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If it happened, it's news to us



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RAEFORD & HOKE COUNTY N.C.

Wednesday, July 21, 2021

COVID on rise again in Hoke County possibly worst in state for vaccination percentage

By CATHARIN SHEPARD
Staff writer

After months of seeing only a decline in the number of new confirmed cases of COVID-19, Hoke County, like the rest of the state, began in recent weeks seeing an increase in people catching the contagious virus.

There have been 85 new cases of COVID-19 in Hoke County over the last 14

days, including 49 new cases in the last seven days, according to the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services (NCDHHS).

Just a few weeks ago, the county was seeing as few as 10 new cases in a seven-day period. Now local leaders are concerned about the rise.

Hoke County Commission Chairman Harry Southerland pointed to the increase during a board meeting Monday. The chair-

man asked County Manager Letitia Edens to speak with Health Department staff about what else the county can do to support efforts to battle the pandemic.

Military numbers released

Hoke County remains among the lowest, and possibly the lowest county in the state for the percent of its population that has been vaccinated against COVID-19, even after accounting for members of the mili-

tary who weren't initially included in the state's vaccination totals.

Last week the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention released more accurate numbers showing how many people in each county in North Carolina have received a COVID-19 vaccine. The new maps include people who were vaccinated through the Department of Defense's vaccination efforts, among other groups that are not
(See COVID-19, page 6)



A Gift From 'The King'

Hoke County Senior Services held an outdoor luau Friday evening with dinner, dancing and the music of Elvis Presley for dozens of senior citizens at the Old Armory ball park. In attendance were the dance group I-40 Rhythm, one of many activities available at Senior Services. At left, "Elvis" takes off his scarf and gives it to a fan. At right, Linda Revels enjoys the show.

\$20,000 reward offered for arrest in murder case

By CATHARIN SHEPARD
Staff writer

The Hoke County Sheriff's Office is offering a \$20,000 reward for information leading to an arrest of a suspect or suspects involved in the January shooting death of a man from Robeson County.

The family of Jeremiah Woods wept Tuesday morning as his twin brother, Nehemiah Woods, pleaded for the public to come forward with information about the shooting that took the 39-year-old from his loved ones.

"I am broken and I can never be whole again. Every time I look in the mirror I see a part of me

that is gone. I will never get it back," Woods said.

"As a family we stand before you and plead to you to come forward if you have any information that will lead to an arrest in Jeremiah Woods' case. No information is too small. We want justice and we need answers. Those
(See REWARD, page 6)



The family pleads for help Tuesday. (Catharin Shepard photo)

Parker announces bid for mayor

By CATHARIN SHEPARD
Staff writer

Raeford mayoral candidate Chris Parker has launched his campaign for the office, and is planning upcoming events to give

voters a chance to speak with him.

Parker is the founding and senior pastor of Abundant Life Ministries in Raeford, where he has been a part of the
(See PARKER, page 6)

Raeford Animal Clinic closing after 4 decades

By CATHARIN SHEPARD
Staff writer

For more than 40 years pet lovers in Hoke County have brought their four-legged friends to Raeford Animal Clinic for care, but the longtime staple of the community will close this week.

A letter to customers from clinic founder Dr. Russell Tate Sr. and his son, administrator Russell Tate Jr., explained that the practice is shutting down.

"After providing over 40 years to

Hoke and surrounding counties with veterinary service it saddens me to inform you that we will be closing our doors for good on Thursday, July 22, 2021," the letter, posted on the clinic's website stated.

"Thousands of clients and a couple of generations – your patronage has been a blessing and it has been a sincere privilege to have served you."

When Tate opened the practice in the late 1970s, Raeford welcomed the veterinarian to town in style. A group of women in the city held an open
(See ANIMAL CLINIC, page 6)



Dr. Tate in the 1980s.

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