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RAEFORD & HOKE COUNTY N.C.

Wednesday, September 21, 2016

Hoke High evacuates after gas leak

Students sent home around noon, pipe break repaired, no injuries



Hoke High School students walk to the Gibson side of campus. (Ken MacDonald photo)

BY CATHARIN SHEPARD
Staff writer

A natural gas leak at Hoke County High School forced students and teachers to evacuate campus Tuesday morning while workers tried to repair the problem.

A gas leak was reported in the outdoor corridor area between the high school band room and the McAllister building around 10:30 a.m. Tuesday, Principal Roger Edwards said.

It appeared that a piece of construction equipment hit a two-inch natural gas line that supplies gas to the MacDonald side of campus, rupturing the line and causing it to spew gas into the open air. Someone quickly noticed the strong smell of gas in the air and alerted school administrators.

"You could smell it a little bit from the other side of campus," Edwards said.

School officials immediately moved all students attending classes on the
(See GAS LEAK, page 9)

Local team emotional after fatal bus wreck

BY CATHARIN SHEPARD
Staff writer

Football coach Demetrius Hollingsworth's team held practice Monday preparing for their next game, even as their thoughts turned to the young men they were scheduled to play Saturday before a fatal wreck intervened.

"They are very, very
(See ACCIDENT, page 6)

HATS wins service award

BY CATHARIN SHEPARD
Staff writer

The Hoke Area Transit Service received first place in its peer group from the North Carolina Department of Transportation for its service to customers, according to HATS Director Nancy Thornton.

(See AWARD, page 6)

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Riley Walker (above) waves from a float manned by Antioch Boy Scouts, and The Turkey (left) is still very much a part of the festival. The parade was well-attended. (Photos by Catharin Shepard and Ken MacDonald)

Fun, music, business reported good at Fall Festival

BY CATHARIN SHEPARD
Staff writer

While the sounds of Christian hip-hop music drifted down Main Street, a dark orange fallen leaf took shape under artist Jecia Anderson's brush strokes.

Anderson is a roadie of a different stripe – one who travels with His Push Team, a gospel hip-hop group, and captures the atmosphere of the day on her canvas.

"I go on road trips to different venues and paint what the event

is, how the environment is," she said as she worked from her easel set up by the stage on Main Street.

Anderson's portrait of the first annual North Carolina Fall Festival breathed a breath of autumn air into Raeford even as

warm breezes and mostly clear skies greeted the thousands of locals and out-of-town guests for the big day downtown Saturday.

For the first time in years, the live entertainment and vendor booths moved back to
(See FESTIVAL, page 10)

Developers back incumbent commissioners

BY CATHARIN SHEPARD
Staff writers

Two Hoke County commissioners running for reelection have received thousands of dollars in donations from Fayetteville-based developers in the current election year, according to campaign finance records.

Ralph Huff of H&H Homes and

Watson G. Caviness of Caviness & Cates, developers that have built hundreds of homes in Hoke County, have donated a total of \$7,000 to local campaigns to reelect Commission Chairman James Leach and Commissioner Bobby Wright.

Huff donated \$2,000 to the Committee to Re-Elect Robert A. Wright and \$2,500 to the Committee to Elect James Leach, the re-

ords show, while Caviness donated \$2,500 to Leach's campaign.

Leach's reelection campaign reported receiving \$27,625 total in donations, much of it from real estate developers located in Cumberland County. The reports showed donations of \$2,500 from Gregory Floyd of Floyd Properties in Fayetteville; \$2,500 from developers Joseph and Trina Riddle of Riddle

& Riddle in Fayetteville; \$1,000 from developer Carroll Thomas of Fayetteville; \$500 from Harold Kidd of Kidd Construction and Development in Fayetteville; and \$1,000 from architect Robert Ferris of First Floor, the company that designed Sandy Grove Middle School. The campaign finance records also showed donations of \$1,000 each
(See CONTRIBUTIONS, page 9)

Festival brings out not just poultry, but love birds

BY CATHARIN SHEPARD
Staff writer



The proposal (left) from a Facebook video, Clark and Daniels (right)

While many people who attended the Fall Festival this year walked away with funnel cakes, handmade crafts and plenty of happy memories, Amanda Daniels left with something a bit more substantial: an engagement ring.

Daniels' boyfriend, Tyler Clark, made a surprise marriage proposal at the Sand Band concert Saturday night.

The couple had known each other for many

years, Daniels said. Their families hunted together and the two had grown up spending time with each other.

"We actually had known each other our whole lives," she said.

The two started dating about a year ago, with their first date a trip to the North Carolina State Fair. They attended the Fall Festival this year and made plans to go to the concert at the Old Armory ballpark.

What Daniels didn't know was that Clark had something special in mind for the evening.

(See LOVE BIRDS, page 6)

