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Ethanol plant rebound promises 79 jobs

BY CATHARIN SHEPARD
Staff writer

The ethanol plant in Dundarrach will be opening back up under its new ownership, bringing 79 jobs and a reported \$36 million investment in the local economy over the next three years, company officials said. Tyton N.C. Biofuels, a partner of Tyton BioEnergy Systems, bought the former

Clean Burn Fuels ethanol plant two weeks ago. The company based in Danville, Virginia paid roughly \$12.8 million for the facility, based on excise tax figures.

Gov. Pat McCrory, Secretary of Commerce Sharon Decker and Tyton officials announced Monday details about the sale. "Companies are establishing operations in North Carolina because our economic environment is strong and our workforce is

extremely capable," McCrory said. "Tyton will generate jobs in green manufacturing and provide new opportunities for farmers while investing millions of dollars in North Carolina's economy."

Hoke County Economic Development Director Don Porter said that the sale will bring good-paying jobs to the county, as well as bringing in tax money on the facility itself.

"Another of our major industries is back on the tax book and that's a good thing for our county," he said.

The county took in a roughly \$1.1 million payment in back taxes the day the new owner closed on the plant.

The plant will start off using corn as the feedstock for making ethanol, but then Tyton BioEnergy will switch the system (See ETHANOL, page 5A)

He's got a long walk ahead of him



Just days into his walk across the country, Justin Kuhel approaches East Hoke Middle School and is greeted by students. (Catharin Shepard photos)

Veteran walks across U.S. to help soldiers

BY CATHARIN SHEPARD
Staff writer

All of East Hoke Middle School's seventh graders lined up along the side of Highway 401 last week, craning their heads down the curve in the road to see who could be the first to spot the flag coming in carried by a special guest.

Soon enough, the stars and stripes came trotting into view as 25-year-old Marine Corps veteran Justin Kuhel completed another part of his walk across America to support

wounded warriors.

"Go, Justin! Go, Justin!" some of the students yelled, encouraging him on, and burst into applause when he made it to the campus.

Kuhel, a veteran from Ohio who served in Iraq and Afghanistan, stopped by the school on Day Six of his trek across the country from Camp Lejeune to Camp Pendleton in California. The veteran is walking across America to raise \$100,000 for two nonprofit organizations dedicated to helping

soldiers wounded in war.

All proceeds go to the Headstrong Project, which provides "no-hassle" mental health help for veterans, and Help Our Military Heroes, which helps adapt vehicles for amputees.

This is Kuhel's second long walk in support of veterans. Previously, he walked 400 miles from Columbus, Ohio to Arlington National Cemetery. That trek, which took him 19 days, raised over \$13,000 in support of the Wounded Warrior Project. (See WALKER, page 6A)



Kuhel hopes to raise \$100,000 for veterans' causes.

Deputy shoots, kills man

A man died last week after being shot by a Hoke County Sheriff's Office deputy who was investigating a call about a suspicious person.

Sandy James McCall, 33, of Raeford was shot about 1 a.m. Saturday, according to the sheriff's office. Sgt. Samuel Morant, an officer with the office for more than eight years, reportedly opened fire during an altercation with McCall. The shooting took place in the general area of Rockfish Road and U.S. Highway 401 Business, where Morant was investigating the call about a suspicious person.

Officials are withholding further details about what happened because the State Bureau of Investigation (SBI) is looking into the matter, Hoke County Sheriff Hubert Peterkin said.

"It's unfortunate that this happened but all the answers that everyone is seeking about what happened, including myself, will come out when the investigation is completed by the SBI," he said.

Morant is on administrative duty, which is typical protocol, Peterkin said.

Authorities did not say what led to the altercation or the exact circumstances surrounding the shooting. (See DEATH, page 5A)

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Public to speak on proposed gunfire ordinance

BY CATHARIN SHEPARD
Staff writer

After multiple com-

plaints about nuisance gunfire in the eastern part of the county, Hoke officials have created a firearm

safety ordinance and are seeking the public's input before voting on it. The ordinance basically bans gunfire within 1000 feet of a dwelling, roughly the distance from the courthouse to the chamber of commerce.

The Hoke County Board of Commissioners will hold a public hearing June 16

about the proposed firearm safety ordinance. The hearing will take place at the commission's regularly scheduled meeting at 7 p.m.

For several years, residents in the county — primarily people living in eastern Hoke — have approached commissioners over concerns about potentially unsafe gunfire in

different neighborhoods.

After hearing the concerns, a number of county officials including Sheriff Hubert Peterkin, Chief Deputy Gary Hammond, County Manager Tim Johnson, County Planner Robert Farrell and County Attorney Grady Hunt worked to put together an ordinance to (See GUNFIRE, page 6A)



Providing comfort

Girl Scouts with Troop 1064 collected stuffed animals to donate to the Hoke County Sexual Assault and Domestic Violence Center. The troop dropped off the donation last week. Pictured are Tulin Boyd, Rosa Ludewig, Jeanelle Boyd, Victoria Carter, Tiana Hawkins, Heather Hamilton, Joyce Monroe, Daelyn Hawkins and Alisca Robinson.

Rockfish residents bring complaints to board about pillar of community

Several residents in the Anderson Creek subdivision off of Rockfish Road (near King Road) appeared before the Hoke Commissioners Monday to seek advice and help in a matter concerning the local road system. A resident of the subdivision put stone pillars on his property, but the pillars are in the right-of-way and the state

Department of Transportation refuses to take over maintenance of the private street because the additions violate DOT guidelines.

That's a problem because the VA and FHA won't make loans to buy houses located on streets that aren't DOT maintained, residents reported. As a result, about half a dozen houses in

the subdivision have gone into foreclosure and others remain up for sale for long periods of time. That means the property values of surrounding homes have gone down, residents said.

The residents said they asked the homeowner to remove the pillars, but they said he refused. After some (See PILLARS, page 5A)



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