

Kids share their letters to Santa, Page 1B

482-4418

Wednesday, December 22, 2010

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## Blaze torches church parsonage

By **RITCHIE E. STARNES**  
Editor

Fire ripped through the Center Hill United Methodist Church parsonage last Tuesday night.

Center Hill Cross Roads volunteer fire fighters battled the 5:31 p.m. blaze that charred the bottom floor while causing smoke and water damage to the second floor of the wood-frame house, according to Capt. L.W. Nixon.

"The point of origin is the left front corner," Nixon said. That bottom-floor room is said to be the house's living room with a stairway located in the center of the home.

That part of the house was clearly the most visibly burned. Firefighters remained on the scene until 8:20 p.m., extinguishing hot spots. Heat also caused the exterior siding to melt.

As for a cause, Nixon said it's too soon for a determination.

"I don't have a cause of fire as we speak. It's all still undetermined," he added.

Howard Henninger, church trustee, said the Rev. Sadat Mendez, minister and parsonage resident, told him that he had left an electric heater running in the living room.

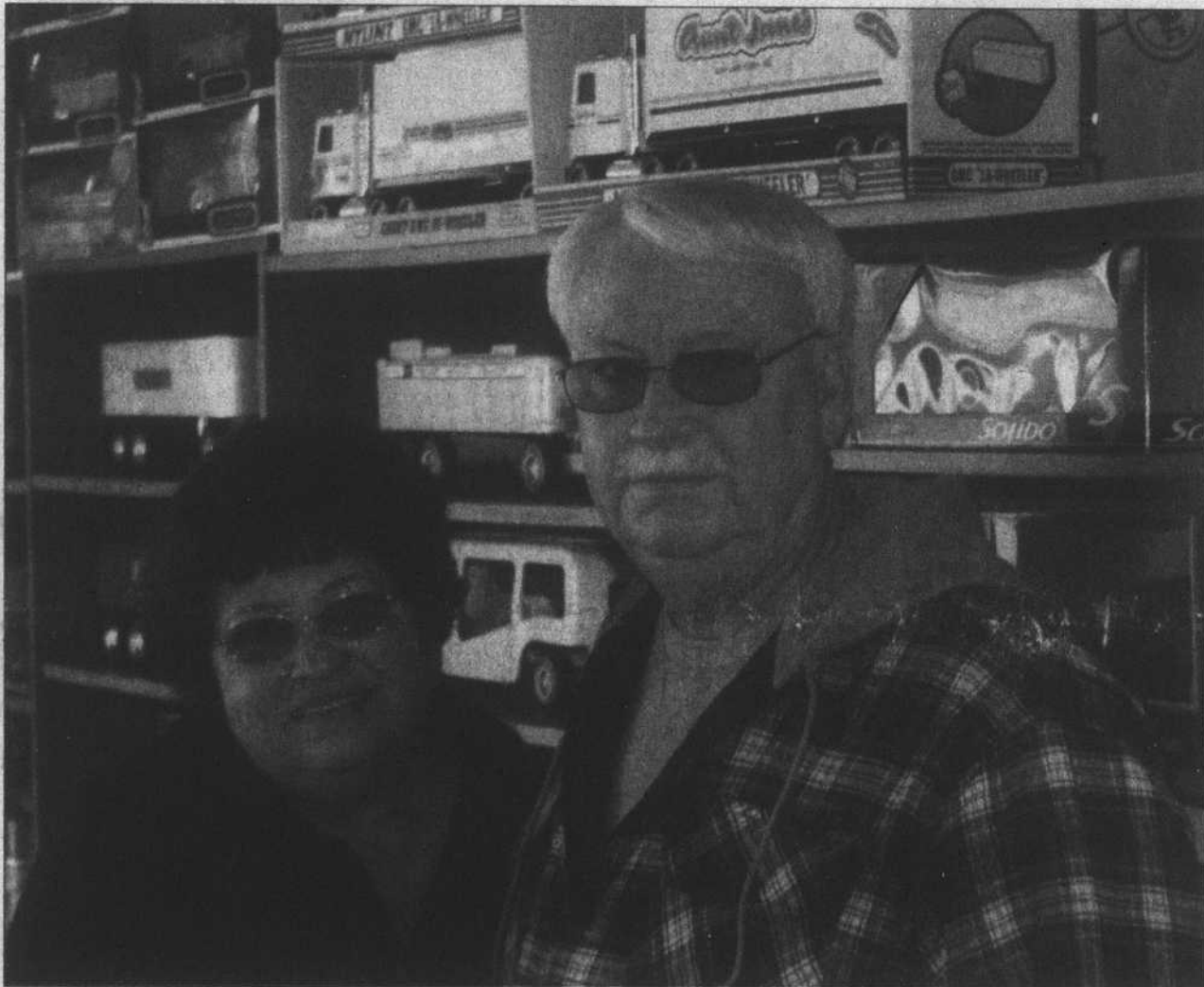
See **BLAZE**, 7A



PHOTO BY RITCHIE STARNES

Firefighters work to extinguish hot spots after last Tuesday evening's fire gutted the parsonage of the Center Hill United Methodist Church in Tyner. The blaze appeared to have started in the left front, or living room, of the two-story house. According to Howard Henninger, church trustee, the Rev. Sadat Mendez had departed the residence prior to the 5:31 p.m. fire to pick up his visiting mother at the Raleigh Durham International Airport.

## A TOY STORY



PHOTOS BY RITCHIE E. STARNES

Martha and Don Jernigan stand among their collection of vintage toys amassed over a 25-year pursuit. Don, 59, has been consumed with collecting toys after his childhood was cut short with the death of his mother.

## Vintage toys fill lost childhood

Model cars still packaged line a garage wall as part of Don's Antique Toys.



By **RITCHIE E. STARNES**  
Editor

How does one recapture lost Christmases? A Ryland man has been trying to fill a lifelong void by collecting children's toys that eluded his youth.

Walking into any one of three buildings at his home is akin to a time capsule that depicts a world of play. Vintage toys consume 59-year-old Don Jernigan's past time. Although the toys date between the 50s and the 70s, most are like new, still

See **TOYS**, 9A

## Split vote OKs alcohol in town's council chambers

By **REBECCA BUNCH**  
Staff Writer

Those attending future Chowan Arts Council openings or fundraisers will be able to enjoy a glass of beer, wine or a mixed drink.

In a split decision, the Edenton Town Council voted 3-2 at its monthly meeting on Dec. 14 to allow those attending Chowan Arts Council events to consume alcoholic beverages within the CAC's leased space

as well as in an area that includes the Council's chambers.

That space is adjacent to the area of the former municipal building recently leased by the town to the CAC. The Town Council had previously agreed to allow the use of its chambers to handle any overflow of visitors to the gallery during receptions and other events.

Voting in favor of the

See **CAC**, 4A

## Town planner to be part-time

By **REBECCA BUNCH**  
Staff Writer

The Town of Edenton may soon have a new planner in place.

The Town Council voted at its Dec. 14 meeting to approve the position as a part-time, 24-30 hour a week job with no benefits. It budgeted \$33,680 to pay the planner's salary.

Mayor pro tem Steve Biggs, who heads the administrative committee, expressed disappointment that the town could not afford to fund the position at a full-time level.

"I don't mind telling ya'll I still hate the idea that we

don't have the money to fund it fulltime," Biggs said.

Biggs added that he wanted to keep that idea on the table for when future funds were available.

Councilman Sambo Dixon agreed.

While the Council discussed the idea of offering benefits for the new position, the board decided it would not be appropriate since other part-time employees with the town do not receive benefits.

"It wouldn't work out," Councilman Willis Privott said, noting that the town

See **PLANNER**, 7A

## Soup Kitchen serves 50 weekly

Organizers seek expanded site

By **REBECCA BUNCH**  
Staff Writer

A warm, filling bowl of homemade soup and fellowship can thaw the emo-



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tional cold of the economically challenged.

That's the theory behind Open Door Baptist Church's desire to continue operating the Soup Kitchen it began between the Thanksgiving and Christmas holidays.

Church member Sheryl Daughety, who started the effort, said as many as 25 people have shown up at the Soup Kitchen, happy to find a hot meal and a warm

See **KITCHEN**, 3A



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Shirley Waff slices bread for those coming to eat at the Soup Kitchen on Soundside Road in Edenton.

## Pantry's Christmas Baskets



PHOTO BY RITCHIE E. STARNES

More than 300 people braved frigid temperatures Friday morning and stood in line to collect Christmas baskets from the Edenton-Chowan Food Pantry. Some 40 volunteers helped with the two-hour long distribution that included a holiday meal with all the trimmings.

"Come Join Us As We Celebrate Our Lord's Birth"

ST. PAUL'S, 101 W. CHURCH ST.  
Father Thomas M. Rickenbaker, Rector

ST. PAUL'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH  
invites you to their

CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICES

5:30 PM CHILDREN'S SERVICE

10:30 PM SPECIAL CHRISTMAS MUSIC

11:00 PM CANDLELIGHT COMMUNION