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25 CENTS

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McDougald Downs residents complain of poor cable TV service

Some Hoke Cable customers in the McDougald Downs subdivision say they just want clear T.V. And with newly replaced transmission line, Hoke Cable thinks they'll finally have the reception they want.

Customers reported repeated problems getting clear reception in cable channels 23 through 26. After what some claim as endless waiting, those channels should come in now.

Wayne and Lauren Hall said they've had reception

problems since they came to the subdivision last April.

"We called many times, and they haven't done anything about it," Lauren Hall said. "They refunded \$3.70 (one month for the Disney Channel) instead of refunding what was paid since last April. The Disney Channel doesn't come in and you pay for it. They won't rectify the situation."

Hall said McDougald Downs residents have few

options without Hoke Cable. "If I didn't have service with them, I couldn't get any other channels. We're locked in."

She said Cablevision Industries will not come to an area already served by Hoke Cable.

Wayne Hall said he would like another service option.

"You're paying people for service and they monopolize this area and treat you how they want," he

said. "They take your money and they don't care. I'm not willing to not receive what I'm paying for."

Some residents opted to do without rather than put up with problems.

Neighbor Dory Straight said she heard of other homeowners' cable problems, and decided cable wasn't for her.

"I don't want cable," she said. "After I'd spoken to

(See CABLE, page 14)



Hoke Sheriff's detective Greg Beard emerges from Rockfish Creek at Twin Bridges with a safe that had been dumped into the creek. Waiting to assist on the bank is Detective Bob Conerly.

Deputies recover stolen safe from creek

Sheriff's detectives charged a convenience store clerk after discovering the man allegedly faked a robbery to make off with an undisclosed amount of money.

John Anthony Carbon, 19, 1918 Harris Ave., Raeford worked for the Thrifty Mart on 401

Business for two weeks before allegedly conspiring to steal the store safe and all the money.

Detective Bob Conerly said Carbon and accomplice, William Lloyd Sneed, concocted the plan which involved planning a fictitious robbery and dumping the safe in a creek by Twin

Bridges in Arabia. Conerly said Carbon went so far as to have Sneed hit him to make it appear he was attacked.

The pair also purchased a car in Raeford and a second car in Fayetteville after the incident. (See CRIME, page 4)

Hoke contingent encouraged after meeting of state task force on violence in schools

Hoke parents and educators seemed encouraged following the final public forum of the Governor's Task Force on School Violence.

The small group from Hoke who attended the meeting, said they gleaned many good ideas and positive feelings from the meeting held Monday night at Terry Sanford High School in Fayetteville.

State Superintendent of Public Instruction Bob Etheridge, SBI Director Jim Coman and William Dudley, assistant secretary of crime

control and public safety, earnestly listened to students, parents, educators and court officials from around the region.

Coman said the forums served as a means to draw all community members together to address the increasing problem of violence in North Carolina's schools.

"It'll take more than three agencies to solve the problems," he told the crowd of more than 100. "Violence is a community problem. We're here to listen to your concerns and

solutions to the violence problem."

Solutions from the crowd ranged from peer mediation boards to stiffer laws to hanging them.

A group of Cumberland County students blamed decaying morals and families for many of the behavioral problems of students. And adults seemed to agree.

"We're dealing with different children than we were five years ago," Carrie Collins said. Collins, with the Robeson County Court system, said (See VIOLENCE, page 5)



William Dudley, assistant secretary, Dept. of Crime Control and Public Safety hears citizens.

New project: stay at home and help others too

Allergies prevented Pat McKnight from participating in volunteer organizations. But with a new at-home volunteer program, she and others like her can stay home and still help others.

"I've held back and just watched and observed," she said of volunteering. But observing wasn't enough, so McKnight took a cue from a Fayetteville organization to

form Project Quick Stitch in Hoke County.

"If something's going to happen, somebody's going to have to get in there and do it," she said. After finding out about a stitch club in Fayetteville, McKnight spoke to H.E.L.P. Center director Nora Cockburn and they formed the Hoke group.

"I thought it was a good thing to

bring back to the county for the county to reach out and help," McKnight said.

Volunteers for the fledgling project are asked to crochet 17 by 17 squares (preferably granny squares) and drop them off at the H.E.L.P. Center on Main Street.

The volunteers plan to piece donated squares into lap quilts for the elderly and ill.

McKnight and Cockburn hope the idea will catch on.

McKnight said she suspects many people in Hoke crochet and work on crafts at home and never thought their hobbies could help someone, until now.

Five ladies already offered to make squares, she said.

"I love crafts and I can't always (See PROJECT, page 7)

County waits out possible jail lawsuit

Hoke County officials wait in limbo to find out whether the county will be sued. A month ago Prison Legal Services inspected the Hoke County Jail and warned officials to resolve overcrowding and other problems, or face a lawsuit. A month later, PLS came back and said the overcrowding is still a problem.

Sheriff Wayne Byrd said he is anxiously waiting for notification of whether PLS will file a lawsuit.

The most recent inspection occurred last Thursday, and Byrd said he felt it went fairly well. "They said they'd be back in touch with us in two weeks and let us know what they're going to do."

After approximately three hours of inspecting the jail, Byrd said the trio said overcrowding and lack of supervision still pose problems for prisoners.

"It was a disappointment for them," he said of PLS after they gave the county a month's warning to rectify problems.

"We're still in violation and they said something would have to be done," Chief Jailer Alex Schwarzbher said. "We're still in violation of overcrowding and lack of supervision, but everything else that was a discrepancy was corrected."

Lack of adequate space and short-staffing place prisoners and facilities in jeopardy, PLS representative Michael Hamden said a month ago. Hamden said if the county made a "good faith" effort to address jail problems, PLS would postpone the lawsuit. He also said then that Sheriff Byrd's efforts to meet jail needs delayed PLS suing Hoke.

"Prisoners reported to me they couldn't shower or if they did it was a cold shower," he said, because the facility lacks adequate plumbing to meet the heavy use.

Chief Jailer Al Schwarzbher said he submitted three proposals to the county for plumbing improvements within the last year. No improvements were made.

Schwarzbher said the plumbing remains a problem.

"We're not going to ignore the problem," County Manager Barry Reed said in a February interview. "As something occurs, we fix it."

"The jail has a rated capacity of 31 and they often have twice that," Hamden said. "In terms of what that does to the facility, the building wears out. That has an impact on the quality of life in the jail," he said.

However unpopular, federal and state law mandate basic requirements for jails to follow, such as exercise and punishment policies. A staff shortage also keeps the Jail in violation of federal mandates.

"It was reported to us that on occasions, the one person (on duty) was required to leave the jail and escort prisoners. If the sheriff doesn't have the staff, something needs to be done to fund it," Hamden said in February.

Two of the four jailers are female, but due to shifts and staff size, only one or the other can work at a time, not both.

"By law, if a female is brought in, we're supposed to have a female on duty. We must have a female and male on duty per shift," Schwarzbher said.

The jail remains understaffed.

(See JAIL, page 7)

Around Town

By Sam C. Morris

Last Saturday, March 20, didn't feel like the first day of spring with the winds out of the north. What a difference a day will make! On Sunday and Monday the temperatures were around 70 degrees and the lows at night were in the high 40s. Spring arrived a day late. It was cold last week and the cold nights set records over the state. The north wind made the temperatures feel much colder. The wind chill was in the teens one night.

The forecast calls for the temperatures to stay above the freezing mark for the remainder of the week. On Wednesday, Thursday and Friday the highs should be in the high 50s and the lows in the 40s. On Saturday the high will be in the 60s and the low will be in the high 40s. There could be rain Wednesday and Thursday, as a low system stalls over the state.

Let's hope that this weather will continue for weeks to come.

Raz Autry, writer and peach grower, told me last week that the cold weather had held back the budding of his peach trees. Maybe with the late cold snap, the budding of the trees will not be hit by cold weather this year. Raz needs a good year in peaches, because his writing is not paying enough to fix his tractors.

You know when you have worked at a newspaper off and on since 1935, you hate to see mistakes made in a news story. The article, about the trial of Tom Cameron's accused murderers to start Monday, was in error. The trial is not on the docket for this week and we at the newspaper office are sorry about the mix-up.

The reporter who wrote the article (See AROUND, page 14)