

# The News-Journal

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RAEFORD & HOKE COUNTY N.C.

Wednesday, January 22, 2014

## Board seeks 3rd campus at Hoke High Proposes classrooms, cafeteria, gym, swimming pool, team

By CATHARIN SHEPARD  
Staff writer

A new high school is not in the works, but a full-size swimming pool and more major additions at Hoke High and other county schools could be on the table

this budget season.

The Hoke County Board of Education voted last week to meet with the county commissioners and discuss building a third campus at Hoke High and adding more classrooms to several other schools. The board members

voted unanimously to send a letter to the commission seeking a meeting to discuss "big picture funding issues."

The list of possible new additions includes a 146,720 square-foot building at Hoke High that would house a public swimming pool, a

new gym, a new cafeteria, a variety of classrooms, offices and more. The new facility would function like a third campus alongside the existing Gibson and MacDonald parts of Hoke High, Superintendent Dr. Freddie Williamson said.

"What we need to deliver for kids, we need to do on this site," he said. "The concept that we have in mind is this, that in essence, (we have) the two main campuses now on the MacDonald side of the campus and the Gibson

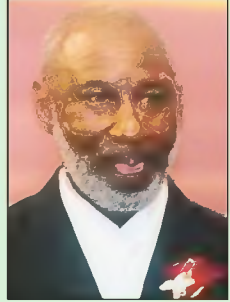
side of the campus. So our proposal is to add a third campus site so you really have in a sense a high school with three main buildings similar to a community college concept."

Other proposed projects (See SCHOOLS, page 6A)



Authorities search for a missing man who fell into Williamson Pond last Wednesday while fishing. (Catharin Shepard photo)

## Afternoon fishing outing turns tragic



By CATHARIN SHEPARD  
Staff writer

A man drowned last week in a pond near Raeford when he fell out of his fishing boat, according to authorities.

First Sgt. John Clint Mims Jr., 58, of the 200 block of Bugle Call Drive in the Parkers Grove subdivision drowned in Williamson Pond Wednesday afternoon. Mims and

friend Calvin Ely were fishing on the pond located off of the intersection of East Palmer Street and South Bethel Road.

Mims caught a fish, stood up in the boat to retrieve the fish and went into the water, the Hoke County Sheriff's Office reported. Ely attempted to rescue Mims but was unable to find him under the water.

"Calvin Ely swam to shore and traveled to several different locations in an attempt to get rescue personnel to the pond," a press statement from the Sheriff's Office said.

Ely sought help from a nearby

home and called 911 at about 2 p.m. Rescue divers aided by a boat located Mims around 3 p.m. Mims was found underwater not far from a curve in the pond bank, in the same area where Ely saw him go under, officials said.

Emergency personnel waiting by the water immediately began administering CPR and transported Mims to Cape Fear Valley Hospital in Fayetteville. Mims was pronounced dead at the hospital at 4:45 p.m.

Mims, originally from Alabama but a longtime Raeford resident, (See MIMS, page 4A)

## Hoke joins suit over vouchers

By CATHARIN SHEPARD  
Staff writer

The Hoke County Board of Education voted unanimously last week to join in a lawsuit against the state's recently enacted voucher legislation.

The North Carolina School Boards Association and four individual plaintiffs from Buncombe, Hertford and Rockingham counties – and now Hoke and likely other county school boards – are suing

the state of North Carolina, the North Carolina State Board of Education and the North Carolina State Education Assistance Authority over the issue of public money being used to fund vouchers to send students to private schools.

Critics state that there isn't a system in place to make sure the private schools receiving that money will follow academic standards or accountability measures that the state (See VOUCHERS, page 4A)

## Veterans officer hired, local office to reopen

By CATHARIN SHEPARD  
Staff writer

The Hoke County Veterans Service office is set to reopen next week, County Manager Tim Johnson said.

The county has hired Jackie Halliburton of Hoke County to serve as the new Veterans Service Officer, taking over for the retiring Randy Smith. Halliburton starts to work Monday, January 27 and the office

will reopen for veterans on Tuesday, January 28.

Halliburton is a retired member of the military and worked for the Employment Security Commission, Johnson said.

"He specialized in dealing with veterans," Johnson said.

Halliburton has worked in the area for many years and lives in Hoke County, the county manager said. When Johnson asked (See VETERANS, page 4A)

## Sheriff revamps website, targets gangs with task force

By CATHARIN SHEPARD  
Staff writer

Last year saw several changes to the Hoke County Sheriff's Office and 2014 is bringing more new additions, along with more ways to address ongoing crime challenges for the county.

In 2013, the Sheriff's Office worked to revamp its website, turning it into a more functional site that offers a variety of services for residents. The office unveiled the new website in the last month. "That's one of the highlights, being able to

do a virtual Sheriff's Office," Sheriff Hubert Peterkin said.

The new website gives citizens a chance to download gun permit forms, report criminal tips, request incident reports and commend or file a complaint against officers, among other functions. It also offers access to press releases, contact information for Sheriff's Office staff and emergency alerts. The updated website is located at <http://hokecountysheriff.org/>. The office is also using the website to conduct a survey of the community, and residents are asked to fill it out

online.

Another new development for the Sheriff's Office in 2013 was a renewed focus on breaking and entering and gang activity in the county – a focus that continues to grow into 2014, Peterkin said.

"We looked at the (breaking and enterings) and the gang problems and we hired... a gang specialist with the Sheriff's Office," he said.

Deputy Hernandez, the new officer heading up the gang task force, is "known throughout (See SHERIFF, page 4A)

## OTHER STUFF

By KEN MACDONALD

When the grandbaby is in the house, a special set of rules goes into effect. And they're not rules I made, like when my children were little. And that means I have to learn them before I can ignore them. I mean abide by them.

Universal rules, the ones we all know and heed, aren't what I'm talking about. An example of those is be quiet when the baby is asleep. This one I happily follow because universal rule number two is if you wake a baby, she's yours, crying and all.

No, I'm talking about parent-specific rules for the babies, like "No pushing food through the little hole on the high chair tray." It must mean that I think like a child, (See OTHER STUFF, page 4A)

## Sandhills gets \$442k grant

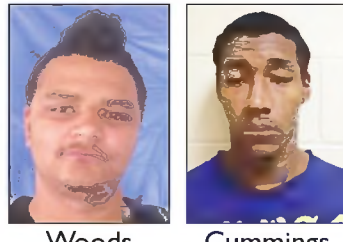
The Hoke County campus of Sandhills Community College has received a grant from the Golden Leaf Foundation to support expansion of the school's programs.

The community college received a \$442,242 grant from the Golden Leaf Foundation in December, according to an email from Andrea Korte, Dean (See GRANT, page 3A)

## 2 arrested in kidnapping

Investigators with the Hoke County Sheriff's Office arrested two suspects and are searching for a third in the alleged kidnapping and armed robbery of a 15-year-old.

Deputies arrested Eijah Malik Miller on January 10 in connection with the alleged armed robbery and kidnapping of the juvenile victim, the Sheriff's Office announced in a press release. The incident reportedly happened December 28 on the 300 block of Autry Loop.



Woods Cummings

Second suspect Trent Raekwon Cummings, 16, of Red Springs turned himself in to authorities January 18. He was charged with robbery with a dangerous weapon, first-degree kidnapping, conspiracy to commit robbery (See CHARGED, page 3A)

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