Potential voter fraud recalls Trinity case

BY DANIEL KENNEDY

RANDOLPH COUNTY — A recent case of potential voter fraud in Randolph County has caused members of the county board of elections to recall a case in Trinity where an improper vote was cast three years prior.

During the November 2018 general election, Randolph County Board of Elections Director Melissa Johnson said Richard Alan Jessup presented to vote on Election Day last year at Coleridge Elementary School. “He came in and went through the check-in process, so he had to give his name and address,” Johnson said. “We issued him an authorization to vote form. He did sign it, and it is checked that he is a registered voter in the county. “And then ... he informed the chief judge that he was ‘checking the system,’” Johnson said at Monday’s meeting of the Randolph County Board of Elections that Jessup informed officials he lived in Louisiana and had just voted there the week prior. Testimony read by Johnson explained Jessup said he wanted to see how people travel all over the country and vote multiple times. The director said he referred the matter to the Randolph County District Attorney’s Office. Johnson indicated the district attorney’s office is considering options in the matter, but no felony charges have been brought to this point. Concern over whether a jury would see the offense as sufficient enough to rise to the level of a felony was discussed. BOE Chairman Bill McNamoly expressed his exasperation with people trying “to game the system,” and said he is an advocate of taking some form of action to let individuals know this is a serious matter. “(Randolph County District Attorney Andy Grigoletti) at least needs to call him and tell him he is subject to being arrested for fraud.”

See Fraud Page 3

Mosquitoes represent hazards during warm weather

BY DANIEL KENNEDY

DAVIDSON COUNTY — Ridding mosquitoes from your home may be among the many items on your to-do list this summer, but health experts suggest in-potency should be elevated.

Informations from the N.C. Department of Health and Human Services indicate that people should take care to tip and toss standing water around their homes. Common sources include gutters, bird baths, pet bowls, flower pots and other empirical mosquito activity. Protecting from bites entails limiting early-morning and early-evening hours outside, as these times are typically when mosquitoes are most active. Health and Human Services also recommends applying EPA-approved repellent to exposed skin areas.

Beyond the itchy bites and other hazards, their bites can transmit diseases. “In the United States, mosquito-borne diseases are particularly dangerous to children and the elderly. Reducing the presence of mosquitoes around homes and protecting individuals from bites is a function of improving the safety of county residents.”

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Repeated use of repellents over a short period of time, however, can be perilous, especially for children and pregnant women. Chemical control of mosquitoes in general can contribute more harm than good.

Pesticides should be used with caution. Spraying sacks, etc., shrubs and trees around the perimeter of a canals may be effective but can also harm beneficial insects.

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Field Day dripping with fun

BY DEBBIE HIGHTOWER

ARCHDALE — Squalls of delight echoed from the Archdale Elementary School playground and track area as students from kindergarten to fifth-grade took part in Field Day activities last week.

Students in Rachael Mitchell’s kindergarten class collaborated on a marble run challenge, while first-graders in Teresa Turner’s class put their game faces on during a Tug of War session. See Fun Page 7

Pastor still striving

BY DEBBIE HIGHTOWER

TRINITY — Pastor Dave Mercadante of Poplar Ridge Friends Church will receive his doctoral degree in ministry tomorrow. He has also published a book and started a nonprofit, but he still continues to encourage the practice of two very important things — loving one another and caring for the poor.

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Mercadante of Poplar Ridge

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May is National Foster Care Month

National Foster Care Month promotes public awareness of the needs of children and older youth in foster care. As stated in the President’s Proclamation, “Children deserve stable family environments, and foster care provides a wonderful opportunity for selfless and compassionate men and women to nurture children while we work to ensure that they have a forever family. This month, and always, we express our gratitude to all of the families who generously open their doors to children in need and provide them with love and support. We recommit to looking for opportunities to invest in the lives of our vulnerable young people, and we celebrate those who tirelessly serve our Nation’s children in foster care.”

There are currently 40 licensed foster family homes in Randolph County and 152 children in the foster care system. The result is less than one-third of Randolph County children and older youth in foster care. “Children deserve a family,” said Karen Allred, a spokesperson for Randolph County DSS. “DSS desires that all children in foster care be able to remain in their home county and attend their school of origin. To make this happen, more families are needed to become foster parents. There continues to be a critical need in Randolph County for families that have the heart to work with teenagers and sibling groups.”

DSS is very excited to have 15 families participating in the spring 2019 pre-service training class. This is the largest class ever. These families graduate this month and will be able to foster children in the community once the licensing process is completed.

To look for a recruitment table at Randolph County’s Relay for Life event on May 18, stop by and a social worker will gladly provide you with details about how you can become a foster or adoptive parent. If you are unable to stop by, call 336-683-8602, or email foster.adopt@randolphnc.gov. If you are considering being a foster parent, please attend an interest meeting at the Department of Social Services located at 1512 North Fayetteville Street in Asheboro. Those meetings will be held on June 6 and Aug. 15 at 6 p.m. The next pre-service training will begin in September.

Randolph County DSS is fortunate to have two foster families receive National Speakers’ Bureau training during the past year. If your organization would like to learn more about the need for foster parents or the foster home licensing process in Randolph County call 336-683-8036.