

The News-Journal

The Hoke County News - Established 1928

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Volume LXXV Number 37

RAEFORD, HOKE COUNTY, NORTH CAROLINA

\$10 PER YEAR

25 CENTS

Thursday, January 5, 1984

Around Town

By Sam Morris

The temperatures have begun to rise and it will be nice weather for the remainder of the week according to all forecasters.

The past week or so has had the thermometer about 30 degrees below normal for this time of year. Then the wind has been blowing which causes the chill factor to be many degrees below the normal temperatures.

We have had a few fires but not as many as other places according to reports in the newspapers and on television. We can be thankful for this here in Hoke County.

The below normal temperatures have caused many people to neglect their water pipes. Many people have closed off part of their homes to conserve energy and not realizing how cold it would be, let their pipes freeze in that part of the house. Others who were away for the holidays came home and turned on water and the pipes froze. This has caused hardships for many families in the county.

Anyway a frozen pipe isn't as bad as a frozen body and we can be thankful for that in the county. Maybe we will learn a lesson from this week of severe weather and be prepared for the rest of the winter.

I was talking to Dr. Bob Nelson, superintendent of schools, Monday and he stated that school had resumed its work after the two weeks' holiday vacation. There were no pipes to burst in any of the buildings and only a minor heating problem at Upchurch School on Monday. It seems that the part needed to fix the unit is hard to obtain, but the school is still operating on schedule.

Dr. Nelson did say that the heat in his house was out for three days but they managed to get through in tip top shape. Space heaters and electric blankets come in fine in this situation.

Have you seen enough football for a day or two? The tube has been carrying football games since the Peach Bowl last Friday afternoon. (They could have forgotten to televise this game.)

Anyway, by the middle of January the football season will climax with the Super Bowl and then we can get ready for two or three months of basketball. This will be fine if the NCAA tournament turns out like the past two tournaments.

The death of Miss Ila Graham just about brings to an end the people who worked in the courthouse during the 1930s.

To the best of recollection, Miss Graham started to work in the Clerk of Court office, under Clerk Edgar Hall in the early 1930s. Then she continued under Clerks John Cameron, Donald Yates and retired when Ed Smith was clerk.

She served as Acting Clerk of Court between the terms of Donald Yates and Ed Smith. She was a faithful worker for the court system for many years.

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Wall of smoke

This North Raeford Fireman braves freezing temperatures to fight this wall of smoke that built up during a Friday morning blaze that destroyed the Rosa Locklear residence in the South Hoke area.

North Raeford and Antioch volunteers fought the flames for more than an hour, while water suppliers were hampered in their duty by frozen water mains. (Photo by Pam Frederick)

Cigarette, Stove Tied To Fires

By Sherry Matthews

Two early morning blazes marred the New Year's weekend and left one Hoke County residence "destroyed" and another partially damaged, local firefighters said Monday.

Despite earlier reports to the contrary, neither fire was considered to have started from "suspicious origins," North Raeford Fire Chief Johnny Baker said.

A blaze which erupted around 10 a.m. Monday at the Howard Adams residence near the N.C. 211 Highway Cutoff apparently started after a cigarette was left smoldering in a sofa.

North Raeford Assistant Fire Chief George Baker, who investigated the incident, said Tuesday the blaze apparently started from a cigarette left burning in a living room couch on Sunday around 10:30 a.m.

No one smoked on the couch Monday, the assistant chief said. Portions of paneling in the living room and kitchen were damaged by smoke from the blaze, Baker said.

The structure of the residence was apparently not damaged by the fire, Baker added.

Fire, however, did destroy the Rosa Locklear residence Friday morning, Johnny Baker said.

"As far as I can determine, the fire was not of a suspicious nature," the North Raeford Chief said.

The fire broke out between 9 and 10 a.m. last Friday and apparently started around a wood heater in the residence.

"This was the second fire at her home in the past two months," Baker said.

The first fire apparently started around the chimney area of the Locklear residence, he added.

In the second fire, the house was "totally destroyed," according to the chief.

"The inside was gutted bad. I think the inside was totally demolished," Baker said.

"The fire was very hard to control because of the strong winds," Baker said.

In addition to the windy conditions, firemen also had to struggle with freezing water pumps due to the below freezing temperatures.

"For the first couple of minutes all we could do was try to thaw the pumps," Baker said.

"It is the first time I have seen fire pumps freeze in this area," Baker said.



Cigarette burned

This bystander checks the remains of a couch that burned in the Monday morning fire at the Howard Adams residence. The fire started from a cigarette that was left burning the day before. (Photo by Pam Frederick)

School Math Scores Rise, Reading Drops

In tests taken during the fall, Hoke County students showed an improved grasp of mathematics, but a decline in reading skills, members of the Board of Education were told Tuesday night.

Students recorded the highest math marks for county schools in at least the last six years on the statewide competency tests, Associate Superintendent Ginny B. Hayes told the board members

during the regular monthly meeting.

Average reading scores dropped, however, from last year's high of 92.2 to 89.9, Hayes said.

Math scores averaged 88.4, which was up from last year's score of 86.6.

Hoke students were below the state average of 92.8 in reading and 89.9 in math, Hayes said, adding that within the 17-school

units in the Hoke County region, students here ranked 11th in reading and eighth in math.

During January all sixth and ninth grade students will take the statewide annual writing competency tests.

If the program is funded by the state legislature, an additional writing skills test will be required in order to graduate from a North Carolina High School.

An Analysis

of Raeford for failure to comply with sewage discharge regulations.

At the close of 1983, the fines had not been collected, but the turkey plant appeared to be on its way to cleaning up its effluent.

School board members cranked up their search in January for a replacement for retiring Superintendent Raz Autry. Alamance County Superintendent Dr. Bob Nelson was later hired as the Hoke County school chief.

Troubles, which plagued Hoke County Commissioner James

Jail Remains Below Standard

By Sherry Matthews

Although a report which surfaced Tuesday shows that the Hoke County Jail is not meeting state dietary and health standards, Sheriff Dave Barrington said he is "satisfied" that the condition of the facility was more than "just adequate."

Members of Hoke County Commission received a copy of the state's December jail report during a regular monthly meeting Tuesday.

Of the nearly 100 compliance standards, required by the North Carolina Department of Human Resources (DHR), the Hoke Jail meets all but five of the requirements.

The deficiencies noted on the December inspection were apparently the same five that had been found during an August state check of the facility.

According to the report, the jail facility still lacks a medical-clinic area, no sheets are provided to prisoners, a good diet is not provided, a dietitian's consultation is needed and regular sanitary inspections are needed.

Barrington believes the sanitary inspection and the dietary consultant are not justified.

"It is not my place to tell another department to come down here and inspect this facility," Barrington said in an earlier interview.

"I don't really feel like we need

a consultation with a dietitian either," Barrington added.

According to the sheriff, the jail inspectors were upset that the same meat was served to inmates for lunch and dinner.

Barrington said that the jail employees serve three hot meals a day to the inmates when they are actually only required to serve two.

Vegetables are rotated at each meal, but the same meat is served.

"I would have to call some of my kitchen staff back at night if we served another meat," Barrington said.

The sheet problem, Barrington said, has been going on for a while.

The sheriff indicated that putting sheets on the inmates' beds could prove "hazardous".

"They are not fire proof. The state requires that all bedding be fire proof," Barrington said.

In addition, Barrington noted that sheets were a good suicide tool.

"A suicidal prisoner could use the sheet to hang himself," the sheriff said.

"I just don't think it would be wise to use sheets," Barrington added.

One requirement that Barrington said he was working on was space for a medical area for inmates.

In the report, the sheriff indicated that a room could be

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Roadblock Aids In Murder Probe

A roadblock, set up last Thursday by Raeford Police and State Bureau of Investigation (SBI) agents, has given authorities "some good information" on the two week old slaying of a prominent local businessman, Raeford Police Chief Leonard Wiggins said.

"We probably talked to 200 or more people between 8 and 10:30 p.m. Thursday," Wiggins said. "I think we got some pretty good information from this," Wiggins added.

The roadblock was set up at the intersection of Harris Avenue and Bethel Road, just in front of Morrison's Grocery where William Danuel Morrison was found shot to death around 9:30 p.m. on December 22.

About 15 local police, SBI agents and rescue squad workers aided in the roadblock.

"We were hoping to get information from people who might have been in the area around the same time as the murder," Wiggins said.

Although Wiggins would not comment on any possible leads the roadblock may have uncovered, he did admit that "it was a success."

"We got a few things that we did not have before," Wiggins said.

Although no arrests are expected immediately, Wiggins said the investigation was continuing on schedule.

"We are looking into every possibility," Wiggins said.

Included in the possibilities for a motive in the slaying is robbery despite evidence that \$1,600 in store receipts and Morrison's wallet were not disturbed.

"Robbery is still a strong motive for this murder," Wiggins said.

The body of the 54-year-old Morrison was found around 9:35 p.m. by a customer.

Morrison was apparently slumped near the cash register when the customer found the body.

Hoke Medical Examiner Robert Townsend said earlier that Morrison died from multiple gunshot wounds.

"We are working very hard to solve this murder. I think we will catch whoever is responsible," Wiggins said.

Investigating officers have not revealed the caliber of the weapon used to kill Morrison. However, other sources have said a shotgun was not used.

Morrison was shot at least four times, and sources say he was killed instantly by his assailant.

Authorities are looking for a red car spotted near the scene about the time of the murder, and witnesses have said that two black males were in the store before Morrison was killed.

February

In February, County Commission members voted to rewrite the contract with the Hoke Ambulance Service and raise the firm's subsidy by 63.3% to \$105,436.

The body of a Fort Bragg soldier was found in a wooded area between Rockfish and Arabia.

Roger Keith Shannon apparently died from multiple stab wounds. His step-daughter Victoria S.

(See DRUGS, page 10)

Hoke County Carried On 'As Usual' In 1983

For Hoke County, December 31 brought to a close a year which was filled with significant stories as well as small ones.

In fact, the horns, bells and fireworks of New Year's Eve celebrated the end of a year that went much like others have gone.

In Hoke County during 1983, there were few occurrences which could be considered earthshaking, and not many that would have been termed devastating.

The population grew slowly, and the county progressed lethargically.

No new industries opened during 1983, but one existing firm ex-

panded its operations and another kept its doors open by changing ownership.

Although some county civic and political leaders gathered to discuss the need for growth, nothing concrete blossomed from the meeting during 1983.

Plans for motel rooms, a satellite community college, improved relations with Fort Bragg, direct telephone service with Fayetteville and additional mid-ranged housing were still hanging at year's end.

Weather was one of the big stories during 1983. Temperatures ranged from 110° to a low of 4°

during the year. Too much and not enough rain took their toll on the county's \$20 million farm industry.

There were three murders last year in the county. Two were solved, but the pre-Christmas slaying of Raeford businessman Danny Morrison still baffled police as the year closed.

Here's a look at these and other top stories which made headlines during 1983:

January

In early January, members of the Raeford City Council broke into the news when they voted to levy \$30,000 in fines against the House