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THOMASVILLE TIMES

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North Carolina retains seats in House of Representatives

BY ERIN WILTGEN
Staff Writer

After months of hard work, the U.S. Census Bureau announced preliminary data, declaring the nation's population continues to grow.

In information released Dec. 21, at the National Press Club in Washington, D.C., staff revealed that the U.S. currently boasts a resident population of about 308.7 million, a 9.7 percent increase over the 2000 amount of around 281.4 million and up from the roughly 92.2 million recorded in 1910.

North Carolina reported a population of about 9.5 million, an 18.5 percent change from the 2000 Census and up from the roughly 2.2 million people in 1910. Though a significant change between census years, North Carolina's growth was not enough to gain an extra seat in the U.S. House of Representatives.

"This marks the 23rd time since 1790, when we were just 3.9 million people, that all residents of the United States have come together to count themselves and, thus, made possible a critical step in our democracy," said Census Bureau Director Robert Groves. "If we track the growth of 50 states, even reflecting populations of territories that later became states, we see a decade of remarkable growth."

The resident population counts the total number of people living in the 50 states and the District of Columbia. In February, the Census Bureau will begin releasing demographic and local data to states.

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Five-year-old Eva Beck slides down a snowy hill Monday afternoon as Chair City residents dug themselves out from a Christmas storm over the weekend.

TIMES PHOTO/ERIN WILTGEN

SNOW COVERS CHAIR CITY

BY ELIOT DUKE
Staff Writer

Saturday night's snow may have been a little late for Christmas but it was just in time to wreak havoc on area roads.

Much of Thomasville's roads were in fairly good shape Monday afternoon following a Christmas weather event that dumped up to six inches of snow throughout the Chair City. Road crews had to cut their holiday weekend short for a long day at the office Sunday.

"We had a couple of different crews on call for snow plowing," Morgan Huffman, city public services director, said. "Overall, I think things went pretty well. So far, I have not heard of any problems."

With many of the city's main arteries cleared off, the threat of black ice has become top priority. Huffman said there are shaded areas throughout Thomasville that could pose a problem for motorists, and there's a likelihood of more patches of black ice forming as the temperature outside drops.

"Everything is pretty much thawed out except for some of the spots with shade," said Huffman. "In some of those areas, we're probably going to have black ice in the morning and overnight. I definitely think we will see some re-freezing overnight. The last I heard, the temperature was going to get down

into the 20s, so people need to be very cautious during the night and into the morning."

Dwayne Condrey, assistant director with Davidson County 911 communications, said there were more than 200 calls for service over the weekend that were directly related to the weather. Condrey's office received 141 calls for property damage, 91 for accidents with possible injuries and 53 stranded vehicles. Saturday night's storm was different in that it affected a wide area, Condrey added.

"Our peak time for calls was around Sunday morning," Condrey said. "It's usually Interstate 85 taking the worst of it when something like that starts but this was everywhere. So far, [Monday] has been good."

As snow starts to melt, Condrey cautions motorists to be extra careful when it comes to black ice.

"I'm sure we're going to have it because a lot of the backroads and even some of the main roads still have ice," said Condrey. "When the snow starts melting and the water starts running, it might freeze back over again."

Unlike two weeks ago, Condrey felt like citizens did a fairly good job staying off the roads Sunday, which went a long way to limiting the amount of calls for service.

"Usually, after the first one, we start slowing down

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Grice warns against drunk driving on New Year's

BY ERIN WILTGEN
Staff Writer

It's that time of year again.

As 2010 winds down, as the clock approaches that magical time between one decade and the next, folks all across the country will clink glasses of champagne, throw confetti and great the new year.

But with celebration comes danger, and Davidson County Sheriff's Department and Thomasville Police Department once again will move out in full force to keep citizens safe from themselves and others on Dec. 31.

According to a report released by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) in 2007, drunk-driving related fatal crashes increase dramatically around Christmas and New Year's Eve. About 36 driving fatalities occur on average in America every day, but in the last two weeks of the year that number rises to 45 deaths daily and spikes to 54 on New Year's Eve.

"It's just an extremely dangerous time of the year," said Davidson County Sheriff David Grice. "We are going to have plenty of officers out there."

Drunk driving acts as a major factor in traffic fatalities any time of year, but with more people out drinking to celebrate the turn of the calendar, the risks increase substantially on Dec. 31.

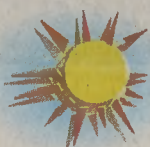
Grice recommends that groups designate a driver before leaving the house and emphasizes that that individual remain com-

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Today's Weather



Sunny, 42/20



Funeral home reaches out to grieving families

BY ELIOT DUKE
Staff Writer

Scott Kramer knows all-too-well how difficult the holiday season can be for people who have lost a loved one.

Kramer, funeral director at Thomasville Funeral Home on Randolph Street, lost his father nine years ago and admits there are still days, though not as frequent, where he thinks a lot about his dad.

"You never really blow your nose and get over it," Kramer said. "It's a very difficult process."

This is the story for many people who have suffered the loss of a family member this time of year. Christmas can be a very difficult holiday for grieving family members, and Kramer understands that as much as

anyone, having seen it often over the years.

"Holidays are kind of bitter-sweet," said Kramer. "It's so difficult on the holidays, especially Christmas, being it's the culmination of the year, for families to try and get over the hump on things."

Some funeral homes hold candlelight vigils or read the names of the recently departed over the holidays, but Kramer chooses to go in a different direction. Earlier this month, he held an open house at Thomasville Funeral Home where family members came for a catered dinner and a chance to be with others who are experiencing the feelings they are.

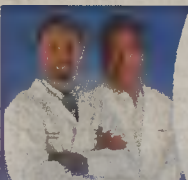
"What I try and do is tell them that everything is going to be

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TIMES PHOTO/ERIN WILTGEN

Scott Kramer, funeral director at Thomasville Funeral Home, looks at a Christmas ornament that honors the recently departed.



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