

Ridge Rider

Meter Reader Takes To Mountain Backroads

Spring means another bone-jarring ride for Ronnie Ray across the ridges and valleys of Doe Branch. Ray reads electric meters.

Once every spring and fall the 33-year-old meter reader for Carolina Power & Light cranks up his jeep and heads out on a 100-mile round trip from Asheville to the mountain backroads to Madison County where a handful of CP&L customers live.

The trip is part of his meter-reading job, but there's nothing routine about riding this circuit.

It requires a good sense of direction and a sturdy set of shock absorbers to reach the 42 CP&L customers scattered in generally remote locations along the French Broad River.

These people are "good, hard working folks," the Buncombe County native said, and they help make the trip enjoyable.

Sometimes he stops to chat with a customer on the porch a few minutes. Other times he just has the chance to wave at one plowing his field in the distance.

Since he is the only personal contact many of these customers have with CP&L, Ray said he tries to use his visits to find out how they are getting along and if they have any problems with their electric service.

He said he looks forward to the trips, "but once a month

might be a different story."

The driving distance and time required to read these few meters make it impractical on a normal monthly basis, he said. An average day on his other routes means reading 150 to 200 meters.

He said it's fairly easy to find most of the houses except those toward the end of the line. "Only going every six months, I almost forget where some of the customers live," he said.

It's an all day trip in a 4-wheel drive jeep, lurching on S-curves, sloshing through creeks, scraping by trees and laurel bushes, and banging the bottom of the vehicle on rocks and ruts most people wouldn't call roads.

Along with sore knees and elbows from being jostled like gravel in a can, Ray said he gets a view of a beautiful, solitary countryside few people ever see.

The scene is quiet and unhurried, the woodland cleared in places into steep rocky pastures and farmland neatly furrowed, he said. From the narrow dirt roads the French Broad River is frequently visible, flowing silently in the valley below.

This semi-annual meter reader route is unique on the CP&L system, as far as

Asheville district manager Tom Dabney knows. He explained that the Doe Branch customers check their own electric meters each month, mark the reading on a special card provided by CP&L, and mail it in to the district office.

If CP&L does not receive the card, Dabney said, the customer's kilowatt-hour usage is estimated based on

prior usage and necessary billing adjustments are made after the semi-annual visits.

On an annual basis the customers pay the same as if their meters were read each month, he said. CP&L has been doing it this way since these areas of Doe Branch first received electric service in the 1950s and 60s.

Man Sentenced In Theft

A North Carolina truck driver began serving 120 days in jail Thursday for participating in the theft of 345 microwave ovens from his tractor-trailer rig in Newport.

U.S. District Court Judge C.G. Neese ordered the term last week for John Gahagan II of Marshall, after Gahagan admitted as part of a plea bargain that he was a willing accomplice in the interstate theft.

The microwave ovens were stolen in December 1977 and later turned up as Christmas presents in the homes of several prominent officials and businessmen in Newport and surrounding Coake County.

Gahagan was driving the truck loaded with the Hot-point microwave ovens from Columbia, Md., to Little Rock, Ark., when, he said, friends in Newport convinced him to let them steal the ovens.

A federal grand jury in Chattanooga last month returned indictments against 10 persons, seven of them from Newport area, following an 18-month investigation by the FBI and the U.S. attorney's office into the theft.

The indictments were returned after another Newport man, Rusty Frazier, pleaded guilty last month in U.S. District Court in Knoxville to participating in

the theft. Officials said most of the stolen ovens have been recovered.

Sen. Morgan To Speak At Bond Rally

Sen. Robert Morgan will be guest speaker at a school bond rally dinner at Madison High School cafeteria on May 26. The dinner will begin at 7 p.m. Plates will be \$25 each.

Tickets and further information can be secured by calling James T. Ledford at 689-3731.

"This will be a non-political meeting," Ledford stated.

Florida Man In Jail Here For Larceny

Roger Dale Allison, 20, of Sebring, Fla., is in the Madison County Jail charged with larceny of a 1974 Mercury owned by Ben Justice, 72, of Route 1, Hot Springs.

Florida officers made the arrest on Wednesday of last week and Allison was brought to the local jail last Saturday.

Gospel Sing

Ed Ball will host a benefit gospel sing at Mountain Heritage High School one mile west of Burnsville this Sunday at 2 p.m.

A freewill offering will be taken for J.C. Watts of Prices Creek.

Groups taking part include Happy Hearts, Asheville; Glory Dawn, Mars Hill; Seekers, Seneca, S.C.; and Happy Rhythm Quartet (Peak family) of Weaverville.

Madison Births

To Mr. and Mrs. Lattie C. Fender of Marshall, a daughter, May 9, in Memorial Mission Hospital.

To Mr. and Mrs. Donnie E. Buckner of Marshall, a daughter, May 10, in Memorial Mission Hospital.

To Mr. and Mrs. Johnny Norton, Hot Springs, a son, May 12, in Memorial Mission Hospital.

Hospital News

Mrs. Clyde M. Roberts returned to her home in Marshall last week from Memorial Mission Hospital where she has been a patient for several weeks recuperating from injuries received in a car accident.

Mrs. Mae Landers of Marshall expects to return to her home May 25 from a rest home in Asheville. She underwent major surgery at St. Joseph's Hospital. She writes that she is looking forward to seeing her friends when she returns home.

Counterfeit Money Display Next Week

Madison County residents will have an opportunity to test their skill at detecting counterfeit currency next week at Wachovia Bank's office in Marshall. Frank Moore, vice president and Wachovia's city office executive in Marshall, said that an exhibit of real and counterfeit money will be on display all week.

The exhibit, obtained from the Federal Reserve Bank of Richmond, is one of the activities scheduled in connection with Wachovia's 100th anniversary this year.

"Counterfeiting is not as big a problem today as it was in the 1800s," said Moore. "Then, the federal and state governments and many banks printed their own currency, and the value would vary according to where you tried to spend it. About all you needed to be a counterfeiter was a reliable press and a copy of one of the bills."

The National Bank Act of 1863 provided for a currency backed by government bonds. The currency was broadly accepted and, because of the quality of the printing, was difficult to counterfeit. These developments gave the United States a uniform national currency for the first time only a few years before the first Wachovia Bank opened in Winston in 1879.

Denominations of currency in the exhibit range from \$5 to \$100. The bills are arranged side by side so that the viewer may try his luck at deciding which bill of each set is genuine and which is counterfeit. When a button corresponding to the number of each note is pressed, a light flashes. The green light indicated the real currency, and the red light indicated counterfeit.

"Many people don't stop to look at their money," Moore said, "and although some bogus bills are skillfully reproduced, many counterfeit notes are easy to spot." Moore said that in counterfeit currency the hairline and eyes usually are slightly irregular and that the screening around the portrait is not well defined.

Mountain Doctrin'

POLIO ON THE RISE

The number of new cases of polio in the United States increased slightly in 1976 and 1977. This number is admittedly very small, but nonetheless parents of young children should never forget that the "child crippler" is still with us and the only reason it is fairly rare in the United States is that between 1955 and 1969 massive immunization campaigns were launched which nearly eradicated the disease. However, polio is by no means "wiped out" and in very recent years an alarming number of children are not receiving the protection of immunization which may explain the slight increase in the number of polio cases.

Of course, polio is not the only serious disease which can be prevented through proper immunization. Another is measles which, if severe enough, can cause permanent hearing loss and even mental retardation. It is a well-known fact that measles during early pregnancy can cause serious birth defects. Another exam-

ple, tetanus or "lock jaw" is generally fatal in very young infants and may be contracted through simply stepping on a rusty nail. Tetanus, too, is effectively prevented through immunization. Whooping cough and mumps are also preventable.

If you or your friends have children between 2 months and 17 years who have not received vaccinations appropriate to their age, we ask that you call any one of our three clinics or the Madison County Health Department immediately for information about free childhood immunizations. Next week may be too late, so don't put this off.

School Menus

For the week of May 21 BREAKFAST

Monday, May 21: pancakes w-syrup, juice, milk.

Tuesday, May 22: doughnut, juice, milk.

Wednesday, May 23: cereal, juice, milk.

Thursday, May 24: cinnamon toast, sliced peaches, milk.

Friday, May 25: dunkin sticks, juice, milk.

LUNCH

Monday, May 21: pizza, tossed salad, corn, jellied applesauce, milk.

Tuesday, May 22: turkey on bun w-cheese, lettuce and tomato, potato rounds, cookie, milk.

Wednesday, May 23: meat loaf, creamed potatoes, green beans, sliced peaches, rolls, milk.

Thursday, May 24: fried chicken, browned white potatoes, carrot and celery sticks, chocolate pudding, rolls and milk.

Friday, May 25: hamburger on bun, lettuce-tomato-onions-pickles, french fries, apple, milk.

Edgewood Restaurant 1435 Merrimon Ave. Asheville, N.C. Breakfast - Dinner Supper

Babe Ruth Team To Play Saturday

The Mars Hill Senior Babe Ruth baseball team will play East Asheville Senior team this Saturday at 2 p.m. on the college diamond.

The public is invited to attend the game and see the boys in action.

Edgewood Restaurant 1435 Merrimon Ave. Asheville, N.C. Breakfast - Dinner Supper REGULAR MEALS SHORT ORDERS SANDWICHES HOMEMADE PIES AIR CONDITIONED Open 6 a.m. - 10 p.m.



RONNIE RAY makes one of his six-month checks of an electric meter along the Doe Branch route in Madison County backcountry.

Parker Takes C/C Helm

Members of the Greater Haywood Chamber of Commerce voted their unanimous approval to appointment of William R. Parker, a former Asheville businessman, as the chamber's executive vice president.

Parker was presented to the chamber by member Linda Reck, head of the search committee assigned to find the successor to current Vice President Bill Crowder. Crowder plans to retire in Newport, Tenn., and Parker

will assume the vice president's duties May 29.

The board welcomed Parker with the observation by President Dan Green that "Haywood County is moving into a period of rapid change, growth and development. We feel Bill Parker is a man who

will provide responsive and creative leadership to assure that the chamber of commerce will be a vital force for the good of all Haywood County."

A Madison County native, Parker has most recently been working in the Asheville area where he owned and operated the Carolina Importers of Candler.

Parker brings to Haywood County experience as a volunteer leader with the Asheville Chamber of Commerce, where he has received a lifetime membership for his record of accomplishment. He has also served on the board of directors of the Asheville Jaycees and is listed in Who's Who in North Carolina.

"I'm glad to be aboard, and I'm real excited about getting started," Parker told the chamber, "I consider (the position) a great challenge, and it's a challenge I'm looking forward to very much."



BILL PARKER

Madison Sports

By JOHN SCHAEENMAN

The boy's track team finished their 1979 season at the Mountain Athletic Conference meet Monday. During the meet Madison scored their first point ever in a conference meet. Mike Chapman placed fifth in the 800 dash with a school record of 2:10. Other outstanding performances included Robert Murray's winning his heat in the 100 low hurdles and competing in the semifinals. The 880 relay team bettered their time with a 1:43.3, the 440 relay team ran a 49.8, and the mile relay team set a school record with a 3:56.5.

Lettermen this year were Dewayne Buckner, Billy Cantrell, Mike Chapman, Mark Fox, Steve Garrison, Roger Meadows, Eric Merrill, Steve Rector, John Schaeenman, Terry Webb, Gerry Kraus, Tommy Ray, Julian Roberts. In order to letter a member had to come in first, second or third in a meet with at least five teams; come in first, second or third in two or more meets; come in first, second or third in one meet and two relays; or be on a relay team that came in first, second or third in at least three meets.

Your Pharmacist Bill Powell Says

Community Medical Center Pharmacy, Mars Hill, NC. Tel. 689-2591



What to do if poisoned

If your child or a member of your family is ever faced with a poisoning emergency, follow these three first-aid steps: 1) Dilute the poison (drink water or milk); 2) Decide whether vomiting should be induced (have syrup of ipecac handy for vomiting, but don't induce vomiting if person is unconscious or has swallowed a corrosive substance); 3) Call a doctor, or

get victim to nearest hospital.

Meanwhile, always keep medicines out of child's reach and never take (or give) medicines in the dark. Write for our Poison Antidote Chart. It's free, c/o this pharmacy, Clipping Service, Box 5051, Raleigh, NC 27607.

Bill Powell, Your Pharmacist.

TRUCKS

- 79 CHEV. 1/2 TON 6 cyl., SD, low mileage \$4995
77 CHEV. 1/2 TON SILVERADO Loaded with all the extras \$4995
75 DODGE RAMCHARGER V8, SD, PB, PS, 4x4 \$4195

- 76 FORD VAN V8, auto., air, pS, PB \$3995
74 FORD VAN 6 cyl. auto. \$2695
64 CHEV 1 TON 6 cyl., 4 speed cattle bed \$795
76 FORD 1/2 TON 4x4 PS, 4 speed \$4495

CARS

- 76 NOVA 8 cyl., SD, PS, extra clean \$3695
77 T-BIRD V8, auto. PS, PB \$5395
75 NOVA 2 door, V8, auto. PS \$2495
73 COUGAR V8, auto., PS, PB \$1795
72 FORD LTD V8, auto., PS, PB air \$995
74 MONTE CARLO V8, auto., air, PS, PB \$2795
74 DODGE DART Auto., air, PS, PB \$1995

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Table with columns: Here's How INTEREST/CHECKING Works, If Your Average Monthly Balance Is, Your Monthly Interest Earnings Will Be. Rows show balances from \$2500 to \$500 and corresponding interest earnings.



In addition, there are no monthly service charges with INTEREST/CHECKING if you maintain a balance of at least \$1000. Should your balance fall below \$1000, there will be a monthly charge of \$2.00 plus 15c per check/item paid. Regardless of your balance, all the money you have in the bank will be earning interest! Is INTEREST/CHECKING FOR YOU? Your Personal Banker can help you decide. So stop by any Wachovia office and we'll be glad to tell you more.

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