



ED PAISLEY PHOTOS, PROVIDED

Ed Paisley's garden tractor will be used even more as he enters retirement and expands his garden plot.

Six deaths in 10 days, Rock cases top 6,000

A record number 91 Rock patients are hospitalized

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WENTWORTH — As county and area hospital officials waited for news from the state about when they will receive more COVID-19 vaccines, Rockingham County saw three more deaths, cases top 6,000 and another hospitalization record high.

Six county residents have died over the past 10 days. All patients were between ages 80 and 100 and all had underlying medical conditions, according to Trey Wright, county public health director.

Three individuals reported dead on Tuesday were residents of area long-term care facilities, Wright said.

Somewhat encouraging is the continuing downward trend of the county's infection rate. In the past month, the rate has eased down from over 16% to 12% on Tuesday. Last week's rate was around 14%.

Still very high, the 12% positive ranking is above the statewide average of 10.2% and more than twice as high as recommended by the CDC. The federal agency says communities must achieve an infection rate of 5% or less in order to control the spread of the novel coronavirus.

Meanwhile, county health officials are hoping the North Carolina Department of Health & Human Services will pledge a fresh vaccine supply for the week of Feb. 1, Wright said. State health officials offered no comment on what the county can expect.

Last week the county was forced to cancel hundreds of appointments when the state withdrew its promise of a vaccine supply for Jan. 28. Numerous counties governments and hospital systems across the state, including UNC Rockingham Healthcare in Eden, grappled with similar cancellations by the state last week.

This week's case count so far

Rockingham passed 6,000 cases over the weekend, jumping from 5,851 to 6,005. On Tuesday, the number had grown to 6,036.

And while it's not clear if student athletes are infected with COVID-19, the McMichael High

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A WELL-DESERVED RETIREMENT

Eden's animal control officer retires after long, varied career



ANN FISH

EDEN — During his eight years as Eden's Animal Control Officer, Ed Paisley chased dogs, cats, pigs and horses, and removed snakes and other critters from people's homes.

He also captured stinky skunks and found new homes for many unwanted pets. But, he never got bit by a dog and, perhaps more importantly, was never "sprayed" by a skunk.

On Jan. 1, Paisley ended his long career with the City of Eden, having worked at the Waste Water Plant, Solid Waste, and Water departments before becoming the animal control officer. Jeff Overby has taken over as Animal Control Officer.

"Ed was one of the most well-liked and hardest working



Ed Paisley has updated his woodworking shop and will be working in it now that he has more time.

individuals here at the police department and the city," Eden Police Chief Clint Simpson said. "He was well-liked by the community and the public."

Being an animal control officer meant Paisley encountered people in a variety of situations, including reports of animal



Eden Police officers escort the retiring Ed Paisley to his door as he ends his last day of work on Dec. 31. Chief Clint Simpson (front left) walks with Paisley (front right).

cruelty. Many times, the job called for his quick thinking and handling of what could have been negative outcomes. At other times, he had to calm irritated residents.

Like last summer when a woman complained a garden beaver was destroying her vegetables. When Paisley said there was no such animal, she soundly chastised him, noting

she was 80 years old and knew what a garden beaver was. The woman said it terrified her and had to be removed; Paisley trapped the vicious animal (a groundhog) and relocated it to a more suitable home.

Another woman called about a black and white cat caught in her trap. When Paisley arrived,

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Suspicious fire guts Reidsville barbershop

STAFF REPORT

REIDSVILLE — Authorities are investigating a fire they called "suspicious in nature" that gutted a popular downtown barber shop early Saturday morning.

Reidsville Fire Marshal Joshua Farmer reported that a crew from the Reidsville Fire Department was dispatched to FADE IT barbershop at the corner of SW Market and Gilmer Streets around 2:00 a.m. Saturday.

A police officer on a routine patrol of downtown noticed flames and smoke coming from the brick building and called it in, authorities said.

On Monday, a charred barber's chair sat amid black timbers, broken glass, and molten combs. Fire breached the shop's

ceiling and the roof and dark smoke licked the front facade of the white two-story.

Among the facts that make the fire seem like possible arson: "The time of morning, the building being closed and unoccupied when the fire started, those kinds of things" raise questions, said Reidsville Fire Marshal Joshua Farmer.

Asked if he has pinpointed suspects, Farmer said, "This is an ongoing investigation and we really don't like to talk about an open investigation."

In weeks past, the bustling shop had seen customers from school kids to older gents come in for styles, shaves, meticulously sculpted beards, and facials. Basketball themed decor —

from ball-bedecked face masks, to Kobe Bryant tribute salon robes, dominated the tiny shop where barbers tucked family photos in their mirrors and were known for making good conversation.

The shop's Facebook page highlights the work of master barbers Kamal Wilson and Kimble Slice with photos of smiling patrons with fresh cuts.

In one photo, a young boy beams as he shows off his new style and a Bryant drape.

Luckily, no injuries were reported from the intense blaze, officials said. Wilson and Slice could not be reached for comment.

Farmer asks that anyone with information concerning the fire call: 336-349-1024.



SUSIE C. SPEAR, ROCKINGHAMNOW

A charred barber's chair sits amid the burned remains of the former FADE IT barbershop in downtown Reidsville.

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