

# The News-Journal

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RAEFORD & HOKE COUNTY N.C.

Wednesday, July 3, 2013

## Hospital to open for festival

BY CATHARIN SHEPARD  
Staff writer

After years of waiting for a hospital and months of construction, Hoke residents will get their first look at the FirstHealth Hoke hospital this September during the North Carolina Turkey Festival.

FirstHealth of the Carolinas announced this week it will hold a community-wide grand opening celebration for the eight-bed hospital located on U.S. Highway 401 Sunday, September 22. The facility, officially known as the FirstHealth Moore Regional Hospital – Hoke Campus, is scheduled to start accepting its first patients on Tuesday,

October 1.

The open house coincides with the 29th annual North Carolina Turkey Festival's concluding day of events. The hospital partnered with the Turkey Festival to use the grand opening to highlight prizewinners from events taking place throughout the week of the festival.

FirstHealth's Hoke Campus will operate under the same name, leadership and medical staff as Moore Regional Hospital in Pinehurst, officials with the hospital system said. The same Pinehurst-based physicians, including emergency room doctors and specialists, will provide services at the Hoke (See HOSPITAL, page 4A)



## 3 charged with arson

Three men from the Hoke County area were arrested last week for allegedly setting fire to the home of one of several suspects charged with kidnapping and beating them last December.

Chad Lynn Blanks, 28, of Shannon, Marcus Ryan Oxendine, 19, of Maxton and Brian Maurice McEachin, 25, of Raeford were charged with second-degree arson, breaking and entering, second-degree burglary and conspiracy, according to the Robeson

County Sheriff's Office.

The three men allegedly broke into the residence of James Ray Bullard, 37, of Mount Zion Church Road and took property belonging to him on December 3, 2012. About a week later, Bullard and his brother Danny Ray Bullard, 32, allegedly kidnapped the three men and a fourth victim and assaulted several of them with brass knuckles and by pistol-whipping them. Two of the men (See ARSON, page 4A)



Neal Sutton's Corvette draws attention on Main Street Saturday night at a "cruise-in," a gathering of cars and their owners.

## Raeford comes alive for 'cruise-in'

BY KEN MACDONALD

"I've got the fastest car out here," said Les Irion.

Though I wasn't taking notes, I think I got that quote pretty close.

"It'll do zero to a hundred and twenty-five in ten seconds," he said of his orange 1972 Plymouth Duster.

"Are you SURE it's the fastest here?" I asked.

"Oh yeah. No doubt about it." I've known Les for a long time—

when he owned Leslie's Garage on Main Street before retiring, and he struck me as matter-of-fact (and a competent mechanic), and he's part of the reason my 19-year-old truck is still running.

Anyway, Les' pride-and-joy was one of 68 muscled-up, restored or classic cars backed into parking spots on Main Street Saturday night for the first-ever downtown "cruise-in" by the Raeford Cruiser Club. Dozens of spectators strolled the streets, some-

thing you don't see often at 7 p.m. on Saturday—okay ever. Some relaxed in lawn chairs. Some drove through in their sissy passenger cars.

Les told me he took out whatever wimpy thing was originally in the car and replaced it with a 440 high performance engine.

A guy in a cowboy hat was walking up the street, directing cars into their spots. His name was Bob Gy-dosh, and I asked him about Les' (See CRUISE-IN, page 6A)



Left: Les Irion with his '72 Duster. Above, Cecil McKeithan in his '57 Bel Air. (Ken MacDonald photos)

## This Week



Eric Maynor to sign with Wizards  
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## Fireworks here July 6, Ft. Bragg's cancelled

BY CATHARIN SHEPARD  
Staff writer

Fort Bragg's fireworks show is cancelled this year due to budget cuts at the military base, but other local shows will still have offerings for people celebrating Independence Day.

For the second time in two years, Hale Artificers

will present a Fourth of July fireworks show at Raz Autry Stadium on the Hoke County High School campus. The gates will open at 7 p.m. Saturday, July 6 and the fireworks show will begin at dark, according to the Raeford-Hoke County Chamber of Commerce.

The North Carolina Turkey Festival committee will offer concessions at the event.

The city of Raeford, Hoke County government, Hoke County school system and the Chamber of Commerce are sponsoring the fireworks show.

The Rockfish Motorsports Speedway will also offer a fireworks show Saturday night, following several races scheduled to begin Saturday

evening. The fireworks at the speedway will start around 9 p.m.

Some nearby communities are also hosting Fourth of July events. The town of Hope Mills will hold a parade beginning at 10 a.m. Thursday, July 4. The town will also offer a fireworks display that evening.

The town of Aberdeen will

also offer Independence Day celebrations at the recreation station beginning at 5:30 p.m. on July 4. Live music will begin at 6 p.m. and a fireworks display will be held at 9:15 p.m.

### Safety tips

The Hoke County Sheriff's Office suggested a number of (See FIREWORKS, page 6A)

## OTHER STUFF

BY KEN MACDONALD

The News-Journal has more than 100 years—minus missing periods here and there—of Hoke history stored on microfilm, and someday we're going to figure out how to scan the collection and convert it to searchable PDFs. (The technology exists but the \$ doesn't.) In the meantime, searching for answers to important history-related questions is challenging. Questions like "How did Arabia get its name?"

I know it's kept you awake at night. After all, the area's names bear the stamp of Scots—names such as Aberdeen, Bowmore, Montrose. But Arabia? (See OTHER STUFF, page 6A)

## Educator John McAllister dies

BY CATHARIN SHEPARD  
Staff writer

Former Hoke County principal, school board chairman, interim superintendent, literacy supporter and military veteran John David McAllister Sr. died last week at the age of 91.

McAllister passed away June 27 and was buried in his family's cemetery Monday following a service at Piney

Grove Missionary Baptist Church, where he was a life-long member.

McAllister was born in the Blue Springs Township to the late James R. and Parthenia McNair McAllister. He grew up in Hoke County attending local schools during the years of segregation and went on to earn a bachelor's degree from Fayetteville State Teachers College and a master's degree from A&T



McAllister State University. He also com- (See EDUCATOR, page 4A)

