

# Hospital plans need 'tough decision' from county

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The entire project would take five years but, according to Satko, "would begin generating new revenue at the end of year two." The end result, he said, would be the equivalent of a brand new hospital.

"We're going to do this in such a way that we won't have to come back in a few years and say we have to do it again," Satko said.

The four phases of the project are outlined as follows:

Phase I: Change to a single main entrance off Hospital Drive. Double the size of the clinics (generating new revenue). Rework the Emergency Department.

Phase II: Construct a new patient care wing with 19 new beds.

Phase III: Construction of a new surgery and lab facility (also generating new revenue).

Phase IV: Refurbishment and construction of administrative and support services areas.

A number of citizens in the audience expressed concerns and questions about the hospital in general, its condition, and the specifics of the planned construction. Satko and Goldman both pointed out that drawings and plans are still in the preliminary stages and specific blueprints are not yet developed.

Others, speaking in support of the hospital credited it with saving their lives.

"The Hospital Authority has been

doing a great job and it is their job to run the hospital." County Commission Chairman Sam Moore said, explaining that "it is not the county commissioners' job to run the hospital. It is our job to look after your tax money and see that the people of Wilkes County get the things they need.

"It's a tough decision" [whether to back the Authority's plan], he said. "In the 90s, the hospital was near closing a few times but now it has shown a profit for two years. The commissioners are not going to decide what needs to be done at the hospital - that's for the Authority to do. We have to decide if this financial risk is worth taking."

Commissioner Donna Hardy said that a number of people had come to her with the impression that the County Commissioners were against building or remodeling the hospital. "We're not [against it], or I'm not, she said, emphasizing that she was not speaking for the entire board. "We want a community hospital," she continued.

"My concern is when, and when can the taxpayers afford to do this," Hardy said. "We've got a lot of things we're looking at as county commissioners. I get the impression that people think we're not going to help the hospital but we are doing this on a regular basis. We just have a lot of things that we have to weigh.

"We have the lowest income levels in this area," Hardy continued,

"lower than the state average, so we don't have taxpayers that can afford increases. We have other things going on other than just a hospital. As a county commissioner, we have to balance all that."

Goldman pointed out that when the hospital was at its lowest point some years ago it had "something like five days of cash reserves and nothing in the bank." Recommendations made in a Stroudwater study which was paid for by MCG "were reacted to" in a number of areas.

"Today," Goldman reported, "we've got about 87 days of operating cash on hand, we're paying our bills, we have recorded two successive years of positive experience, and we're doing some things to generate the kind of business the Stroudwater folks suggested.

"These are tough times for small rural hospitals everywhere," Goldman continued. "We are working very hard every day to assure this hospital's future." He also pointed out that a second Stroudwater report recommended the building of an entirely new hospital. Hardy said the cost of that was estimated at \$26 million.

Concerning the Authority's request that the county back its proposed bond issue, Moore pointed out that there are also other ways to secure the financing without risking the use of tax money. He cited a method used by a hospital in Abbeville, S.C., using revenue

bonds.

"It's a tough decision for us to make," Moore said, "because, in the past, we have really supported our hospital a lot. It's nice to think about having things but we cannot let the debt ruin our hospital - that happened to the Greensboro hospital."

Moore pointed out that the Authority can borrow money on its own without risking the taxpayers' money. "But they have brought it to us and we have got to consider if that risk is worth taking."

As reported earlier, the option of a FHA 242 loan is available to the hospital but the Authority says it would cost at least \$2.2 million more and would delay the project 12-18 months.

## Get tickets now for Hillary Lindsey benefit concert set for Sat., April 28 at Washington Country Club

More than 300 tickets have already been sold to hear Hillary Lindsey, Washington's own Grammy-winning songwriter, in concert on Saturday night, April 28, and a CD of her music will soon be available.

"Hillary has compiled a CD of her most notable songs," said organizer Debbie Wells, "like the Grammy-winning 'Jesus Take the Wheel' and hits like 'Blessed' and 'This One's for the Girls,' and some songs that have never been heard before. The CDs will arrive in Washington in mid-April, and the Washington-Wilkes Arts Foundation is offering them for \$16 each. You can pre-pay to guarantee you'll receive one, as the quantity and time they'll be available is limited."

Tickets will be on sale this Friday night next to the Chamber of Commerce on The Square. The concert is set for 8 p.m. Saturday night, April 28 at the Washington-Wilkes Country Club. Tickets are \$6 for lawn seats and \$20 for tent seats. "We have limited table seating available, too," she said. "Call us for information and pricing."

"We're so pleased that Hillary Lindsey will headline the Washington-Wilkes Festival of Music and Art to benefit music in the schools," said Wells, "And I hope we can fit in everybody who wants to come see her."

By Hillary's request, the Washington Wilkes Art Foundation will use all proceeds of the event to purchase instruments for the Washington-Wilkes Middle School band.

Tickets can be purchased at [www.washington-wilkes-art-foundation.org](http://www.washington-wilkes-art-foundation.org), by calling Wells at 706-318-8190, or by e-mail at



The toll free Dial-A-Prayer number is 1-877-337-7785.

**A Learning In Retirement Course on "Writing About Your Life," with Peggy Barnett and Bolton Luncford as instructors, will be held April 9, and 16, 2 p.m., at the Parish House.**

**Gibson Grove Baptist Church will have a Pastor Support Ministry Anniversary program on Sunday, April 15, 3 p.m. Pastor Samuel Duggan and the Greater Level Hill Baptist Church will be in charge of the service.**

**Mt. Carmel Baptist Church Choir will present a musical extravaganza on April 15 at 3 p.m. Everyone is invited to attend.**

**New Salem Baptist Church will have a series of special services following Palm Sunday, during the week of April 2-6, 7:30 p.m. Guest preachers will be Pastors Dante Smith, Harvey Peek, Robert Walton, Samuel Duggan, and W.R. Ferrell.**

**New Salem Baptist Church will have an Easter Sunrise Service on Sunday, April 8, at 6 a.m. with Pastor Robert Crawford as the speaker. Breakfast will be served following the service.**

**Shiloh Academy #50, OES, will have its bi-annual brunch Saturday, April 7, 10 a.m., at the Third Shiloh Building. Donation is \$5.00.**

**The Regions Bank Relay for Life Team will be having a cook-out and bake sale Friday, April 13, 11 a.m. until 2 p.m.**



## Washington orator wins Optimist zone contest

Washington's Dixie Lee Trimm (left) was congratulated by Optimist International's Lt. Gov. Dan Parker on winning the Zone 6 Optimist Oratorical Contest in Athens last week. Blaine Wooten (right) of Athens was the boy's winner. Sponsored by the Washington Optimist Club, Dixie Lee will go on to compete in the Area 4 contest coming up in Athens, said contest chairman Dan Coxwell. "We're really proud of Dixie Lee - she knocked everybody's socks off, and I know she'll do well at the area contest."

## Crack cocaine arrests lead March arrest roundup...

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March, the following arrests were recorded at the Cecil Moore Law Enforcement Center:

Tokyo Cofer, 26, of Washington, was arrested March 31 by the Georgia State Patrol and charged with driving under the influence and with driving on a revoked or suspended license. He was held on \$3,000 bond.

Jeffery Harris, 40, of Lincolnton, was arrested March 31 by Washington Police and charged with driving under the influence and with driving on a revoked or suspended license. He was held on \$5,000 bond.

Brandon Jerral Flint, 17, of Washington, was arrested March 29 by Washington Police and charged with one count of burglary. He was held on \$8,000 bond.

Zachariah Richard Barnett, 29, of Lincolnton, was arrested March 31 by the Georgia State Patrol and charged with driving with an open container of alcohol, and with misdemeanor possession of marijuana. No bond was noted.

Paul Mickel McKittrick Jr., 26, of Wilkes Co., was arrested March 27 by Wilkes Co. deputies and charged with misdemeanor possession of marijuana; possession of drug-related objects; and with a traffic charge. He was held on \$7,000 bond.

John David Dye, 27, of Wilkes



## Adopt a friend

This friendly white female dog is one of the many nice dogs that are at the Washington-Wilkes Animal Shelter awaiting good homes.

She is spayed and neutered and ready for a good home.

Call the animal shelter at 706-678-CATS, or visit the shelter on Brown Road.

## GSP troopers report 8 crashes, one death on Wilkes Co. roads

State Troopers from the Washington Post of the Georgia State Patrol investigated eight traffic crashes during the month of March in Wilkes County.

Sergeant First Class Derrick Durden said the traffic crashes resulted in seven injuries and one traffic death.

SFC Durden said troopers from Post 17 also issued 108 traffic citations in the county during the month. The total includes five arrests for driving under the influence, 67 citations for speeding, seven seat belt violations, and one child restraint violation.

Troopers also issued 158 warn-

ings, was arrested March 27 by Wilkes Co. deputies and charged with theft by taking. No bond was noted.

William August Schmitz, 25, of Lincolnton, was arrested March 27 by Wilkes Co. deputies and charged with misdemeanor possession of marijuana; and with possession of drug-related objects. He was held on \$6,500 bond.

Joshua Ryan Hunnicut, 21, of Tignall, was arrested March 24 by Wilkes Co. deputies and charged with misdemeanor possession of marijuana. He was released on \$3,000 bond.

Clarence L. Ashmore Jr. 40, of Tignall, was arrested March 24 by the Georgia State Patrol and charged with driving under the influence and with a traffic charge. He was held on \$1,750 bond.

Megan Lynn Waters, 19, of Tignall, was arrested March 24 by Wilkes Co. deputies and charged with felony possession of a controlled substance; and with felony violation of the original container drug law. She was released on \$4,000 bond.

Archie Demarcus Acree III, 30, of Washington, was arrested March 25 by the Georgia State Patrol and charged with speeding and with driving on a revoked or suspended license. He was released on \$2,000 bond.

Miguel Chavez Medina, 28, of Dale, Ga., was arrested March 24 by Wilkes Co. deputies and charged with driving under the influence; and with speeding. He was released on payment of \$821 cash bond.

Rogelio Eligio Uscanga, 33, of Lincolnton, was arrested March 24 by the Georgia State Patrol and charged with driving under the influence and with a traffic charge. He was released on payment of a cash fine.

Debra B. Mills, 47, of Washington, was arrested March 23 by Wilkes Co. deputies and charged with deposit account fraud. She was released on payment of a \$329 cash fine.

Bryan Roger Ward, 41, of Athens, was arrested March 18 by the Georgia State Patrol and charged with driving under the influence; speeding 73 in a 55; and with violation of the open container law. He was held on \$2,500 bond.

Henry Will Turner, 56, of Lincolnton, was arrested March 17 by Wilkes Co. deputies and charged with speeding; driving under the influence; and violation of the open container law. He was held on \$1,116 bond.

Ronelle Rashid Lazenby, 17, of Lincolnton, was arrested March 16 by Wilkes Co. deputies and charged with simple assault. He was held on \$3,500 bond.

King Brown, 19, of Wilkes Co. was arrested March 14 by Washington Police and charged with three counts of entering an automobile with intent of felony. He was held on a probation violation.

Charles Ernie Reed Jr., 28, of Union Point, was arrested March 13 by the Georgia State Patrol and charged with speeding 77 in a 55

zone; and with driving on a revoked or suspended license. He was released on \$2,000 bond.

Josefina Rameres, 34, of Wilkes Co. was arrested by Wilkes Co. deputies and charged with driving with no proof of insurance; and with violation of a license requirement. She was released on \$590 bond.

Santiago Rene Claver, 27, of Wilkes Co. was arrested March 10 by the Georgia State Patrol and charged with felony driving under the influence; driving with no proof of insurance; driving without current license plates; and with a driver license violation. He was released on \$1,538 cash fine.

Fredricus T. Brittan, 26, of Washington, was arrested March 9 by the Georgia State Patrol and charged with driving on a revoked or suspended license and violation of the window tint law. He was released on \$2,000 bond.

Paul Epps, 18, of Washington, was arrested March 9 by Wilkes Co. deputies and charged with five counts of deposit account fraud. He was held on \$1,002 bond.

Saintwan Roberts, 18, of Washington, was arrested March 6 by Washington Police and charged with alteration of license plates; driving with no proof of insurance; driving without current license plates; and with a driver license violation. He was held on \$1,728 cash fine.

Vernon James Hardin, 23, of Augusta, was arrested March 5 by the Georgia State Patrol and charged with driving on a revoked or suspended license and with speeding. He was released on \$1,492 cash bond.

Montoya Jackson, 24, of Washington, was arrested March 3 by Washington Police and charged with cruelty to children. No bond was noted.

Chico Belafonte Scott, 42, of Athens, was arrested March 3 by Wilkes Co. deputies and charged with driving on a suspended license. He was released on \$715 cash bond.

The following individuals were arrested on probation violations: Christopher Binns, 23, Washington; James Kelly Young, 31, of Washington; Jonathan Derick Cleghorne, 23, of Tignall; Elmore B. Austin, 44, of New York, N.Y.; and Travis Kinta Mahoney, 26, of Washington.



**Wilkes Ministers United will have an Easter sunrise service on The Square in Downtown Washington at 7 a.m. Breakfast will be at the First United Methodist Church.**

**The Methodist Men of the First United Methodist Church will have chicken barbecue for sale on Saturday, April 21, in the fellowship hall. Plates will be \$6.00 each and will be available for take-out or eat-in. Tickets are available from church members.**

Washingtonarts@gmail.com.

Sponsors for the event include Dycom, Farmers & Merchants

Bank, The Fitzpatrick Hotel, Mike Reese and family, and Washington Cellular.

## Registration has already begun for WLTCO. summer drama camp

Registration for this year's Summer Drama Camp at the Washington Little Theater has already begun. Instead of the usual two-week camp, this year's camp will be three weeks. As always, all students completing kindergarten through the twelfth grade are invited to attend.

The camp will begin on May 21 and end with four performances of Disney's "High School Musical" June 8-10.

Due to the complexity of this year's drama camp production, the schedule will be as follows:

During the week of May 21-25, grades K-4 will rehearse from 9 a.m. until noon and grades 5-12 will rehearse from 12:30-3:30 p.m. During the week of May 29-June 1 (nothing on Memorial Day, May 28) all students will rehearse from 9 a.m. until 3 p.m. And during the week of June 4-8, all students will rehearse from 12:30-3:30 p.m.

Performances of "High School Musical" are scheduled for Friday,

June 8, at 7 p.m.; Saturday, June 9, at 2 p.m. and 7 p.m.; and on Sunday, June 10, at 2 p.m.

Before registering for Drama Camp, prospective participants are asked to please check the above dates and times to make sure that they are able to attend all three weeks of camp and all four performances.

This year's camp will accept up to 15 students who are completing kindergarten-fourth grade and up to 25 students who are completing grades 5-12. Registration forms will be available online and at any Wilkes County School office beginning March 23.

Six scholarships will be available. They will be distributed based on need and teacher recommendation. Scholarship forms will be available online beginning March 23. The deadline for scholarship applications will be April 11.

Please contact Nora Dukes at 706-678-7272 for further information.

## Community Calendar

- April 2-6 Spring Break for schools  
New Salem special services, 7:30 p.m.
- April 5 Holy Week service, The Square, 12 noon, lunch Baptist Mission Center
- April 6 Holy Week service, The Square, 12 noon, lunch First Baptist  
Georgia Peaches and Peanuts Relay for Life Team  
Bake Sale, 3-5 p.m., The Square  
Sutton Temple Gospel Celebration, 6 p.m.
- April 7 Shiloh Academy OES brunch, 10 a.m., Third Shiloh  
New Saints SNAP, 3 p.m.  
Wilkes Health Care Relay for Life yard sale, 8 a.m., parking lot
- April 8 EASTER SUNDAY  
Newtown Baptist Sunrise Service, 8:30 a.m.  
New Salem Baptist Sunrise Service, 6 a.m.  
Mulberry Baptist prayer, 3 p.m.  
Wilkes Ministers United sunrise service, 7 a.m., The Square  
First Baptist sunrise service, 7 a.m., First Baptist Park  
Pleasant Grove sunrise service, 6 a.m.; worship, 11:30 a.m.
- April 9 Washington City Council, 7:30 p.m.  
Woman's Club, 12 noon, clubhouse
- April 10 Iris Garden Club Field Trip, 10 a.m., Parish Hall parking lot  
Historic Preservation Com., 5 p.m., City Hall Annex  
Senior Center Advisory Council 10 a.m.  
County Commissioners, 2 p.m.  
W-W Garden Club, 2 p.m., Tignall Library  
LWREA, 11 a.m., Pizza Hut
- April 13 Wilkes Board of Registrars, 10 a.m., Courthouse  
Regions Bank Relay for Life Bake Sale, Cookout, 11 a.m.-2 p.m.
- April 14 TLM Resurrection Prayer Breakfast, 9 a.m., Third Shiloh  
Little River Relay for Life Team barbecue, 12-2 p.m., Lions Club
- April 15 Gibson Grove Pastor Support program, 3 p.m.  
Hilliard Station pastor's anniversary, 3:30 p.m.  
New Saints stewards and trustees day, 2 p.m.  
Reeves Chapel Usher Board program, 11:45 a.m.  
Bethlehem Baptist pastor's anniversary, 11:30 a.m.  
Sandy Cross Baptist homecoming, 11 a.m.
- April 16 Board of Education, 7:30 p.m.  
DAR Field Trip, 9:30 a.m., First Baptist parking lot  
Ladies of the Club, 6:30 p.m., Country Club
- April 18 WMH Lunch & Learn, 12 noon, Hospital library
- April 19 Tignall Homemakers, 2 p.m., Tignall Library
- April 21 FUMC chicken barbecue, fellowship hall
- April 22 Jackson Chapel, Black Rock AME pastor appreciation, 3 p.m.  
Mulberry Baptist Women & Men's Day, 3 p.m.  
New Sutton Temple youth choir anniversary, 3 p.m.  
TLM Spring St. Worship, 8:30 a.m., Dusty's  
Civil War Roundtable, 6 p.m., Fitzpatrick
- April 23 New Sutton Temple revival, 7:30 p.m.
- April 27 Wilkes Dept. of Health, 11 a.m., Health Department
- May 4-5 Relay for Life, 7 p.m.-7 a.m., W-WPRD Track
- May 18 Last day of school  
W-WCHS Graduation, 8 p.m., Tiger Stadium
- May 21-24 Post-Planning for teachers