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Heart patients, children avoid this field

By CATHARIN SHEPARD
Staff writer

By day, the woods off of Alex Baker Road don't hold anything more frightening than pine cones and the occasional squirrel, but after dark, the innocent-looking campground is transformed into a heart-pounding fright-fest. It takes about 15 to 20 minutes to

tour the scary trail dubbed the "Field of Screams," "depending on how fast you run," organizer Jessica Lee said. Lee's family runs Gillis Hill Road Produce and for several years hosted the "Field of Screams" in the farm's corn maze. However, they ran into a snag and had to look for a new location. "The corn has gotten where it won't grow, so we switched to a wooded area,"

Lee said. Plus, people who were running wildly to try and escape the scares would often go tearing straight through the corn, damaging the maze itself, she added. So the Field of Screams moved into Hoke County, setting up shop on the same property that serves as the campground for the Hoke County Wagon Train during the summer.

At the Field of Screams, a guide steers those bold enough to walk into the unknown through a haunted woods tour. "It's basically a trail. It'll be guided with a guide and we'll try to scare you," Lee said. The trail includes different costumed characters frightening the guests, who move through different scenes – like a spooky (See *FIELD OF SCREAMS*, page 6)



From left, Dill (Jenna Howland), Jem (Bobby Beeler) and Scout (Hannah Sousa) talk about Boo Radley.



Atticus Finch (Justin Heath) tells the kids not to bother Boo Radley. (Ken MacDonald photos)

Hoke High presents 'To Kill a Mockingbird'

The novel "To Kill a Mockingbird," written by Harper Lee, is a classic story read in English classes across America. Although the book was written in 1960, the students of the Hoke County High School Drama Club are finding that many of the book's themes still ring true in today's world.

In "To Kill a Mockingbird," Scout Finch (Hannah Sousa) and her older brother Jem (Bobby Beeler) live in sleepy Maycomb, Alabama, spending much of their time with their friend Dill (Jenna Howland) and spying on their reclusive and mysterious neighbor, Boo Radley (See *MOCKINGBIRD*, page 6)

Voting in city begins next week

6 vie for City Council

By CATHARIN SHEPARD
Staff writer

One-stop early voting for the Raeford municipal election starts next week at the Hoke County Board of Elections office. Absentee one-stop early voting will begin on Thursday, October 22 and ends Saturday, October 31. Election Day is Tuesday, November 3. Registered voters who live in the city of Raeford will have the opportunity to cast ballots for three of six candidates running for election to the Raeford City Council. Incumbents running for reelection are Robert "Bobby" Conoly, John Jordan and Mary Neil King and candidates running for election to the council are Shirley Hart, Jeremy Hollingsworth and Jackie McLean. The five-member board is nonpartisan and members serve four-year terms. Council members Charles Allen and Wayne Willis and Mayor John K. McNeill are not up for election this year. Their terms expire in 2017. There are no county positions up for election this year. Next year will be a much busier year for elections in Hoke County. Besides the presidential and state level (See *ELECTION*, page 6)

Treatment plant operating

By CATHARIN SHEPARD
Staff writer

After a bout of near-record rainfall caused operators to delay the start date for Hoke County's new wastewater treatment plant, utilities company Envirolink was able to start up the plant's operations for the first time late last week. "They started up the first two pumps, and they were going to start bringing in the sludge for feeding about 11 a.m. yesterday," Hoke County Manager Letitia Edens said Tuesday. (See *TREATMENT*, page 6)

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Freedom East church celebrates 150 years

By CATHARIN SHEPARD
Staff writer

Freedom East Presbyterian Church was already almost a century old when Nezzie Ferguson started attending services there. "When I was a little girl back in the '50s, that's when I started coming," she recalled.

Her grandfather, Willie Purcell, and his father, John David Purcell, were members at the church, as were many other locally well-known families and individuals. Ferguson and her sister learned to teach Sunday school at Freedom East Presbyterian, and over the years, their family and many others marked important events in their lives at the church located on Doc Brown Road.

The church's history dates back to the last years of the Civil War, and it's one of the oldest churches in Hoke County, Pastor Willie McCaskill said. This year, Freedom East Presbyterian is celebrating a big milestone: its 150th anniversary, with a special banquet planned to recognize its long-lived contributions to the (See *FREEDOM EAST*, page 6)

OTHER STUFF

By KEN MACDONALD

We were driving in the van on last weekend's youth group beach trip, and I hear from the back: "Oh man, this song gets me in my feels!" Hadn't heard that phraseology before, but then these young'uns are always entertaining. And sometimes they intend to be. Yes, we are again committing music. We have started up the youth band after a hiatus over the summer, a result of being just plain hotdog-and-peanut-butter-sick of playing the same half a dozen songs over and over. How a real musician does it, I don't know. If I had been Lynyrd Skynyrd, for example, (and had he been a single person), I'd have shot myself in the head about the tenth time I had to play Sweet Home Alabama. It's kind of like painting a house; the first room is an interesting adventure. "I could do this for a living," (See *OTHER STUFF*, page 4)



New band uniforms arrive
The new Hoke High Mighty Bucks Marching Band uniforms have arrived, as modeled by Simeon McCallum. (With him is band director DeVon Pickett.) The uniforms cost about \$100,000 and come with special panels that can be changed for home, away and competitive performances.

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