

Former Police Officer, The News Record File Lawsuits Against Town

Two unrelated lawsuits were filed last week against the Town of Marshall, the Marshall Board of Aldermen and Mayor Betty Wild. The suits were brought by former Marshall police officer Carlie Gunter and The News Record.

Gunter's suit was filed in the Madison County Superior Court by Asheville attorney Lamar Gudger. The suit alleges that Mayor Wild and the town's aldermen wrongfully dismissed the 18-year police veteran on grounds of police brutality.

Documents filed with the Madison County Clerk of Courts state that Wild and the aldermen dismissed Gunter as one of their first acts in office on Dec. 5, 1983. The suit contends that on Dec. 6, the day following the swearing-in, Gunter was presented a notice stating that his dismissal was because of police brutality.

Gunter's suit alleges that he asked for, and was refused, a hearing on the charges of brutality. The documents filed with the court on Thursday seek \$100,000 for wrongful dismissal, an additional \$150,000 for libel and \$100,000 in punitive damages.

The documents state that the former police was dismissed from his position because of his political beliefs, thus denying him his rights under the first and fourteenth amendments of the U.S. Constitution.

The libel damages sought charge that Mayor Wild and the aldermen caused damage to Gunter's reputation by allowing false information concerning police brutality to be published. The suit also asks the court to order Gunter reinstated to his position on the Marshall police force.

The suit brought by The News Record was instituted by News Record editor Robert Koenig on Thursday and charges that the Mayor violated the North Carolina Open Meetings law by failing to provide adequate advance notice of a public hearing.

Mayor Wild had scheduled a public hearing on Friday at 9 a.m. for the aldermen to consider leasing a town owned trailer at the Marshall Recreation Center. Notice of the meeting was made public at 2:30 p.m. on Wednesday.

Marshall attorney Richard Miller prepared the documents charging the violation and asking for a temporary restraining order to prohibit the Friday meeting.

Koenig drove the Boone Thursday afternoon to obtain the restraining order from District Court Judge Phillip Ginn. Judge Ginn signed the order prohibiting the Friday meeting at 6 p.m. Thursday in the offices of the Boone Police Department.

The order calls for a hearing on the restraining order to be held April 16 at 2 p.m.



MARSHALL MAYOR BETTY WILD received a pair of summons Friday morning.

Marshall Holds 30-Second Session

After waiting some 30 minutes to start Monday's special called meeting of the Marshall Board of Aldermen, it took the board only 30 seconds to dispose of the business at hand.

Mayor Wild had called the special meeting, her ninth since taking office in Dec., to discuss a lease to rent a trailer owned by the town located at the Marshall Recreation Center. Wild has proposed leasing the trailer to William and Devi Ramsey.

The called meeting was originally scheduled for Friday morning, but was postponed until Monday when The News Record obtained a temporary restraining order against the Friday meeting.

Mayor Wild was the only board member present at Town Hall at the 9 a.m. scheduled starting time for the meeting. Board member Ed Niles arrived some 20 minutes late, followed by alderman John Dodson at 9:30.

With two board members present, Mayor Wild called to meeting to order. Dodson then said that he had studied the lease and asked that the agreement with the Ramseys be tabled until the next regularly scheduled meeting of the board on May 7.

Dodson's motion to table the decision was seconded by Niles and passed. Mayor Wild then adjourned the special meeting.

County Receives Grant

Madison County has received preliminary approval for a \$236,000 Community Development Block Grant.

Announcement of the award was made last week in a letter to county commission chairman Ervin Adams from James A. Summers, secretary of the N.C. Department of Natural Resources and Community Development (NRCD).

The county had sought the grant in an application submitted in January. Funds from the grant will be used to install sewer lines from the Madison Manor Nursing Center into lines operated by the town of Mars Hill.

Sam Parker, director of the Madison County Housing Authority, explained that the funds were requested in order to correct a sewage problem at the nursing home. The home's present septic system is unable to handle the load placed on it and must be pumped out twice a week.

Parker said that the sewage problem threatened some 95 jobs at the facility.

He went on to say that Brookwood Investments Corp., the original operators of the Madison Manor Nursing Center, have completed plans for a new 60-bed rest home

facility adjacent to the nursing home, to be called Mountainview Villas.

When completed, the new rest home is expected to employ about 27 workers. The rest home will be constructed using revenue bonds approved by the county commissioners in an agreement similar to that which funded construction of the nursing home.

The approval of the block grant funds is conditional. Parker said that an environmental impact statement will have to be issued before funding can be obtained. In addition, plans for the sewer construction must meet with Division of Health Services approval before contracts for construction can be awarded.

Parker said the proposed line would extend from the Madison Manor Nursing Home to a pumping station on Jim Jarvis Rd. Sewage from the nursing home would then be pumped by force main into the system operated by the town of Mars Hill.

Construction of the Mars Hill line to collect the nursing home sewage has not yet begun.

Parker estimated that it may be several months before construction of the nursing home line can begin.

CLEAN UP LITTER.

Keep North Carolina Beautiful.

Clean-Up Campaign Begins

The annual Western North Carolina Beautiful Contest, a fourth of the WNC Community Development Program got underway officially this week which is being observed as "Community Development Week" in this area. A majority of the approximately 100 organized communities in the improvement program are engaging in clean-up and anti-litter projects.

This week was also designated as "Cleanup Litter Week" throughout North Carolina.

Theme of the special community week in Western North Carolina is "People Helping People." Purpose is to encourage the organized community clubs to undertake beautification and other community projects and to recognize those with outstanding remedial instruction to students during summer break.

The board also re-elected Bobby Ponder to another term as chairman of the school board and reappointed Larry Leake to serve as the board's attorney.

At the request of Madison H.S. principal David Wyatt, the board selected May 25 as graduation day for the Class of 1984. Wyatt reported that the school has five students eligible for the North Carolina Scholars Program honors.

The board also heard a report concerning property owned by the board at Ebbs Chapel. A community group seeking to organize a volunteer fire department has asked for a portion of the property in order to build a fire station. The board authorized Edwards and Ponder to negotiate with the group for use of the school property.

last year in the WNC Beautiful Contest went on to win three-fourths of all the awards presented statewide at an awards luncheon of Keep North Carolina Beautiful, Inc. in March. Included was five of seven first place awards.

Area awards to winners of the beautification contest will amount to \$2,000.00 in 1984, according to Morris L. McGough, executive vice president of the Western North Carolina Development Association.

Participation in the project is open both to organized rural community clubs in the 18 western counties and to other organizations and groups. Included in this category are Extension Homemakers clubs, civic groups, garden clubs, Boy Scout and Girl Scout troops, 4-H clubs, churches and other groups.

Judging and awards are in two separate divisions, one for the community clubs and one for other groups.

Purpose of the WNC BEAUTIFUL program is to promote clean-up and beautification projects, encourage planting of flowers, shrubs and trees, protection of the natural beauty and generally to promote an awareness among the people of Western North Carolina of the need for improving the appearance of the area.

Deadline for entering the contest is May 15. Entry blanks can be obtained from the N. C. Agricultural Extension Service office in each county or from the WNC Development Association, 430 City Building, Asheville, N.C. 28801.

Judging of entries in both divisions will be done in late summer in the counties and (Continued on Page 6)

MHC Receives \$441,597 Gift

Mars Hill College has received a \$441,597 gift from J. Wesley Grayson, a retired California financial consultant who had previously given the college \$1.1 million in 1978 and \$735,065 in 1982.

In announcing the third major gift on Saturday, Dr. Fred Bentley, president of the college, said the gift consisted of \$100,000 in cash and the remainder in Gulf Oil stock.

Counting several smaller cash gifts in between the major contributions, Grayson has given the college a total of \$2,379,869 over the last 5 1/2 years, which makes him the most generous benefactor in the 128-year history of the school.

Mrs. Grayson, daughter of the late Mr. and Mrs. Roy Wall of Mars Hill, gave the college an additional \$477,515.50 in 1982. This means that the couple's total gifts to the college have amounted to almost \$3 million.

All of the money has gone to the support of a scholarship program named for the 86-year-old former university economics professor and government tax analyst who lives in Laguna Hills, CA.

The Grayson Scholarships are the most prestigious awards offered by the college. They pay full tuition, which

will be \$3,635 for the 1984-85 school year. This means that, over a 4-year undergraduate career, one of these scholarships will be worth almost \$15,000.

Currently there are 41 Grayson Scholars, and they are among the most outstanding students, academically and socially, in the student body of 1100.

"The Grayson Scholarships," explains Bentley, "are making a significant impact on the college. They help attract outstanding young people who set a challenging pace in the classroom and provide effective leadership in dorm life, student government, student organizations, athletics, and other aspects of campus living. Furthermore, the Grayson Scholars have great potential for the future. They will become effective leaders in business, industry, government and professional life and in their communities, churches and families after they are graduated."

Grayson is a Mid-Westerner and the son of a Methodist minister. He worked his way through undergraduate and graduate studies at DePaul University in Greenacastle, IN, and became an economics professor at the University of



J. WESLEY GRAYSON

Kansas. He later taught at Ohio State and operated a brokerage firm in Ohio before going into government as a tax economist. For 20 years prior to his retirement he was an economist with the Internal Revenue Service in Washington.

A skillful manager of investments, he made his millions in the stock market, accumulating and losing two small fortunes in the 1920s and 1930s before achieving financial

success in the late 1940s. Grayson has been acquainted with Mars Hill College since 1946, when he married the former Pauline Wall, a native of Mars Hill whose uncle, Dr. Robert Lee Moore, was president of the college from 1897 until 1938. His interest in the college has been especially keen since 1978, when he established the scholarship program with a gift of stock valued at

at the request of Walnut (Continued on Page 6)

School Board Approves Furniture Purchase

The Madison County Board of Education met last Wednesday and approved \$3,165 in funds to purchase new furniture for the Marshall Primary School.

Superintendent Robert Edwards said that the furniture was needed due to increased enrollment at the school. The purchase authorized by the board will include 26 student desks, two teacher's desks and chairs, a secretary's desk and several cabinets. The furniture will be purchased from Learning Environments of Liberty, N.C.

The school board also approved several personnel decisions affecting the new school during last week's session. After an executive session, Superintendent Edwards recommended, and the board approved, granting tenure to Marshall Primary School principal Nancy Allen. Earlier in open session, the board approved naming Brenda Shepherd, Virginia Davis and Betty McKinney as substitute teachers at the school.

The board also approved the elimination of one special education position from the payroll in order to finance the hiring of a full-time school psychologist.

At the request of Walnut

School principal Sidney Harrison, the board approved Tom Pythian as a substitute bus driver for the school.

Doyle Ammons and Louie Zimmerman were appointed as the two teachers to be funded by state funds as mathematics and science instructors for the summer term. Both will provide remedial instruction to students during summer break.

The board also re-elected Bobby Ponder to another term as chairman of the school board and reappointed Larry Leake to serve as the board's attorney.

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