

HOKE COUNTY NEWSLETTER

SPRING 2013

Our New Website is Live!

Hoke County invites you to explore its redesigned website! On April 4, 2012, Hoke County officially launched its new website at www.hokecounty.net. Current and prospective residents of Hoke County now have access to a number of new and improved tools designed to help them quickly locate the information and services they need. A prime objective of the redesign was to create a Website that would provide up-to-date information to our residents in an efficient manner.

The new *Alert Center* and *News Flash* features allow the County to provide critical information to resi-

dents instantly. In addition, a new *Notify Me* option allows people to sign up to receive alerts via email or mobile phone text message about special events, public meetings, job opportunities, and a variety of other County activities.

Our new website offers a clean, modern design with intuitive navigation. The search feature directs people to specific information while interactive online forms allow citizens to complete County business without ever leaving home. The website's user-friendly design provides more efficient access to County resources, online payments and event schedules.

Created with the user experience firmly in mind, the website has been designed to be compatible with today's browsers and mobile devices. The site was created over the past several months in a joint effort between County Departments.

"Completely redesigning the Hoke County website was a large undertaking," said Hoke County's Director of Information Technology, Candace Pierce. "The new website site reflects our growth as a County and establishes a framework that we can easily build on. Hoke County is fortunate to have County Commissioners and a County Manager that understand the value of technology in today's world."

New content will continue to roll out on the site over the coming months as more features are added to increase functionality.

Hoke IT Dept



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Welcome!

Welcome to the Hoke County Newsletter. Inside you'll find information of what's going on inside Hoke County.

If you have any questions, comments, or concerns, please email

Newsletter @hokecounty.org



News from the Tax Assessor's Office

There is still time to apply for exclusions granted to the elderly, permanently disabled persons or totally disabled veterans for the 2013 tax year. Deadline for applications is June 1, 2013.

Elderly and Permanently disabled homestead exclusion excludes \$25,000 or 50% of the value of the house and land (up to one acre), whichever is

greater. This exclusion is for your permanent legal residence only. Owner's previous year income cannot exceed \$28,100 for the 2013 exclusion. Proof of income is required.

Disabled Veteran exclusion excludes \$45,000 in value of the veteran's permanent residence. The veteran must own and occupy the resi-

dence. A veteran, as of January 1, 2013 must have a 100% total and permanent disability that is service-connected or has received benefits for specially adapted housing under 38 USC 2101. Unmarried surviving spouse may also receive the exclusion.

Applications may be obtained at the Hoke County Tax Office or from the

County webpage: www.hokecounty.net, choose Tax Office, Tax Forms.

Additional information may be obtained by calling the Tax Listing Office at 910-875-8751.

Jennie Gibson

News from the License Plate Agency

The Hoke County license plate agency has continued to pick up business with the recent closings of local license plate agencies in Saint Pauls and Laurinburg. Even with the increase in customer traffic, we have continued to obtain excellent monthly audit reports as well as maintain an outstanding error rate – one of the best in the state! We are very proud of these achievements and will do our best to continue to be the license plate agency of choice for our customers, many of which travel great distances to utilize our office due to the short lines and speedy service. We even received the following compliment, called in by a customer on Friday, March 8, 2013: "Mr. C.

Palmer called in to the DMV Commissioner's Hotline to compliment the girls at the Hoke County license plate agency. He said that agency has great employees...they are kind, patient, and courteous." It's not every day someone takes the time out of their busy schedule to call in a compliment for someone, so we feel quite honored!

Most everyone has heard there are some changes being implemented in the state of North Carolina in regards to how we pay our vehicle property taxes. According to the North Carolina Division of Motor Vehicles, these changes should be in effect beginning July 2013. All license plate agencies across the state

will be attending training seminars throughout the month of April to learn more about this new system and how transactions will be processed. According to House Bill 1779, the goal for the change is to combine vehicle property taxes and license plate renewal fees into one bill. Their hope is that this change will make the renewal process easier for the general public, as well as improve the collection rates of vehicle property taxes across the state. We are still learning all the details of this new system, but we have high hopes that it will all transition smoothly and will ultimately be a better system for North Carolinians. For more information, please log on to

<http://www.ncdot.gov/dmv/vehicle/tagtax>.

We would like remind everyone that all license plate agencies in North Carolina are compensated per transaction by NCDMV. Therefore, since our agency is operated under the County of Hoke, all transactions you bring to us rather than processing by mail or online are ultimately benefitting the county!

The Hoke County License Plate Agency is open Monday through Friday, from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. We are located at 520 W. Donaldson Ave., Raeford, NC, 28376, and we look forward to serving you!

Amanda Ward

2013 Municipal Election Information

For Mayor and 2 City Councilmen

Candidate Filing Period

12 noon, July 5 to
12 noon, July 19

One Stop Voting

Thursday, October 17 to
Saturday, November 2

Election Day

Tuesday, November 5

Animal Shelter News

The Animal Shelter has been working extremely hard to place the unwanted animals of Hoke County into loving forever homes. We are proud to announce that in the past 2 years compared to the 2 years prior we have had 421 more animals go to rescue organizations! We have also had 128 more adoptions and 667 less animals euthanized! We are very proud of these numbers, but realize that



Melanie

if each pet owner were to spay/neuter their pet it would help the pet overpopulation significantly

Through neutering, you can help your dog or cat live a happier, healthier, longer life. Spaying a female dog also eliminates the messiness associated with the heat cycle. Neutering of male dogs and cats can prevent certain undesirable sexual behaviors, such as urine marking, humping, male aggression and the urge to roam. If you have more than one pet in your household, all the pets will generally get along better if they are neutered.

A long-term benefit of spaying and neutering is improved health for both

cats and dogs. Spaying females prior to their first heat cycle nearly eliminates the risk of breast cancer and totally prevents uterine infections and uterine cancer. Neutering males prevents testicular cancer and enlargement of the prostate gland, and greatly reduces their risk for tumors.

It is proven that 1 cat and her offspring can produce 720,000 in 7 years time. Only 10% of animals admitted to shelters have been spayed or neutered prior to arrival. It costs less to spay or neuter your pet than it does to raise a litter of puppies or kittens. These alarming statistics present a good enough reason, all by themselves, for prevent-



ing more pet animal births. Simply put, the widespread failure to spay or neuter dog's results in homelessness, misery, cruelty, and death. If you or someone you know needs assistance in finding a low cost spay/neuter please call the shelter at 910.875.4827. The staff would be more than happy to help you in this matter.

Kristi Cartwright

Public Works

Projects

With Phase V Water System Improvements almost complete the Public Works Department has secured \$2 million dollars of additional grant funding to further expand and improve the water system. The new project is Hwy 401 Water Improvements and is targeted towards a sustainable water system capable of accommodating commercial growth in the Urban Service Area.

The Golden Leaf Foundation and the North Carolina Rural Center have graciously awarded \$1 million dollars each to-

ward the project. Infrastructure improvements include additional production wells, 12" transmission main, additional tie-in to the PWC system and renovation to an existing elevated tank on Adcox Rd.

Along with the water improvement projects we currently have two sewer projects on going. The Phase 1A Sewer Project installed sewer infrastructure to serve the two hospitals and will ultimately be incorporated into the Phase 1B Wastewater Treatment Plant Project that is scheduled to bid in the coming months. The plant will be located on



Ellis Road and with the addition of outfalls and pump stations will except all Hoke County existing and future flows.

Reminder

It may not feel like it, but spring is here and soon lawns will be greening up. Customers of Hoke County Public Works with irrigation systems are reminded to have a certified technician to perform the annual service on your backflow preventer. For additional information contact Kelly McGee, 910-875-6704.

Water Restrictions are still in effect. If you do not have a copy of the restrictions they can be viewed on the Public Works web page at www.hokecounty.net.

Jenny McDuffie

Child Abuse Prevention Month

April is National Child Abuse Prevention Month and we can all play a part in preventing child maltreatment and promoting well-being. Blue Ribbons will dot Main Street during the month of April, in an effort to remind the community that we need to work together to make our community safer for our children and families. Join us on 4/25/13 at the Hoke County Public Library from 10 am to 2 pm to learn more about what you can do to help prevent child abuse/neglect.

In April, and throughout the year, Hoke County Department of Social Services encourages all

individuals and organizations to play a role in making Hoke County a better place for children and families. By ensuring that parents have the knowledge, skills, and resources they need to care for their children, we can help promote children's social and emotional well-being and prevent child maltreatment within in families and communities.

Research shows that when parents possess six protective factors, the risk for neglect and abuse diminish and optimal outcomes for children, youth, and families are promoted. The six protective

factors are:

- * Nurturing and attachment
- * Knowledge of parenting and child and youth development
- * Parental resilience
- * Social Connections
- * Concrete supports for parents
- * Social and emotional developmental well-being

April is a time to celebrate the important role that communities play in protecting children. Everyone's participation is critical. Focusing on ways to build and promote protec-

tive factors, in every interaction with children and families, is the best thing our community can do to prevent child maltreatment and promote optimal child development. For more information on what you or your organization can do to help prevent child abuse and promote well-being of children and families, call Hoke County Department of Social Services: Terry Stanton, CPS Supervisor, 878-1929 or Kristi Pigford, Program Manager, 878-4048.

Social Services

Pancake Breakfast



Hoke County United Fund is sponsoring a Pancake Breakfast at Andy's of Raeford on Saturday, April 27, 2013 from 7am until 10 am. The ticket price for Adults is \$5.00 and for Seniors age 60 and up and for children age 12 and under the price is \$3.00. The breakfast consists of 3 large pancakes, two strips of bacon and a drink for

this very small price! The Hoke County United Funds provides funds to the Senior General Assistance program administered by the Hoke County Department of Social Services. The funds in the Senior GA program are used to assist non-Medicaid Seniors with the cost of medicine, doctor visit, eye glasses, ensure, etc. Unfortunately the

funding for this program has been limited in the past few years because of low contributions to the United Fund organization. Please call Tammy Chaney at 878-1935 to buy a ticket for the Pancake Breakfast and to find out more about United Fund and the Senior GA program.

Tammy Chaney

Parks & Recreation: Upcoming Events

Opening ceremonies will be held on **Saturday, April 13** from 10am-12noon at Hoke High School Stadium.

Senior Games will run **Thursday April 25-May**

14th. The games schedules have been posted online, and can be found at www.hokecounty.org.

Summer camp registration will begin **May 1st.**

The annual Mother's Day Luncheon will be hosted on **May 11** from 12noon—2pm in the Senior Room, located at 423 E. Central Ave.

Pat Shouse



Senior Services

Love and fellowshiping was in the air for the Senior Valentine gathering in February. The seniors who participated enjoyed picking names to give cards to other seniors. Also, the seniors that participated had fun with the mystery work search game. Many seniors won wonderful gifts and the food was delicious thanks to Bo's catering staff.



Upcoming Events

The seniors are getting ready for the senior games and they are getting better each day. We are looking to WIN!!! WIN!!! WIN!!!

The 2nd annual Senior Services of Hoke County contest for King and Queen starts 2/4/2013 to 9/6/2013.

The new hours of Senior Services activities from 12 to 4, Monday to Thursday will start this summer.

The Director and staff members of Senior Services would like to give a special THANKS to Brady

Lawson of MED 1 SERVICES for training Seniors Services staff members in CPR, FIRST AIDE, and Automated External Defibrillator (AED).

All the staff and director of Seniors Services would like to give THANKS and PRAISE to everyone for the donations, services, and time given to help us to assist the seniors.

Ester Harrell



Hoke County Solid Waste

Daylight Savings time is here again and those who are pushed to get to the convenience sites before 6 pm now have an extra half hour. Summer operational hours are from 7 am until 6:30 pm at all five of our convenience sites.

We continue having issues with people bringing large televisions to our convenience sites. Any

television one person cannot easily lift should be brought to the Transfer Station. Be mindful that one man picks up these items from our convenience sites and must lift them into the bed of a dump truck.

Most are now acclimated with our new convenience site, and we have received many positive comments. Remnants

from the old site will soon be completely gone and perhaps then those who continue to throw trash there will stop. Our Waste Enforcement Officer is now watching the area and the fines for littering can exceed \$200.00 plus court costs.

In recent months I have received complaints from farmers of illegal dumping on their land. It is often in

areas that have been dumped on and cleaned up before. I encourage anyone having this problem to dig trenches or put up chains or cables to deter this activity. Remember: those looking for a site to illegally dump will go back to a place where they successfully dumped before.

Don Russell

Congratulations!

Congratulations to Sharon Foy, Computer Lab Instructor for Hoke Reading/Literacy Council, who has been named Hoke High School's Stu-

dent Support Person of the Year. We are fortunate to have her as part of our team. Well done Sharon !!!

Carole Taitt



Literacy Council at the 2013 Hoke Expo



Barbara Tyson and Carole Taitt of the Hoke Reading/Literacy Council speak with the County manager Tim Johnson.

Louise McLeod and Barbara Tyson representing the Hoke Reading/Literacy Council at the Expo.



Wanted: Reading Buddies

Are you a high school or college student looking for a great place to volunteer this summer?

Hoke Reading/Literacy Council is in need of volunteers to work with ele-

mentary and middle school children who need help to improve their reading skills.

If you are interested in becoming a volunteer or if you have a child who is

struggling with reading, please contact us at 910-875-2145 or via e-mail hrlc@nc.rr.com

Carole Taitt



Hoke County Public Library Statistics

In the January-March 2013 Quarter, Hoke County Public Library Staff...



LOANED:
18,239 Books & Other Items, Including:
9,204 Adult Fiction & Non-Fiction
7,502 Juvenile Fiction & Non-Fiction
1,398 DVDs, CDs & Other Non-Print

ANSWERED:
3,979 Reference Questions

SUPERVISED & ASSISTED:
5,517 Patrons With
29,791 Computer Searches

PRESENTED:
225 Programs For All Ages, With **6,591** Total Attendance

WELCOMED:
24,414 Patrons To The Library

Sheila Evans

Upcoming Programs & Events at the Library

Adult Computer Classes

Tuesdays at 5:00 pm

Thursdays & Saturdays at 10:00 am

Senior Bingo

2nd Wednesdays at 10:00 am

Friends of the Library Monthly Meeting

4th Mondays at 6:30 pm

Preschool Storytime

Tuesday mornings at 10:00 am

Homework Central

Select weekday afternoons
 Contact Natalie at 875-2502



Wonderful Women of Hoke

Friday, April 12 at 4:00 pm

Friends Book Club

Friday, April 26 at 11:30 am

F*A*R Family Literacy Programs

Saturday, April 13 at 3pm
 Thursday, April 18 at 6:30 pm

Boogie in the Books

Saturday, April 20 at 7:00 pm

A Friends of the Library Fundraiser
 Tickets: \$10.00 each

Summer Reading 2013

Reading for prizes starts June 1
 Programs begin after school year ends

Veterans' Medical & Personnel Service Records

Have you lost or need to replace yours or a family member's individual's service record? Know what information you are entitled to and how to go about receiving it. An individual's complete service record is available from the National Personnel Records Center (NPRC) in St. Louis, Missouri to the former service member or, if deceased, to his/her next of kin (parents, spouse, or children). Limited information (such as dates of service, awards, and training) is available to anyone. Not available to the general public is information which would invade an individual's privacy; for example, medical records, Social Security number, or present address. The NPRC receives many requests for service records each week, so a request will be processed with greater speed and accuracy if the requester uses a Standard Form 180, "Request Pertaining to Military Records".

If requesting the records of a relative, a requester should mention the relationship to the former member (brother, uncle, or other). There is no charge for this service to former service members or their next of kin. For others, a nominal fee is charged for research and reproduction costs. You may submit more than one request per envelope or fax, but submit a separate request (either SF 180 or letter) for each individual whose records are being requested. Send by to National Per-

sonnel Records Center, Military Personnel Records, 9700 Page Avenue, St. Louis, MO 63132-5100 or send by fax to 314-801-9195. NPRC will respond in writing by U.S. Mail.

You may also check out the official NPRC web page at <http://www.archives.gov/veterans/military-service-records/index.html> for more information about form SF 180. Order processing response times for records requested from the NPRC vary greatly depending on the nature of the request. For example, the NPRC Military Records Facility currently has a backlog of 180,000 requests and receives approximately 5,000 requests per day. Routine requests for separation documents currently require only 2-4 weeks for servicing. However, requests that involve reconstruction efforts due to the 1973 fire or older records which require extensive search efforts may take much longer. The average turnaround time on all requests is currently running at approximately 12 weeks.

The Official Military Personnel Files (OMPF) held at the National Personnel Records Center (NPRC) are administrative records containing information about the subject's military service history. Many OMPFs contain both personnel and former active duty health records, but the service branches discontinued retiring the health record portion to the NPRC in the 1990s. In the past, all of the mili-

tary services retired the individual health record, along with the personnel record, to the NPRC upon a service member's separation from service. The Army and the Air Force retired its health records with the Official Military Personnel File, while the Department of the Navy (including the Navy, Marine Corps and Coast Guard) retired these files separately to the NPRC until the 1980s.

Health records cover the outpatient, dental and mental health treatment that former members received while in military service. Health records include induction and separation physical examinations, as well as routine medical care (doctor/dental visits, lab tests, etc.) when the patient was not admitted to a hospital.

In comparison, clinical (hospital inpatient) records were generated when active duty members were actually hospitalized while in the service. Typically, these records are NOT filed with the health records but are generally retired to the NPRC by the facility which created them. Medical records from the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) are also NOT included.

In the 1990s, the military services discontinued the practice of filing health records with the personnel record portion at the NPRC. The Army began retiring most of its former members' health records to the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) on Oc-

tober 16, 1992. The Navy began on January 31, 1994. The Air Force began on May 1, 1994. The Marine Corps began on May 1, 1994. The Coast Guard began on April 1, 1998.

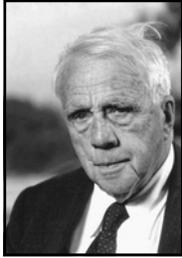
After the dates listed above, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), Records Management Center, in St. Louis, MO, became responsible for maintaining active duty health records and managing their whereabouts when on loan within the VA. Call the VA toll free number at 1-800-827-1000 to identify the current location of specific health records and to find out how to obtain releasable documents or information.

Filing a claim for medical benefits? Veterans who plan to file a claim for medical benefits with the [Department of Veterans Affairs \(VA\)](#) do not need to request a copy of their military health record from the NPRC. After a claim is filed, the VA will obtain the original health record from the NPRC. In addition, many health records were lent to the Department of Veterans Affairs prior to the [1973 Fire](#). Veterans who filed a medical claim should contact the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) toll free number at 1-800-827-1000 in order to determine if their record is already on file.

For further assistance contact your local Veterans Services representative.

Randy Smith
910.875.2147

Fences in Hoke County



The poet Robert Frost made famous the proverb "good fences make good neighbors" and in the spirit of being neighborly the Planning Department would like to inform you about what the Zoning Ordinance says about putting up fences in unincorporated Hoke County.

Fences are allowed in all zoning districts for both commercial and residential uses but today we're going to just talk about fences for individual homes. Before putting up any fence you must first apply for and receive a zoning permit from the Planning Department. Zoning permits for fences are \$75.00 and are typically issued the day you

apply for the permit. In addition to the zoning permit there are some requirements that must be followed when putting a fence up. Most fence types are allowed in Hoke County, the fences allowed in the county are: open picket, post and rail, wrought iron, open wire (hurricane and chain link), brick or stone (solid or pierced), and solid plank.

While all of the above fencing types are allowed there are some special requirements that must be followed when putting up a fence:

- Open picket, post and rail, wrought iron, and open wire fences cannot be any taller than six (6) feet in height.
- Solid plank, brick, or stone fences in front yards cannot be taller than four (4) feet in height.

Solid plank, brick, or stone fences in the side or rear yard of the property cannot be taller than six (6) feet in height.

And this final requirement is very important to pay attention to: Fences must be built with the finished side facing your neighboring property owner or the street.

While that is the end of the zoning ordinance requirements for fences the Planning Department staff has some tips and advice you should consider before starting that fence project:

- If you are a part of a private homeowners or property owners association with private restrictive covenants you should check to see if those rules will allow a fence in your neighborhood. While the zoning ordinance may allow fences, private covenants can still restrict

what you can do on your property.

It is important that you do not place your fence on your neighbor's property so if you are unsure about where your property line is you are encouraged to contact a surveyor before placing a fence. If you are over the property line on someone else's land you may have to remove the fence.

As always, if you have any questions about fences or any other question about zoning in Hoke County please do not hesitate to contact Robert Farrell or Jackie Lowery with the Planning Department at (910) 875-8407.

Robert Farrell



Cooperative Extension News

4-H Recognizes Outstanding Youth & Volunteers

Hoke County 4-H held the 2013 Achievement Night on February 25, at the Senior Center with over 90 people in attendance. This program honored the accomplishments of our 4-H youth and volunteers.

The guest speaker was Scott Enroughty, Project Coordinator, Operation Military Kids-North Carolina 4-H. He spoke to the youth about getting in-

involved in helping to support our military families. There were a number of military families represented that night.

Project awards were given in the following categories. The 5-8 year old Cloverbuds were Elizabeth Baker – Dog; Clayton Godwin – Strawberry; Emily Daniels – Pork; Clair Fields – Citizenship; Jake Hoover – Fire Safety ; Maxwell Hoover – Bird; Michael Landry – Snowflakes; Jonathan Landry –

Veterinarian; Emily Loes – Happy Kitchen, Save the Earth, Entrepreneurship, Fossils and The Cherokee; Janeah Miles – Clothing; Hayden Sullivan – Lighthouses; Riley Sutherland – Exploring the Community.

The 9-10 year old category included: Coleman Burns placed first with Wood Art; Kayley Dwyer placed second with Writing; Austin Godwin won first with Strawberry; Mollie Hoover placed first with Photography; Han-

nah Sullivan won first with Dog; Trevor Young placed first with Automotive Modeling.

Mark Landry won first place with Making a Movie in the 11-12 age category.

In the 13-15 year old category, Bryce Davis placed first with Automotive Brakes; Hunter Davis won first with Fly Tying; Alexander Stephens placed second with Beekeeping; Joshua Young placed first with Extract-

ing Honey.

The following youth were honored with a leadership medal in giving much of their time in leading club meetings, assisting with workshops, and officer roles: Sabria Brown, Abigail Clark, Bryce Davis, Hunter Davis, Amanda Daniels, Samantha Daniels, Brianna Winston, Davion McQueen, and Elijah Wood.

The following club leaders were honored: Michael Bower and Kenneth Craig – Hot Shots Shooting Sports Club; Shirley Hart – Southside Club; Sherry Wood – Lucky Leaders and Monster Club. Volunteers present were also honored. Volunteers are important to 4-H in giving their time to clubs, teaching workshops, supporting junior campers, and teaching youth the life skills and leadership needed for their future.

4-H Achievement Night

Pictured left to right (standing below): Elijah Wood, Abigail Clark, Amanda Daniels, Samantha Daniels, Brianna Winston, Hunter Davis, Bryce Davis, Davion McQueen and Cathy Brown.

To enroll as a member or volunteer in 4-H, please contact Cathy Brown at (910) 875-2162 or cathy_brown@ncsu.edu by email or visit our office



at 116 West Prospect Avenue in Raeford.

The **4-H Life Skills** program will conduct the first committee meeting this year on **Monday April 8, 2013 at 4:00pm** at the NC Cooperative Extension office. Call Shirley Rush at (910) 875-2162 for more information about this committee and the 4-H Life Skills program.

Horticulture

The Hoke County Cooperative Extension Center is now taken subscriptions to the **Community Supported Agriculture** (CSA) program. The subscription consists of five weeks of fresh produce, eggs, honey and fruits from our local farmers. The CSA will begin **May 8th and run through June 5th** with pick up days being each Wednesday at the Hoke County Cooperative Extension Center located at 116 West Prospect Avenue in Raeford. The cost of the subscription is \$70.00. There is a meat (beef) option for those who would like to receive a weekly fresh cut of beef as well. The cost for the beef is \$60.00. Subscribers have the option to do both if they would like to do so. Please make checks payable to Hoke County Farmers Market, for more information you may con-

tact Mary Hollingsworth, Horticulture Agent for the Hoke County Extension Center at (910) 875-3461 or Wanda Cohen at (910) 489-4842.

The Hoke County Extension Master Gardeners will be hosting a **Container Gardening Workshop on April 20th, 2013 at 10:00am**. The workshop will be located at 1275 Bethel Road in Raeford. Participants will learn how to create a beautiful container garden as well as how to properly care for the containers once you have taken them home. Participants are asked to please bring your own container. Plants will be available from Williamson Farms. The cost of the workshop is \$10.00 to cover materials. For more information please contact Mary Hollingsworth at the Hoke County Cooperative Extension Center at (910) 875-3461.

Poultry

Are you interested in learning how to care for backyard chickens? If you answered yes to this question then the **Backyard Chicken Workshop** will provide you with valuable information on how to properly care for your chickens as well as how to properly handle your eggs. A North Carolina State University veterinarian and the area poultry agent will conduct the workshop on **April 4 at 5:30pm**. A light meal will be provided. The workshop will be held at the Hoke County Cooperative Extension Center located at 116 West Prospect Avenue in Raeford. To register or learn more

about this workshop contact Michelle Shooter or Mary Hollingsworth at (910) 875-3461.

Agriculture

Pesticide containers that are cleaned by being triple rinsed or pressure rinsed can be taken to the Hoke County convenience sites for recycling. This recycling program saves disposal costs and protects the environment from improper disposal with no charge to the citizens.

A **pesticide recertification class** will be held for private applicators that need 2 hours of category V on **April 10 from 9-11am** at the Cooperative Extension office. For more information on this class or other pesticide information contact Keith Walters by email at keith_walters@ncsu.edu or by phone at (910) 875-3461.

Family & Consumer Sciences

The **Pathway to a Healthier Future** workshop will be held Wednesday, **April 24, 2013 at 6:00 pm** in the Senior Center located at 423 East Central Avenue in Raeford with William Laurence, MD, Director of Hoke Primary Care Pavilion & Hoke Family Medical Care presenting. Registration is \$10 per person or \$18 per couple and registration includes a heart healthy meal. To learn more about this workshop please contact Shirley Smith at the North Carolina Cooperative Extension in Raeford at (910) 875-2162

2013 Spring Fire Safety Tips

Spring is here once again. Here are some easy fire safety tips that will help ensure a fire free entrance to this summer:

- Smoke detector batteries should be checked, and replaced if necessary.



- Smoke detector units should be cleared of dust.
- Fire extinguishers should be checked, and recharged if necessary.
- Electric wiring should be checked for damage, and replaced if necessary.
- Electric outlets and extension cords should not be overloaded.
- Air Conditioning units and electrical cords should be checked.
- Barbeque Gas grills (including gas hoses) and propane tanks should be inspected prior to use.
- Never use open flame devices to strip paint. This is very dangerous and is illegal.
- Never burn yard waste or trash. This is very dangerous and is illegal.
- Windows should be checked to make sure they open and close properly, in case they are needed as exits.
- Review your family's Fire Escape Plan.
- Fuels for lawn and garden equipment, etc. should be stored in an approved container only.
- Pesticides and chemicals should be stored in an approved container and away from children.
- Swimming pool chemicals should be stored according to manufacturer guidelines.
- Oil based paints and solvents should be stored in a metal cabinet

BBQ Grill Fire Safety Tips

The outdoor cookout season is in full swing now that summer is upon us. Listed here are a few



helpful hints in making your outdoor barbeque a fire safe event.

Propane Gas Grills

- Before each use, check hoses for signs of wear and tear, and that the connection to the tank is tight.
- Remove excess grease buildup from the unit, to prevent flare ups.
- Periodically check the inside gas tubes for the buildup of spider webs that can cause blockage, causing gas to backflow into the control valves, where it could potentially ignite.
- An orange flame is an indication that there is an obstruction in the gas tubes that lead to the burners. Flame should be blue in color.
- When igniting the grille, make sure the lid or cover is in the open position.
- Never leave the unit unattended while cooking, and keep children at a safe distance.
- Always shut the tank off after each use.
- If the unit catches fire, do not attempt to extinguish it, especially if propane is burning freely. **CALL THE FIRE DEPT.** Propane will reignite with explosive force.
- Proper location and placement of the unit is very important. Keep the unit away from the sides or back of your home, as well as open windows. If fire occurs, it will spread to the building.
- Use common sense and read the manufacturer's directions.



Charcoal Grills

- Careful use of charcoal starter fluid is very important. Follow the direction on the can and never apply additional fluid once the fire has been ignited.
- The use of an electric starter or paper is an alternate method, and pre-treated charcoal should also be used.



- Place all ashes in metal cans.

Submitted by the Hoke County Fire Marshal's Office