



The NEW BERN MIRROR

PUBLISHED WEEKLY
IN THE HEART OF
WESTERN NORTH
CAROLINA
Regional Library
400 Johnson St.
New Bern NC 28560

VOLUME 12

NEW BERN, N. C., FRIDAY, JANUARY 16, 1970

NUMBER 42

The recent Christmas holidays weren't completely merry for three women who visited a local supermarket in a small, foreign-make car. One of the ladies stayed inside the vehicle while the other two shopped.

When the shopping pair returned to the automobile, and opened a door, a huge German police dog (German shepherd if you want to get technical) jumped inside and insisted on going home with the trio.

For once there wasn't a brave man, or even a cowardly one, anywhere around. The woman inside wanted out, the two women outside wanted in, and the canine intruder wanted to stay put.

Everybody got hysterical but the dog. After several minutes of trying to tolerate such ridiculous pandemonium, the friendly instigator of the unexpected invasion figured it simply wasn't worth it.

He made a mighty leap from the small automobile, and the lady shoppers scrambled inside and quickly sped from the parking lot. If you meet a dog severely disillusioned, and ready to agree with Scrooge's "Humbug" evaluation of Christmas, you'll know why.

Usually, in the coldest weather you'll see mini-skirts on Middle and other New Bern business streets. There may have been some worn by feminine pedestrians during the Arctic days the town went through last week, but something longer and warmer was on top to conceal the fact.

Extreme temperatures, in either direction, don't do much for physical attractiveness. Humans aren't exactly glamorous when their faces are drenched with perspiration, and they are even less so when they sport a red nose and wince in agony at the onslaught of each frigid blast assailing their contorted countenance.

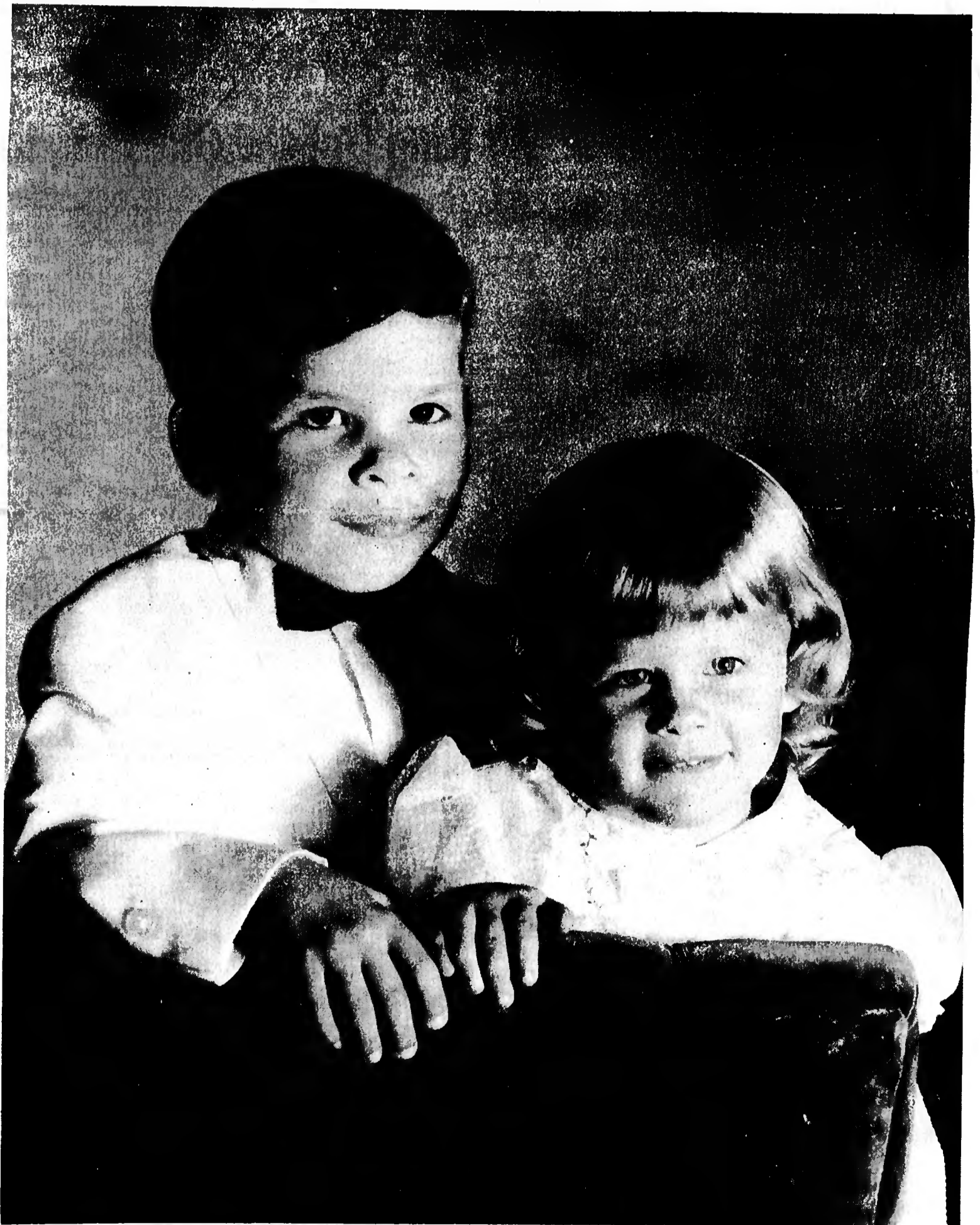
On one of the coldest recent mornings, at an early hour, we met an intoxicated man staggering up Middle street, along about the Post Office. Neatly lodged under his right arm was a morning newspaper he had obviously purchased to take home, or somewhere.

The thought occurred to us that no one in his condition could possibly make any sense out of what he was planning to read. That was our first thought. Our second thought was that folks quite sober would probably be just as confused as the weaving drunk, when they too read the morning news, and a lot unhappier.

Carl Goerch, who founded the State Magazine and has been doing columns since semi-retirement, remembers affectionately as we do the late John Bragaw of Washington. The other day, Goerch recalled Bragaw's story of going to an office to make a complaint, and changing his mind when he found the man wasn't in, and the following under the plate glass covering the man's desk:

"The customer is the most important person ever in this office. The customer is not dependent upon you, you are dependent upon him. The customer is not an interruption of your work, he is the purpose of it.

"You are not doing him a favor."
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HAPPY PAIR — Donna Elizabeth (Cookie) Purifoy and her brother Dell belong to a mutual admiration society reserved for two, so posing together for this delightful photograph was a joy they won't soon forget. Barbara and David Purifoy of 2805 Old Cherry Point Road are the parents, and living nearby on the same highway are two of the grandparents, Bob and

Marie Andrews. Nothing is better than the bright faces of childhood to make all of us momentarily escape from the worries of our grown-up world. Hopefully, some of those worries will be erased before Cookie and Dell are old enough to realize such things exist. —Photo by Mona Hanes (Wray's Studio.)