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RAEFORD & HOKE COUNTY N.C.

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Now illegal to shoot at night

Gun ordinance also forbids firing guns within 1000 feet of buildings

BY CATHARIN SHEPARD
Staff writer

Answering multiple pleas from Hoke County residents concerned about unsafe gunfire in the eastern part of the county, the county commissioners voted last week to approve a proposed firearm safety ordinance.

The board voted Friday at a resumed

meeting to put restrictions on the firing of guns under certain circumstances while also making exceptions for situations where people use the weapons for defense of lives and property.

The board held a public hearing on the matter last month where several people spoke in favor of the ordinance but also reported having concerns about some of the specifications, and one person spoke against

the ordinance.

The approved ordinance states that the increased population in the county has resulted in a higher population density with people living closer to each other, and therefore the shooting of personal firearms poses a greater danger than it has in the past. After hearing from residents on a number of occasions regarding "a number of incidents in which firearms have been discharged

within dangerously close distances of homes and other such places where people are likely to be," the board decided it was "reasonable to regulate the shooting of firearms near places where people live, work, shop or are otherwise likely to be present."

The county commissioners believed placing limitations on the discharge of firearms in the county is "necessary for the safety (See GUN ORDINANCE, page 6A)

Relay For Life, take two



Relay For Life back from storm

A sudden storm that blew apart tents cancelled the planned Relay For Life June 20, so organizers regrouped and returned Sunday to salvage the Survivors Lap (above) and a few other activities. The event raises money for the American Cancer Society. While attendance was less than past events, the Hammonds family from Macedonia Church was undeterred as they walked the track at Raz Autry Stadium at Hoke High School. (Catharin Shepard photo)

No grills on apartment balconies

Fire code revised

BY CATHARIN SHEPARD
Staff writer

The county will start charging different prices for fire inspections depending on the size of the building being inspected, and also banned use of grills on balconies of multi-family dwellings in an updated version of the county's fire prevention ordinance.

The ordinance covers fire codes, permits, inspections, fees and fines, open burning, violations and penalties, haunted houses and hydrant regulations. The county originally adopted the ordinance in October 2012 but worked on revising some of the ordinance at the recommendation of emergency management personnel. The revisions were made to the drawings and specifications required, plans review, operational permits, fees schedule, fire hydrants, gas grills and similar used in multi-family dwellings and additional sections of the ordinance.

The county commissioners approved the changes at a meeting Friday. The newly revised ordinance, along with the budget and firearms ordinance, went into effect this week.

(See FIRE CODE, page 4A)

This Week



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Look for this symbol to find stores that sell The News-Journal

No county tax increase as budget passes

BY CATHARIN SHEPARD
Staff writer

The Hoke County Board of Commissioners approved the finalized version of the 2014-15 fiscal year budget ordinance last week at a

resumed meeting.

The budget kept the ad valorem tax rate steady at 73 cents per \$100 valuation, and based the total property valuation for tax purposes at about \$2.7 billion.

The county's human

services received the biggest amount of funding with a \$12,667,768 appropriation, while the public safety department (sheriff's office) received \$9,925,145 and the Hoke County school system received \$8,914,734

in funding. The remaining funds were dedicated as \$4,631,002 for general government, \$2,093,745 for special appropriations, \$1,615,412 for non-departmental costs, \$993,686 for cultural and recreational

funding and \$608,621 for environmental and physical development. The total appropriation was in the amount of \$41,450,113.

The budget included funding for some (See BUDGET, page 6A)

County working with Lumbee Tribe on \$100k in taxes

BY CATHARIN SHEPARD
Staff writer

On paper, the Lumbee Tribe currently owes Hoke County about \$100,000 in back taxes, but officials trying to address the problem said the matter is complicat-

ed and there may be errors on both sides.

According to tax office records, the Lumbee Tribe owes the county \$103,682.11 total in taxes for the 2009-13 fiscal years. The county has known about the owed back taxes and made efforts

to collect, but "for some reason it got drug out and drug out and it never got resolved," county manager Tim Johnson said.

County tax collector Daphne Dudley said she is working with Bosco Locklear of the Lumbee Tribe's

housing authority to figure out exactly what the tribe owes, while county attorney Grady Hunt examines a 2006 agreement between the tribe and the county that gave the tribe a tax break.

In 2006, the Lumbee Tribe's housing authority

signed an agreement with the county that gave the tribal government a tax break in exchange for providing low-income housing for the Lumbee community members in Hoke.

"They pay what's called (See BACK TAXES, page 4A)



A Raeford Police officer looks for clues to find the owner of this trailer.

Oops: 'And his trailer just trailed off..'

BY KEN MACDONALD

"I'm leaving before something else happens!" Brenda Tucker of Raeford called from her car as she drove off.

She'd had her fill of pickup trucks in the last 15 minutes.

Tucker was driving home along East Seventh Avenue Tuesday morning when she met a pickup truck traveling in the other direction, and watched as the truck's trailer

came unhitched, drove itself slowly across a patch of grass and hit a tree in an old pecan orchard. The truck's driver didn't notice his trailer was gone and kept going.

"I look," she said, "and his trailer is just trailing off. And he just keeps going."

Minutes earlier, just a mile away, she'd left the State Employees Credit Union and was nearly rear-ended by a pickup, she said, and then a few hundred yards up Fulton (See TRAILER, page 6A)



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