



ROCKFISH FIRE--Rubble is all that remains of the wood frame home of Mrs. Annie Bell Baker after a fire raged Feb. 26. Mrs. Baker and two other persons got out safely.

Home Burns In Rockfish

A heater is believed to have started a fire that destroyed a Rockfish home last Wednesday morning and sent the three occupants fleeing.

Rockfish Fire Chief Julian Barnes said the home of Mrs. Annie Bell Baker, about a mile east of Rockfish on the Rockfish Road, was completely burned when the fire department arrived shortly after 10:30 a.m.

"We didn't even use any water on it. It was already gone," Barnes said.

Barnes said Mrs. Baker told him a heater started the fire, but he was unsure how it ignited or if there was an explosion.

Mrs. Baker roused her son and grandson, who were sleeping, Barnes said, and all three escaped the flames safely. All the furnishings were destroyed, but a car near the burning

home was pushed out of the yard in time to avoid any damage, he reported.

Barnes said the antenna at the Rockfish firehouse apparently did not pick up the signal relayed from the sheriff's department and the fire siren did not sound. A caller reported the fire siren was not working, and the firemen were contacted by telephone, Barnes said.

Barnes indicated he was doubtful the delay caused by the fire alarm failure made any real difference.

"I heard Mrs. Baker's grandson say there was no way the house could have been saved," Barnes stated.

Barnes said an antenna will be put on the roof at the firehouse this week to insure it will receive the signal. The antenna is now presently inside the building, he said, and this may have caused the failure.

Area Incidents

Truck Theft Is Charged

City police answered a burglar alarm early Monday morning at Bill's Car Wash on 401 By-pass. A coin-operated machine had been broken open and \$50 was reported missing, according to Police Chief Leonard Wiggins.

Group Elects New Officers

The Hoke County Association for Developmentally Disabled met Feb. 17 at Raeford United Methodist Church.

Newly elected officers are Mrs. Catherine Brown, president; Warren Pate, vice-chairman; Mrs. Betsy McNeill, secretary.

Speakers at the meeting were Buddy Humphreys of the regional office of mental health and Jack Ammons, vocational and rehabilitation counselor.

Regular meetings are held every third Monday at the Raeford United Methodist Church. Anyone interested in membership in the association is invited to attend.

Bookmobile Schedule

ARABIA, MARCH 11 -- Mrs. Archie Maxwell, Mrs. Bertha Hendrix, Mrs. Dan Hagan, Mrs. Lillian White, Mrs. Aretha Ray, Mrs. William Harris, Mrs. Linda Pittman, Mrs. H.J. Chason, Mrs. J.E. McGougan, Mrs. Johnny McGougan, Mrs. Buena Melvin, Mrs. Gloria Konkel, Mrs. Geneva Coggins, Mrs. Bob Grantham, Mrs. Brenda Tillman, Mrs. Marlene Russi, Mrs. Janet E. Nubby, Mrs. Mann Hwa Smith.

A glass on a gas pump at Tuttle's Self service station on Harris Avenue was found broken about 3 a.m. Monday.

The theft of a pickup truck was reported to city police about midnight Sunday. The truck, owned by Knit-Away, was taken from the parking lot. It was recovered several hours later and police have charged Ernest Jacobs, 25, of East Elwood Avenue with the theft.

Deputies investigated a number of break-ins in the county.

Frances Pate, of Rt. 4, Fayetteville, reported that two mobile homes were discovered to have been entered Sunday and furniture valued at more than \$500 was stolen.

The trailers were not occupied at the time of the break-ins, according to the investigation report.

Emmett Steele of Rt. 1, 401 By-pass, last Friday reported the theft of a new garden tractor from the tool shed at his home. The tractor was valued at \$394.15.

Mag wheels and rims valued at \$230 were reported stolen Friday from a car owned by Delton Ray Hammonds of Rt. 1, Red Springs.

A lakeside cabin owned by the chairman of the county board of commissioners was broken into recently. Ralph Barnhart reported Thursday the theft of two guns and two boxes of ammunition taken from a dresser drawer.

Windows were reported broken at the New Jerusalem Mission Church near McCain last Thursday.



Steve Morgan

State Club Picks Morgan

A Hoke High student has been chosen state vice-president of the Future Teachers of America-Students for Action in Education.

Steve Morgan was elected at the state convention held last weekend at Duke University.

A member of the National Honor Society and Key Club, he has also held office as president for two years of the science club.

A letterman in golf, Steve was active in the bikeathon for diabetes and in the Fellowship of Christian Athletes.

Service Personnel

Marine PFC. Alfred McPhaul, son of Mr. and Mrs. Willie McPhaul of Rt. 1, Red Springs, was graduated from recruit training at the Marine Corps Recruit Depot, Parris Island, S.C.

He received a promotion in recognition of his outstanding performance in all phases of recruit training.

Plan To Expand Family Planning

A high birth rate and limited family planning facilities were pointed out in a proposal from the regional council of governments.

A proposal that would significantly increase the family planning capability at Hoke's health center was presented Monday to the county commissioners for their comments.

John Highfill, executive director of the Lumber River Council of Governments, explained that the COG has agreed to assume the responsibility for coordinating family planning efforts for the region.

A four-hour clinic, from 8-12 on Friday mornings and three afternoon clinics a month are presently available at the Hoke County health center. The family planning program is presently held in conjunction with a prenatal clinic staffed by a physician from Ft. Bragg.

Under the proposal being studied, the family planning duties will be headed by a registered nurse practitioner who will visit Hoke, Bladen and Robeson counties. Clinics would be increased to two days a week here, Susan McKenzie, acting administrator of the county health center told the commissioners.

In addition, the expanded program would require an additional public health nurse, a clerk and a part-time

public health educator.

According to statistics for 1973 included in the proposal, Hoke County's fertility rate was 121.8, far exceeding the state average of 89 and the national fertility rate of 87.5. Fertility rates are measured by the number of births for every 1000 women of childbearing age.

The birth rate in 1973 was 18.9 per cent, or 323 babies born to Hoke County mothers. Of these, 105 were white and 218 were nonwhite.

A high infant death rate was also identified in the region, although the mortality rate in Hoke County was below the national average.

In the Lumber River Region, 95 infant deaths per 1000 live births were recorded. This compares nationally with 19.2 infant deaths for every 1000 live births.

However, the infant mortality rate in Hoke County is lower, with a 15.5

overall rate in 1973. All of the infant deaths that year were among nonwhite babies.

Births to teenagers under 17 was also identified in the study as a significant health problem.

The commissioners were asked to comment on the proposal by March 10.

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