

## Kittrell Community Watch receives Castle Law update

The Kittrell Community Watch Association met in the Kittrell Community House on May 10 at 7 p.m. This was the first meeting of 2012 and 51 people attended. After light refreshments were served, President Edward Woodlief called the meeting to order and Joe Sears provided the invocation.

The main speaker was Chad Coffey, a Granville County police officer and firearms instructor. Other guest speakers included Bobby Choplin of the Henderson-Vance Community Watch Association, Leonard Hight of the Kittrell Water Association, and Lt. Irvin Robinson of the Henderson Police Department. Vance County Sheriff Peter White also attended the meeting.

Coffey, who spoke at the October 2011 meeting, again used a question and answer format to identify and address issues and concerns of the attendees. The new Castle Doctrine, which became law in Decem-

ber 2011, generated several questions. The Castle Doctrine law does two main things: it removes the duty to retreat in your own home, vehicle, or business and it removes civil liability if deadly force is used legally in those situations. He explained that North Carolina has concealed carry reciprocity with 36 other states (ncdoj.gov) but the specific laws of those other states must be known and followed. Reciprocity and Castle Doctrine are the only major changes since North Carolina concealed carry legislation began in 1995. Coffey recommended citizens be prepared to protect themselves but he quickly emphasized the importance of training and practice for citizens who choose to be armed.

When asked about police stops, Coffey said a legally-armed non-permit holder must have his gun in plain sight unless it is in a locked compartment, and he should keep his hands in plain sight. He

emphasized that whenever an armed concealed-carry permit holder encounters police, regardless of circumstances, he must immediately inform the officer that he is armed and show his permit and identification. Finally, when asked the minimum caliber for a defensive carry handgun, Coffey said the real answer is to carry a caliber you can shoot really well.

Choplin invited everyone to the upcoming Community Watch Association meeting on Thursday at 7 p.m. at Maria Parham Medical Center. Two local judges and two assistant district attorneys will be there to describe court procedures, answer questions, and address concerns from local residents.

Hight urged Kittrell-area attendees to sign up for County water now to be included in the Vance County water project. The initial cost for early sign-up is \$125. He said that municipal water will

ensure safe drinking water and also will provide fire hydrants which may reduce insurance costs.

Robinson reviewed upcoming Crime Stoppers and Special Olympics activities and reminded everyone to be extra careful after school is out on June 9th.

Scott Ritchey emphasized the need for highly visible, reflective street-number signs with numbers at least four inches high. Emergency responders need to find addresses quickly, day or night, so signs need to be placed to clearly indicate the correct house. It is particularly difficult and dangerous for fire trucks to make a U-turn if they overshoot a poorly-marked home. Kittrell Community Watch can provide a street-number sign at nominal cost for anyone who wants one.

Woodlief announced that the next Kittrell Community Watch meeting will be July 19th before adjourning.