

A Birthday Vigil

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Wednesday, 17 November 2010 09:20

Braving wet and wind, hundreds gathered in Hickory to celebrate the life of a young girl most never knew in life. Hickory Police Chief Tom Adkins told the crowd that “Thirty-nine days ago, most of us did not know Zahra Baker,” and he went on to say “In more than a month, we’ve fallen in love with her and become better people because of her.” The chief, whose department is investigating the girl’s death, said nothing about the progress of the probe toward charges in the case, as the crowd sang ‘happy birthday’ to a girl who would have been 11 yesterday. The mood in Hickory was sad to angry, according to various news accounts, but theirs was not the only vigil for the girl—there were reports of others across the state and in her home country of Australia, where her uncle eulogized her, David Baker calling his niece “a special little person.”