

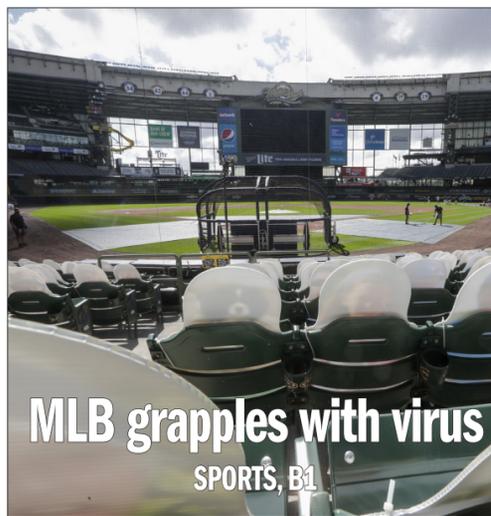
# Rocky Mount TELEGRAM

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## Mayor reiterates rules for public comments

BY WILLIAM F. WEST  
Staff Writer



ROBERSON

Mayor Sandy Roberson said he believes there has been a lot of confusion about the rules one must follow when addressing the City Council during the public comment phase of council regular meetings.

Roberson, in a posting on Friday via Facebook and YouTube, sought to make clear the procedure for providing remarks when

at the speaker's podium. At the same time, Roberson made clear the City of Rocky Mount values information and thoughts from local residents. "These rules are not meant to stifle your opinions nor to intimidate you, but to allow you to have an uninterrupted three minutes to

tell us what's on your mind," Roberson said in the posting.

"We need your input and encourage you to let us know what you think — and that's the good, the bad and the ugly," Roberson said. "You know, we represent you and we want to hear from you often.

"It is necessary to keep negative comments to constructive criticism," Roberson said.

During the public comment period, people are allowed up to three minutes to address the

council. This part of the council regular meeting is lively and at times contentious.

Roberson, in the posting on Friday, re-emphasized that any comments should be directed to the council as a whole and not to any council members individually or to the municipal staff members.

Roberson said in most cases the council members will not comment but may refer the matter to City Manager Rochelle Small-Toney or to the municipal staff for

a follow-up.

Roberson also said speakers are asked to give their remarks in a civil, non-argumentative and respectful manner.

Roberson also said that personal attacks with the potential to disrupt the meeting will not be tolerated and that a speaker who does so will be asked to sit down or face removal from the meeting.

Roberson also said that if an

See **MAYOR**, A6



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

A girl operates a flight simulator during the IBX Stem Center's Drone Camp hosted by Michael's Angels Girls Club in Tarboro.

## Girls learn about drone technology

BY AMELIA HARPER  
Staff Writer

Despite soaring temperatures and pandemic setbacks, a group of Edgecombe County girls spent the week rocking science and learning more about drone technology.

Eleven young girls, ages 9-17, participated in the IBX Stem Center's Drone Camp in Tarboro this week. The event, titled "Girls Rocking Science," was hosted by Michael's An-

gels Girls Club on 214 N. Main St. in Tarboro.

All the participants were students of Edgecombe County Public Schools, Crystal DeLoatch, director of operations for Michael's Angels Girls Club, said in a statement. DeLoatch also emphasized that all state and federal COVID-19 safety guidelines were practiced at the camp.

"I enjoyed the camp because it taught us how to fly drones and planes. We also talked about what we

wanted to be when we grow up," said Assyria Western, 11.

This experience is just what Shanell Knight, founder and CEO of Michael's Angels, hoped to provide. Her stated goal in founding Michael's Angels is to "provide young girls every opportunity to become highly educated and equipped for the future."

This week's Drone Camp exposed young girls to a wide range of subjects

See **DRONES**, A2

## Police probe shooting that wounded man

BY WILLIAM F. WEST  
Staff Writer

Police are trying to find out who fired shots that resulted in a man being found with injuries to both of his legs on Clyde Street in the Little Raleigh area.

JVon Coley, 25, was found leaning up against a vehicle after officers at 4:02 a.m. on July 26 responded to a shooting with

injuries on Clyde in the area of the intersection with Luper Street, police Cpl. Clay Wilder said.

Coley was found bleeding from the groin area. A bullet appeared to have passed through one thigh and into the other thigh, Wilder said.

Coley told officers he was in a vehicle when the shooting occurred and subsequently said he would not

provide further information about the shooting, Wilder said.

Emergency medical services personnel transported Coley to Nash UNC Health Care, Wilder said.

In the meantime, officers searched an open area behind a residence along Clyde and found several .223-caliber shell casings, Wilder said.

Coley at the hospital

told officers he was about to leave a residence when he exited his vehicle to tell other people he was leaving, Wilder said.

Coley told officers that is when he started hearing the shots, Wilder said.

Coley told officers he began running away and then realized he had been shot, Wilder said.

See **SHOOTING**, A2

## Pandemic alters storm preparations

### State braces for Isaias

BY AMELIA HARPER  
Staff Writer

Nash County passed the 1,000 mark for confirmed COVID-19 cases Friday even as state and county officials were making preparations for Hurricane Isaias.

"This is something of a milestone and one I hoped we would never see," Nash County Health Director Bill Hill said at Friday's meeting of the Nash County COVID-19 Emergency Response Team. "This means that more than 1 percent of the population of Nash County has tested positive for COVID-19."

As of 3 p.m. Friday, Nash County had 1,008 cumulative confirmed cases of COVID-19. About 50 of those cases were added on Thursday and Friday, Hill said.

Of that number, 581 people are considered recovered, 391 are isolated at home, 24 are hospitalized and 12 have died.

The Edgecombe County Health Department last released case numbers on Thursday. However, according to the state Department of Health and Human Services, Edgecombe County

See **ISAIAS**, A6

## Man wounded after shots fired at his car

BY AMELIA HARPER  
Staff Writer

Rocky Mount police are investigating a shooting that sent a 26-year-old man to the hospital late Thursday night.

Officers responded to a ShotSpotter activation call about 11:17 p.m. Thursday on the 200 block of Union Street. The ShotSpotter system indicated that 13 rounds had been fired followed by another six rounds a few seconds later.

As police were responding to the location, they were notified that a vehicle had been struck by gunfire on the 200 block of Cedar Street near Union Street. When they arrived at the scene, they discovered that the vehicle had been driven from the scene.

Officers soon located the vehicle and discovered that the driver had been shot in

the leg. The victim, identified only as a 26-year-old Black man, was treated at the scene and transported to Vidant Medical Center in Greenville. His current condition was unknown as of press time, Cpl. Clay Wilder of the Rocky Mount Police Department said.

Wilder said the victim was in the vehicle with a 31-year-old woman at the time of the incident. She was not injured and left the car to check on other relatives before police reached the driver, Wilder said.

Anyone with information about this crime is asked to contact Crime Stoppers at 252-977-1111 or crimestoppers@rockymountnc.gov. Tips also can be texted to police at 274637 by beginning messages with RMPOL to direct the tip to the police department and typing up to 155 characters about the information.



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