



Fathers with pride

The Dispatch-News

LEXINGTON, SOUTH CAROLINA

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Pelion's Price named District 1's top teacher

By JAMES JORDAN
The Dispatch-News

The profound affect you can have on a child is what makes teaching a worthwhile profession according to Valerie Price, who was named Lexington District 1 Teacher of the Year last week.

She is a fifth-grade teacher at Pelion Elementary School. "This is an incredible honor," Price said. "I have taught in two other districts, and I can tell you how awesome it is here. I tell everyone that," she said.

She teaches the same grade and at the same school as last year's winner, Gwen Freeman.

"Children are like diamonds in the rough, and we shine them. There is nothing in the world that gives you that kind of joy. There is nothing like teaching," she said.

Each school in the district chooses its own Teacher of the Year, and from those teachers, three finalists are named. The finalists, in addition to Price, were Lexington Middle School Life Science teacher Carolyn Hamilton, and Lexington High School Spanish teacher Sandra Osborne.

Price was a junior at USC studying Journalism and English when she got started teaching. She said she went on a summer mission trip and was teaching children.

"I was just interacting with them. I really didn't know it was teaching, but everyone told me what a great teacher I was. They could not believe I was not a teacher," she said.

She enjoyed that so much, she went to graduate school at USC and became certified to teach Elementary Education.

She is in her fifth year of teaching at Pelion Elementary, but she has been

teaching for 13 years.

The thing she enjoys most about teaching is the impact she has on her students.

"You can send their spirit soaring or you can crush it. You have to be careful. Each student is a special jewel. Students are very forgiving though, so even if you blow it, they will give you another chance," she said.

The day after getting the award, she was showered with appreciation at the school.

"Some of the kids were throwing TEACHER OF THE YEAR Please see page 2



Valerie Price reacts to being named top teacher.

New business LEDA reports several coming

By EMILY COOPER
The Dispatch-News

Lexington may soon be home to Home Depot, a home-building supplier who is negotiating for 13 acres next to Lowe's, its competitor, on Highway 378.

Other new business reported by the Lexington Economic Development Association (LEDA) Executive Director Donna Smith includes Cogdill Carpets on Hwy. 378, and Ft. Jackson Federal Credit Union on North Lake at Roundknob Road. A national chain is considering a shopping center at Hwy. 378 and Hope Ferry.

This was one of the several pieces of good news that was dis-

LEDA Please see page 2

Where are the Christmas lights?

We want to know where the best Christmas decorations are in Lexington County.

Please send us places you know about, that are exceptionally decorated. We will publish the list in the Dispatch-News regularly until Christmas arrives.

When you send information in, be sure to include the exact address, the name of the person if you know it, and your own name and telephone number.

To send us information, write P.O. Box 1317, Lexington, S.C. 29173; fax: 359-1378, E-mail: Dispatlex@aol.com.



Above, Santa Claus officially ushers in the Christmas season in Lexington Sunday as he rode at the end of the Lexington Christmas Parade. Those that braved the cold to watch the parade, also were treated to a brief snow shower that decorated some trees along Main Street. The snow lasted not much longer than the brief shower.

PHOTOS: JAMES JORDAN

Council in ruckus Mayor's changes raise ire of members

By JAMES JORDAN
The Dispatch-News

Lexington Mayor Dan Breazeale created a storm Monday night at the town council meeting that left two council members crying foul.

Breazeale proposed dispensing with various committees, and instead have one large committee for work-session meetings. Council members Randy Halfacre and Hazel Leggett-Tyndale wanted the matter put off so there could be some discussion, but Breazeale wanted move forward immediately.

Halfacre's motion to put the matter off to the work-session, scheduled for December 19, was beaten 4-3. The vote to adopt the mayor's proposal passed by the same 4-3 vote.

Halfacre called the mayor's actions "reprehensible, a travesty against the council and the citizens of the town."

After the meeting Breazeale said his actions were in keeping with issues brought up during the election.

"We need to move forward. We can't do it like we have been doing it. We need to run the town like a business. The people want one person in charge, and this will put the administrator in charge," Breazeale said.

'We need to run the town like a business.'

Mayor Dan Breazeale

'A travesty against the council and the citizens of the town.'

Councilman Randy Halfacre

Not so, Halfacre said later. He noted that in the 1998 election the town's citizens had voted down a town manager form of government in a referendum, and for keeping the council form of government that is in place now. Part of Breazeale's proposal is to have all department heads answer to town administrator L.C. Greene, which Halfacre said amounts to creating a manager

FIREWORKS Please see page 2

County expanding into Kroger building

The Lexington County Council set the process in motion last week to buy the old Kroger building in Lexington. The county will use the building for office space and storage while a major expansion of facilities is completed.

The council has started the process of building a new courthouse and renovating the existing administration building. Once that gets going, many of its offices will be even more crowded than they are already.

The council passed a measure at its meeting last week that will allow it to buy the building and seven acres for about \$2.7 million.

Councilman Smokey Davis said the county may be in a position to sell the building at some point. It is not being considered a permanent purchase. Once the building projects are completed, in two or three years, the county may

sell the building.

The property is located in the Town of Lexington, but since the county will be using it, it will not be paying property tax. Lexington mayor Dan Breazeale said it would be a loss of revenue, but in the overall picture of the total budget, he does not think it will be significant.

Davis said the building may house some state agencies, such as the Department of Social Services, but he said nothing has been settled.

"We do have to house some state agencies by state law," Davis said.

The county has not committed the money to the new courthouse yet, though it has hired architects to plan the expansion. The newly purchased building will give the

NEW BUILDING Please see page 2



State runner-ups

Lexington's Phillip Dieckmann receives the second place trophy Saturday after the state championship football game at Williams Brice Stadium. The Wildcats lost the game 31-24 after having led early. For more photos and stories about the game, please see special pages on page 8 and 9, as well as game coverage on page 16.

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