

INSIDE



Health in Hoke County

Sheriff says fifth term is for staff

BY CATHARIN SHEPARD
Staff writer

Hoke County Sheriff Hubert Peterkin was sworn in Monday to start his fifth consecutive four-year term in office.

"Five terms is hard to get. Hoke County was established in 1911, and there have only been seven sheriffs since 1911. I'm

the seventh one," Peterkin said, speaking on the history of the county's law enforcement office.

The first three Hoke sheriffs held the office for a combined 77 years. Peterkin has been in office for 16 years; it will be 20 years by the end of this term. He was 38 years old when he was first elected in 2002.

"People ask me, how long are

you going to do it? Sounds like I'm just getting started," he said.

The ceremony held at the Mt. Pisgah Community Resource Center included the swearing-in for Peterkin and dozens of Hoke Sheriff's Office deputies.

Peterkin said he thanked God for blessing him with the chance to serve in the office.

(See SHERIFF, page 5)



Peterkin speaks at a swearing-in ceremony.



Hometown Christmas scenes

Above, the Sandy Grove Elementary School chorus sings Christmas carols at the library stage. At right, crowds lined up outside Raeford City Hall for the tree lighting and to see Santa. At far right, four-year-old Waylon Funke lights up as he shares a secret wish with Santa Claus. Hometown Christmas is in its fourth year downtown. (Catharin Shepard photos)



Hometown Christmas rings in holiday season

BY CATHARIN SHEPARD
Staff writer

When Santa's reindeer run into trouble on the way to Hometown Christmas, who do you call for help?

The same folks who stand ready to help anyone in an emergency.

The famous man in the big red suit arrived to Raeford City Hall in style last week thanks to the paramedics of Cape Fear Valley's Hoke ambulance service. When the sleigh got delayed, the ambulance crew stepped in to give Santa a lift right down Main Street so he could hear children's wishes for Christmas.

The festivities kicked off the holiday season Thursday in downtown Raeford with hayrides, caroling, classic Christmas movies and more. This marks the fourth year for the annual celebration, sponsored by the Raeford-Hoke Chamber of Commerce and supported by Hoke County Schools, the city of Raeford and Hoke

County local government. Raeford Mayor John K. McNeill, Hoke County Commission Chairman James Leach and Chamber of Commerce President Sharon Burney welcomed the crowds and opened the festivities with the Christmas tree lighting at city hall. (See HOMETOWN, page 5)

Hoke Animal Shelter is jammed full, adopters needed

BY CATHARIN SHEPARD
Staff writer

Take one look at Leo's big paws and floppy ears, and you can tell he's going to be a big boy.

That's to be expected with a Great Pyrenees for a dad and a golden retriever for a mom.

The four-month-old puppy arrived malnourished and hungry at the Hoke County Animal Shelter this

week. He was "shy at first," but enjoyed his first day at the shelter playing with staff and volunteers, shelter operator Kristi Pylant reported on the organization's Facebook page.

Look through the Assisting the Hoke County Animal Shelter Facebook page and you'll find photos of Leo, and Nicholas the yellow Labrador retriever, plus hound dogs in every shape and size. There are tiny spotted puppies that an animal control officer found covered with fleas, living underneath a burned-out mobile home, and a Chihuahua-Dachshund mix named Alejandro who likes to hop into laps to shower the shelter staff with kisses.

Those are just a few of the



Leo found a home. Other pets wait for adopters. many dogs and puppies available for adoption at the Hoke County Animal Shelter, which is full to capacity and needs to find good, loving homes for as many animals as possible in order to save

their lives. "We are completely full right now and have so many wonderful animals that desperately need loving forever homes," Pylant wrote on the shelter's Facebook page.

The shelter takes in dogs and cats found on the street, and those who are surrendered by owners. Each of them has their own story of how they come to be in need of a home, often shared by Pylant on the animal shelter's active Facebook page.

A cat named Max, recently adopted, was surrendered by his owner who is pregnant and on bed rest while her husband is deployed. Rifle, a black Labrador retriever, was adopted after (See SHELTER, page 5)

OTHER STUFF

BY KEN MACDONALD

"Oh Lord it's hard to be humble
When you're perfect in every way
Can't wait to look in the mirror
I get better looking each day..."
(Mac Davis)

We should probably sing that song to ourselves each morning, to build ourselves up and prepare for the onslaught of humiliation that awaits us in the world.

(See OTHER STUFF, page 5)



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