

# The News-Journal

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RAEFORD & HOKE COUNTY N.C.

Wednesday, August 11, 2021

## New numbers: Hoke at 41%

### New DOD data for vaccinations brings Hoke closer to state average

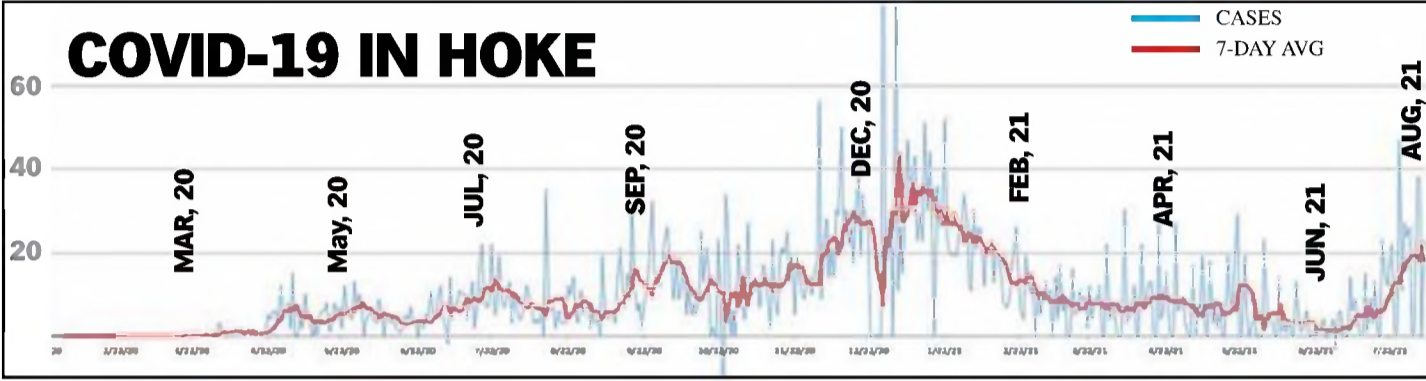
### But cases still climbing

By CATHARIN SHEPARD  
Staff writer

against COVID-19. About 46 percent have received at least one dose of a COVID-19 vaccine.

Newly released vaccination numbers from the United States Department of Defense (DOD), when added to state totals, show that 41 percent of Hoke County residents are fully vaccinated

With concerns over the Delta variant and the number of new confirmed cases on the rise, health officials are pushing toward the next goal (See COVID, page 4)



A TV crew sets up near the splash pad at the county sports complex on N.C. 211. Gunfire began nearby Monday night resulting in the deaths of two people. (Ken MacDonald photo)

## Shootout at park leaves 2 dead, 1 injured

By CATHARIN SHEPARD  
Staff writer

A "parent's worst nightmare" unfolded when children practicing softball nearby witnessed a shootout that killed two people and injured

a third Monday night. The apparently drug-related shooting started at the county sports complex on Red Springs Road.

Nakoya Maynor, 25 and Zyrique Grace, 22 were shot and killed, according to the Hoke County Sheriff's

Office. The third victim, whose name has not been released, was taken to a hospital. His condition was not immediately available.

The shooting started near the splash pad — a water feature play (See SHOOTING, page 6)

## Decision reached, but not announced in residency dispute

By CATHARIN SHEPARD  
Staff writer

The Hoke County Board of Elections has made a decision, but hasn't announced the outcome of a residency challenge a City Council member filed against Raeford mayor candidate Chris Parker.

The board held a hearing last Thursday to give both Parker and City Council member Wayne Willis, who contested Parker's candidacy, a chance to provide evidence, call witnesses and make statements in the matter.

The board has made a decision and will be mailing the result to Parker within 15 days of the hearing. Elections Director Towanna Dixon said Tuesday that since the board hadn't sent the notification yet, the office couldn't release the board's decision to media. County Attorney Grady Hunt assisted the board with legal representation and asked questions during the hearing, and was reviewing the (See RESIDENCY, page 2)

## Grassroots supply drive helps kids for school

By CATHARIN SHEPARD  
Staff writer



As summer vacation draws to a close for Hoke County students, Jessica Leach Oxendine's house is stuffed with backpacks, bottles of hand sanitizer, paper and pencils.

"Really it looks like a Walmart threw up in my living room," she joked.

Oxendine said her family happened to see an opportunity to do some good when

Ed Megill of Copperheads LEMC Sandhills, Kirk Leach of Raeford Hoke Mini Storage, and Leach's grandkids Aaleyah Oxendine, Alexis Lester, Ella Lane and Landen Oxendine supported the drive.

they came across a sale on backpacks. Her children wanted to help other kids start the new school year off right. They quickly snapped up the backpacks.

"We bought just about every one they had," she said. That was just the start. The family business, Raeford Hoke Mini Storage, hosted a school supply drive to collect more items. The Copperheads Law Enforcement Motorcycle Club Sandhills Chapter jumped in to help.

With supporters from across Hoke County and beyond, the giveaway organizers were able to stuff dozens of backpacks full of school supplies for students. They also worked on putting together boxes of classroom necessities (See SUPPLY DRIVE, page 6)

## Airwoman from Raeford dies in Kuwait



King

The United States Department of Defense last week announced the death of an Air Force chief master sergeant from Raeford.

Chief Master Sgt. Tresse Zanette King, 54, died August 3 in a non-combat related incident at Ali Al Salem Air Base,

Kuwait, the DOD said in a statement. The incident is under investigation, which is protocol for the death of a military service member. Her remains were flown back to the United States last week and arrived at Dover Air Force Base for dignified transfer.

King is survived by family including her mother, Eunice-teen Diggs; her children George King and Jecia Anderson; and two grandchildren, reports said. Her daughter is a former candidate for Hoke County Commissioner.

(See KING, page 3)

## Search finds woman's body, suspect arrested

Hoke County Sheriff's Office investigators found a missing woman dead inside a home in South Hoke and have a homicide suspect in custody, and also located a missing child, according to authorities.

Lumberton Police Department officers charged Donny Dwayne Sessum, 41, in connection with the case, after he reportedly attempted to flee from arrest.

A neighbor noticed that 38-year-old Jessica Nicole Hall hadn't been seen in several days and contacted the sheriff's office, Hoke County Sheriff Dr. Hubert Peterkin said. Investigators obtained a search warrant and just after midnight last Tuesday searched a house on the 200 block of Applewood Lane. The emergency response team found Hall dead inside the home, apparently shot to death, the sheriff said.

The sheriff's office contacted the North Carolina State Bureau of Investigation (SBI) for assistance with the crime scene and help locating a missing child. Hoke authorities notified Lumberton police, who located the suspect and pursued him in a car chase. After the chase police detained (See HOMICIDE, page 3)

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