

# The News-Journal

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## DOT wants feedback on 211 widening Drop-in meeting is at West Hoke Middle School July 23, 4-7 p.m.

By CATHARIN SHEPARD  
Staff writer

The North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) is seeking information and input from the public about plans to widen N.C. 211 to a four-lane road

between Raeford and Aberdeen. NCDOT officials will hold two public input sessions for residents of Hoke or Moore counties to view preliminary designs for the project and give feedback about the road widening.

The first meeting will be held

Tuesday, July 23 at West Hoke Middle School in the school gymnasium from 4-7 p.m. West Hoke Middle School is located at 201 Aberdeen Road in Raeford.

The second meeting will be held Thursday, July 25 at Aberdeen Elementary School in the

school cafeteria from 4-7 p.m. Aberdeen Elementary School is located at 503 North Sandhills Boulevard in Aberdeen.

Project staff will be available at the meetings to answer questions, discuss the early designs and receive feedback from residents.

Those interested in attending are welcome to come by any time during the meeting hours, according to information from the state agency. There will not be a formal presentation.

People who want to submit (See 211 WIDENING, page 3)

## Man charged with child sex offenses

Deputies with the Hoke County Sheriff's Office arrested a registered sex offender last week for multiple alleged sex crimes against a child, authorities said.



Locklear

Officers arrested Billy Ray Locklear, 53, of the 300 block of North McPhatter Road in Red Springs on charges including three counts of taking indecent liberties with a child, three counts of secretly peeping and three counts of possessing photographic images obtained by secretly peeping.

The alleged offenses reportedly took place in July of 2015 and April 2016 on the 300 block of North McPhatter Road, investigators said. Law enforcement took him into custody last week.

Deputies arrested Locklear July 5. He was held under a \$300,000 secured bond.

Locklear was previously convicted in 2008 of taking indecent liberties with a child, according to state public records.



The 'Mighty Marching Bucks' band pauses in Washington, D.C. with the U.S. Capitol in the background July 4. (Contributed photo)

## Marching Bucks perform in D.C. July 4

By CATHARIN SHEPARD  
Staff writer

A crowd of 20,000 people, scorching summer temperatures and a mile-and-a-half march awaited the Hoke County High School

Mighty Marching Bucks last week, as the band performed for its largest audience yet in the National Independence Day Parade in Washington, D.C.

The high school band, which has performed at Carnegie Hall in New York and many com-

petitions and events across the country, got the invitation from Gov. Roy Cooper a year and a half ago to join the Independence Day celebration in the nation's capital.

"They agreed to it and we booked it (See MARCHING BUCKS, page 8)



Barbara and Lonnie Locklear with their 180-year-old piano. (Ken MacDonald photo)

## South Hoke man's piano dates from time of Battle of the Alamo

### OTHER STUFF

By KEN MACDONALD

As I approached the front door I could hear the tinkle of a piano. The right house, I thought, since I was at Lonnie Locklear's South Hoke home to see an instrument built not long

after the Battle of the Alamo. After reading a column by Ron Huff in The News-Journal on Hammond organs, Locklear thought we might like to see his Chickering grand piano, dating from 1838.

(See OTHER STUFF, page 8)

## Spot an armadillo? Tell biologists

By CATHARIN SHEPARD  
Staff writer

Move over, possums, there's a new roadkill in town.

The nine-banded armadillo, native to South and Central America, has been creeping northwards through the United

States ever since the 1800s. They arrived in North Carolina in 2007 and reached Hoke County last year, according to state records.

Scientists with the North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission are asking the public's help in tracking the

spread of armadillos. Commission black bear and furbearer biologist Colleen Olfenbittel is working with the North Carolina Armadillo Project, an online database of photos and stories submitted by people who've spotted one of the (See ARMADILLOS, page 4)

## Three incumbents file for City Council

By CATHARIN SHEPARD  
Staff writer

Three incumbents have filed to run for another term on the Raeford City Council, according to the Hoke County Board of Elections.

Council members Bobby Conoly, John Jordan and Mary Neil King all filed Friday to run for reelection, Elections Director Towanna Jackson said.

So far no other candidates have filed to challenge the incumbents. The filing period for the city council opened July 5 and will close at noon July 19.

(See FILING, page 3)



Conoly, King and Jordan on winning night in 2015.

## McLauchlin Park official opening still to come

By DIANE ADAME  
Intern

As contractors have continued to meet their deadlines, McLauchlin Park is on track to officially open in coming

weeks with a ribbon cutting ceremony.

City manager Dennis Baxley said the park is currently unofficially open to the public, only because the ribbon cutting ceremony has not hap-

pened yet.

"We're working on planning that now and we're pushing it back a few weeks because we need the grass to get established," said Baxley. (See PARK, page 4)

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