

Structures burn from one end of county to another

By PAT ALLEN WILSON
Editor

Firefighters and the county fire marshal have been busy battling and looking into the causes of structure

fires around the county. No injuries were reported in any of the fires but two family pets, a dog and a cat, died in a home fire Thursday morning.

A passer-by noticed smoke com-

ing from the side of a house at 7749 Turnpike Road and dialed 9-1-1. The Hoke's fire marshal, Al Schwarzbher, says this action saved the home from being totally destroyed but the animals died of smoke inhalation before

firefighters arrived. No one was at home when the fire began, and flames started in the bedroom in the proximity of a bed. Schwarzbher said. The fire is under investigation by him and the company that holds insurance on the house.

Firefighters responded to a fire that appears to have started in a back porch area of a home at 3503 Red Springs Road on Saturday, May 17, Schwarzbher said. The residents had departed the home within about an hour's time prior to the fire, he said. Flames destroyed the back section of the house and the family has been set up with some immediate care from the American Red Cross.

That fire is under investigation by the fire marshal and the insurance company.

North Raeford firefighters responded to a fire smoldering inside a structure at 626 Alex Baker Road Saturday, May 24 shortly after 8 p.m. Schwarzbher said it appears a window was broken and an accelerant was used. There were burns on a table and the cushion of a chair. The fire had been reported to the Hoke Sheriff's Office.

On the Thursday, May 15, reported at 9:33, a vacant structure at 905 Chason Road was destroyed by flames, Schwarzbher said.

That fire is under investigation by the fire marshal and the Hoke Sheriff's Office.



Two pets died in this fire on Turnpike Road Thursday morning.

BUSINESS



Barbara McMillan — Businesswoman of the Year Award winner with Texas Senator John Carter.

Hoke accountant earns top businesswoman award

Barbara McMillan, president of B&T Tax Service Inc., recently attended the National Republican Congressional Tax Summit held in Washington, D.C., where she received the Businesswoman of the Year Award.

All 50 states were represented at this summit. Presenting the award to her was Senator John Carter of Texas.

McMillan is the first African-American female accountant in Hoke County to receive this award. She worked for other tax firms from 1981 to 1992 and started her own tax and accounting firm on October 3, 1993. She regularly attends seminars and tax updates with the IRS and N.C. Dept. of Revenue to keep up with the current tax laws.

McMillan received a personal thank you letter from Congressman Tom Reynolds, chairman of the

NRCC Business Advisory Council, for her excellence in American business.

McMillan is the mother of three children and grandmother of five. She enjoys working in the family firm where her son, Thomas McMillan Jr. is the vice president; daughter, Deborah McMillan-Evans is secretary and Leola McMillan Sawyer is treasurer. Her logo is "The Lord is My Shepherd."

Says McMillan, "I love my job and I do my best to help people from all walks of life to try to understand the income tax and accounting laws."

"I say to you all, when you put God first, all things are possible."

Her firm is located at 113 Campbell Avenue in Raeford.

McMillan is the daughter of Leola Kelly Blue and the late Willie S. "W.S." Blue. She is married to Fred Ray.

Southerland

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transactions with county clients were questionable.

Southerland was not available for comment, but he said previously he has done nothing improper. Southerland is currently a member of the Hoke County Board of Education and the owner of Southerland & Associates law firm.

Edmonson said the initial investigation involved Hoke citizens, but the recent court order and injunction was issued after other allegations came to light.

According to the temporary court injunction issued on May 27, Southerland is no longer allowed to accept funds from clients or third parties in a fiduciary capacity. The court said he cannot withdraw "any funds and/or write any checks" against any account in which client funds or fiduciary funds have been deposited.

At the preliminary hearing held yesterday, the court also ordered Southerland to reimburse the N.C. State Bar for its costs in obtaining bank records that Southerland had failed to produce after subpoenas were issued to him.

In recounting the allegations, Edmonson said the situation regarded

"problems in his trust account caused by a client's deposits of approximately \$100,000 that did not clear the bank that Mr. Southerland made disbursements from.

"Centura Bank closed Mr. Southerland's account after he made his next deposit because he got into a negative balance.

"Centura Bank gave him a check that represented client funds. Some of that \$6,300 went into a new trust account, but he wrote some checks to himself. He then deposited some funds into his commercial account," Edmonson said.

Edmonson said it was improper for Southerland to have done that through a trust account. The State Bar regulates the conduct of attorneys in the state and responds to complaints against its members.

"The court felt that the restraining order should be left in place," Edmonson said. "That does not mean that Mr. Southerland will be cited for any serious, disciplinary problem.

"He told the court yesterday in evidence that he thought his client's checks had cleared the bank when he wrote checks on the account.

"Our investigation is continuing."

In the trail of accounts followed by the State Bar, it was determined that Southerland's Centura trust account was allegedly overdrawn by \$38,849.88. Other questions of the State Bar officials allegedly arose over Southerland's banking transactions with Bank of America and BB&T. Between March 13, 2003, and March 17, 2003, the court restraining order stated that Southerland allegedly wrote four additional checks to himself from his BB&T trust account totaling \$3,500.

At the time he wrote those four checks, the court documents alleged Southerland did not have funds in his BB&T trust account that he was entitled to cover them.

Fern Simeon, a representative of the State Bar, said because of the

temporary injunction ordered by the court that Southerland will be unable to handle trust funds for real estate transactions, estate matters or any other cases involving fiduciary funds of clients. He would be able to handle traffic cases in court or other court cases where he "actually earns" the money.

Southerland has also been the subject of a State Bureau of Investigation criminal probe since August 2002. A complaint filed with the office of District Attorney Kristy Newton has alleged Southerland "misappropriated county funds for his own use," and that another violation occurred when one of Southerland's checks written to the county allegedly bounced.

The SBI has not completed its investigation.

Club members look at pictures

The Kiwanis Club of Raeford met May 22 for its regular meeting at the Raeford Civic Center with President Mike Lucas presiding.

"Happy Dollars" continues to be of great interest by the members. It is always interesting to hear the comments of members for their contributions.

Ken MacDonald was responsible for the program. Ken, who is general manager of Dickson Press (the publisher of The News-Journal) and over the years, has been one of the main photographers along with his many other duties. For his program Ken gave a power-point presentation of a few unusual pictures he has taken for the newspaper. These pictures consisted of storms, wrecks, and high water due to poor drainage, a Klan demonstration and shootings. He gave

Kiwanis Korner

Harold Gillis

a brief background and description of each photograph. Toward the end, he showed youth of the Presbyterian Church with pictures set to music. At the very end he showed a few comical and interesting TV commercials.

A short board of directors meeting was held at the end of the meeting dealing with the Young children: Priority One. The board unanimously approved the project. This will be another project to assist children in our community — the main focus of our club as well as Kiwanis International.

Dr. Chu joins Moore Surgical

Surgeon sees patients in Raeford once a month

Dr. Fabian Alzamora and Dr. Clayton Steiner announce the association of Dr. Willy Chu to their practice at Moore Surgical Center. Dr. Chu is board certified in general surgery. He is originally from Raleigh and received his undergraduate and medical school degrees at Duke University. After completing his surgical residency at Boston University, he returned to North Carolina in 1990. He had been in practice in Dunn prior to joining MSC. Dr. Chu, his wife, Dr. Barbara Mack, and their four children reside in Southern Pines.

Dr. Chu's areas of practice include laparoscopic procedures, surgery for breast and gastrointestinal malignancies, thyroid surgery, and hernia surgery done under local anesthesia with sedation. Office procedures such as removal of benign and malignant skin lesions can be done at the patient's initial visit.

Moore Surgical Center is located at 80 Avimore Court in Pinehurst. Dr. Chu sees patients daily in Pinehurst



Dr. Willy Chu

and on the fourth Thursday of each month in Raeford at the FirstHealth Center on 303 Teal Drive. Appointments can be made to see Dr. Chu by calling 910-295-5900.

CHIROPRACTIC OUTLOOK

Dr. Tony Santangelo, Chiropractic Physician

LENGTH OF WHIPLASH CARE

Chiropractic patients often ask how long it will take to treat their whiplash. In an automobile accident, the extent of injuries may differ depending on impact speed as well as on direction and angle of force. The victim's age, physical condition and willingness to hasten recovery are also important factors.

If you are in an accident, your Doctor of Chiropractic will ask whether or not you were wearing a seatbelt, what your position was before impact, and if you braced yourself at impact. He/she will take x-rays if necessary and then manipulate your spine and/or other joints to treat injured muscles and ligaments and to restore natural movement and position of the vertebrae.

In the beginning, the doctor will have difficulty determining the length of treatment, and whether the problem will be resolved or if it will become chronic. In most cases, you will need treatments for several months even to confirm that the injury has been eliminated. Regardless of accident specifics, the sooner care begins the better.

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Deadline to receive Bids is 5:00 pm on Wednesday, June 11, 2003

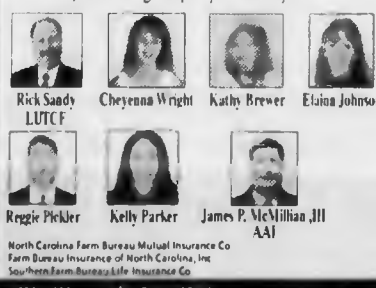
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United Way accepts applications

The United Way of Hoke County is now accepting applications for the funding of projects that benefit the citizens of Hoke County during the 2003-2004 campaign year. If your organization is interested in receiving an application packet, contact Keith Walters, secretary, at (910) 875-2162. Completed applications are due to the United Way of Hoke County no later than July 3, 2003.

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