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RAEFORD & HOKE COUNTY N.C.

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Most FirstHealth patients still go to Moore Cape Fear, FirstHealth still in court over 28 additional beds

By CATHARIN SHEPARD
Staff writer

taking advantage of the local emergency room although Moore Regional Hospital continues handling many patients from the county as well.

Numbers from FirstHealth of the Carolinas show how many people are using the FirstHealth Hoke hospital emergency room. Since opening in October

of last year, the eight-bed FirstHealth Moore Regional Hospital – Hoke Campus has seen an average of 27 patients per week brought in to the emergency room

by ambulance, officials reported. In comparison, the 395-bed Moore Regional Hospital in Pinehurst sees about 31 patients per day in the emergency room brought in by ambulance, and an average of 217 per week.

Most of the patients coming into the Hoke hospital are coming from Hoke and Cumberland counties, FirstHealth public relations spokeswoman Gretchen Kelly said.

The hospital system (See HOSPITALS, page 6A)

About four months after the opening of Hoke County's first hospital, patients are



Cape Fear Valley's Hoke hospital is beginning to take shape at its east Hoke campus Tuesday. (Catharin Shepard photo)

Couple pleads guilty in bestiality case

A local couple charged with making and selling bestial pornography pleaded guilty in federal court, according to court records.

Last year, Raeford police arrested Ruben Chance James Fox and Amber Nicole Fox, both 23, of the 900 block of East Prospect Avenue in Raeford after a cyber crime investigator in another state

contacted police about the couple's alleged involvement in sexual acts with dogs.

Ruben Chance James Fox was originally charged with 10 counts of crimes against nature/bestiality, 12 counts of felony disseminating obscene materials and two counts of felony conspiracy. Amber Nicole Fox was originally (See PLEADS, page 4A)

Three charged after drive-by shooting Two similar shootings investigated

By CATHARIN SHEPARD
Staff writer



The Hoke County Sheriff's Office responded Monday to three different reports of drive-by shootings, including one that sent a man to the hospital with a non life-threatening gunshot wound.

Travis Maurice Grace

suffered a gun shot wound to his right ankle while standing on the front doorsteps of a residence he was visiting on the 1600 block of McBryde (See DRIVE-BY, page 6A)

Hunt case continued

Hoke County Commissioner and Lumbee Tribe Administrator Tony Hunt last week sought and received a continuance of his court case, according to Hoke County courthouse records.

Hunt, 51, of the 1100 block of Stonegate Drive in Raeford was arrested last November and charged with felony larceny, assault on a female, assault by pointing a gun, domestic criminal trespassing, resisting, delaying or obstructing a public offi-

cer, carrying a concealed weapon and communicating threats, authorities said.

According to reports and arrest warrants, Hunt allegedly threatened to shoot his wife and himself.

Hunt's next court date is scheduled for February 5. He has not yet entered a plea in court.

2 fatal shootings unsolved

The Hoke County Sheriff's Office continues investigating two fatal shootings from 2013 that remain open with no arrests in either case.

Investigators continue following leads on the unrelated shooting deaths of De'Andre "Papa" Ricketts, 16, and

Chad Lynn Blanks, 28. Ricketts was shot and killed October 13 and Blanks was killed October 14 of last year.

Ricketts was shot dead at a friend's late-night birthday party on the 800 block of South Bethel Road, less (See UNSOLVED, page 6A)

Alleged shooter arrested

Officials with the Hoke County Sheriff's Office arrested last week a suspect wanted in connection with a shooting that happened last year in the Red Springs area.

Investigators arrested Joshua Davis Barton, 25, of the 200 block of South Hoke Street in Red Springs on charges of assault with a

deadly weapon with intent to kill, inflicting serious injury. The Sheriff's Office charged Barton with allegedly shooting Jose Salinas last November at a home on the 200 block of New Lane Road in Shannon.

Salinas suffered two gunshot wounds to the pelvic (See ARRESTED, page 6A)

Rep. McIntyre won't run again Many seats important to Hoke up for grabs in 2014

By CATHARIN SHEPARD
Staff writer

North Carolina Rep. Mike McIntyre, a Democrat representing Hoke County and the rest of Congressional District 7, announced that he will not seek a tenth term in office.

McIntyre, who grew up in Scotland County, served nine terms representing North Carolina in the U.S. Congress. He announced last week his decision not to run again.

"We have helped thousands of constituents from all walks of life in ways that have significantly impacted their lives. None of this could have been accomplished without the strong commitment of my family, the hard work of my staff, and – especially – the willingness of people throughout our region to put partisanship aside and work together to get things done for the betterment of eastern North Carolina," he said in a statement. "Indeed, I am grateful to all

of the Democrats, Republicans, and Independents with whom we have successfully worked through nine elections over 18 years. My family and I are ready for a new chapter and excited about new opportunities to continue helping North Carolina."

2014 races to watch

The Congressional races are just a few of multiple elections of importance for Hoke residents this year. (See ELECTION, page 6A)

This Week

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New courthouse in county's future?

By CATHARIN SHEPARD
Staff writer

Hoke County wrapped up work on several major construction projects and other improvement efforts last year, with at least one more on the way for 2014, County

Manager Tim Johnson said.

The county and school system's joint project, Sandy Grove Middle School, opened to students in August 2013. The process of financing and constructing the school was a major event for the county, Johnson said.

"Anytime you're in a county as rural as Hoke – and we're still rural, we're getting to the point where the population is going up but it's still a rural area – that's a big deal, when you're talking about spend-

(See OUTLOOK, page 4A)

January fun

Kim Cardoza (left) was among the youth from Called Into Action, Inc. who helped residents at Autumn Care of Raeford make snowmen on a rainy Saturday afternoon last weekend. She is shown with Violet Seaford. Dane Sorensen (right) and Elizabeth Baker teamed up too.

