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If it happened, it's news to us



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RAEFORD & HOKE COUNTY N.C.

Wednesday, October 13, 2021

3 more die as numbers decline Vaccination rate in Hoke still remains below one-third

By CATHARIN SHEPARD
Staff writer

Three more people in Hoke County have died after testing positive for COVID-19, even as the number of newly reported infections continues to fall. As of Tuesday, the North

Carolina Department of Health and Human Services (NCDHHS) reported a total of 77 people in Hoke County have died after contracting COVID-19 since the start of the pandemic. The three recent deaths were reported over the past week. Despite the increasing death

toll, overall Hoke County and North Carolina's numbers of new infections are going down. Hoke has seen 163 new confirmed cases of the virus in the past 14 days, including 64 cases over the past seven days. Those numbers are among the lowest since late spring and early sum-

mer, before a surge in cases began putting pressure on hospitals. Hoke has seen a total of just under 7,000 lab-confirmed cases of COVID-19 during the pandemic, according to NCDHHS. The Hoke County School system reported just 18 cases for the school week ending Friday,

October 8. That figure includes 16 students and two staff members across all of the district's public schools. The district includes about 9,000 students and 1,500 staff members. The cases were spread out across the district with most (See COVID, page 5)



David Fernandez, a teacher at Turlington Alternative School, doesn't keep a dull desk. It's indicative of his interest in tech and teaching. (Catharin Shepard photo)

Teacher brings technology to the classroom

By CATHARIN SHEPARD
Staff writer

As the tiny robot zoomed across the sheet of paper, following a curving line drawn in a special marker, teacher David Fernandez picked up another marker, added some lines and changed its path. Fernandez is a first-year teacher at Turlington Alternative School, where he teaches robotics, coding and 3-D printing to help youth change their own path to the future. As part of the Hoke Career and Technical Education program, Fernandez is bringing his own

lifelong curiosity and appreciation for technology into the classroom – and showing the next generation just what's possible with the right knowledge. His classroom desk tells his story: military memorabilia and insignia from his time serving in the United States Army sit alongside R2-D2, the dome-headed droid from Star Wars, and a Nintendo Game Boy-shaped notebook. "It's ok to not have it ALL figured out," a reassuring sign reads. Fernandez said his interest in technology started early in life. (See TEACHER, page 5)



Downtown during the 2018 Fall Festival (File photo)

Fall Festival street fair is Sat.

The North Carolina Fall Festival returns this week with live music on two stages, the annual Turkey Bowl football game and Senior Day fun for Hoke's senior citizens. Melissa Kaye Senior Day is set for Wednesday, October 13. The event is named after the late Fall Festival Director Melissa Kaye Pittman. The event will happen this year at the Robert A. Wright Agricultural Building, located at 645 Palmer Street in Raeford, next to the Hoke County Health Department. The Turkey Bowl Football game and Hoke High Homecoming is Friday, October 15. The Hoke County High School Bucks will take on the Union Pines High School Vikings from Moore County in a battle for the Turkey Bowl trophy. The home game is also Homecoming and Hoke High Senior Night. There won't be a parade or Stuffin' and Stompin' dinner this year, but there are many live acts on the schedule and plenty of vendors who will be selling fair food favorites in the food court at the street fair Saturday. The street fair is going to be from 9 a.m.-4 p.m. Saturday, October 16 on Main Street in Raeford. Thousands of people will turn out to enjoy live entertainment on two stages from bands, singers, and dancers. Some of the performers set to take the stages include The Sand Band, Guy Unger Band, South Ridge Bluegrass, the Dowdy Boys, Chris Nelson, Right Turn and Creek Water. Vendors will have all kinds of arts and crafts, decorations, home goods items, toys for the kids and great gift items for sale. Funnel cakes, lemonade, fresh sausage hot off the grill and lots (See FALL FESTIVAL, page 5)

Voting opens, but races are uncontested

By CATHARIN SHEPARD
Staff writer

One-stop early voting in the Raeford municipal elections for three uncontested races starts this Thursday. One-stop early voting begins Thursday, October 14 and runs until Saturday, October 30. Raeford

residents can vote early Monday through Friday, 8:30 a.m.-5 p.m. at the Board of Elections office in the Pratt Building on Main Street in Raeford. There will also be one Saturday of early voting, October 30 from 8 a.m.-3 p.m. Polls will open for the municipal election on Election Day, Tuesday, November 2 from 6:30 a.m.-7:30

p.m. The polling places for the municipal election include Raeford #1 – Hoke County Public Library, Raeford #2 – Juvenile Justice Conference Room and Raeford #4 – Raeford Civic Center. There are three races on the ballot, and all of them are uncontested. Only those registered voters who (See VOTING, page 5)

Man on moped killed in Rockfish accident

A man from Spring Lake died last week in a two-vehicle accident that happened at a Rockfish intersection. Roosevelt Gay Sr. of Spring Lake died when the moped he was riding on collided with a passenger car, according to the North Carolina Highway Patrol.

The accident happened around 3:30 p.m. Thursday, October 7 at the intersection of Lindsay Road and Adcox Road. Gay was driving a 2004 Honda moped on Lindsay Road, and Anthony George of Parkton was driving a Mazda passenger car on Adcox Road, the Highway Patrol report stated.

George stopped at the intersection and apparently didn't see Gay coming down Lindsay Road. George pulled out in front of Gay and the two vehicles collided in the roadway, according to the Highway Patrol. Rescuers responded to the scene of the crash, but Gay did not survive. (See ACCIDENT, page 5)

Fight leads to stabbing, arrest at local restaurant

Raeford police took a suspect into custody Friday night after an employee was stabbed at Wangz Bar and Grill on Main Street. Officers with the Raeford Police Department arrested Andrew Ray Smith, 37, on a charge of assault with a deadly weapon with intent to kill inflicting serious injury. More charges are pending against Smith, authorities said in a

press release. Police responded around 6:35 p.m. to a call of a stabbing at the restaurant, located on the 200 block of South Main Street. When officers arrived they found Yamani Albert, an employee of Wangz, had sustained "multiple lacerations" to his body. "His assailant, Mr. Andrew Ray Smith, was still on scene (See STABBING, page 5)

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