

The News-Journal

If it happened, it's news to us

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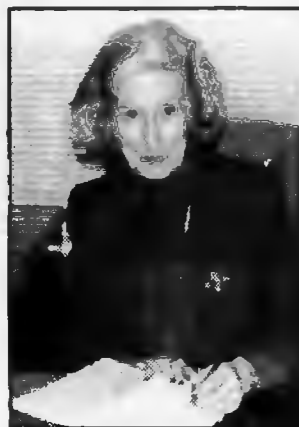
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Wednesday, December 29, 1999

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This week

Christmas night
blaze takes
vacant, former store
page 5A



Mary Archie
McNeill
Foundation
exceeds goal
page 1B

Index

Births 5B
Calendar 5B
Classifieds 7-8B
Deaths 6, 8A
Editorials 2-3A
Legals 5-6B
Public Record 5A
Religion 2B
Schools 4A
TV Listings 3-4B

Around Town



By SAM C. MORRIS
Contributing Editor

We did have a few snow flakes over the holidays, but it didn't make a white Christmas. The weather was cold, but there wasn't anything to keep the relatives from coming home for Christmas. When you discuss plans for the holidays with friends, it seems that each family has different days that their relatives can be home. We had our celebration the day after Christmas. Maybe it wasn't the 25th of December, but the spirit of Christmas was there when the turkey was eaten and the presents under the tree were exchanged.

The forecast for the remainder of the week, Wednesday through Saturday, calls for the high Wednesday to be in the 50s and the lows in the 30s. Thursday and Friday the highs will be in the 60s and the lows in the 40s. Saturday the high will be in the 50s and the lows in the 30s.

Saturday, January 1 will be the year 2000. As I have stated in this column, only a few folks go from one century to another. We have heard that some of the television stations will bring in the New Year in many countries around the world. This will take many hours to cover all the time zones.

Maybe I can awaken and hear the sound of car horns (See AROUND, page 10A)

Election filing to begin

Slots open on commission, school board, for DA

By VICTORIANA SUMMERS
Staff writer

Filing begins Monday for candidates seeking election to several offices, including the Hoke County Commission, the school board and as district attorney and

register of deeds.

Two incumbents' seats at large are available on the Hoke County Board of Commissioners. Cleo Bratcher Jr. and Chairman James A. Leach, both Democrats, are up for reelection. Bratcher, formerly a county commissioner,

was defeated in 1994 by only 10 votes before he was elected again in 1996. Leach has been elected for two consecutive years as chairman of the board by his fellow commissioners and is currently serving his second term.

(See FILING, page 8A)



Sgt. Lisa Whitfield (left) and Deputy Diane Randall display Christmas gifts for five needy families. (Photo by Victoriana Summers)

Deputies share Christmas

By VICTORIANA SUMMERS
Staff writer

Hoke County Sheriff's Department deputies dipped into their pockets and hearts to help five less fortunate families celebrate Christmas. Organized by Chief Deputy Hubert A. Peterkin, the adopt-a-family project spread goodwill and collected gifts for more than 20 children, ranging in age from one to 14 years old. The charitable program will become an annual event for deputies.

"Our deputies wanted to show kids they could do more than ride around in their cars and make arrests," Peterkin said. "They wanted to show kids that they're human, too, just like everybody else. It was so touching to see some of the reactions from these kids. We gave to some families that had nothing for Christmas."

Patrol cars roamed the county last Thursday, distributing a turkey, donated by House of Raeford, to each family, along with clothes and lots of toys. Families were selected based on

recommendations from the Department of Social Services and school counselors. Hardship cases included single parents, unemployed dads, disabled moms, a young widow and one homeless family staying at a shelter.

"We raised thousands and thousands of dollars worth of gifts," Peterkin said. "Most of the clothing was new and donated by Hoke County people and businesses. We want to thank the City of Fayetteville Police (See DEPUTIES, page 7A)

Hoke emergency services ready for Y2K after upgrades

By VICTORIANA SUMMERS
Staff writer

Y2K technology upgrades will be put to the test between December 31, 1999 and January 1, 2000. Director Al Schwarzbher said Hoke County Emergency Management's got a handle on any problems, having already converted its equipment to become Y2K compliant and ready for the transition in 2000.

But, if the systems go down, Sheriff Jim Davis, Chief Deputy Hubert A. Peterkin and Schwarzbher are advising county residents what to do in case of

emergency.

"Our county communications equipment and telephones are equipped to convert over and are Y2K prepared," Schwarzbher said. "But, I'm not going to rule out the option there's a possibility some problems could occur. There is no need for people to panic. Our 911 communications will be open 24 hours. If for some reason, people's telephones or cellular phones stop working and they have an emergency 911 situation, they will need to drive, or send a runner to Emergency Management on Central Avenue in the Old National Guard Ar-

my Building, the City of Raeford Police Department, or the Sheriff's Department. Help will be available."

During 1999, a checklist was sent out by Emergency Management to all county departments with a questionnaire to inventory all office equipment, computers, elevators and other items that could be affected by Y2K. Schwarzbher said the county is prepared and citizens shouldn't worry.

Sheriff's alert

The Hoke Sheriff's Department goes on a 24-Hour alert (See Y2K, page 9A)

Domestic violence, rape crisis center to open

By VICTORIANA SUMMERS
Staff writer

"With Open Arms," a new domestic violence/rape crisis center in Raeford, opens in January. It will serve as a resource and refuge for victims, where families seek free advice and information to help prevent domestic violence.

According to statistics, domestic violence is the number one cause of injury to women in the

United States. At least one out of four families will be affected by domestic violence at some time. Records also indicate a woman leaves home five to seven times before she stays away from an abusive situation.

"With Open Arms" headquarters is affiliated with "Friend to Friend" organization in Moore County, sponsored by the North Carolina Council for Women. The center, a non-profit organization, is located at 128 Elwood

Avenue and will be open Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. until 5 p.m. Victims may call (910) 904-7182 for help, or call 911 for emergencies.

Elaine Monaghan, central region director for the Council, has appointed Karen Moseby as the project director in Raeford. Moseby was formerly employed as a probation-parole surveillance officer. Executive director Bonnie Kalte of "Friend to (See RAPE CRISIS, page 9A)

Raeford family recovers from stolen Christmas

Friends pitch in to replace children's presents discovered stolen on Christmas Eve

By VICTORIANA SUMMERS
Staff writer

Somebody stole all the Christmas gifts Santa Claus had stored in a Raeford warehouse for the A.K. "Dooie" Leach family.

"They took all our presents for our children," Deana Leach said. "It was so shocking when I found everything missing."

The Raeford Police Department is seeking suspects, investigating the Christmas Eve

disappearance of over \$800 worth of holiday merchandise from the Leach's storage unit located on U.S. 401. The lock was forced off the door, Mrs. Leach said.

Thanks to the generosity and time volunteered by friends and family, the Leach family didn't experience a total loss for their kids at Christmas. Mrs. Leach said Santa still visited one-year-old baby John, four-year-old (See STOLEN, page 7A)

1999 — Year in Review

By PAT ALLEN WILSON
Editor

As Hoke and Raeford move toward a new century, it is good to remember the celebrations of this past year that involve centennial events.

First, the Raeford Presbyterian and then the First Baptist churches held their centennial celebrations in 1999 bringing thousands back home to roots, family, friends for remembering and worshipping.

We pause to remember some of the treasures of our community—those who will have lived in three centuries:

Johnny Ray turned 107 in April. He is the oldest living Mason in North Carolina.

A country woman all her life, Nancy Ray celebrated her 111th birthday this year with family and friends at Autumn Care Rest Home.

These are some of our lost treasures: Margaret Cameron Keith passed away March 3; she was 105 years old. Carlie Locklear also died this year at the age of 97; he was said to have been the oldest living Native American in Hoke County.

Looking back, we have pro-

year, Davis garnered more than \$220,000 in grants for upgrading the department and its services.

In late January Burlington announced it was closing its weaving department. Jobs—475 of them—were phased out by the end of March. The action was taken as Burlington streamlined its apparel fabrics operation. The yarn production and dyeing operations were left intact as were the 950 remaining jobs with those operations.

February

City and County officials forged a plan to give sewer relief to 120 residents of Silver City. The City agreed to accept and treat up to 500,000 gallons of wastewater from sources outside of City limits.

March

Mother Nature vented her fury on March 3 when high winds—one storm labeled a funnel cloud—not only resulted in property damage but whipped up flames that resulted in the loss of two homes, one of them the historic Dickson House (later referred to as the Gatlin House) at 283 Wallace McLean Road that was built in the 1880s and once housed a post office.

Alicia Del Carmen Raymond



The historic Dickson and later Gatlin house that burned in March.

vided you with the month-to-month highlights of 1999 as covered by *The News-Journal*.

January

Sheriff Jim Davis, who had been accused of election violations during the November 1998 general election, was cleared of those charges by the state Board of Elections. Eighteen Hoke County residents had filed complaints against Davis at the county level but only five took their complaints to the state level; two followed through for Davis' hearing in Raleigh.

One of Davis' first acts of office was to request an additional \$60,000 from county commissioners for a "professional facelift" for the Sheriff's Department. He was asked to prioritize his list by commissioners and politely turned down on the majority of his requests. Later in the

received the coveted Morehead Scholarship but later disappointed educators at Hoke High with a

valedictorian speech that reflected her own political agenda, and, some thought, put her mentors in a bad light.

Hoke High graduate Terrell McIntyre, a Clemson University basketball standout, was honored by the institution at Senior Day. Hoke High staged its own Terrell McIntyre Day in May.

The Raeford-Hoke Crime-stoppers program was launched March 23.

Another textile operation, Unifi, announced it was closing due to "consolidation." A total of 143 jobs were phased out in May.

April

Democratic Party Chairman (See REVIEW, page 8A)