

The News-Journal

The Hoke County News - Established 1928

The Hoke County Journal - Established 1905

Volume LXXV Number 35

RAEFORD, HOKE COUNTY, NORTH CAROLINA

\$10 PER YEAR

25 CENTS

Thursday, December 22, 1983

Pate Chosen As District Court Judge

By Sherry Matthews

After eight weeks of deliberation, North Carolina Governor Jim Hunt has appointed Raeford Attorney Warren L. Pate to fill the vacated 12th Judicial District Court Judge's seat.

Pate was informed Tuesday afternoon of the appointment.

"I am very happy about this appointment," Pate said.

"I am just grateful that the governor decided to retain a resident District Court judge," he added.

Presently four of five seats in the 12th Judicial District are held by Fayetteville residents. Pate will

replace retired Hoke County Judge Joseph E. Dupree.

If Pate had not been appointed, Hoke County would have lost its last representation on the district court.

Although Pate was uncertain of the swearing in date, he said Tuesday that he "hoped" he would be ready to start his new job by January 15.

"It will take me about two weeks to wrap up my private practice," the new appointee said.

"Right now I am just happy that I got the appointment. I am happy for Hoke County, and I am happy for myself," he added.

Pate, who serves as president of

the 12th Judicial Bar Association, captured one of three nominations for the position vacated December 1 by Dupree.

Cumberland County Assistant District Attorney Stephen Nimmo and Spring Lake attorney Hank Finch were also nominated for the appointment.

Hunt has been deliberating on the appointment since mid-October.

"These appointments are very important and the governor realizes this," Legal Council to the Governor Jack Cozort said earlier.

Pate, 38, has been practicing in Raeford since 1974 and believes he has a strong base of legal ex-

perience that qualifies him for the judgeship.

Pate is a 1970 graduate of Wake Forest University Law School.

Prior to starting his practice in Raeford, Pate served for two years in the Judge Advocates Office at Ft. Bragg.

An Erwin native, Pate has been active in the Democratic Party here and has served as President of the Young Democrats. He is presently Hoke's only representative on the state Democratic Party Executive Committee.

Pate has also served as Chairman of the Hoke County Association for the Developmentally Disabled, a Hoke County delegate

on the Lumber River Council of Governments, Chairman of the Bethesda Halfway House in Aberdeen and has been active with the Hoke County Recreation Commission.

"I am very grateful to the Governor for appointing me, and I pledge to the people of Hoke and Cumberland Counties to do my best as a district court judge," Pate said.

"I just want to thank all of my supporters in Hoke and especially Cumberland County. They made this appointment possible," Pate said.

(See PATE, page 2A)



Newly appointed 12th Judicial District Court Judge Warren Pate.

Raeford Airplanes Sabotaged

By Sherry Matthews

Hoke County Sheriff's deputies are investigating the apparent sabotage of two passenger aircraft housed at the Raeford Airport, reports show.

The airplanes are owned by jump school operator Gene Paul Thacker, and were apparently sabotaged late Wednesday.

Pilots were reported to have been readying for takeoff when the damage was discovered. The planes carry parachutists.

Sheriff's reports indicate that pennies were dropped in the oil reservoirs and sugar was placed in the gas tanks on two of Thacker's planes.

Thacker reported that someone had put pennies down one oil spout and sugar down another in his twin-engine plane, the report says.

He also noted that the oil stick had been broken off so the caps could not be replaced.

Sugar and more pennies were placed in the oil spout and gas tank of a second single-engine plane, according to the report.

Thacker could not be reached for comment at press time. However, a spokesman for Cessna Aircraft in Fayetteville said that the

(See SABATOGUE, page 2A)

Around Town

By Sam Morris

Do you want a white Christmas? The weatherman won't say at this time whether or not we will have one. The outlook is slim, but by the way most forecasters have been missing the past year, about anything could happen.

We believe that the rainfall has built up the rain level for the year and most communities are not in need of rain at this time.

We like to see snow fall but the after effects of the snowfall is what has turned us against having a white Christmas. Also most of us want to see our family members come home for the holidays. Either way we will live with whatever happens. What else can we do?

Raz Autry was by the office Monday and was sporting a cap that signified who he wanted for governor. (no free advertising Raz?). He was proud of the help he had received in the staging of the Christmas Parade, but I believe it was another load off his back. When you have weather problems and must postpone an event, then you worry about when it can come off.

From all reports the parade was a big success and was a thrill for old and young alike. Any projects that help Raeford and Hoke County are worth the effort.

Robert Gajlin showed me a book he had received from one of the Gilchrist family members that

(See AROUND, page 2A)



Happy holidays

Santa should be able to relax Sunday after a busy Saturday night. We, at The News-Journal, hope that your Christmas is as relaxing and that your new year is rewarding.

'Time Off' On List For Christmas

With temperatures dropping down into the low 40's during the day and weathermen timidly predicting the first snowfall for this part of the state, it is beginning to feel a lot like the Christmas season.

Last minute shoppers scurry to overfilled stores in a panic, just knowing that the one last gift they need is going to be in the hands of another frenzied procrastinator.

Despite the hassles, everyone seems to be almost ready for Saturday and Sunday to arrive,

bringing Santa and his reindeer to all Hoke County homes.

Along with Santa and presents wrapped in colorful paper, many Hoke residents will be receiving a much needed holiday vacation.

School-age children are already enjoying a vacation that started Monday and will continue until January 2.

County and city employees will enjoy a long weekend as both offices close Friday December 23 and re-open Tuesday December 27.

The landfill will be opened Friday December 23 but will be closed Saturday, Sunday and Monday, resuming their regular schedule again on Tuesday.

Landfill officials said there would be no garbage pickup Friday or Monday because of the holiday.

In addition, The News-Journal office will be closed Monday December 26. Deadlines for classified ads will be moved up to Friday at 12 p.m. for the coming week.

Testing Of Dump Sites Is Delayed

By Sherry Matthews

Final testing for hazardous residue in three Ashley Heights dumping areas, which was scheduled to be completed in December, will not be performed until early January, a state Department of Human Resources (DHR) official said Tuesday.

"We are involved with a major clean-up project in Richmond County that is taking longer than we expected," DHR Solid and

Hazardous Waste Branch Supervisor Terry Dover said.

"It will probably be the first or second week in January before we get back out to those sites to do final testing," Dover added.

Although testing has been delayed by at least two weeks, Dover does not see any problem.

"I don't really think we are going to find anything now that the clean-up has been done," Dover said.

"We are just doing these final tests to be certain," Dover added.

According to Dover, Goldsboro salvage operator Woody Wilson Jr., who used the areas for dismantling battery casings containing lead and transformers which contained some alleged cancer-causing substances, has finished the state mandated clean-

(See DUMP, page 2A)

Plane Crash Photos Taken In Break-in

By Sherry Matthews

Raeford law enforcement officers were continuing an investigation this week into the Friday evening break-in at the Hoke Rescue Squad Building that netted suspects a set of photographs.

Despite the presence of "a lot of valuable items," the only things taken during the break-in were several photographs of a wrecked aircraft, Raeford Police Chief Leonard Wiggins said.

A member of the Hoke rescue squad later confirmed that the "only thing missing" from the building were pictures taken of the June 4 airplane crash at the Raeford Airport.

"In my opinion, this was not a normal break-in," Raeford Police Chief Leonard Wiggins said Monday.

"There were a lot of valuable things in there, but none of them were bothered," Wiggins said.

According to Wiggins, someone apparently "pried open" an outside door, causing \$75 damage, and entered the building.

The intruders went through kitchen and desk drawers, Wiggins said, noting that they also "broke" the knob off the supply room door.

Despite an apparent ransacking, the pictures were all that was taken, according to Wiggins.

The photographs, apparently

stolen during the break-in, were taken six months ago after a Cessna 150 aircraft crashed into the woods, one mile from the Raeford airport.

"Uncertainty" surrounds the crash, which occurred while the pilot was allegedly practicing "night landings" at the Raeford Airport.

In June, law enforcement officials and Federal Aviation Authority (FAA) Officials could not determine the exact time of the crash.

Reports indicated that the pilot, Charles Morgan, 51, of Hope Mills, landed short of the runway and apparently "wrapped his plane around some nearby trees."

Reports also show that Morgan wandered around the woods looking for parachute jump school owner Gene Thacker shortly after the aircraft hit the ground.

In an earlier interview, Thacker confirmed that Morgan was looking for him.

Reports show that Thacker's son reported the non-fatal accident to FAA officials between 10 and 10:30 p.m. Saturday, although rescue squad members were not dispatched by FAA officials until 3:30 a.m., some five hours after the accident apparently occurred.

The case was apparently closed three weeks later after FAA of-

(See PHOTO, page 2A)

Pound Construction Could Start In Jan.

By Sherry Matthews

Construction on a new animal shelter facility could begin in January if city board members approve a revised plan tentatively adopted by county commissioners last Wednesday, Hoke County Manager James Martin said.

"We are waiting for the city councilmen to approve the plan," Martin said.

"If it is approved, I think site preparations could begin in January," Martin added.

The new animal facility plan, drafted by county tax supervisor Larry Holt, calls for a \$24,000 cinderblock building that can be constructed by "existing" county labor.

"We can do most of the work ourselves. It will be cheaper that way," County Commissioner James Hunt said during Wednesday's meeting.

The new plan, tentatively approved by the county board, will cost taxpayers some \$80,000 less than the original architectural proposal.

"We just want something that is better than what we have," County Commissioner Wyatt Upchurch said.

The plan includes a metal roof, insulated cinder-block walls, 20 dog pens, two separate rooms for puppies and cats, a waiting area and a storage room.

The new proposal, however, excludes an office, a bathroom and an outside concrete running area for the dogs.

Although the new proposal has apparently been trimmed of money

and space, Humane Society Director Jack McGinnis said he is "satisfied" with the tentative decision.

"All we wanted was a decent place for the animals to be housed," McGinnis said.

"We still haven't seen any ground broken and cold weather is here. I just hope something can be worked out soon," McGinnis said.

McGinnis also noted that the new plan was "very similar" to one presented to the commissioners nearly six months ago.

"We (county appointed animal

(See SHELTER, page 2A)

Inside Today

Lester Baker, owner of the Wagon Wheel Restaurant has his \$500 winnings after his name was drawn as the winner of the Kiwanis Club raffle last Thursday night. We take a look at the Kiwanis Club pancake extravaganza and the Christmas parade in this week's B-section of The News-Journal.