

Independent Register

TUESDAY, December 6, 2005

Providing biweekly coverage of New Bern and Craven County

Single copy free



INDEPENDENT REGISTER/WILLIAM R. TOLER

The varsity Bears hoist their 4-AA East Region championship plaque after defeating Raleigh Wakefield on Dec. 2.

Bears vie for state crown

New Bern High football team to compete in 4-AA championship

BY ERIC VOLIVA AND COREY FRIEDMAN
THE INDEPENDENT REGISTER

For the third time in four years, New Bern High School's varsity boys football team will square off against Charlotte Independence for the 4-AA state championship. The Bears (13-2) earned the right to play in the big game with a convincing 28-7 victory over previously undefeated Wakefield on Dec. 2. New Bern faces a perennial powerhouse on a 91-game winning streak — a force that head football coach Chip

Williams won't underestimate.

"We just have to look at the film to see. It's probably too early to tell [who will win]," Williams said. "Independence is a great football program, they're coming in undefeated as well. It will be a big challenge for the Bears."

New Bern wide receiver Woody Wilson knows that Independence is a dominant team, but he said that won't affect the Bears' mentality.

"They beat us two years. They've got that streak going,

but it ain't going to faze us," he said. "We're going to go

into it like we're going to go into any game and try to beat them."

New Bern's 4-AA East Region win over Wakefield represents another ascent in what has been a roller coaster season for the Bears, who were

stunned in their season opener with a loss to Mt. Tabor and whose ground game is on the mend along with tailback Kelvin Hardesty, who returned to action Dec. 2 after an ankle injury.

The top teams in the 4-AA East Region and West Region divisions will meet in the state championship game Saturday, Dec. 10 at Carter-Finley Stadium on the campus of North Carolina State University in Raleigh. Kickoff is scheduled for 4:30 p.m.

Expanded COVERAGE

New Bern trounces Raleigh Wakefield en route to state title

See Page B1

County to build new jail

Morris is elected board chairman

BY COREY FRIEDMAN
THE INDEPENDENT REGISTER

Craven County signed an option agreement with a private landowner to purchase 106 acres for a new law enforcement center and detention facility, County Manager Harold Blizzard told the board of commissioners on Dec. 5.



Morris

The board had authorized Blizzard to proceed with the purchase during a closed session in a previous meeting, the county manager explained. Craven County is expected to buy the land for about \$689,000.

In the next 20 to 100 days, the county will hire experts to examine the property and initiate soil testing, a Phase I environmental study and a wetlands delineation study, Blizzard told commissioners during the county manager's report.

A definite timetable for the purchase of the land and construction of the new facility, which would presumably house the Craven County Sheriff's Office, had not been set.

Earlier in the meeting, county commissioners underwent their annual reorganization of the board, unanimously electing District 1 Commissioner Perry Morris to the post of board chairman and District 3 Commissioner Johnnie Sampson Jr. as vice chairman.

"I'd like to thank all of you for your vote of confidence in me," Morris told his fellow commissioners. "I think the past three years, we have had a very good working board."

Blizzard swapped nameplates on the commissioners' bench — placing Morris' placard in the center — as Sampson was sworn in as vice chairman.

Commissioner George Brown formerly served as

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INDEPENDENT REGISTER/COREY FRIEDMAN

Victims of automotive collisions in Craven County are often airlifted to Pitt County Memorial Hospital in Greenville, which is designated as a Level I trauma center. Craven Regional Medical Center, above, has no trauma center designation.

Airlifted. Treated. Released.

When the local hospital is without trauma center designation, protocol often forces first responders to send in the helicopters

BY COREY FRIEDMAN
THE INDEPENDENT REGISTER

A deflated airbag obscures the face of a man trapped in a crumpled sport-utility vehicle on the shoulder of U.S. 70. A paramedic leans on the mangled doorframe, trying to coax a response from the driver.

As emergency medical technicians work to free the man from his vehicle, he tells them he's OK. Blood is spattered on the windshield, and although the driver's condition isn't life-threatening, it's established that his arm is immovable and might be broken.

Craven Regional Medical Center is a few miles down the road, but the nearest designated trauma center is more than 40 miles away in Greenville.

Following protocol, first responders notify Pitt County Memorial Hospital, which dispatches an EastCare helicopter. The patient is airlifted to the hospital, treated for a hairline fracture and released within a day.

For Stanley Kite, director of Craven County Emergency Management

Services, this is a familiar story.

He's heard countless variations from county residents who question why their injuries couldn't have been treated at the local hospital — sparing a helicopter flight that can carry a price tag of more than \$23,000 for patients without health insurance.

"There are some times the ambulance goes right by the hospital and goes to the helicopter pad out back," Kite said. "It really makes me question when you have a motor vehicle accident on the side of the road a few blocks from the hospital."

Emergency first responders — paramedics, EMTs and law enforcement officers — are trained to make swift determinations of how severely a trauma patient is injured and what level of care he or she will require.

But they're also required to follow the protocol set forth in the Craven, Pamlico and Jones counties' Aeromedical Request Decision Tree, which establishes that patients who suffer moderate to severe

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Craven Regional Medical Center	Pitt County Memorial Hospital
LOCATION: 2000 Neuse Blvd., New Bern	LOCATION: 2100 Stantonsburg Road, Greenville
BEDS: 313	BEDS: 745
PATIENTS: 40,000 per year	PATIENTS: 229,000 per year
OWNERSHIP: Craven County government	OWNERSHIP: University Health Systems of Eastern Carolina
TRAUMA CENTER: No	TRAUMA CENTER: Level I



PHOTO COURTESY OF PITT COUNTY MEMORIAL HOSPITAL

Two EastCare helicopters are shown hovering over Pitt County Memorial Hospital in Greenville. Trauma patients from neighboring counties are often airlifted to PCMH, which has the state's highest trauma center designation.

Lawmen seek two suspects

Bolds is wanted for New Bern shooting

STAFF REPORTS
THE INDEPENDENT REGISTER

New Bern police continue to search for two men wanted on felony charges and a Vanceboro man believed to have information in a statutory rape case, police said.

A city man implicated in a Nov. 18 shooting remains at large and is considered armed and dangerous, according to city police.

Randolph Bolds, 28, is wanted for assault with a deadly weapon with intent to kill. The New Bern Police Department issued a bulletin advising law enforcement agencies in a 50-mile radius to be on the lookout for Bolds.



Bolds

A shots-fired call at 10:30 a.m. Nov. 18 brought police to the Trent Court Housing Complex, where 30-year-old New Bern resident Robert Glass reported that an African American man driving a burgundy Chrysler 300 had fired several shots at him from an assault rifle, according to a police news release.

Glass, who was not struck by any of the shots, later positively identified Bolds as the shooter, authorities said.

Police found the burgundy Chrysler 300 in the Craven Terrace Apartments parking lot Nov. 22. Officers seized the vehicle and searched several apartments, but did not locate Bolds.

Anyone with information about Bolds or knowledge of his current whereabouts is encouraged to contact the New Bern Police Department at (252) 633-2020 or Craven County Crimestoppers at (252) 514-4734.

Police are searching for a suspect who allegedly had sex with a 13-year-old girl and also seeking a Vanceboro man who may have further information on the incident.

Felipe Galindo, 22, is accused of picking up the girl — whom police said he had

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Galindo

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Havelock varsity boys and girls fall to dominant Hoggard teams on basketball court
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A plethora of pictures from Saturday's New Bern Christmas Parade
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Local & State

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News Briefs

Singer to perform in fund-raiser

Timmy Ray Hawks, a Nashville, Tenn. entertainer with roots in Ernul, will perform a benefit concert for local cancer patient Sherry Dunn on Friday, Dec. 9.

Hawks recently returned home from Nashville, where he has been performing his unique country music stylings.

The concert will be 7:30 to 10:30 p.m. Dec. 9 at the Woodmen of the World building on Macedonia Church Road in the Ernul community. Donations will be accepted and 50-50 drawing tickets will be sold. Refreshments will also be available.

Dunn, a Bridgeton-area native undergoing cancer treatment at Pitt County Memorial Hospital, has worked for the Craven County Sheriff's Office and Mallard Food Shops.

Lions Club to sponsor vision tests

Free vision screenings will be offered from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 10 in the Twin Rivers Mall parking lot, sponsored by the Twin Rivers Lions Club and New Bern Lions Club.

Screening candidates should be at least 6 years old, and individuals under 18 will need the signature of a parent or legal guardian. Screenings are comprised of a visual acuity test, a field vision test and a pressure check.

For more information, contact George Fisher at (252) 672-0513.

Cove City, Ernul slate parades

Ernul's Christmas Parade is scheduled for 11 a.m. Saturday, Dec. 10, with the parade line-up set to begin at 9 a.m.

The parade's theme this year will be "The True Meaning of Christmas." For more information, contact Jay Tyree at (252) 636-1805 or Joshua Whitford at (252) 244-1272.

Cove City's annual Christmas Parade will begin at 3 p.m. Sunday, Dec. 11, with the line-up scheduled for 2 p.m. For more information or to reserve a spot, call the Cove City Town Hall at (252) 633-2595.

Mall hosts chess open

The New Bern Chess Club will hold a holiday chess open from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 10 at Twin Rivers Mall in New Bern.

No entry fee or rating is required. Registration will be from 9:30 to 10 a.m., with the first game to start at 10. For more information, contact Roger Sample at (252) 638-8943.

Briefs are compiled from Independent Register staff reports. To submit information for this space, e-mail news@indieregister.com.

New Bern's population eclipses 25,000

BY COREY FRIEDMAN
THE INDEPENDENT REGISTER

When New Bern city leaders saw the U.S. Census Bureau's adjusted population estimate for 2004, they knew that something didn't quite add up.

After persuading government officials to take a second look at the swelling city limits, New Bern saw its estimated population jump to 25,684 — an increase of 2,316 residents.

"The government does estimates annually on your figures," explained City Manager Bill Hartman. "Starting in the year that the actual count is done, they will

start projecting what it will be [next year]."

New Bern challenged the Census Bureau's figures and was proven right when the government readjusted its tally, pushing the official population past 25,000 — a benchmark that may help the city attract more retail businesses.

"It really opens the door more to what we would call retail and restaurant business that is geared toward demographics," Hartman said. "They would look for a benchmark of 25,000 before they'd even look at the area."

The population hike is expected to mainly spur growth in the retail sector, but Hartman said being a 25,000-resident city may also make more federal funding available.

For New Bern, the next hurdle is getting the state bureau of statistics to accept the Census Bureau's tally and revising its own population figures, which may make the city eligible for state construction grants.

Populated areas that are annexed into New Bern's city limits will further inflate the city's official estimate, but residents in the city's

extraterritorial jurisdiction will not be included in population figures, Hartman said.

The Bear City's population is growing at the robust rate of about 525 people per year, a steady clip that slightly exceeds expectations but is still considered sustainable.

"It may be a little bit on the fast side for us to deal with, and we're doing the best we can," Hartman said. "I think we're doing a pretty good job. We're so glad to have the growth right now that we're not quibbling about the rate of growth."

There are some state and federal grants tied to what Hartman calls "targeted population," but he said most of them have a benchmark of 50,000 residents.

"I think that rate of growth will be pretty close to being maintained," Hartman said. "In 2010, by the end of the decade, it should be close to 29,000 to 30,000."

Along with the smaller towns that ring North Carolina's colonial capital, New Bern was ranked as the nation's 25th largest micropolitan statistical area, according to census data.

Havelock presses on with railroad depot relocation

STAFF REPORTS
THE INDEPENDENT REGISTER

HAVELOCK — The City of Havelock is forging ahead with plans to relocate the old railroad depot, with help from the state Department of Transportation and the Havelock Historical Preservation Society.

Havelock commissioners discussed the railroad depot project at length in their Oct. 24 regular meeting, narrowly passing a motion to approve a memorandum of understanding with the Havelock Historical Preservation Society.

The project has a \$134,350 budget, with \$100,000 to be supplied by the North Carolina Department of Transportation. \$17,850 to come from the city and \$15,000 to be furnished by the Historical Preservation Society.

After robust discussion and debate on an earlier motion—and a failed effort to end debate by calling the

question—the city Board of Commissioners voted 3-2 to accept a motion made by Commissioner [now Mayor-Elect] Jimmy Sanders approving an agreement with the Historical Preservation Society contingent on the approval of its board of directors and the submission of the NCDOT's project extension request.

If bids for the project exceed the \$134,350 budgeted, city commissioners would have to vote to expend additional funds.

The city plans to have the project implemented within one year of receiving the NCDOT grant extension approval, with the project architect/engineer contract to be awarded in an anticipated 20 days after receipt of the extension, according to a timetable prepared by City Manager Jim Freeman.



INDEPENDENT REGISTER/WILLIAM R. TOLER

Wreckage recovery

Workers from Damco, Inc. in Bridgeton make final adjustments Nov. 30 after excavating the Cessna Cardinal that crashed into the Neuse River behind Dixie Chemical Co. two weeks prior. The plane's pilot, Goldsboro resident Kent Larson, was airlifted to Pitt County Memorial Hospital in Greenville.

Fran's Felines schedules adopt-a-thon

BY COREY FRIEDMAN
THE INDEPENDENT REGISTER

When Fran Arbit began rescuing abandoned cats and placing them with new owners, she found it difficult to say goodbye.

Now 30 years and countless adoptions later, the namesake of Fran's Felines looks forward to seeing her cats go home with loving families, allowing her to save more abandoned animals.

"I cried with my first one," she said. "I know that for every one I find a home for, I can rescue another one, and that makes me feel good."

Arbit will try to make room for more unwanted cats and kittens — which she

encounters almost daily — at a Fran's Felines adopt-a-thon, planned for 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 10 at Arbit's Fairfield Harbour home.

Prospective adoptees will be asked to fill out an application to ensure the pet of their choice will be provided with a loving home. Arbit does home checks for every adoption and only places cats with people who agree to keep them indoors as house pets.

The adoption fee of \$95 per cat covers vaccinations against feline leukemia and a spaying or neutering.

"You can't even get a cat spayed or neutered for that," Arbit said. "It's costing my

husband and I three to four thousand a month to maintain all these cats. We don't make anything. We just want to find homes for these babies."

Arbit said she sometimes tries to place two cats together and often will adopt the second cat for half price.

"I've been rescuing cats for 30-some years," she said. "They all seem to find me."

One of Arbit's most recent rescues is Freeway, a four-week-old female kitten that had been tossed from a car in Bridgeton.

"I have cats from four weeks to three or four years," she said. "I wish they would

adopt the older cats too. They need a home so bad."

Arbit runs Fran's Felines rescue group out of her home — 6106 Felucca Court in the Fairfield Harbour subdivision of New Bern. For directions or information on the adopt-a-thon, she can be reached at (252) 638-8315.

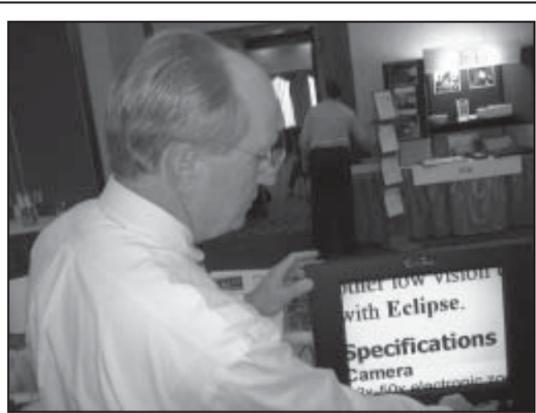
When she's not rescuing abandoned cats and kittens, Arbit is trying to educate local residents about the importance of spaying and neutering their pets.

"Spay and neuter your animals, please," she said. "We don't want any unwanted puppies or kittens. Then they end up with me or in the shelter being put to sleep."



INDEPENDENT REGISTER/WILLIAM R. TOLER

Fran Arbit holds Freeway, a 4-week-old rescued female kitten who was thrown from a car in Bridgeton.



INDEPENDENT REGISTER/WILLIAM R. TOLER

Helpful innovations

Frank Beard from Quintex of Asheville demonstrates one of the newest developments in closed-circuit televisions for the visually impaired at the 15th annual Assistive Technology Expo held at the North Raleigh Hilton Dec. 1 and 2. The expo included products to help people of various disabilities, a silent auction and information sessions.

County plans to unveil a revamped Web site

Continued from Page A1

chairman, with Morris as his vice chairman.

Public hearings were held for a road naming ordinance, which added 42 new road names and 61 other additions to the county's official registry upon approval; a community development block grant, which will allocate \$400,000 in state funds for the repair or replacement of residential dwelling units; and a \$487,637 grant for the Craven Area Rural Transit System that would enable CARTS to purchase two new conversion vehicles and three new lift vehicles.

Commissioners discussed what they see as a growing trend of litter on

county roadsides, with suggestions on curbing the unsightly practice ranging from more frequent inmate highway clean-ups to increasing the cost of littering fines.

"It doesn't seem like everyone has pride in themselves or in the county," said Commissioner Leon Staton.

The county's Web site is receiving a facelift and will be ready for its close-up on Wednesday, Dec. 14, when Blizzard plans to unveil the new site, a work in progress for more than 6 months.

"We've been working on this for a while," he said. "As anxious as we are to get this out, this is really just the starting point. It is not the

final product; this will be ongoing."

Blizzard said the site was designed for functionality, with the most requested links and pages available on the Web site's front page, and all content a maximum of three clicks away.

"The new Web site allows more control for the different departments" while maintaining a consistent appearance, the county manager said.

The Craven County Board of Commissioners will meet with the county Board of Education at 8:30 a.m. Friday, Dec. 9.

The boards are expected to discuss possible future expansion for Craven County Schools.

Opinion

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Editorials

The extra mile

Hospital should seek trauma center designation

If Craven Regional Medical Center would go the extra mile, county trauma patients might be spared 40 extra miles — the approximate distance between New Bern and Pitt County Memorial Hospital in Greenville.

Patients moderately to severely injured in auto collisions are customarily airlifted to Pitt County Memorial by EastCare helicopter due to protocol that requires trauma patients to be treated in state-designated trauma centers.

Pitt County's hospital — which serves as the teaching hospital for East Carolina University's Brody School of Medicine — maintains a Level I designation, the highest one that the North Carolina Office of Emergency Management Services confers. Craven Regional Medical Center has no trauma center designation.

For patients with life-threatening or otherwise extensive or severe injuries, the area's proximity to Pitt County Memorial is a blessing, and EastCare aeromedical transport is just what the doctor ordered. But when lucid patients with relatively minor injuries are being flown to Pitt when they could be adequately treated at CRMC, it's evident that there is a breakdown in the system.

Most trauma patients airlifted to Pitt could receive comparable care at the local hospital, and they — or their insurance companies — wouldn't be stuck with a hefty helicopter tab.

But paramedics are instructed to follow protocol whose basic tenet is this: Trauma patients go to trauma centers.

CRMC spokeswoman Megan McGarvey said the hospital's emergency care is equivalent to that of a Level III

trauma center, but that hospital officials don't see a need to apply for trauma center designation.

"There are no plans to do the official paperwork to be designated, because we know that we offer the appropriate level of care for this community," she told us.

If the hospital did obtain a trauma center designation, however, emergency first responders could send more patients to CRMC and cut down on the number of EastCare flights into Craven County, according to Stanley Kite, the county's director of emergency management services.

Kite explained that transport time would also be greatly reduced in many cases. He's seen instances where drivers who wrecked their cars within a few miles of CRMC have been flown to Pitt instead of driven right down the road.

"If you've got a patient walking and talking with a bump on the side of his head, there's certainly no reason that person shouldn't be taken to Craven," he said.

Craven Regional Medical Center should pursue designation as a Level III trauma center. We hope the Craven County Board of Commissioners will urge hospital administrators to do so, and that the county will reduce its dependence on EastCare in instances of minor to moderate trauma.

McGarvey was correct in saying that CRMC offers the appropriate level of care. But that's exactly why a trauma center designation is crucial — it will allow the hospital to provide that care to trauma patients on a more consistent basis.



Cartoon by William R. Toler

What do YOU think?

Letters to the editor are accepted for publication in this space each issue. Letters should be 350 words or fewer and should contain the author's name and telephone number for verification purposes.

Mail letters to the Independent Register, 1734 Elmwood Street New Bern, NC 28560, fax them to (252) 636-0616 or e-mail them to letters@indieregister.com.

Verbatim

“Never, never, never believe any war will be smooth and easy, or that anyone who embarks on the strange voyage can measure the tides and hurricanes he will encounter. The statesman who yields to war fever must realize that once the signal is given, he is no longer the master of policy but the slave of unforeseeable and uncontrollable events.”

Sir Winston Churchill

“I think high self-esteem is overrated. A little low self-esteem is actually quite good...Maybe you're not the best, so you should work a little harder.”

Jay Leno

“You know, I think that if parents would spend less time worrying about what their kids watch on TV and more time worrying about what's going on in their kids' lives, this world would be a much better place.”

Trey Parker and Matt Stone

Deck the mall

New owner of Twin Rivers Mall faces a challenge

In the five months since Hull Storey Retail Group purchased Twin Rivers Mall, sweeping plans for renovations and securing new tenants have been announced. But all that's really changed is the name of the company on the “For Lease” signs that hang in the mall's vacant storefronts.

As Christmas shoppers fan out across eastern North Carolina in search of yuletide bargains, it pains us to see Craven County residents bypassing the New Bern mall en route to flashier shopping centers in Greenville and Jacksonville.

While we urge consumers to spend money locally and help expand the area's retail market, we understand why Twin Rivers Mall doesn't attract teenagers by the busload. With only two

major department stores — JC Penney and Belk — three restaurants and a handful of clothing stores, the only thing the mall offers in abundance is empty space.

Hull Storey must have seen profitability in the aging mall, or it wouldn't have invested the sum of \$10.36 million to purchase the sleeping giant.

While New Bern pride climbs to its aegis as the city bounds toward its 300th birthday, mall management should be making long overdue renovations to the mall's façade and aggressively recruiting retailers who cater to the youth market.

We hope this is the last holiday season that New Bern shops outside city limits.

Independent Register

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- The Independent Register
Operating Structure and Standard Protocol

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Spunky Diablo's Laundromat

Einstein mastered math and murder

His wizened, kindly eyes stare out at you with warm-humored intelligence. His wrinkly face betrays the burden of supreme genius, and in an age where Columbus is badmouthed as a lustful megalomaniac, Tom Jefferson is cursed as a raper of slaves and Beethoven is categorized as the world's first R&B artist, *his* reputation has managed to escape unscathed. His name? Albert Einstein — America's favorite Foxy Grandpa.

He is also a mass murderer. The only tragic thing about him is that his mother carried him to term.

Forget this nonsense about his inability to tie shoelaces or his failure at maths. You don't become the Pope of postmodern physics without first making maths your bitch. First, the man simply *imagined* his now-famous Relativity theories — you couldn't just test his theories in a lab. You

waited one-third of a decade until a special

alignment of stars bore your theories out, thus stupefying the scientific world and ensuring the end of humanity in one fell swoop.

If Einstein had stood in the Garden of Eden, he wouldn't have merely sampled one fruit from the Forbidden Tree — he would've made a whole bakery full of pies, apologizing only after all of Eden's denizens fell ill with a pandemic of projectile diarrhea.

Our murderous Grandfather knew that Man does not fashion a weapon

without using it, and in his declining years professed sorrow for this bottled Armageddon.

He became an advocate of peace, his pacifying words just so much sperm fertilizing dirt. Only his actions count.

Mine is an untutored mind compared to Einstein's, but I have enough sense to know that his Nuclear Utopia is a pipe dream. You should know this too. So, the next time your professor (or maybe just some pompous asshole at a cocktail party) kisses the old kraut's behind, have the sac to rise up and attack Einstein. He has been sanctified long enough. Defy his ghost.

Maybe then we can escape the cataclysm he prescribed.

Contact Stephen Lewis at stephen@indieregister.com.



STEPHEN LEWIS

Obituaries

James Foscue Harriet

POLLOCKSVILLE — James Foscue Harriett, 81, died Friday, Nov. 18, 2005. The funeral service was conducted at 2 p.m. Tuesday, Nov. 22 at Pollocksville United Methodist Church. Burial with Masonic Rites was in the Oak Grove Methodist Church Cemetery in Pollocksville.

Mr. Harriett, son of the late Charlie Peter and Rosa Wooten Harriett, was a native of Jones County and spent his youth in the Oak Grove community. He served in the U.S. Army Air Force during World War II. Following the war, he worked for Barrus Construction Co. for several years, for General Wholesale in New Bern from 1956 to 1966, and then went to work for Texas Gulf Sulfur, retiring in 1982.

He was a member and past Master of the Vanceboro Masonic Lodge No. 433, the Scottish Rite Bodies of New Bern and the Sudan Temple of New Bern, where he was a Road

Runner. He was a member of the Order of the Eastern Star, Chapter 231, where he served as Worthy Patron for many years. He was a member of Pollocksville United Methodist Church.

In addition to his parents, he was preceded in death by a grandson, William Ryal Harriett and three brothers and a sister.

Surviving are his wife, Olyetta Louise Collins Harriett; daughter, Olivia Louise Harriett Willis and husband, Douglas, of Pollocksville; son, James Pierce Harriett of Chocowinity; grandsons, Kevin Willis of the U.S. Navy stationed in Iceland, James Tyler Harriett of Greenville and Joshua S. Harriett of Chocowinity; and great-grandsons, Kevin Willis Jr., Kenneth Willis and Kristopher Willis.

Memorial contributions may be made to the Shriner's Crippled Children's Hospital, P.O. Drawer 490, New Bern, NC 28563.

Craven County trauma patients airlifted to Pitt County hospital

Continued from Page A1

trauma should be treated at a designated trauma center.

And in Craven, Pamlico and Jones counties, that means a helicopter ride to Greenville.

Pitt County Memorial Hospital is a Level I trauma center, the highest designation conferred by the North Carolina Office of Emergency Management Services.

As the teaching hospital for East Carolina University's Brody School of Medicine, Pitt County Memorial has a staff of surgeons in residence and on-call 24 hours a day, one of the most critical requirements for trauma center certification.

Craven Regional Medical Center has not sought the designation, explained CRMC director of public relations Megan McGarvey, because "with Pitt being as close as they are and being the level trauma center they are, it's not necessary for us."

"If we were to be designated, we would be equivalent to a Level III [the lowest level]," McGarvey said. "There are no plans to do the official paperwork to be designated because we know that we offer the appropriate level of care for this community."

The hospital spokeswoman explained that paramedics must make determinations of what level of care a trauma patient will need in the field, and in some cases, injuries can be less serious than they appear and can be treated quickly.

Medical regulations and protocol strongly advise medical professionals to seek the highest level of care available, McGarvey said.

"You will usually only find Level I trauma centers affiliated with a school of medicine," she said. "Community hospitals are not, as a standard rule, going to be a designated trauma center — although they still offer the same level of care as if they were designated."

But if Craven Regional Medical Center was a Level III trauma center, Kite said, first responders would face less pressure to have patients with moderate injuries airlifted to Greenville.

"It's not that Craven doesn't have the ability, it's that Craven doesn't have the designation as a trauma center," he said. "I don't want to play Monday morning quarterback here, but I still think one of the solutions to the problem would be if Craven had some acknowledgement of trauma care. It would cut down on a

lot of people flown out to Greenville."

Kite said the transport time is also a factor. In the time it takes an EastCare helicopter to depart from Greenville and return with a patient injured in Craven County, the same patient could already be receiving care at the local hospital.

"A lot of times, by the time the helicopter gets there, the patient could have been in the hands of an attending physician in the [local] hospital," he said.

While it's universally agreed that cost does not play a role in determining the level of care a patient will receive, Kite said the sticker shock has led some patients who were airlifted to question whether they couldn't have received treatment at nearby Craven Regional Medical Center.

"There's probably some hardships because of cost," he said. "The helicopter ride has got to be much more expensive than the ground ambulance."

While Kite disagrees with McGarvey on the necessity of trauma designation for CRMC, he expressed confidence in the hospital and its resources.

"I have the highest respect for the physicians

and their staff," the EMS director said. "Craven Regional Medical Center could certainly handle some of these patients, but they do not have the trauma center designation."

In December 2004, Craven County Commissioner Perry Morris discussed the possibility of trauma center designation for the 313-bed, county owned hospital at a Board of Commissioners meeting.

At the time, commissioners took no formal action. But Morris, newly elected Board of Commissioners chairman, said on Dec. 5 he is planning to meet with hospital administrators to identify possible obstacles to trauma center designation.

Morris said the state may not allow CRMC to obtain the distinction because of its proximity to Pitt County Memorial. However, if the hospital can become a Level III trauma center, Morris said he would support the hospital doing so.

"We have a good hospital," he said. "We have a hospital that could handle a lot of the cases that are going to Greenville."

Contact Corey Friedman at 633-2757 or at corey@indieregister.com.

Lewis Lawson Price

Lewis "Billy" Lawson Price, 74, of New Bern, died Friday, Nov. 25, 2005.

He was born in Pamlico County, the son of George Holiday Price and Carrie Elizabeth Bennett.

He is preceded in death by his parents; two sisters, Ollie P. Belangia and Mattie P. Hancock; and five brothers, Vernon, Dewey, Ray, Bert and George Edward Price.

He served in the U.S. Navy during the Korean War and was stationed on the U.S.S. Joseph P. Kennedy Jr. 850. He was a civil service employee and loved fishing, gardening and traveling.

He is survived by his wife of 50 years, Barbara W.

Price; one son, William L. Price; two daughters, Elizabeth P. Small and Candace G. Price of New Bern; five grandchildren, Sherry P. Hess of Estes Park, Colo., Randy E. Price and William M. Price of New Bern, Michael L. and Steven L. Braton of Wilmington; and 24 nieces and nephews.

Visitation was from 6 to 8 p.m. Saturday, Nov. 26 at Cotten Chapel.

Funeral services were 2 p.m. Sunday, Nov. 27 at Cotten Chapel with the Rev. Richard Roberts officiating, followed by burial at Greenleaf Memorial Park.

Arrangements by Cotten Funeral Home & Crematory.

Police seeking man in statutory rape case

Continued from Page A1

"known for a while" — in Pitt County and driving her back to New Bern, where they had sex.

Galindo's address was not given, but police said he is a Craven County resident.

The alleged victim's family reported the incident to New Bern police. Detectives within the police department's Major Case Unit have not been able to locate Galindo, but believe he is still in the New Bern and Craven County area.

Warrants for Galindo's arrest on charges of statutory rape and first-degree sexual offense have been obtained, according to police.

The Major Case Unit is also searching for Doriel Ramos, 26, of Vanceboro, who is believed to have information relevant to the case.

Ramos is described as a Hispanic male about 5 feet, 7 inches tall and between 200 and 225 pounds with brown eyes and black hair, according to police.

Anyone with information on the whereabouts of Galindo or Ramos is encouraged to contact Det. Paul Brown of the NBDP Major Case Unit at (252) 672-4247 or Craven County Crimestoppers at (252) 633-5141.

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Basic classified advertisements for individuals and businesses are \$5 for five lines of copy with the first line bolded, with \$0.50 added for each additional line of ad copy. Business logos, icons or clip art can be added for an extra \$1.

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wanted to cover community events and write concise, accurate and engaging news and feature stories for the Independent Register, an alternative biweekly newspaper covering New Bern and Craven County. Call Corey Friedman, editor, at (252) 633-2757 for more information.

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