

# THE NEWS RECORD

SERVING THE PEOPLE OF MADISON COUNTY

On the inside . . .

Ponder Re-elected  
Board Of Ed Chief

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A FLOOD WATCH was called for Madison County for early Monday after heavy weekend rains and thunderstorms. The French Broad River lapped around the edges of Blannerhasset Island, but Marshall school

## Rehab Moves Quickly On Hot Springs Homes

The effort to rehabilitate two groups of older houses in the Town of Hot Springs is being handled so smoothly by administrators and workers alike that the project is well ahead of schedule.

According to Larry McCall, Community Development director for Hot Springs, seven of nine houses due for rehabilitation along Spring Creek Road are nearing completion, and six of eight houses in the Silvermine area are almost finished.

The speedy progress of the project is due partly to good weather this winter (work began on Nov. 13), and partly to good management by everyone concerned with it. "Larry McCall has worked very hard and effectively," said Becky Williams, the grant agent at Land-of-Sky Council who helped secure the funding from the Department of Housing and Urban Development. "And so has the town board and the advisory council in Hot Springs. It's really the good pace of this work that helped us get another grant for next year for other houses in Hot Springs."

The town board consists of Debbie Baker, Wesley Staude and Jerry Ramsey; the mayor is Swann B. Huff. The citizens' advisory committee consists of Chairman Sidney Harrison, Rich West, Kenneth Sumerel, Joe Cogdill and Nellie Norton. The Community Development secretary is Patsy Shelton.

Part of the challenge in fixing up a number of houses in a small area, according to Larry McCall, is to keep them from looking too much alike when they are finished.

"I looked at some homes in another area that were done with government grant money," he said, "and they were all alike. They looked like 'government work.' Even the paint was the same color; every house was a kind of off-yellow. Here we try to let the owners choose their own color of paint, and we try to vary the exterior as much as we can."

McCall said that his houses, like those being rehabilitated in the Spillcorn area, are all costing slightly more than estimated, primarily because the cost of materials has risen between 15 and 20 percent since the grants were written. Any materials made of petroleum, such as roofing materials, have gone up even more.

"We originally estimated that each house would cost around \$9,500," he said. "But we find that they are costing closer to \$11,000. Fortunately for the overall budget, three houses that were initially scheduled to be in the project are no longer included, so that saving can be applied to the others."

The regular work force responsible for bringing the houses up to Section 8 standards consists of Carmen D. Payne, foreman; Freddie Barnette and Sammy Barnette, carpenters; and Louis Gosnell and Johnny Payne, helpers. This crew has worked since the beginning. The plumbing, electrical, roofing and painting is done by various contractors.

The HUD grant, which became effective last October, was approved for \$263,280 and called for work to be done on a minimum of 20 houses. It was to be used to provide "safe and sanitary" housing for 79 persons in the target areas, all of whom earn low or moderate incomes. Most of the houses are more than 50 years old and narrowly spaced on steep, difficult-to-work land.

The specific neighborhoods for next year's projects were selected by the Community Development directors and approved by the Madison County Planning Board.



THE HOME OF JESSIE AIKENS on Spring Creek Road was photographed before the rehabilitation work began.

## Big Pine Couple Is Selling Organic Crop Fertilizer

Ever since they moved to their farm on Big Pine seven years ago, Jim and Libby Woodruff have been exploring better ways to treat their soil. Specifically, they have searched for fertilizers and conditioners that would not just give their crops enough nutrients for a single season.

They wanted more than that. They wanted long-term health for their soil; higher humus content; a good balance of minerals that would make their plants — and the people who eat them — as healthy as possible.

They have finally found what they were looking for. Several months ago they

located a line of fertilizers and plant foods that they believe will produce healthier soil and plants than any other. They have bought a full line of products from Necessary Trading Co. in New Castle, Va., and are offering them for sale to county farmers and gardeners.

The products include Leathermeal, a mixture of byproducts from hides and other slaughterhouses waste that is rich in nitrogen (similar to the familiar Nitro 10); Calphos, ground phosphate rock with a trace of calcium; potassium from green sand, a potash-rich rock that has been ground into

powder for field application; Erth-rite, a mixture of composed materials rich in humus; and Sea Crop 16, a liquid extract of kelps and other sea plants from the coast of Maine which increases plant growth, vigor and disease resistance.

"Healthy soil contains certain elements," says Jim Woodruff, "that have to be maintained: humus, various minerals, tiny rock particles, a complex community of bacteria, fungi, yeasts and other organisms in a delicate

balance. Virgin soil has this balance; when we plow it and plant crops in it, we change the balance. What we would like to do is replace the elements used by crops with material as much like nature's materials as possible.

"Most chemical fertilizers don't do this," he went on. "They are fast-acting and they are designed to pump nutrients into the plants for one season — then they are gone. We are offering fer-

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DAVID DOWDY, 17, of the Bear Creek section of Madison County, is shown with a 37-inch long, 12½ pound Muskie he caught last Sunday morning at Redmon Dam. Wayne Freeman, 18, of the Redmon section, who was fishing with David, helped land the large fish by jumping into the French Broad River. David remarked that he had been fishing for three years for a Muskie and finally reached his goal last Sunday.

## Citizens List Priorities

The mayor, city council and planning board of Marshall recently sent out a questionnaire to the citizens of the town, asking them which issues they regard as most important.

Those questionnaires have now been completed, returned and compiled, and the town reports that the response was excellent. The town officials would like to thank all those who took the trouble to fill out the form and would like to report on the results.

Below is a listing of the town priorities, ranked according to the preference of those who returned their questionnaires:

1. Attract industries that will provide better, higher-paying jobs.
2. Improve the availability of 24-hour, emergency doctors' services.
3. Improve roads in the area.

4. Improve the town's police and fire protection services.
5. Preserve and restore the existing business district along the French Broad River.
6. Develop a sound approach toward the town's future development and prevent unwise use of land within the town.
7. Improve water and sewer services.
8. Improve the town's recreation facilities and programs.
9. Improve run-down areas through rehabilitating housing and improving existing services to these areas.
9. (Tie) Increase citizen input to the town's government.
11. Help provide low-cost housing for lower-income residents in the town.
12. Further develop and improve existing library facilities.

## Blue Mold Spreading North From Florida

By WILEY DuVALL  
AGRICULTURAL EXTENSION AGENT

Blue mold season is here. Farmers should keep a constant watch over their tobacco plant beds.

Low temperatures (58 degrees to 68 degrees F) and wet weather favor the spread of this disease. The disease is easily recognized by the bluish-cottony mold on the underside of the leaf. Generally,

the disease first appears in small areas scattered throughout the bed. The leaves of infected plants become a lighter green color than those of healthy plants. Leaves then wilt and appear scalded. In later stages, the leaves turn brown and appear burned.

Blue mold is doing great damage in beds in the states of Florida and Georgia. Those farmers who are spraying their beds with fungicides have thus far escaped

damage. Those who have not sprayed are in trouble.

Madison County farmers should start a spray program when plants are small (the size of a dime at the most). Beds should be sprayed weekly. Spray twice a week during periods of rainy weather. The first three to four sprayings should be with Ferbam at the rate of five tablespoons per gallon of water. After this, change to Maneb and spray at the rate of 1 level teaspoon per

gallon of water.

Fungicides are preventives, not cures. If blue mold comes in spite of the spray treatments, then streptomycin sulfate at the rate of 1 tablespoon per three gallons of water would be the treatment.

Those farmers who prefer a dust treatment may use a Ferbam 11.4 percent or a Maneb 1.4 percent. Regardless of the method used, thorough leaf coverage is very important. For more information, call 648-2611.



...AND AFTER COMPLETION. Instead of a dull gray, the house is now a bright yellow; homeowners are in most cases given their choice of exterior finish. More important, the structure and interior have been brought up to Section 8 standards.

## EPA Tells Plan Board Of County's Sewage Needs

The Madison County Planning Board spent the largest part of its regular session last week listening to a group of men from the Environmental Protection Agency talk about small wastewater systems.

As many as 2,000 homes in the county said the eight EPA men have inadequate sewage systems. These systems will soon have to be brought up to standards, they said, or legal

action could be taken against the owners.

Because most people cannot afford new treatment systems, which cost around \$1,000, the EPA is offering to put up most of the money — as long as the county will agree to pay for a small share and to guarantee that the systems will be maintained and monitored in the future.

The local share of a new sewage system was estimated by the EPA representatives to be as low as \$75 — at present costs. But because the EPA Construction Grants Program can take as long as four years

from first application to completion, the cost is certain to rise. And the maintenance cost per homeowner was estimated at \$6 to \$8 a month — or perhaps more.

As one EPA man admitted, they have never dealt with an area quite like Madison County in this program, and all costs are at present only estimates.

Each owner would also be responsible for calling the "honeywagon" to pump out the septic tank when it is full. This presently costs about \$50 and must be done every two to

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**National Library Week:**  
**April 13-19**

THIS WEEK IS National Library Week. Celebrate by paying a visit to your county library in Marshall!