# The News-Journal

If it happened, it's news to us

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50¢

## Revaluation on horizon, tax bills may go up Senior citizens may see lower bills under state program, some others' may go down too

By VICTORIANA SUMMERS Staff writer

Capital improvement projects planned in Hoke County are continuing to stack up debt. Yet projects such as a pending jail expansion and school additions plus a new health building soon taxpayers' bills by as much as 20 for citizens and their children, could reduce their tax rates. according to Commission Chair-

man Bobby Wright.

To pay for many of the loans on these projects, some county officials indicated they are counting on an increase in revenue generated from the upcoming 2006 property revaluation. The revaluation could increase some to be completed will provide to 25 percent, according to the more safety, human, educational, Hoke tax assessor's office, but recreational, and health services some programs for senior citizens

"People should not swim the

#### Road trip set to get scoop on ethanol plant Board to tour similar plant, talk to locals

By VICTORIANA SUMMERS Staff writer

The Hoke board of commissioners and County Manager Mike Wood are flying to Palestine, Illinois on Monday to tour an ethanol plant of a similar design to the one proposed by Clean Burn Fuels, LLC in Hoke County.

"If we are investing money in to Wright. this ethanol plant, we need to do our homework," Commissioner Chairman Bobby Wright said of the exploratory trip. "We must have guarantees for our taxpayers, and Mr. (Jack) Carlisle, co-partner invest \$3 million in a 500-acre

Planned as a day trip, commissioners will receive a tour conducted by an engineering team. Hoke's board will also informally interview neighbors of the out-ofstate plant, asking their opinions on any problems associated with odor or noise.

The plant is located on the Illinois-Indiana border, according

The board approved the trip in a Tuesday meeting, continued from the regularly-scheduled session on Monday night.

Hoke officials plan to initially site for Clean Burn Fuels at the

river until they get to it when it comes to concerns about the property revaluation for next year," Wright said. "We will cross that bridge when we come to it.

"Some of our landowners frontage have property valuations reduced by at least one-third," he said.

"Not everyone will see an who own property without road increase on their tax bill. I think Chairman Charles V. Daniels 10 years."

However, Commission Vice we have been very fortunate in said he wants to be sure tax-Hoke not to have raised taxes for payers do "not sink" from the (See REVALUATION, page 7A)

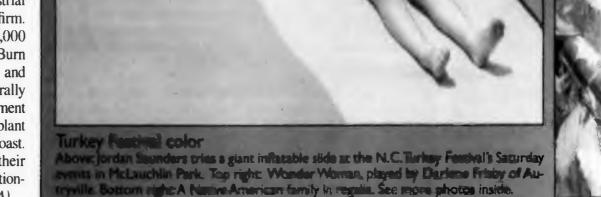


of Clean Burn Fuels, recognizes that."

This Week



Hoke County Regional Industrial Park, transferring land to the firm. Investing a proposed \$80,000 into the enterprise, Clean Burn Fuels' co-partners Carlisle and Philip Kohl say Hoke is centrally located and its rural environment is ideal for the first ethanol plant to be built on the East Coast. Ethanol plants, deriving their product from corn, have tradition-(See ETHANOL, page 6A)



## South Hoke couple yearn for safe 'decent' home

Brianna Chavis shows rotten boards.

**Turkey Bowl trophy** home again page 5A

> **Festival goers** liked the park page 3A

Kershaw, Gaddis meet on gridiron page 4A

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Essie Mae Stevens and son Charles show Commissioner James Leach (center) the collapsed back porch of her old farmhouse.



BY KEN MACDONALD Publisher

Man, was I exhausted after the 10K Turkey Festival foot race Saturday. Even at 8 a.m. the temperature was approaching 90, and it was just a hard race to watch.

As I stood at the intersection of Main nuts??" Street and Sixth Avenue observing all those runners who are used to the festival's five K try to cope with what this year was changed to a ten K run, I was almost feeling guilty

kicked back in the shade and all. But then this woman sprinted by, pushing a loaded baby carriage, and she was

out front, near the lead. Something welled up from within me. "All right, all right!" I wanted to yell, "What's wrong with you? Are you

People like her make people like me feel like :: places hand to forehead in shape of an L:: losers. Oh yeah, I hike occasionally, t(See OTHER STUFF, page 4A)

Help may come from grant BY VICTORIANA SUMMERS Staff writer

Essie Mae and James "Candy Rose" Stevens have been married for more than 30 years, residing in their wooden ramshackle home in South Hoke that reportedly dates back to the 1700s. Without hot water or kitchen facilities, an indoor toilet or air-conditioning, the couple has survived for years in near-poverty circumstances.

Under the gnarled oak trees that shade the house, the Stevens home appears to be on the point of collapse. They say they are praying God will bring them a decent home to live in for the future.

"In the winter, we just have an old wood-burning stove inside," Essie Mae said. "I put up plastic and heavy draperies on the windows to try and keep out the drafts and leaks, but it does not work very well.

(See HOME REPAIRS, page 6A)

### County commissioners okay two meter readers, inspector

By VICTORIANA SUMMERS Staff writer

The board of county commissioners approved three positions last week: for one environmental health specialist and two water meter readers, with total salaries of almost \$100,000 not in this year's budget. The board also requested the sheriff economize on gasoline for deputies patrolling the county so Hoke would not be over budget by the end of

the year.

Based on the conservation request, deputies are roving less and remaining stationary in their patrol zones. Sheriff Hubert Peterkin told the board he has doubled up deputies in one vehicle during peak times in patrol zones in the county when possible.

"That way if they called for backup the backup deputy would already be in the patrol car," Peterkin said afterward, "I do (See NEW WORKERS, page 6A)