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Hardware store heist suspect charged Same man alleged to have attacked teacher at elementary school



Nivens

BY CATHARIN SHEPARD
Staff writer

A man already in jail awaiting trial for allegedly attempting to kill a West Hoke Elementary School teacher in December and breaking into four churches has now also been charged with stealing 52 weapons from Raeford Hardware just five days before.

Officers with the Raeford Police Department charged Michael Lee Nivens, 35, of the 200 block of Piney Grove Mobile Home Park with breaking and entering, larceny of a firearm and possession of firearm by a felon. A magistrate issued Nivens a \$500,000 bond.

"On November 29, 2017, Michael Lee Nivens entered Raeford Hardware while the business was closed.

Michael Nivens then removed 52 firearms from inside the business along with the cash registers and other items," a release from Raeford police said.

Nivens was a suspect in the case long before he was charged because investigators were working with the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Fire-

arms in trying to retrieve as many of the weapons as possible first, Raeford Police Chief Marc Godwin said.

"We've gotten several of the guns back, we haven't gotten them all back by any means, but we had him as a definite suspect for some time," the chief said.

Nivens allegedly took multiple (See **HARDWARE**, page 10)



Overtured

A two-vehicle accident near the intersection of U.S. 401 Business and Rockfish Road clogged traffic for over an hour Monday afternoon just around the time local schools were letting out. One vehicle overturned on the side of the road, and a pickup truck also sustained damage in the accident. Hoke County EMS transported the injured to an area hospital, according to the North Carolina Highway Patrol. Names of those involved were not immediately available. (Catharin Shepard photo)



McNeill

Hudson

Huffman

Hudson, Huffman, McNeill announce for Congress

BY CATHARIN SHEPARD
Staff writer

Two people including the Republican incumbent and a Democrat candidate have filed to run for election to the House of Representatives in North Carolina's Eighth Congressional District, which includes Hoke County.

Incumbent Congressman Rep. Richard Hudson, a Republican from Cabarrus County and former Aberdeen Mayor Frank McNeill, a Democrat from Moore County have both filed to run for election to Congress. Hudson filed Monday and McNeill filed Tuesday.

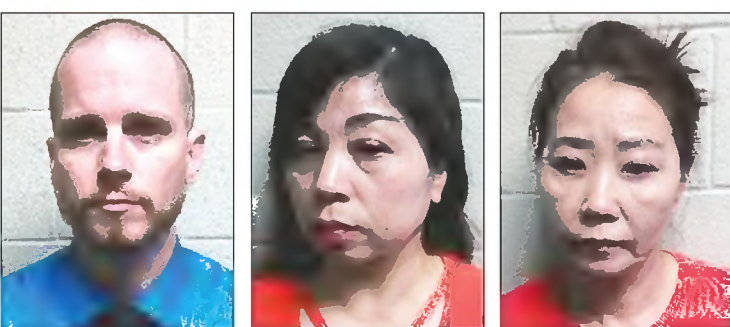
A third candidate, Navy veteran Scott Huffman, a Democrat from Charlotte, has also announced his intention to run for election to the office but had not filed as of The News-Journal deadline Tuesday. Election filing opened Monday and runs through February 28.

Hudson was first elected to office in 2012 and is now serving out his third term, which is his first representing Hoke County following Congressional redistricting. District 8 includes Hoke, Moore, Montgomery, Stanly and Cabarrus counties and parts of Rowan and Cumberland counties.

Hudson defeated Republican candidate Tim D'Annunzio and Democrat candidate Thomas Mills in the 2016 primary and general elections. The congressman, described on his website as "one of the most conservative members of Congress," has announced his bid for reelection.

"I'm running for re-election to continue to be a conservative, common sense voice for the people of North Carolina's 8th District," Hudson said in a media statement. "Now more than ever, we need conservative leaders who will stand up to the Washington elites and fight (See **CONGRESS**, page 10)

Three charged in prostitution bust



Martin

Fu

Dai

BY CATHARIN SHEPARD
Staff writer

Deputies with the Hoke County Sheriff's Office arrested three people last

week in connection with alleged prostitution at a spa on Fayetteville Road, and the Department of Homeland Security is assisting with further investigation into

whether human trafficking is involved.

Investigators arrested Jeffrey Martin, 34, of the 2400 block of Bells Ford Road in Greenville on a charge of soliciting prostitution; Jimmiao Dai, 54, of the 3000 block of Fayetteville Road on a charge of aiding and abetting prostitution; and Lifang Fu, 42, also of the 3000 block of Fayetteville Road on a charge of prostitution. All of the charges are misdemeanors. Martin received a \$1,000 unsecured

bond while the two women received \$500 secured bonds.

Investigators with the Sheriff's Office Special Operations Unit, along with agents with the State Bureau of Investigation and Homeland Security, began looking into the matter after authorities received a tip about unusual activity at Serenity Beauty and Spa, located at 3999 Fayetteville Road.

"Investigators conducted (See **PROSTITUTION**, page 10)



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City no longer accepting glass in recycling

BY KEN MACDONALD



Trash collection in Raeford this week. Glass is out of favor. (Ken MacDonald photo)

The City of Raeford is no longer accepting glass from residents for recycling. City Manager Dennis Baxley says a letter is going out instructing residents to stop putting glass containers in curb bins, because the company that processes Raeford's recycling will no longer accept it.

"Basically the way it was given to me last Friday," says Public Works director Travis Sutherland, "was that they will stop taking glass in our mainstream recyclables.

"They just said—they gave me some reasons—basically there's no market for it," says. "When it's

combined with other waste, glass gets broken, so it becomes trash instead of recycling," he said.

If residents continue to put glass in recycling curb containers, the entire recycling program is in danger, he said.

"I've asked for tolerance, and she has basically said there is not going to be any tolerance," he said.

Beginning Feb. 15 glass also won't be accepted at the city's recycling station behind Unilever.

Baxley and Sutherland says it all boils down to the value of recycling. Though there's a public misconception that recycling pays, Baxley and Sutherland say, (See **GLASS**, page 9)