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Commissioners begin work on budget

Sets meeting to hear from heads of four costliest departments

BY CATHARIN SHEPARD
Staff writer

The Hoke County commissioners will meet next Tuesday for the first budget workshop session of the year, the board decided at its regular meeting Monday night.

The commission scheduled to meet April 15 at the parks and recreation facility on Highway 211 to hear budget requests

from the county's four largest departments. Department heads from the sheriff's office, school system, social services and the health department will present their 2014-15 budget year requests to the board. Those four departments represent the largest expenditures of county tax funding in Hoke.

The board decided to address those four departments first and in one day, and not schedule a second day for the rest of

the county office budget requests because County Manager Tim Johnson said the other offices are still working on completing their requests. Another budget workshop will be scheduled to discuss those requests at a later date.

By state law, the board must approve a 2014-15 budget by June 30.

In other business, the commission voted unanimously to pass a request from the

Hoke County Sheriff's Office for the county to take part in the statewide Misdemeanant Confinement Program. The program was created to provide housing in local confinement facilities for people convicted of misdemeanor crimes and serving sentences between 90 and 180 days. People sentenced for a drunk driving offense are an exception to the program.

(See COMMISSIONERS, page 6A)

Carnival returns to school



Carnival fun

For the fourth year, the HokeFest Carnival brought fun and funds to East Hoke Middle School last week and weekend. Clockwise from top: going up the Super Shot before a free fall; the band 4 Points North performs; all smiles on the children's swing; a mechanical bull throws a rider. (Hal Nunn photos)

Rep. Pierce leads delegation to D.C.

Group to defend voting rights

BY CATHARIN SHEPARD
Staff writer

Hoke County state Rep. Garland Pierce (D-District 48), chairman of the North Carolina Legislative Black Caucus, will this week lead a delegation to Washington, D.C. to discuss the Voting Rights Amendment Act of 2014.

Members of the caucus will travel to the nation's capital Wednesday to

meet with Congressional representatives about the act, which opponents say removes important protections for African-American voters.

North Carolina, Alabama and South Carolina are no longer included under the pre-clearance requirement of federal voting rights legislation.

Originally, the legislation required southern states to

(See VOTING, page 4A)

Hunt says he wants to continue progress

BY CATHARIN SHEPARD
Staff writer

Incumbent candidate Tony Hunt is seeking reelection this year for another term on the Hoke County Board of Commissioners.

Hunt, a Democrat, has served on the board for 12 years and now hopes to be reelected for a fourth term.

Hunt, a minister, served in the military and earned several degrees including one in religion. He has been a member of many various community leadership and organization boards and was one of the first people to serve on the Lumbee Supreme Court. He worked with the school system doing family outreach and now serves as the Tribal Administrator of the Lumbee Tribe.

Hunt said he is running for reelection because the board has accomplished many good things in the last years and he hopes to be a part of continuing to work on the ongoing projects and needs, such as the county's wastewater treatment plant now under construction.

"I want to see that through," he said.

(See HUNT, page 6A)



Hunt

This Week

Dog saves family
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Horses, hats, people converge at race

BY CATHARIN SHEPARD
Staff writer

The hats and horses came out Saturday as thousands of people from around the country descended on the Carolina Horse Park for the 63rd running of the famous Stoneybrook Steeplechase.

The day featured four steeplechase races and one flat race, with the steeplechase races offering purses between \$10,000 and \$25,000 for the winners. The horses weren't the only ones going home with

awards, as competitors in the popular hat decorating contest, tailgating contest and children's stick horse races also claimed ribbons.

Tia Garner, Nancy Averitte and Averitte's daughter Amy Quick, all from Hamlet, wore hats covered in swirls of bright fabric, bows and silk flowers. It was the first time they had entered the hat contest but their third year attending the steeplechase, Averitte said.

"We always look forward to it, it's a lot of fun, (See RACE, page 6A)



Clockwise from top: a jump creates an optical illusion with a jockey-in-show hat; jockey Pellegrino from the horse High Flying Jake gets medical treatment. (Catharin Shepard photos)

