

# The News-Journal

Hoke County's newspaper since 1905

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RAEFORD & HOKE COUNTY N.C.

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## Voting site splits elections board Member withdraws support, things get a little heated

By CATHARIN SHEPARD  
Staff writer

Two weeks after Hoke County Board of Commissioners Chairman James Leach spoke out against using the county public library as a one-stop voting site, a county elections board member chose not to sign off

on the one-stop voting site plan that the board had already unanimously approved.

At a commission meeting February 17, Leach opposed moving the county one-stop voting site from the county offices to the library in Raeford. Leach called the move "a disgrace" and said he had concerns

about accessibility and parking at the library. The move was part of a one-stop voting site plan that in January passed a unanimous vote by the Hoke County Board of Elections.

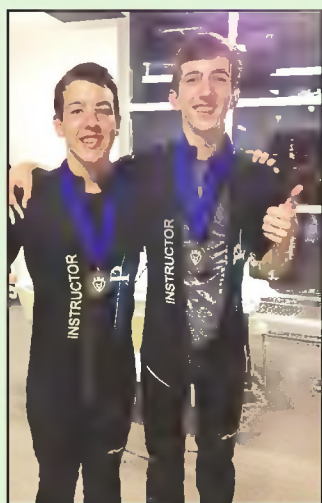
Ultimately, county commissioners do not have the authority to determine where polling places are located, according to North Carolina

state law.

At a called meeting Friday afternoon, Board of Elections Chairman Robert Vaughn and board secretary Gene Shelnett signed the previously approved one-stop voting site plan that would open early voting sites at the Hoke County Public Library and the Conference B Headquarters on

Highway 401 (R.L. Douglas Headquarters Building). Board member Gloria Hill did not sign the plan and said she did not approve of using the library as a one-stop voting site, although she previously voted in favor of it.

The proposal will now move on (See *VOTING SITE*, page 6A)



Clockwise from top left: routine and vertical formation winners Josh D'Annunzio and Alex Verner; best trick winner Ray Kubiak; best trick youth winners Trey Verner and Cam Timberlake. (Contributed photos)



## Indoor skydiving championship draws international competitors

By CATHARIN SHEPARD  
Staff writer

More than 150 of the world's best body fliers came to Raeford last weekend to suit up and step into the wind tunnel at Paraclete XP SkyVenture to test their skills.

People from ages eight to 60, hailing from six different countries, visited Hoke County to take part in the two-day 4th Annual World Invitational Indoor Skydiving Championships. The event challenged the best of the best body fliers to see who could perform some of the most complicated, best synchronized or fastest mid-air moves. People from as far away as Belgium, France and Qatar came to compete, while others – notably, the United States Army Golden Knights – were closer to home.

The competition included six different categories of flying, including the four-way formation on pro, amateur and rookie

levels, the eight-way formation, the two-way VFS, two-way routine and best trick.

The local wind tunnel is the site of the championships because it's a unique place to go flying, media specialist Keith Creedy said. The tunnel is the biggest indoor skydiving facility in America.

"It's the only tunnel you can fly eight-way (formation flying)," he said.

Three judges carefully watched each performance to give the contestants their scores.

"They use a camera at the top of the tunnel," Creedy said.

The judges look for different things in each category. For example, in the formation flying competition, it's about how many tricks the group can perform in 35 seconds.

The people competing in the championship have typically dedicated years and a

(See *SKYDIVING*, page 6A)

## 12 vie for commission Debate set for candidates in contested races

By CATHARIN SHEPARD  
Staff writer

By the time the candidate filing period closed Friday, a dozen candidates had filed to run for one of the three available seats on the Hoke County Board of Commissioners.

Republicans John F. Harry and Angela Thomas, and Democrats William "Brownie" Brown, Richard Byrd, Charles Daniels, Tony Hunt (incumbent), Michael Lindsay, Freddie McPhaul, Clifford "Cliff" Overby, Jean Powell (incumbent), Harry Southerland and Allen Thomas filed to run for the commission. Incumbent Ellen McNeill is not running for reelection.

Several incumbents in major local races will

run unopposed this year. Incumbent Sheriff Hubert Peterkin was the only candidate to file to run for that office. Incumbent Hoke County Clerk of Court Evelyn McLeod and long-time county coroner G. Franklin Crumpler are also unopposed.

Three District Court judges in District 16A are running unopposed. Incumbent judges Scott T. Brewer and Regina M. Joe and candidate Chris Rhue are seeking office without challengers. Rhue is seeking incumbent Chief District Judge William McIlwain's seat. McIlwain is not running for reelection.

Three people filed to run for incumbent Robin Hudson's seat as a Supreme Court Associate Justice. Hudson and candidates Eric

(See *ELECTION*, page 5A)

## Former veterans officer in race

By CATHARIN SHEPARD  
Staff writer



Freddie McPhaul

Former Hoke County Veterans Service Officer Freddie McPhaul announced last week that he plans to run for a seat on the county board of

commissioners.

Several people approached McPhaul about running for the board and he felt it was time to go for it, the candidate said.

"I told them I still love my county and if they got the committee together I would run, because you got to have community backing, and I feel like I have that," he said.

McPhaul said he is interested in becoming a commissioner because he hopes to be part of the county's leadership.

(See *MCPHAUL*, page 6A)

## News-Journal awarded for excellence

The News-Journal was named the third-best newspaper of its size in the state last week at the 2013 North Carolina Press Association News, Editorial and Photojournalism awards banquet.

The News-Journal won third place in General Excellence for the Category A community newspaper division. Considered the top prize presented by the NCPA, General Excellence awards are given to publications that demonstrate mechanical excellence, general and departmental news coverage, literacy excellence, promotion of community interests, graphics and appearance, editorial vigor, use

of photographs and advertising enterprise.

A contest judge commented that The News-Journal showed "Good reporting on many news stories. Advertising, design and layout are strong." Volunteers from the New Jersey and Michigan press associations judged the contest.

Additionally, News-Journal reporter Catharin Shepard received first place in Feature Writing and second place in News Feature Writing.

The NCPA presented the awards at a banquet Thursday night in Chapel Hill.

The News-Journal has received 15 awards in the last three years from NCPA contests.

### This Week

Calendar ..... 2B  
Classifieds ..... 6B  
Deaths ..... 3A  
Editorials ..... 2A  
Legals ..... 3-5B  
Sports ..... 7A  
Worship ..... 6B

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## Turkey Festival to change name to reflect changing poultry industry



By CATHARIN SHEPARD  
Staff writer

Move over, Turkey Lurky. You've got company.

The North Carolina Turkey Festival committee is hoping fans of the annual event, celebrating its 30th anniversary this year, will be just as happy talking chicken as they have been talking turkey. After years of discussing the possible change,

the festival committee has reserved the named "North Carolina Poultry Festival" and plans to reboot the annual event in 2015 with an altered focus that includes chicken and other fowl as well as turkey.

The change is an attempt to keep up with the times and economy in Hoke, festival executive director Melissa Pittman said.

"Thirty years ago, turkey was the largest commodity in Hoke County. It no longer is and we still want to promote the largest commodity, but we don't want to leave the turkey behind," she said.

Many people have been "assuming and thinking and talking" about a possible change since last year, but the committee was a bit sentimental about making

(See *FESTIVAL*, page 4A)



### Going digital

Hoke County teachers work with a digital science textbook in preparation for its use in elementary schools. The county received a \$54,500 grant from the state to help "digital learning" in the schools. The "Techbook" will be available to students at all times and will allow teachers to create individual lessons based on need.



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