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If it happened, it's news to us



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RAEFORD & HOKE COUNTY N.C.

Wednesday, September 29, 2021

Booster shots available in Hoke 4 more deaths, 111 new cases reported in last week

BY CATHARIN SHEPARD
Staff writer

The Hoke County Health Department and Cape Fear Valley Health both announced last week they are now offering booster COVID-19 shots for people who are eligible to receive one.

The booster shot is only avail-

able in the Pfizer vaccine, as boosters of the Moderna and Johnson and Johnson shot are not yet approved or authorized for emergency use. The booster shot is not approved for people under the age of 18.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) rec-

ommend a booster shot only for certain people, at least six months after their first two shots.

According to the CDC guidance:

•People 65 years old and older and residents in long-term care settings should receive a booster shot.

•People ages 50-64 with certain underlying medical conditions should receive a booster shot.

•People ages 18-49 who are at high risk for severe COVID-19 due to certain underlying conditions may receive a booster shot, based on their individual benefits and risks.

•People ages 18-64 who are at increased risk for COVID-19 exposure and transmission because of occupational or institutional setting may receive a booster shot, based on their individual benefits and risks.

The underlying medical (See COVID, page 3)

Fight, threats mar school year

BY CATHARIN SHEPARD
Staff writer

After a fight on campus Thursday led to threats of more violence, Hoke County High School told students to stay home Friday and attend online classes.

"There was a large altercation after school yesterday. Later a threat was made for retaliation. In an overabundance of caution, the school will be remote today to assure student and staff safety," a message on the Hoke High School Facebook said Friday.

The school sent a message to families about the change, though some parents said they didn't receive the information until their children told them about it.

Hoke County wasn't the only school district in North Carolina that had to deal with violent threats last week. Threats on social media led to multiple schools in Cumberland County, Wake County, Nash County and Johnston County going on alert last Tuesday and Wednesday.

Most of those threats were later determined to be hoaxes, and schools in those counties (See THREATS, page 10)



Hoke Commissioner James Leach, the man for whom the aquatic center is named, shows construction progress Tuesday. (Catharin Shepard photo)

Pool completion on target for 2022 Walls now, steel next, Leach says Hoke deserves building

By Catharin Shepard
Staff writer

Construction of the James A. Leach Aquatic and Recreation Center is on target to wrap up late next year, with the doors likely to open to the public in November 2022.

Commissioner James Leach, the center's namesake, said this week that things are getting "exciting." Drivers passing by the construction site on U.S. 401, just down the road from Walmart and East Hoke Middle School, can see walls start to go up.

"So far it looks good. It's on

time. We're looking for the steel maybe a week from today to come in, and that will be a major part of it as they're putting in walls," Leach said.

When the building is done, its partial glass exterior will catch the attention of people as they come into Hoke County. Cur-

rently the interior walls are going up, with a lot of work left to do over the next year.

Fortunately the construction team has had fairly good weather to work with, helping to keep things on track. The county also set prices into the contract

(See POOLS, page 7)

OTHER STUFF

BY KEN MACDONALD

Our feet were tired, having walked all over Washington on an outing with our nine-year-old granddaughter to teach civics, art and travel and how to survive on potato chips, mac and cheese, and ice cream. We found a bench at the Hirshhorn Sculpture Garden, and sat in front of a Henry Moore piece. "What do you think of this art?" I asked. "Where's the art?" she replied. I laughed. Holly heard me laugh and told me later she thought it was because she just happened to pick a piece of sculpture for viewing entitled three-way. Oops.

We got as close as we could to the Capitol, briefly got her hopes up when we proposed walking the mall, toured (See OTHER STUFF, page 8)

First Friday, Fall Festival on the way

With the weather cooling off, there are events on the way to help families have fun and enjoy what Raeford has to offer in the fall.

The First Friday on Main Street in Raeford is set for 6-10 p.m. Friday,

October 1. The event will feature a performance by the Jebb Mac Band, a crossover country group that blends multiple genres into country music.

There will be free face painting, free balloon twisters and complemen-

tary axe throwing. Food trucks will be present to sell food and there will also be adult beverages available for purchase.

The event is open to the public. First (See DOWNTOWN EVENTS, page 8)

Architect picked for courthouse, office building

BY CATHARIN SHEPARD
Staff writer

If the North Carolina General Legislature comes through with \$31 million in funding for a new Hoke

County Courthouse, Metcon will work with Silling Architects to design and build it.

The county expects to spend another estimated \$5-6 million to build a new county administration building

alongside the courthouse, with that project going to a collaboration of HH Architecture and MSquare Construction.

The Hoke County Commissioners (See ARCHITECTS, page 8)

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