

The News-Journal

Hoke County's newspaper since 1905

75¢

No. 19 Vol. 109

RAEFORD & HOKE COUNTY N.C.

Wednesday, July 16, 2014

Two file for board of education

By CATHARIN SHEPARD
Staff writer

So far, two people have filed to run for election to the Hoke County Board of Education.

Incumbent Della Maynor filed to run for another four-year term on the board on the first day that filing opened. Candidate Gilbert Walker has now filed to seek one of the

three seats on the nonpartisan board that is up for election this year.

The filing period for the nonpartisan school board race opened Monday. The filing period runs through August 4.

The school board seats currently occupied by Maynor, Barbara Buie and Irish Pickett are up for election this year. Buie said she does plan to file for reelection. Pickett said she has not decided yet whether

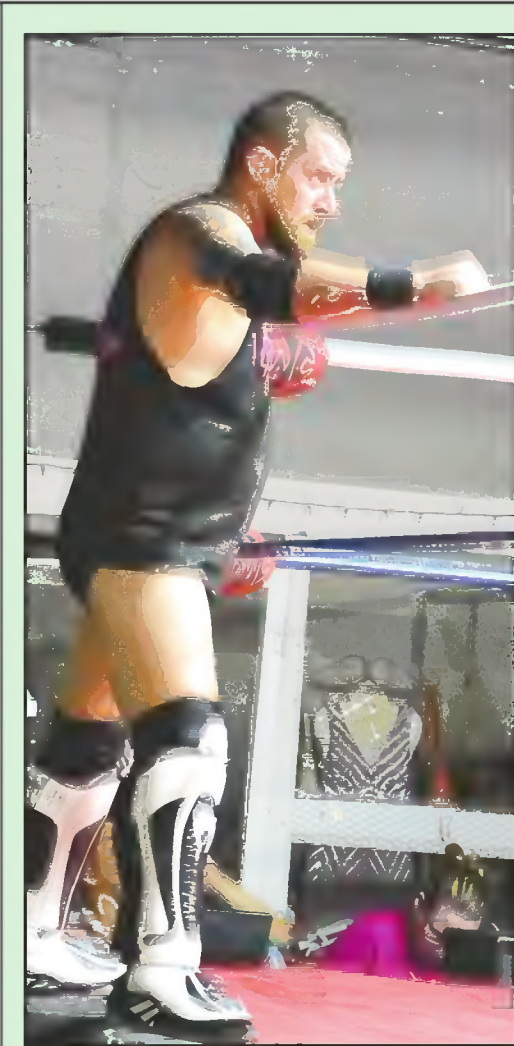
she will run again but expects to make a decision by the end of the week.

The filing period for the Soil and Water board closed earlier this month. Leonard Baldwin and Neil McKenzie were the only two candidates to file to run for the two available seats up for election on that board.

Most local and state races are uncontested, with the exception of the race for three seats on the Hoke County Board of Com-

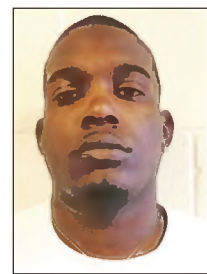
missioners. Voters will select three people to represent them on the county board.

Democratic candidates for the three seats are incumbent Tony Hunt, former county attorney Harry Southerland and Allen Thomas. Republican candidates running for election to the commission are John F. Harry and Angela Thomas. Democratic incumbent Jean Powell ran for reelection (See *SCHOOL BOARD*, page 3A)



MaxxVenom (left) gets ready to climb into the ring for a tag team match at a Ring Wars Carolina wrestling event in Lumberton. He has the upper hand (center), but his opponent isn't just human, but cancer itself. Sales of his specially designed shirt (right) will generate money for the Duke Cancer Fund. (Catharin Shepard photos)

Alleged phone thief charged



Deputies with the Hoke County Sheriff's Office arrested a man last week on felony charges for allegedly breaking into a vehicle.

Officers charged

Covington Jaqwan Covington, 20, of the 200 block of Ellis Road in Lumberton on charges of felony breaking and entering a motor vehicle, felony possession of stolen goods and misdemeanor larceny. He received a \$5,000 unsecured bond.

Investigators called to the 7000 block of Fayetteville Road around 1 p.m. July 9 reportedly reviewed video surveillance showing the suspect breaking into a vehicle and taking a cell phone.

Shortly after, deputies doing community patrol on Cavalier Drive in Raeford located the suspect's vehicle. They were able to locate the suspect, who had the stolen cell phone in his possession, according to the sheriff's office.

Detectives were called to the scene and placed Covington under arrest.

Wrestler takes cancer fight into the ring

By CATHARIN SHEPARD
Staff writer

When Hoke County's Maxx Venom came charging into the ring Saturday night in Lumberton, he traded his usual wrestling gear for a shirt with a special message: It's time to

"knuckle up" against cancer.

Maxx Venom, also known as James Hunter, is trying to make a difference by using his reach as a Ring Wars Carolina wrestler to raise money for the Duke Cancer Fund. Hunter is selling T-shirts with all profits going to the fund, which conducts

innovative cancer research and helps connect patients with new, cutting-edge cancer therapies.

Hunter got into wrestling because he enjoys the excitement and the chance to help others have a good time. He was a big wrestling fan when he was growing up, and he remembers

being that young boy watching wide-eyed as wrestlers faced each other down in the ring. Now he's the one looking out at the crowds.

"I did it just to make enjoyment for other people, mainly the children. That's one of the (See *WRESTLER*, page 6A)

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Edwards is city's new finance, tech officer



Edwards

By CATHARIN SHEPARD
Staff writer

Scott Edwards, former finance officer for Hoke County and the town of Hope Mills, is now working for the city of Raeford.

The city council hired Edwards earlier this summer to be the new city finance officer.

He has been on the job for about a month now, he said. Besides serving as finance officer, he will also be handling information technology matters for the city.

Edwards was raised in Raeford and graduated from Hoke High School in 1990. He attended the University of North Carolina in Charlotte

for two years and then transferred to the University of North Carolina at Pembroke to complete his bachelor's degree in accounting.

Edwards began working at the James F. Baker certified public accountant firm in Raeford and stayed there for several years before the county hired him to serve as

the county's finance director in 2001. He served in that role with Hoke County for four years before returning to private sector work. He worked with another CPA firm while earning a master's degree in business administration from UNC-Pembroke.

The town of Hope Mills (See *EDWARDS*, page 4A)

Local actress writes, directs upcoming play

By CATHARIN SHEPARD
Staff writer

Hoke resident Julionne Johnson is only 21, but she's already a veteran actress and now is bringing her writing and directing talents to the Sandhills.

The Boston-born, multi-

talented young woman has performed in television shows including "The Vampire Diaries" and "Revolution," and currently is preparing to stage at the Crown Center in Fayetteville a play she wrote and directed.

Johnson's family moved to Fayetteville to be closer to her grandparents, Wayne and June Johnson, before moving to Raeford. She got involved in the arts at a young age. Her first role in a play was performing as a pixie fairy in a middle school production of "Into the Woods."

After that, Johnson was hooked. She went on to attend North Carolina Performing Arts in high school, where she created and performed her own religious solo piece. When she moved on to college, although she continued her involvement in plays, she branched out to television and film.

Besides her appearances on popular television shows, the (See *ACTRESS*, page 4A)



Johnson wrote and will direct a play.

OTHER STUFF

By KEN MACDONALD

It was a manly weekend. Some of us manly men gathered Saturday to plumb the depths of a butane-propane-powered nail gun—that's right, a device that smells like a forklift and explodes nails into wood—boom!—sounding like target practice.

Ka-bam! That board ain't going nowhere.

The noise didn't matter, because half the guys working on this plank ramp were so old and hard of hearing you had to tap them on the back of the shoulder to get their attention to tell them they were about to nail something in the wrong (See *OTHER STUFF*, page 4A)