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Wednesday, December 17, 2014

Fate of hospital beds goes to top court

BY CATHARIN SHEPARD
Staff writer

The fate of 28 hospital beds could go before the state Supreme Court. Cape Fear Valley Medical Center filed a request last month

for the court to hear the hospital system's argument that it should receive the 28 acute care beds awarded in 2012 to FirstHealth of the Carolinas.

The healthcare system made the appeal on November 28,

according to Cape Fear Valley Public Relations Director Janet Conway.

"On November 28, we filed a petition for discretionary review to the state Supreme Court for the 28 beds. The petition asks the Su-

preme Court to hear the appeal," Conway said.

The State Supreme Court can choose whether to hear the appeal.

North Carolina's Certificate of Need (CON) law requires that healthcare companies apply to the

state to receive permission before adding certain services and equipment to their facilities. Hospital beds are one example, and some expensive, specialized medical equipment also falls under the (See BEDS, page 4A)



401 traffic brought to its knees

No one was injured in this wreck that happened near the intersection of Highway 401 and Highway 401 Business Monday afternoon, though traffic backed up before the roadway was cleared. The truck driver was crossing the road to enter a private driveway when an unmarked patrol vehicle driven by First Sgt. Bell of the State Highway Patrol collided with the truck. The trooper is not one of the officers assigned to Hoke and was passing through from another county. The matter is under investigation. (Ken MacDonald photo)

Juveniles accused of bomb threat

BY CATHARIN SHEPARD
Staff writer

A 12-year-old and a 14-year-old will face juvenile court after allegedly calling in a bomb threat to local schools last week, according to the Hoke County Sheriff's Office.

All students at Hoke County High School and Turlington Alternative School were evacuated December 9 after someone placed a call to the Hoke County Emergency 911 Center claiming that there were bombs at both schools. Authorities and bomb-sniffing dogs cleared the campuses and did not find any explosive devices.

After interviewing school staff and students, investigators identified (See BOMB THREAT, page 3A)

Park Christmas event shut by Grinch

BY CATHARIN SHEPARD
Staff writer

Someone earned a spot both on Santa's naughty list and the Hoke County Sheriff's Office wanted list by stealing all the extension cords from the Hoke County Christmas Lights in the Park exhibit. In all, \$2,600 worth of equipment was taken.

More than 20 extension cords went missing early Saturday from the Hoke County Recreation Complex, which had been set up

as a winter wonderland for families to visit Santa and a living Nativity scene.

The event had to shut down two days early because it couldn't operate without the cords.

"We weren't able to hold the events on Saturday and Sunday, the last days," Parks and Recreation Director Kendrick Maynor said. "That really put us in a setback. We were looking for a great attendance."

The Parks and Recreation Department paid for most of the

decorations and equipment used at the park and borrowed the rest of the lights from various places including from donors and other county departments. Most of the stolen extension cords belonged to the county, but others were donated.

Everything was fine when the park shut down and locked up for the night Friday, Parks and Recreation officials said, but sometime between the park's opening at 6 a.m. Saturday and early afternoon when the workers

arrived to set up, all of the extension cords disappeared.

The cords were 40-foot and 100-foot heavy-duty drop cords used to connect the lights to the generator, Parks and Recreation Athletic Director Pat Shouse said.

Maynor and his staff worked for days getting the light display in place before the grand opening. Many of them dressed up in costumes to greet children as they came through the park.

The department had hoped to (See PARK, page 3A)



Parks and Rec. employees Stephen Kesinger and Jamie Wick took down the lights Monday.

This Week

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Branch (center) with his wife Mae, Post 10 Commander McClinnahan and the Hoke board of commissioners. (Catharin Shepard photo)

Branch named Veteran of the Year

BY CATHARIN SHEPARD
Staff writer

Hoke County veteran and Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 10 Quartermaster Charles Howard Branch was named the Hoke County Veteran of the Year

Monday night.

Branch is well known in the community and shows excellence in his work with the VFW, Post 10 Commander Mary McClinnahan said.

"I haven't known Mr. Branch for a long time, but for the time

that I've known him, he is a very well-respected gentleman and he knows his business," she said.

Branch has lived in Hoke County since 1958, when his parents moved to Raeford to work at the Burlington plant.

(See BRANCH, page 4A)

Inspections department to get scrutiny

BY CATHARIN SHEPARD
Staff writer

Some residents are reporting problems with the Hoke County inspections department, according to commission chairman James Leach, and the commission voted Monday night to look into it.

"I think we have a very good inspection department but our inspectors, we need to look at that, maybe to have someone come in as an independent to go in and look at how our inspectors are doing," he said. "They're costing our citizens a lot of money right now, some of the things they're asking them to do. Sometimes they're not even willing to accept an engineering report. They have to go back to the engineer and get two or three letters because they don't like the way that (See INSPECTIONS, page 3A)



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