

Around Town

BY SAM C. MORRIS

Last week an article appeared in this newspaper about a home being destroyed by fire in the Rockfish section of the county. A notice concerning the fire was received after the paper had gone to press and I think everyone should read it and maybe you could assist this family.

The notice is as follows:
 "The house owned and across the street from Mr. and Mrs. Cecil Reynolds burned about one o'clock Saturday morning. It was a total loss. It was occupied by Mr. and Mrs. Fred Parliaman, son, Butch, 16 years old and daughter, Coleen, 13 months old. They lost everything they had and will be living in a mobile home. If you would like to make a donation or have anything they might be able to use please contact Cecil Reynolds, 875-2720 or Mrs. Judy Henley, 875-4354 or 875-2501."

If you have anything that will help this family please contact one of the above numbers.

The weather was perfect over the weekend for the first time since the New Year arrived. Monday and Tuesday were rainy and reports are that it will stop and that cold air will move in and it will stay cold for a day or so and then start raining again. Let's hope for another fair and warm weekend.

The Hoke County United Fund drive is only a hundred dollars short of its goal. I know that some folks have not contributed this year and more than likely have forgotten about it or haven't taken time to write a check. The amount that it takes to reach the goal is so small and any amount you would give could make the drive a success.

So take time today to mail a check to Gene Carter at The Bank of Raeford or to this writer at The News-Journal. Thanks.

Last Thursday night the program at the Raeford Kiwanis Club was given by the Hoke County High School Chorus. The theme of the program was our Bicentennial year. As always the group performed in a superior manner.

Robert Gatlin was program chairman for the night and before the Chorus arrived told the club about a trip the group was wanting to take this spring. This group has always been "goodwill ambassadors" for Hoke County and Raeford. Gatlin stated but it was almost impossible for them to raise money for such trips due to school rules. The club voted a contribution to the group after the program.

I don't know if other clubs or groups know about the trip but a donation to this group would certainly be appreciated by their singers. I expect they would accept a contribution from a private citizen also.

If you would like to help these ambassadors you could make out a check to the Hoke County High School Chorus and send it to this newspaper and I will see that it gets in the right hands.

Death Ruled Suicide

Sheriff's deputies responded to a call about 2:55 P.M. Saturday, Jan. 24 involving an apparent suicide that occurred near Rockfish.

Leslie Allen Moser, 24, of Rt. 2, Raeford was found lying on his back with a wound in the right side of the head in a wooded area near Rockfish.

A .38 pistol was found lying by his side.

New Number

A new telephone number for non-emergency calls to the police department has been installed and citizens are asked to use the new number unless they are calling to summon immediate help.

The new number for non-emergencies and routine matters is 875-5058. To phone the police in an emergency, the 875-3400 number should be dialed.

All calls to the Chief of Police should be dialed through 875-5058.



YOUNG FARMER -- Eddie Baker (center) gets his scholarship for the annual Short Course in Modern Farming and is congratulated by The Bank of Raeford's Gene Carter and Southern National Bank's Freddie Williams. An enrollment of about 100 is expected for this year's two-week course at N.C. State University, which is wholly sponsored by hometown banks.

Perjury Levied

Plea Entered In Killing

A surprise plea was entered halfway through a murder trial here Tuesday morning after only two witnesses has been called to testify for the state.

Benjie Allen Stephens pleaded guilty to involuntary manslaughter of Freddie Stephens last October 15.

Both men, residents of the Robbins Heights area of Raeford apparently were engaged in an argument before Benjie shot Freddie at the home of Michael Priest.

The jury for the case was chosen in a little over an hour's time Monday afternoon and testimony began shortly afterward.

A principle witness for the state, Kenneth McDonald, also of the Robbins Heights area, said he was an eye witness of the shooting.

McDonald said that he could identify the weapon used, a pistol, and related incidents surrounding the shooting, but had his testimony damaged after he was asked if he had been drinking the night of the occurrence.

He said that he had consumed two quarts of wine.

After agreement was reached with Stephen's attorney, Phil Diehl, and the district attorney, Superior Court Judge James H. Pou Bailey allowed Stephens to plead

guilty to the involuntary manslaughter charge.

Stephens was sentenced to five years, suspended, and placed on probation for five years.

After hearing the plea, Bailey explained the situation to the jury and dismissed them.

Members of the jury selected were: Roland E. Furr, Albert G. McLean, John W. Nixon, Kenneth E. Hendrix, Lewis Oxendine, Harrison Ray Daniels, F. Gilbert Burnhardt, Carrie McBryde, Pearl Davis McRae, J.P. Scarborough, James T. Barefoot, Edna Q. Davis, and Charles Clifton McNeill was the alternate.

In another case, Bailey ordered that a warrant be drawn up for a Raeford man for subornation of perjury after testimony indicated that he had paid two young girls to testify against another man in District Court.

N-J Staffers Receive State Writing Award

Two News-Journal staffers received the second place award for investigative reporting among the

Poll Concludes Opinion Shaky On Community

Sheriff Replies

In response to reports published in The News-Journal last week concerning the firing of deputy sheriff Elisha Dial, Sheriff D.M. Barrington contacted a reporter Wednesday with further comment.

"At last Monday night's meeting of the county board of commissioners at which Mr. Dial and myself appeared, I was unaware of statements that Mr. Dial had made,

due to the fact I was advised to be at the meeting at 8:30, and the meeting convened earlier; therefore I was unaware of statements made prior to my arrival."

"I had previously prepared a statement on my reasons for firing Mr. Dial and I followed the guidelines of my prepared statement. Had I known that Mr. Dial accused James Lamont, my Chief Deputy, of being off with a woman and wrecking a police car, I would have given some explanation of this matter at that time."

"I would also have given an explanation of the Claudine Hodgkin ticket - fixing case, had I known that statement had been made prior to my arrival at the meeting."

"I feel the public should be made aware of what actually took place on both of these incidents and accusations made by Mr. Dial."

"If the newspapers are so kind as to print it in its entirety, I will give a full explanation of both instances - of one of which I am ashamed."

"I have betrayed the public trust only one time in my law enforcement career, we are now speaking of the Claudine Hodgkin incident, and I will accept the responsibility of it when it becomes necessary."

"On Oct. 24, 1974, at 10:30 A.M., a house in the Antioch area was entered by two Indian males. This was an illegal entry. There was a 16 year - old girl present in the home, suffering from an illness and in her bed. She was the only occupant of the home at that time. I will not divulge her name, because this may be embarrassing to the young girl involved, or her parents."

"This young lady entered her hallway and saw various items and belongings stacked in the hallway. She went back into her room, obtained a pistol, came back in the hallway and saw two Indian males near the stack of property."

"She pointed the pistol, pulled the trigger, and it misfired. The Indian males left through the front door, getting into a pick-up truck."

"The investigating officers obtained information from the young lady, who advised if she saw the subjects again, she could identify them."

"On the evening of Nov. 14, 1974, Deputy Sheriff James Lamont contacted me at home and advised me Robeson County deputies had located a vehicle that fitted the description of the vehicle used in above described B&E."

"Lamont advised me he would take the girl to Robeson County for identification purposes. He went to the home of the young lady under my authorization. He obtained her mother's permission to take her to Robeson County. He drove the young lady to Robeson County where identification was made of the vehicle which led to the arrest of Johnny Locklear and Charles Ronald Locklear."

"After the identification was

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Less than half of the people sampled in a random opinion poll here rated Hoke County as becoming a "more enjoyable place to live", according to findings released by North Carolina State University last week.

Only forty five per cent of those responding agreed the community was becoming more enjoyable in the poll conducted last spring statewide. The state average was 57 per cent agreeing.

Findings of the survey, which was done by mailed questionnaire sent to 120 county residents, were published by the N.C. Agricultural Extension Service. 66 responses were received, and of these, 12 were randomly selected for use in the poll based on Hoke's population size.

Since the responses were not based on representative groupings according to age, sex, income, education, or other typings, county extension agent Wendell Young cautioned against drawing any broad conclusions.

"With the number of responses we got back, and since you don't know who they are, you don't know if it's a true picture. Yet it could be the thinking of most people. You have no way of knowing," he said Monday.

Bladen, Robeson, and Scotland Counties, which make up Region N along with Hoke, fared better on the "enjoyable" question. 65 per cent in Bladen answered yes, 61 per cent in Robeson, and Scotland topped the list with 76 per cent in agreement.

Neighboring Cumberland County only drew 39 per cent as "yes". Respondents were asked to rate availability of 12 community services, and locally health care, jobs, housing, and recreation received overwhelming "poor" ratings.

Fifty-four per cent rated availability of medical facilities "poor", and 59 per cent agreed availability of family doctors was "poor". Only 11 per cent rated overall quality of services and facilities as "good", and 73 per cent felt alcohol and drug rehabilitation services were "poor".

Fifty seven per cent classed availability of job training as "poor", and 51 per cent agreed quality of job opportunities was "poor".

In housing, 44 per cent ranked availability of low income housing "poor", 25 per cent ranked middle income housing as "poor", and 63 per cent agreed availability of rental apartments was "poor".

Overall quality of recreational facilities was rated "poor" by 54 per cent, with six per cent rating it "good".

Fifty two per cent classed quality of elementary and secondary education "good", while public kindergarten and special education programs dropped to 30 per cent and 26 per cent, respectively, in affirmative responses.

Quality of city and county law enforcement was rated "good" by 39 per cent, while control of crime and juvenile delinquency received only 25 per cent "good" response. Quality of highway patrol was ranked "good" by 66 per cent.

'Can't Make It'

Family Depends On Food Stamps

Rayford Edwards and his wife, Peggy, have a hard time managing their budget and feeding their nine year-old daughter Carol on Social Security disability checks. This month the family's \$130 allotment of food coupons ran out early, and last Saturday The Edwardses had no food, except for some black eyed peas.

"I just can't make it on what they give us. In South Carolina, they didn't count Carol's SSI (supplemental Social Security income). The highest I ever paid for food stamps was \$20. Down here they count it as income," Edwards said.

Edwards, 36, and his wife, 28, are both disabled. The family income from Social Security disability payments is \$407, including amounts of \$109 and \$51 for their severely birth-damaged daughter. Edwards draws \$196 a month as 100 per cent disabled.

Monthly expenses for the family, including rent, utilities, car pay-

ment, insurance, and other bills comes to \$378.87, including the \$76 spent on the food stamp, according to Edwards.

Edwards said the social services office here told him that his wife was ineligible for Medicaid benefits because she is not 100% disabled, so \$15 a month is spent on insuling and supplies for his wife, who is a diabetic.

Edwards, who explained he was hospitalized with a nervous breakdown in 1973, is supposed to be on constant medication, but at a monthly cost of \$26.60, he said he just can't afford it.

Carol, who suffered spinal and brain damage, is able to attend special classes for the handicapped, but she requires special body bags since she has no bladder or bowel control.

They (social services) told us they didn't have no funds in Hoke County to pay for something like that. But Miss Betsy Sloan at the

board of education called somebody in Fayetteville, and we got them," Edwards said. Miss Sloan explained the bags were purchased by the Crippled Children's Society in Fayetteville.

Saturday's crisis was averted when his wife's parents came to visit from their home in Bennettsville, S.C. They bought groceries for the family, but Edwards said Monday his disagreement with the social services office here may threaten more of the family income.

"I got a letter today from the Social Security office, they were going to cut off Carol's SSI check if we didn't report within ten days. We've already been over to the Social Security people in Fayetteville," he said.

Edwards said he has been back and forth to the social services office here, trying to get his food

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Rose's Office

The mobile office of Congressman Charles G. Rose will be in Raeford Friday, Jan. 30 from 10 A.M. to 3 P.M.

The van will be parked as close to the post office building as possible.