

**WEEKEND**

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# The Wilson Daily Times

**DEMONS FALL:**

Jacksonville beats  
Fike in soccer.

**SPORTS | 1B**

**NEUTRAL CORNER:** Wilson

County votes needed.

**3A**

**TRAVEL TIP:** Edenton a quick  
and fun tourist stop.

**7D**



Today



**PARTLY SUNNY**

High: 70s Low: 50s

Complete forecast, 8A



**SAVE UP TO \$100.00** in coupons  
with today's edition.

Inside Today

**LOOK FOR** the supplement in  
today's paper, 'Spring and Sum-  
mer Fashion on the local runway'



**USA WEEKEND:** Find out what  
are this season's best shows.

**THE WILSON LABOR COUN-  
CIL** is commemorating Workers  
Memorial Day with a march and  
remembrance, program and ban-  
quet today. **BUSINESS, 1D**

Reminder

**FUND-RAISER** for the college  
foundation at Wilson Technical  
Community College will be held  
Saturday at 7 p.m. in the Del-  
Mastro auditorium on the Tech  
campus. Performing are Heather  
Johnson, Ronnie Ezzell, Cheryl  
Bryant Powell, Robert Leonard,  
Michelle Lee, and the New River  
Band. Admission is \$5. Free re-  
freshments will be provided.

Monday's Edition



**NEIGHBOR:**

Animal lover lends  
help to local 4-H.

**LOCAL**

Index

## Stories of war

More than 140 local veterans share their  
experiences for the historical project



By Alex Keown  
Daily Times Staff Writer

It's been more than 60 years  
since World War II ended, but  
the stories of the men from  
Wilson County who fought  
in that war are still fresh in  
their minds.

And now the stories of those  
deeds are being preserved for  
all time.

More than 140 Wilson Coun-  
ty veterans of World War II  
have contributed tales of their  
wartime experiences to the  
Wilson County Historical Soci-  
ety World War II project.

Those 142 stories span not  
only the years of the war, 1941-  
45, but include some little  
known details about how the  
war impacted Wilson County  
prior to the United State's  
involvement.

Included in the project are  
pictures, soldiers' personal  
letters to their families and sto-  
ries about key battles. Some  
submissions were made by  
the veterans themselves, but  
most were by their widows or  
children.

"It's a way to preserve the  
stories of Wilson's greatest  
generation," said Betty Mc-  
Cain, one of the compilers of  
the histories. "So many of the  
men and women who fought  
in the war are either gone or  
can't clearly remember their  
past."

Earlier this week, McCain  
and WWII veteran John Hack-  
ney, one of the project com-  
pilers, shared some of the tales  
preserved in the volumes with  
the Wilson County Genealogi-  
cal Society.

Hackney was in the Army  
and served in the Pacific The-  
ater of the war, however, he  
never saw action. Hackney  
was 19 years old when he  
entered the military. During  
his four-year stint, he trained  
infantry troops. Hackney said  
he never saw battle action be-  
cause as his unit was staged to  
invade Japan, atomic bombs  
were dropped on Hiroshima.  
He said he always wanted  
to hug President Harry Tru-  
man for his decision to drop  
the bomb.

Hackney said when he went  
off to war, he was surrounded  
primarily by the boys he grew  
up with — and that same circle  
of friends is recounting their  
lives for the project.

The memory of Dec. 7, 1941,  
he said, is embedded in the



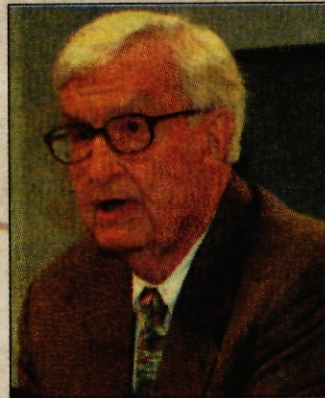
Keith Barnes | Daily Times

Dave House poses with a World War I helmet and World War II Jeep vehicle.

memory of everyone of his  
generation.

"Everyone who was around  
on Dec. 7 could tell you exactly  
where they were on that day  
and what they were doing,"  
said Hackney. He recalled he  
was studying for final exams  
at the University of North  
Carolina at Chapel Hill.

"Anybody born before 1926,  
about nine out of 10 went to



Keith Barnes | Daily Times

**John Hackney speaks to Wilson  
County Genealogical Society  
members about the World War  
II project.**

the war. I can look at my base-  
ball team and football team,  
and just about everyone on  
the team served in the war be-  
cause we were already physi-  
cally fit," Hackney said.

**WAR MEMORIES**

During the meeting, Hack-  
ney showed off copies of some

photographs that featured  
details of Jimmie Dempsey's  
life.

Dempsey, now deceased,  
was an Army Air Corps pilot  
who flew bombers. During  
one mission over Europe,  
Hackney said the tail of  
Dempsey's plane was "shot  
all to pieces" yet Dempsey  
managed to pilot the limping  
bomber hulk through near  
freezing temperatures back  
to base and land safely.

"I don't know how he did  
it, but the tail gunner of that  
mission told Jimmie he had  
frostbite in places he wasn't  
supposed to have it," Hack-  
ney said.

Some of Dempsey's memo-  
rabilia include photos of a  
plane he flew, as well as a  
photos of a pi-  
lots' briefing  
that was attend-  
ed by Winston  
Churchill.

Another story  
documented in  
the five large  
three-ring bind-  
ers currently  
housing the  
tales is that of  
Ernest Deans  
"Bo" Hackney,  
John's brother.

Hackney re-  
counted several  
of his brother's missions, in-  
cluding a dogfight between  
a squadron off 18 P-51 Mus-  
tangs and more than 100 Ger-

man aircraft on Easter Sunday  
in 1945.

The Mustang pilots hap-  
pened upon a squadron of  
Germans who were waiting  
in the clouds to engage Allied  
bombers. The Mustang pilots,  
including Bo Hackney were  
flying at a higher altitude than  
the Germans and surprised  
them. After a brief firefight  
that took down 24 German  
aircraft, the Germans scat-  
tered and all 18 U.S. planes  
returned safely.

However, Hackney said it  
turned out that only eight of  
the U.S. planes fired their  
guns during that engagement.  
In the memoirs Bo Hackney  
said he learned that in a dog-  
fight, few pilots actually fired  
their guns because of fear.

"My broth-  
er didn't get  
credit for all  
the planes he  
shot down  
during the  
war," Hackney  
said.

The project  
is full of inter-  
esting tales  
like the Hack-  
ney broth-  
ers, McCain  
said. She said  
they're not ed-  
iting the men's  
tales, but putting the stories in  
like the men write it.

SEE WAR, PAGE 4A

## City, county to meet

By Rochelle Moore  
Daily Times Staff Writer

After several missteps and  
failed attempts to hold a joint  
city and county meeting, lead-  
ers from the two governments  
will finally sit down together  
Monday afternoon.

Members of the City Council  
and Wilson County Board of  
Commissioners will meet at 5

*'What we should  
remember is the  
majority of citizens  
in Wilson County  
are city residents.'*

**Greg Godard**

Executive director of the  
Upper Coastal Plains Council  
of Governments

p.m. in the Council Chambers on  
the third floor of City Hall.

"Wouldn't that be an interesting  
meeting," said Greg Godard, a  
Wilson resident and executive di-  
rector of the Upper Coastal Plains  
Council of Governments.

Godard was recently involved  
in the Wilson 20/20 Vision Sum-  
mit as a participant in the col-  
laboration breakout session. One  
of the strongest messages that  
came from that summit was that  
the county and city need to work  
better together.

One of the summit's collab-  
orative goals is to  
encourage better  
working relation-  
ships, joint projects  
and cooperative  
agreements be-  
tween local govern-  
ment leaders.

"What we should  
remember is the ma-  
jority of citizens in Wilson County  
are city residents," Godard said.  
"My expectation is that they should  
work together on resolving issues  
that impact the citizens."

City and county relationships  
have remained tense following  
the county's move of some of its  
offices from downtown to Miller  
Road. Inspections of the building  
became an issue, but instead of  
forcing the county to comply, city  
leaders turned over the inspection  
process to the county.

City and county leaders have  
also clashed over the city's  
planned \$28 million fiberoptic

SEE MEETING, PAGE 2A

New trend in medication aides has some worried



# WAR: More stories from women, African-Americans are needed

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1A

"And some of the stories show it too," she said. "One of the best ones is by Stafford Patterson who received three battlefield promotions. He had an interesting time in the European Theater and his stories are laced with blue language."

Other stories in the compilation include those of veteran Eddie Price. Price included stories both humorous and harrowing. He said there were days in combat when his rifle would overheat because he was pulling the trigger as fast as he could.

"You'd throw your gun down and pick up another that was lying on the ground, because there was always one that wasn't needed anymore," he wrote, underscoring the number of dead soldiers.

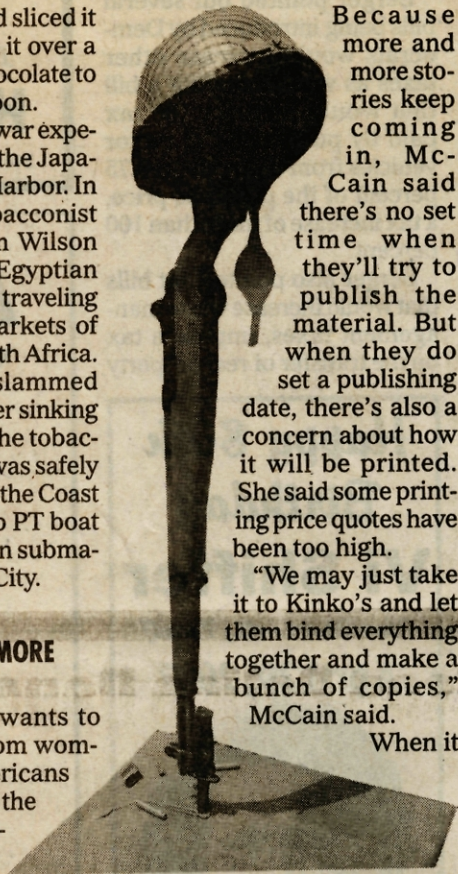
Price also included a tale of milking a cow during a respite from combat operations. He said he took a steel helmet, cleaned it out and squeezed the milk into it. Then Price took a chocolate bar that was

part of his rations and sliced it into the milk, heated it over a fire and served hot chocolate to members of his platoon.

Thomas B. Miller's war experience begins before the Japanese bombed Pearl Harbor. In 1939 the Wilson tobaccoist and five others from Wilson were on board the Egyptian ocean liner Zam-Zam traveling from the tobacco markets of Brazil to those in South Africa. A German U-boat slammed torpedoes into the liner sinking it and killing one of the tobaccoists. Once Miller was safely back home, he joined the Coast Guard and ended up PT boat patrolling for German submarines off Morehead City.

## SEARCHING FOR MORE HISTORIES

McCain said she wants to find more stories from women and African-Americans who were involved in the war. Out of all the stories collected, there are only three from women and two from blacks.



Keith Barnes | Daily Times

**House displays an M1 Rifle and helmet memorial in his garden at home.**

Because more and more stories keep coming in, McCain said

there's no set time when they'll try to publish the material. But when they do

set a publishing date, there's also a concern about how it will be printed. She said some printing price quotes have been too high.

"We may just take it to Kinko's and let them bind everything together and make a bunch of copies," McCain said.

When it

is finished, a copy of the book will be put into volumes to be kept at the Wilson County Public Library, Barton College, Wilson Technical Community College and the Department of Cultural Resources.

While the Historical Society wants to get as many stories as they can, there's no way to get them all, even though World War II stories are all around.

Take for instance the story of the grandfather of Dave House, a World War II re-enactor. House's grandfather, an Englishman, was an officer with the British code-breakers. Following the war, his grandfather was knighted by King George VI.

House and several friends in Wilson collect World War II artifacts. House's collection includes firearms, uniforms, radios, jeeps and a portable mine-sweeper. He displays the artifacts at various events so people will remember the men and women who defeated the Axis powers.