, 35, of the 200 block of Twin Creek Drive in Raeford died July 16, along with John Wesley Morrow, 67, of Fayetteville and Jimmy Campbell, 50, of Lumberton. Jennifer Chagnon of Clemmons, another driver involved in the accident, was not seriously injured.

The wreck happened around 6:30 p.m. on the 3500 block of Murchison Road, according

to reports. Authorities said it appeared Morrow swerved into oncoming traffic, possibly to avoid a collision with another vehicle, but the matter remains under investigation. McNair and Campbell were reportedly unable to stop and ran into Morrow's vehicle. Morrow was driving a 2010 Nissan pickup truck, McNair was driving a 2003 Volkswagen and Campbell was driving a 2006 Chevrolet pickup truck.

McNair was born September 1, 1978 to Julius and Vernella Handon Anderson in Cumberland County. She graduated from Hoke High School

in 1996. She is survived by her parents; one son, Gabriel McNair of the home; two sisters, Deshanda Readdy and Allenease Readdy of Raeford. The funeral is scheduled for 2 p.m. Wednesday at the Cape Fear Conference B Headquarters in Raeford. Burial will follow in (See *WRECK*, page 6A)



McNair

## County to reconsider controversial cell tower

BY CATHARIN SHEPARD  
Staff writer

The Hoke County Board of Commissioners voted Monday to reverse an earlier decision that failed to approve a permit for a proposed cell phone tower on Horace Walters Road. In essence, the board agreed to reconsider the tower in

August.

Commissioner Jean Powell made a motion at the regularly scheduled commission meeting to rescind the county board's prior 2-3 vote that failed to approve Nexsen Pruet's request for a conditional use permit to build the tower. The board voted on the request May 5, but Nexsen Pruet brought

the matter before the commissioners this week asking them to hear the proposal again.

Commissioner Bobby Wright seconded the motion, which passed in a 4-1 vote with Chairman James Leach dissenting. The board voted to hear the permit request again at the August 4 meeting. Leach also dis-

sented in the vote to schedule the request.

The matter has been ongoing since February, when a public hearing about the request drew criticism from residents who live in the area of 875 Horace Walters Road where the tower would be constructed. The board tabled the request at that meeting to give the

interested parties a chance to meet and discuss the situation, but in May the county planner reported that conflicting schedules kept the two parties from meeting.

The permit request came before the board again at its May 5 meeting. Wright and Commission Vice Chairwoman Ellen McNeill voted (See *TOWER*, page 4A)

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