

# Limited Access Urged For U.S. 23 Extension

An estimated 200 Madison County residents were present Wednesday of last week for a public hearing on the extension of U.S. 23 from the Tennessee state line at Sams Gap to U.S. 19 near Mars Hill. These concerned citizens braved snow and strong winds to listen to officials of the Department of Transportation (DOT) explain the alternatives of four possible routes being considered for the project.

had varying ideas concerning the proposed routes but the greatest concern involved the limited access to and from the proposed extension, regardless of which route was chosen for the highway. DOT officials presented the crowd with maps showing the four alternative routes the new highway may take, explaining that one of the four locations had not yet been recommended. Vertise Mason, a squad leader with the Department of Transportation who participated in the preliminary

planning, said that the first alternative, A, would follow the existing road; the second alternative, A-1, would also follow the existing road but with a slight variation near Mars Hill; the third alternative, C, leaves the existing road near California Creek, diverts across country east of Sprinkle Branch Road, and intersects the existing road near Laurel Creek; and the fourth alternative, D, also diverts across country from California Creek to Laurel Creek, west of Sprinkle Branch Road.

Maps of the four possible corridors are available at the Mars Hill Town Hall and DOT offices in Asheville. According to information from DOT, approximately 51 families and eight businesses would have to be relocated using alternative A; 45 families and five businesses would be relocated with alternative A-1; 31 families and two businesses would be relocated with alternative C; and 25 families and one business would be relocated with alternative D. Total cost for corridor A is

estimated at \$20,640,000; for A-1 at \$22,040,000; for C at \$21,819,000; and corridor D at \$21,383,000. DOT officials explained that all information from the meeting would go to the Board of Transportation to be used in selecting the final design by August. A design public hearing would then be held in October or November according to DOT officials. Commenting on the need for limited access, Carl Eller, a member of the Mars Hill town board, said that crossing a

four-lane highway without limited access was a "death trap." "We've had four or five killed at the four-lane crossing into Mars Hill. We ought to think about the people who live here rather than those passing through," he added. Bill Zink, a representative of the Mars Hill Fire Department, added that he had helped clean people up off the highway there. "I don't care what road they take," he emphasized. "I want to see a road with limited access."

Ed Howard, owner of Howard's RX Pharmacy in Mars Hill, said that he was one of the people who would be displaced by the new highway, but that a new highway was needed. "I'm concerned with people, homes and families and I want limited access," he said. Other members of the audience expressed concern over limited access as a need for elderly drivers and school buses.

questioned the advisability of spending thousands of dollars for an overpass for those who hike along the Appalachian Trail while, without limited access, subjecting school children and the elderly to the dangers of having to cross the new highway in order to reach their destinations. One citizen commented about the necessity of students on school buses having to cross the highway with the heavy traffic endangering their lives. "Without limited access, this is utterly foolish," one person commented.

**On the Inside . . .**  
New nursery needs donated equipment  
...details on page 2

# THE NEWS RECORD

SERVING THE PEOPLE OF MADISON COUNTY

78th Year, No. 5 PUBLISHED WEEKLY IN THE COUNTY SEAT AT MARSHALL, N.C. THURSDAY, February 1, 1979 15¢ Per Copy

# Leake Chosen To Succeed Crawford As State Senator

After a delay of almost four hours, Larry Bruce Leake of Asheville was sworn in Monday night in the old State Capitol Building as a senator and a member of the North Carolina General Assembly. State Democratic Party Chairman Betty McCain explained the delay early in the long wait as a courtesy to Leake to allow members of his family to get to Raleigh to witness the ceremony, but Leake said later that was not a factor.

State Thad Eure. Leake told reporters during the ceremony in Eure's office that he had chatted with Hunt for the first half an hour or so of the nearly four hours that he was secluded in the governor's office. He said they talked about the duties of a senator and very little else. Leake said he had made some telephone calls to political leaders in the district to sample the reaction to his appointment to the Senate seat. But he said most of the calls were simply to wind up his legal work as a lawyer in Asheville "so that I could be absolutely sure that I could serve as a full-time senator." He conceded later that he

made eight or nine calls "of a political nature," but insisted that his mind was made up before he came here and that he never had any intention of withdrawing as the nominee of the eight-man 26th District Senatorial Executive Committee. Leake, a bachelor, did not take his seat in the state Senate Monday night because he had missed lunch and dinner by the time the session started at 8 p.m. He said he doesn't think the incident with the obscene telephone call charge will limit his effectiveness in representing the people of the 26th District. The district is made up of Buncombe, McDowell, Madison and Yancey counties. The other senator from that

district is Robert S. Swain of Asheville. "I think people will take me seriously," he said in response to a question. "I don't think people are so cruel that they will typecast me for an act of stupidity." In talking to reporters following the oath of office ceremony Monday night, he said again that the incident in 1976 was the only time he had been involved with the law in a similar matter, although he admitted to a lengthy driving record. "I don't think that reflects as much on my morals as it does of my intelligence," Leake said of the telephone charge in 1976. Leake said the problem he

had over the obscene telephone call arrest was "no dark secret" in the Asheville area among politicians. He said in response to a question that he feels that the eight members of the executive committee knew of the charge before they voted for him in the Buncombe County Courthouse Saturday night. The vote by the committee has not been made public.

had over the obscene telephone call arrest was "no dark secret" in the Asheville area among politicians. He said in response to a question that he feels that the eight members of the executive committee knew of the charge before they voted for him in the Buncombe County Courthouse Saturday night. The vote by the committee has not been made public.

## 26th District Panel Favors Him Over 4

Larry B. Leake, an Asheville attorney, was elected Saturday night by the eight-member 26th District Senatorial Executive Committee to fill the seat of the late State Sen. I.C. Crawford. The election was held in the fifth floor courtroom at the Buncombe County courthouse. The meeting lasted only one hour with the committee deliberating in executive session less than 30 minutes before returning with its decision. Defeated in their bids to capture the vacant Senate seat were former Rep. Claude DeBruhl of Candler, Francella Poston of Asheville, Buncombe County Commissioner J.W. "Bill" Oglesby of Asheville, and Asheville attorney Robert E. Riddle. Approximately 150 persons drove through mixed rain and snow to be on hand for the 8 p.m. election. If applause was an indication, when the candidates each made a five minute speech, it was definitely between Leake, president of the North Carolina Young Democrats, and DeBruhl, a five-term member of the state House before he lost his seat in the 1978 primary. Both men made strong statements to the audience and the committee, with DeBruhl maintaining that he had "more experience (in state government) than all the candidates combined." DeBruhl maintained he was there Saturday night, "only at the urging of people who know how the game (in Raleigh) is played." And he urged the committee to remember his track record and to remember that "we're up here tonight to get a job done." "This changing horses in the middle of the stream means you have to have somebody who can hit the ground running." Leake's appeal to the committee was based on two points. "One," he said, "is the ability to know what the people of the district give me that knowledge." "Two," he said, "is that through my contacts in the Democratic Party, I believe I have the respect of the members of the Senate. I believe I can effectively champion the cause of this



LARRY B. LEAKE, a native of Madison County and son of Mr. and Mrs. A.E. Leake, was sworn in as a member of the N.C. Senate Monday night. Leake succeeds the late I.C. Crawford who died Jan. 24. Leake, an Asheville attorney, is also state president of the Young Democrat Club, and is county attorney for Madison County.

## County Allocated \$100,000 For Winter Highway Repairs

Snow and ice may mean days of fun for winter sports participants, but for Department of Transportation road maintenance crews winter weather will mean long hours clearing highways and bridges for the safe passage of motorists. In preparation for the winter weather, a portion of the \$300 million highway improvement bond issue, which was overwhelmingly approved by the voters in 1977,

has been used for spot and sectional road restoration. The major emphasis has been directed to roads in the western counties which have suffered severe winter damage. About \$5 million of the bond money has been spent for one or more restoration projects on 1,000 roads in 25 western counties. \$100,000 has been allocated Madison County for spot and restoration projects. "Recognizing the severe

damage to roads in the western part of the state over the past two winters, the Board of Transportation approved money for restoration of the sections of unpaved roads on the secondary road system," said Secretary of Transportation Tom Bradshaw. "The emphasis of the Board of Transportation will continue to be on paving unpaved roads, improving paved roads, and bringing unpaved

roads to an all-weather standard," Bradshaw added. "Department of Transportation officials will work closely with county boards of commissioners to determine and deal with priority needs." Jack Murdock, secondary roads officer, said most of the spot and sectional restoration in the western counties has been completed. "Last winter sections of roads were impassable as a result of damage caused by the severe winter weather. The restoration work is an effort to build solid roadbed foundations and re-establish drainage so that they will be passable this winter and, hopefully, for many winters to come," he noted.

The \$5-million bond money spent on road restoration was a supplement to existing county road maintenance allocations. Highway maintenance crews worked on the road restoration projects in

## Manslaughter Case Ends In Mistrial

A mistrial was declared Thursday in the Superior Court trial of Randy Kim Tweed of Route 2, Marshall, on a charge of manslaughter after the jury reported it was deadlocked. Tweed was charged in the death last October of Janet Elaine Brady of Route 2, Marshall, in a one-vehicle accident on the Marshall bypass. The trial of Kenneth Buckner, 46, of Route 1, Marshall, and dual charges of murder in the Oct. 21 rifle deaths of a brother, Arthur Buckner, 41, and a sister, Hope Buckner Caldwell, 41, was continued to Feb. 19. Judge Clifton E. Johnson of Charlotte granted the continuance on the motion of Buckner's attorney, Bruce Briggs. On Friday, the case of State vs. Paul Chandler, charged with breaking, entering and larceny was completed when the jury returned a verdict of guilty. Chandler received a sentence of not less than one year nor more than two years. Court adjourned Friday afternoon.

## Smoky Mtn. Fire District Merges With Marshall Dept.

More than 70 interested residents of Marshall and the Smoky Mountain Fire District met Monday night in the cafeteria at Madison High School to discuss the future of the two departments. Ralph Rice of Brush Creek, chairman of the SMFD Commission, presided. Jack Ramsey, secretary of the Marshall Volunteer Fire Department, discussed the financing of fire protection in Marshall and the surrounding SMFD. Ramsey ably

presented every angle of the problems facing the residents as well as the two fire departments. He explained that there have been misunderstandings about the 15 cents per \$100 valuation tax voted by residents of the SMFD in 1977, and pointed out one purpose of the meeting was to "clear up questions about the tax." He told the gathering that the town (Marshall) and SMFD now share the same building and equipment — one

truck owned by the town and two by the district, which covers a four-mile radius from the center of Marshall outside the town. "The 32 firemen on the roster of the two departments serve in all fires, town and district," he explained. The state Department of Insurance has urged a merger of the two departments into one, Ramsey said, or has warned that if they remain separate the state agency will insist that each have 19 men

on its rolls. "Getting that many firemen is a near impossible goal," Ramsey said. Following a lengthy discussion, a question-answer session followed with numerous citizens inquiring about the advantages and disadvantages of a merger of the two departments. A large blackboard was used to illustrate the financial structure and outlook in the future of financing the departments. The subject of an additional fire truck (new)

was discussed and action on this project will be taken in the near future. The audience showed its appreciation of the fine work the firemen are doing by giving them loud applause. Tom Wallin, a resident of the SMFD, made a motion that the two departments merge. Wallin's motion was seconded by John Cochran of Marshall. The vote approved of the merger was unanimous.

CITIZENS of Marshall and the Smoky Mountain Fire District are shown in the Madison high school cafeteria Monday night where it

was decided to merge the two fire departments. (Photo by Jim Story)

was decided to merge the two fire departments. (Photo by Jim Story)