

## Home burns

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Haire said his father is reliving all the memories since the house has burned. There was no insurance on the house, he added.

He said the family may allow firefighters to use the residence for fire practice in order for it to be safely removed as a hazard.

"It was a grand old home," Haire said. "I used to work tobacco here when I was a kid. It was a ritual to have Sunday dinner here with fatback and collard greens and the best pound cake you ever tasted."

"Both my grandparents were brought back here after they died for the visitation in the front parlor. That was the tradition in those days."

Haire said through the years people had stolen "so much stuff" out of the house.

"For us, it was a living memory of our closeness as a family," he said.

Haire said he is not angry at the arsonist, just disappointed someone would do such a thing.

"A lot of people admired this house," Haire said. "We only preserved it because my father felt so sentimental about it."

"I just do not see how somebody could have burned this beautiful home."



The rapidly-engulfed fire was slowed down by firefighters.

## Travel

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"I have been going with the county commissioners on trips for two or three years, and I have never paid for a trip," Southerland said. "I will not pay for this one."

Southerland said he was in the capital on other business prior to the National Association of Commissioners Convention. He came back early on March 2 because of the death of Mitch Tyler, Hoke school superintendent, and never used the hotel room at Hilton Hotels booked for him by Hoke, he said. Southerland is a member of the school board.

Linda Revels, clerk of the board, signed up Southerland for the trip. The county paid a \$385 registration fee for commissioner seminars for Southerland plus hotel accommodations terminated early, totaling \$586.

Revels said Southerland never requested her to cancel his trip after he resigned. Hoke assistant finance officer Scott Edwards mailed Southerland the bill, which was authorized by County Manager Mike Wood. He requested the bill be paid by Southerland because, Wood said, the trip was not authorized by a county official.

According to the county tax department, Southerland resigned from his foreclosure position with the tax department after he told them on February 27 he was going to file that day for county commissioner.

Southerland said he is being singled out unfairly. He alleged Commissioners Charles V. Daniels and Bobby Wright have not paid back the county for their wives going with them.

"Why don't you ask Linda Revels?" Southerland said last week. "She can tell you that Commissioners (Bobby) Wright and (Charles) Daniels have not paid the county for their wives' trips or all those meals."

Revels said yesterday, however, Commissioners Wright and Daniels are always prompt in paying back the county for airfare expenses for their wives and other expenses for meals. County Manager Mike Wood also confirmed Wright and Daniels have acted appropriately.

"Any costs paid by the county for their wives to go to the national convention were deducted from their monthly



Harry Southerland

travel checks," Wood said. "It is not correct that they did not pay the county back."

Southerland also complained that County Attorney Neil Yarborough had also accompanied the commissioners in a previous year to a state convention in Asheville at taxpayer expense. Revels said she would have to research if Yarborough had gone on one trip, but she said he did not attend any national conventions. She said commissioners may have requested he attend.

"It does not matter if I was only a part-time attorney for the county and he is the county attorney," Southerland said. "We are both part-time because he is also contracted."

The request for Southerland to pay for the national convention resulted after Edwards realized Southerland had already resigned in his capacity with the county.

Southerland also attended a national convention for commissioners in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania last July, and that trip was also paid for by the county.

Southerland was contracted in 1999 to handle foreclosures for Hoke's tax department. His contract did not stipulate he was entitled to have the county pay for any out-of-town travel for hotels, registration fees or meals.

## Lumbee housing program begins rehabs

Contracts have been awarded and construction is underway through the Lumbee Tribal Housing Rehabilitation program. One home in Scotland County was completed last week.

The resident, Joyce Locklear, said that she had applied three times for housing rehabilitation, however, her advice to others is "to keep trying; it's worth it after all."

Another tribal member, St. Pauls resident Gracie Locklear said, "I am proud and I now have the faith that something is happening through our Tribal Council. It makes me feel proud to know that something is being done that I

couldn't do myself due to money."

In Hoke County another home is being rehabilitated. Shingles, wiring, an overhang, windows, a porch and siding are being installed.

Although the application process did not bother Christine Henderson, she stated that she was just surprised about "how quickly work has begun" on her home.

The rehabilitation program provides services to repair, renovate or replace existing substandard housing conditions for qualified low to moderate income Lumbee families.

The Lumbee Tribal Council housing program expects to assist 125 Lumbee families this year.



The Hoke home of Christine Henderson is undergoing rehab work.

## Illegal burning can lead to big fines

The state regulates open burning, and only leaves, branches or other plant growth can be burned — legally.

Residents can be fined up to \$10,000 for illegal open burning in North Carolina.

It's illegal to burn garbage, paper and cardboard; tires and other rubber products; building materials, including lumber; wire, plastics and synthetic materials; asphalt, shingles and

heavy oils; paints, household and agricultural chemicals.

Homeowners can burn yard trimmings — excluding logs and stumps — if it is allowed under local ordinances, no public pickup is available and it doesn't cause a public nuisance. Other allowable burning includes campfires, outdoor barbecues and bonfires for festive occasions.

Landowners can open burn vegetation to clear land or rights-of-way,

provided that prevailing winds are away from built-up areas and roads, fires are at least 1,000 feet away from occupied buildings, and burning is done between 8 a.m. and 6 p.m.

Burn permits issued by the N.C. Division of Forest Resources, its agents or any local government do not excuse a person from following state air quality rules.

For more information call 875-4126.

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LOCATION OF SALE: Courthouse door,  
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