

# Wake and Franklin settle on boundary

## Some end up in another county

By RAY MARTIN  
STAFF WRITER

**WAKE FOREST** — Roy Lynam and his family have called Wake County home since his father built their house north of Wake Forest in the 1940s.

Lynam, 66, his wife and five siblings all attended a Wake school, and the Lynams would like their grandchildren to attend a school in the Wake system.

But starting in January, the Lynams will, by 100 yards, be residents of Franklin County.

Commissioners of both counties concluded last week a three-year process to determine exactly where the Wake-Franklin border lies. They also ironed out a policy that decides which county has the right to tax property that sits in both counties.

The Lynams live on Youngsville Boulevard — a rural road where several houses for decades were thought to have sat either directly on the county line or just inside Wake County. Near the Lynams' home,

the line shifted about 100 yards west.

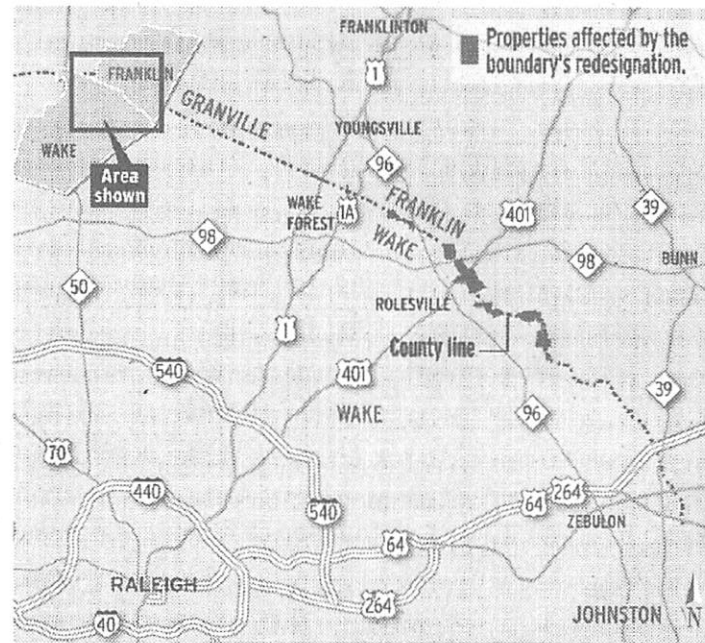
"It tugged at our heart a little bit," said Donna Lynam, Roy's wife, who graduated from Wake Forest High School. "How would you feel if you grew up in a place and walked out on the porch one morning and you were in another county?"

For about two dozen homeowners, the border will mean new tax rates, emergency services, voting locations and property tax values. It could also force a few Wake children to change schools.

The last survey of the border was conducted in 1915 and was based on the original survey done in the 1700s. Both used natural landmarks such as trees, rocks, fences and plantation borders, most of which have faded over time.

For years, the land along the border was mostly rural farm tracts, and the county line was relevant only to the few people who tried to get building permits along the border.

But as growth in the area has increased, the exact loca-



tion of the county line has become increasingly important.

"With urbanization and more development coming up, it's critical to have government functions clearly defined," said Wake County Commissioner Joe Bryan, who represents District 1 in northeastern Wake. "This should have been done a long time ago."

In 2004, developers of the Richland Hills subdivision sold four lots that they wrongly claimed were in Wake County. A private surveyor's error led the developers to the wrong conclusion, and the new owners soon received letters from the Franklin County tax assessor. The ensuing legal battles among developers prompted county

officials to jog the line around the subdivision in 2006 so the homes would be in Wake County.

In January 2008, both counties decided to scrap the jog and clearly define the county line. The North Carolina Geodetic Survey recently completed the survey.

Owners in both counties have, for decades, paid property taxes to the county where the majority of their land lay. Now, those owners pay Franklin County taxes for the portion of their property that is in Franklin County, and Wake County taxes for the land in Wake. The rightful county of homes that sit directly on the line is determined by the location of the room where the head of the household sleeps.

"This was a joint effort to work toward making sure which county contained which parcels," said Jimmy Tanner, Franklin County tax administrator. "It's better for tax offices so we can assess only what's in our county."

ray.martin@newsobserver.com  
or 919-836-4952

○ This Article to RPH via email 31 OCT 2009 from  
Ray & Ann Grehing [see Ann Post]

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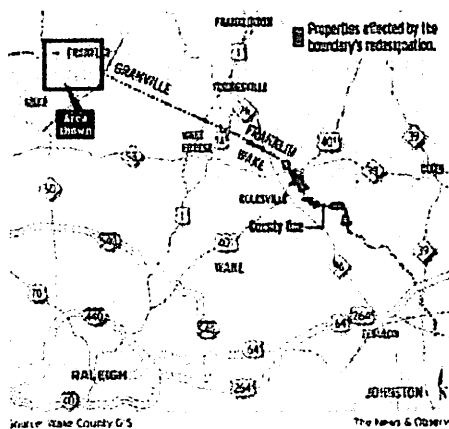
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