

The News-Journal

The Hoke County News - Established 1928

The Hoke County Journal - Established 1905

5519-7

VOLUME LXI NUMBER 34

\$4 PER YEAR

RAEFORD, HOKE COUNTY, NORTH CAROLINA

10¢ PER COPY

THURSDAY, JANUARY 5, 1967

Patrolman Wins Chase With 'Hot-Rodder'

Says Youth Forced Him Off Street

BY JIM TAYLOR

A young Hoke County driver, described by officers as a "hot-rodder," is accused of forcing a state highway patrolman off the road when the officer pulled his patrol car alongside during a midnight chase Monday inside the town limits.

Johnny Scott, 20, of Shannon Rt. 2, also faces charges of assault on an officer, resisting arrest, failure to stop for a police light and siren, and careless and reckless driving as a result of the incident.

The patrol car, driven by Patrolman J. D. Robinson, and Scott's vehicle were locked together before and after they "spun out" in a high speed tug-of-war on Jackson Street.

Two Killed New Year's Eve

Robinson said he was driving down Harris Avenue toward downtown Raeford after 11 p.m. Monday when he observed a car, driven by Scott, "scratch off" from Jiffyburger No. 2 and speed toward Main Street.

Robinson said he immediately gave chase and was closing on the car when it turned right onto South Magnolia Street.

With siren wailing and blue light flashing, Robinson chased the car, which then was running with lights off, he said, through Raeford Lumber Company's lumberyard to South Main Street.

There, Robinson said, the car turned north, with him following closely, to Campbell Avenue. With lights still off, the auto sped through the dirt streets of a Negro neighborhood, wound through the Hoke

Oil and Fertilizer Company property, and turned north onto Jackson Street.

"I realized that if he made it to Central Avenue (Old Fayetteville Road) he would have clear sailing, endangering every car he met or passed, and I might have to chase him for miles," Robinson later said.

About 100 yards or so from the intersection of Jackson and Central, Robinson tried to pull alongside on the left of the other car, he said, and the driver turned to the left, hitting the patrol car and forcing its left wheels well off the pavement onto the soft shoulder.

The two vehicles locked at impact, the bumper of Robinson's car hung in the left rear fender of the convertible.

There ensued a short "power struggle," according to the pa-

troldman, with the police car regaining the pavement and the two vehicles doing a tandem spin.

The cars came to a stop halfway in the Jackson-Central intersection, Robinson said, and Scott jumped from his car and ran.

Across Central Avenue, Scott tried to jump a hedge and tumbled into a front yard, according to Robinson.

"When I reached him, he came up fighting," Robinson said. "I subdued him and took him into custody."

The officer displayed a black eye received, he said, when Scott "came up swinging."

Other officers, meanwhile, had converged at the scene. They searched the convertible.

See CHASE, Page 8

Road Toll For Year Totals 14

A Fort Bragg soldier and one of four passengers in his car were killed near Rockfish shortly before midnight on New Year's Eve, closing out Hoke County's traffic death count at 14 for 1966.

Killed when the car failed to negotiate a curve at apparently high speed were the driver, Manuel Ratcliff, 23, of Fort Bragg, and Alvis McRae, 21-year-old Negro of Fayetteville Rt. 4.

State Highway Patrolman E. M. Roberts said he was of the opinion that neither man would have been killed had they been using the seat belts with which the car was equipped.

"All five of the passengers were thrown from the car," he said, "and McRae's body was hurled 137 feet from the wreckage."

He listed the injured passengers as Frank Robinson, 20, Negro, Fort Bragg; Edward McGill, 19, Negro, Fayetteville Rt. 3; and Eddie Shaw, 18, Negro, Fayetteville Rt. 3.

Robinson and Shaw were admitted to Cape Fear Valley Hospital in Fayetteville, where McGill was treated and released.

"Edward McGill told me the five had left a Fayetteville night club and were en route to another club near Arabia when the accident occurred," Roberts said. "McGill said they were traveling about 90 miles an hour and that he begged Ratcliff to slow down, but he wouldn't."

Roberts said the car left the pavement of Rural Road 1406 two miles south of Rockfish in the direction of Davis's Bridge. The car hit the sidewalk, careened back onto the pavement, and overturned in the roadway.

"The car traveled 393 feet after missing the curve before it overturned," Roberts said. "It then went another 96 feet and apparently rolled at least twice."

The vehicle, a 1956 Buick apparently registered in the name of someone from Ratcliff's hometown in Texas, was demolished.

Both victims suffered severe head injuries apparently sustained when they were thrown from the car, Roberts said.

Both died at the scene only about an hour before the end of the year and were, therefore, listed as 1966 statistics.

The past year's total of 14 (See KILLED, Page 3)

Funeral services for Alvis McRae, 21, Fayetteville Rt. 4, who was killed December 31 in an automobile accident, will be held Sunday at 2 p. m. at Mt. Pisgah Baptist Church.

Burial will be in Silver Grove Baptist Church Cemetery. The body will remain at Buie Funeral Home until the funeral hour.



DEATH CAR--A Fort Bragg soldier and a Fayetteville Rt. 4 Negro died New Year's Eve about an hour before the old year ended when this car went out of control and crashed between Rockfish and Davis's Bridge. All five passengers were thrown from the car. The fatalities were Hoke County's 13th and 14th of the year.



LOCK HORNS--The above State Highway Patrol cruiser and a 1964 convertible operated by Johnny Scott, 20, of Shannon Rt. 2, remained locked after they came together in what Patrolman J. D. Robinson said was an attempt by Scott to force him off the road when he pulled alongside the convertible after a "lights off" chase through town Monday night.

Tragic Camping Accident Wore Year's Worst News

Humberton spent one night, the five sleepy lads piled into their sleeping bags inside the tent. Twelve feet away, the remains of a campfire smoldered.

At about three o'clock in the morning, the boys were shocked into wakefulness. The tent was on fire. The sides and the roof were ablaze and the tent was filled with smoke.

It is reasonable to assume that their clothing, too, was ablaze. Four of them staggered

to apparent safety--choking and coughing. The fifth lad, 12-year-old David Womble, son of Mr. and Mrs. J. B. Womble, was trapped in the fire and burned to death.

The four others made their way tortuously to the home of Mr. and Mrs. Hugh Pickler, parents of another of the boys, 13-year-old Harry Duke Pickler. They stumbled into the house, badly burned, and only then realized that David Womble was not with them.

The adult Picklers placed the four boys on a bed, called an ambulance, and Pickler and a teen-age son hurried to the scene of the fire, several hundred yards from the house. When they arrived, only the skeleton of the tent remained, along with the badly charred body of the Womble boy.

The other four victims were rushed to Moore Memorial Hospital in Pinehurst, where doctors and nurses began an around-the-clock medical battle to save their lives.

On Sunday, the Pickler boy died. It was apparent also that two others, Clarkson Allen, 13, son of Mrs. Nickie Allen, and John Crissman, 14, son of Mr. and Mrs. H. G. Crissman, would not survive.

Both had third degree burns over as much as 80 per cent of their bodies. Saving their lives was a medical impossibility.

The fifth lad, Harry Thornberry Jr., meanwhile, was released from the Pinehurst hospital. Today, he is the only

See ACCIDENT, Page 8

Other 'Big' Stories Of Year Are Listed

Top news story of the year in Hoke County, although a tragic tale, was the death of four of five teen age boys in a horrible camping fire November 19.

In one way or another, the story remained in the state wide news for several weeks as two of the four victims battled for their lives. Locally, it was kept alive by the generous efforts of neighbors who created a "Fund For Five Fire Victims."

Death and tragedy were at the forefront of other big stories during the final six months of the year. Following is a recapitulation, week by week, of the major stories in The News-Journal, beginning with the last issue of the year and going backward to July:

December 29--Hoke and Cumberland counties, which constitute a State Highway Patrol District, experienced no

highway deaths during the Christmas week end. Only four minor wrecks occurred in Hoke County, and officers of all departments reported a minimum of law violations during the holidays.

Christmas was made merry for 101 young boys at Leonard Training School when civic organizations, including Asheboro Community Development Club, showered them with gifts.

William R. Windley, superintendent of the correctional institution, said that as late as December 23 the 101 lads had received nothing from home.

December 22--Four young Hoke County Negroes were charged with murder after an elderly Negro, Neill Archie McCormick, 75, was beaten to death and robbed in his home in the Duffy's Station community. McCormick's body was discovered by his son, Fred McCormick. See ROYALTY, Page 9

See TAX LISTERS, Page 8

Hoke Tax Listers Are Back In Business At Same Stands

It's tax listing time again. Taxpayers are told that the consequences may be worse if they fail to list taxes than if they fail to pay them.

In Hoke County, the period set for listing taxes is January 3 through February 2.

All persons owning real or personal property are required to appear before the taxlister for their township during January and make a report of all property for purposes of taxation. All property owned on January 1 must be listed.

All males over the age of 21 are required by law to give in their poll.

Items to be listed include real property such as land, buildings and improvements and machinery permanently affixed to the real estate; household and kitchen furniture, farm equipment and farm supplies. Household furniture includes electrical appliances and tools of trade; also to be listed are farming equipment, livestock, poultry farm supplies and farm products produced prior to 1966.

Other personal property includes radios, televisions, air conditioners, guns, bicycles, jewelry, diamonds, typewriters, boats and motors, golf equipment and office equipment.

Under "motor vehicles" all automobiles and trucks, also house trailers, airplanes, scooters and motorcycles.

Taxpayers may be questioned as to possible ownership of other tangible property by the taxlister, especially if they own a business. Farmers will be asked to report on their farm census.

A schedule of places, tax listers and townships follows:

Allendale Township -- Miss Willa McLaughlin, Alex McCormick's Store, Jan. 10, Jan. 25.

Antioch -- C. C. Conroy. See TAX LISTERS, Page 8

Hoke Marine Saves Wreck Victim's Life

A quick-thinking Hoke County Marine, Pvt. W. J. Bennett, was credited during the holidays with saving the life of a woman motorist trapped in a wrecked automobile.

Bennett, former football and wrestling star at Hoke High School, was home on Christmas leave from Camp Lejeune before going to Vietnam when he encountered the wreck near Pinehurst.

Mrs. Lena Howard, 54, of Carthage was pinned inside a panel truck following a car-truck collision. A crown had gathered at the scene and when Bennett arrived, he heard someone ask if the woman was still breathing.

He observed that she was sitting upright in the demolished cab, her head held backward by her coat collar, which had caught on something. Her legs were badly twisted and she appeared to have stopped breathing.

Bennett is credited with crawling through the broken windshield, cutting loose the coat collar, and administering mouth-to-mouth respiration to the victim.

She responded and in about five minutes was breathing, but still unconscious. An ambulance arrived. She was loaded aboard and Bennett left the scene without having learned her name.

Later in the day, she was identified as the wife of R. O. Howard of Carthage. She and her 14-year-old son, Randolph, were riding in the panel truck when it was involved in a collision with a sports car driven by Linda Smith of Troy.

Both Miss Smith and the Howard youth were taken to Moore Memorial Hospital by passers-by.

State Highway Patrolman C. L. Cain and others said Bennett's timely assistance probably saved Mrs. Howard's life.

Bennett later said he did not know how long it was after the accident that he arrived at the scene. It apparently was something like an hour, according to bystanders, he said.

Bennett entered the Marine Corps September 12, 1966. He was taught artificial respiration during boot camp at Parris Island, S. C.

He was graduated from Hoke High School in 1965 and attended Sandhills Community College for a year before entering the Marine Corps. His parents, Mr. and Mrs. Waylon Bennett, now live in Aberdeen.

Bennett said he will report January 17 to a California station before departing for Vietnam.



W. J. BENNETT

Town Will Collect Back Taxes

"The town budget set last June is a tough one," Ed Williams, town manager, said this week, "and in order to stay within it, we must collect delinquent taxes."

In reporting that the January meeting of town councilmen was postponed until January 9 because of the New Year's Day holiday, Jan. 2, Williams said the tax matter will be discussed at the upcoming meeting.

Current tax collections have been good, making the going easy for the first half of the fiscal year, he said, but added that unless delinquent taxes are brought in, it will be hard for the town to meet its obligations during the second half.

Mentally Retarded Program Is Pushed

Hoke County commissioners were asked this week to appropriate \$2,000 in the next fiscal year to employ a coordinator to work with Hoke County Council on Mental Retardation.

The Rev. Cortez Cooper and Dr. Harry McLean appeared before the board and gave a lengthy assessment of the need for services and programs for the county's mentally retarded children.

They revealed that the state is now paying a coordinator who divides his time between Hoke and Sampson counties, but his state employment was to have terminated January 1.

They estimated that if he is employed by Hoke and Sampson Counties to continue in that capacity, the local share will be \$2,000 a year. Sampson County would pay an identical amount and the state would pick up the remainder of the tab.

The local council has been in operation for more than a year and already has made progress in a county-wide survey of needs for mentally retarded persons.

Dr. McLean reported that approximately 200 persons in

Hoke County are mentally retarded and fall in the IQ range of 80 to 92, which is an educable or trainable range.

Only one special class is conducted in the county for mentally retarded students and about 15 persons attend the class.

To make an appreciable portion of the 200 cases self-reliant to the degree that they can take care of their personal needs, perhaps even work for a living, would be of tremendous benefit to the county, commissioners were told.

The Rev. Mr. Cooper and Dr. McLean asked commissioners to provide \$800 to employ the coordinator, Arvin West, for the remainder of the fiscal year (until June 30) and to set aside \$2,000 in next year's budget.

Commissioners agreed to include the request in their budget considerations for the forthcoming year; however, it was not believed that \$800 would be available in the middle of the budget year.

In its first meeting of the

See RETARDATION, Page 8