



# THE NEWS RECORD

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## Marshall Hires Police Chief

By ROBERT KOENIG

The Marshall Board of Aldermen named Herschel Cox the new chief of police during a special called meeting held Thursday morning at Town Hall.

Appointment of the new police chief came on a motion made by board member Ed Niles. Alderman John Dodson voted in favor of hiring the 29-year old Cox. Board member Sammy Lunsford opposed the appointment.

Cox will be paid \$9200 a year as the town's police chief.

The new police chief will be the first to lead the Marshall police department in several years. Former Marshall police officer Carlie Gunter served as the town's unofficial police chief until he was dismissed by Mayor Wild in December of last year. Gunter has filed a



TROON SQUIRE AND HIS PET CHICKENS were awarded a blue ribbon during animal parade at Beech community's 100th July 4th celebration.-More pictures on Page 6.

## Blue Mold Warning Issued

The Madison County Extension Service has issued a blue mold watch to local tobacco growers.

Although blue mold has not been reported in the area, weather conditions have been favorable for the disease's development. The wet, overcast and cool weather of the past several weeks is the ideal environment for blue mold development in unprotected fields.

Farmers are urged to watch for the disease in old plant beds that have not been destroyed. Parts of fields which receive morning or afternoon shade and valleys subject to early morning fog also require careful observation.

Growers should make sure that all old tobacco beds are destroyed. The Extension Service recommends applying a layby treatment of Ridomil at the rate of one quart per acre. The treatment should be applied to the row middles and the base of all plants. A shallow cultivation of the soil or immediate rainfall following application will increase the treatment's effectiveness because Ridomil gives best protection when it is absorbed by the plants' roots. Applications on the plant does not provide protection for any new growth.

Farmers detecting signs of blue mold infestation in their fields are asked to contact the Madison County Extension Service office in Marshall immediately. The Extension Service telephone number in Marshall is 649-2411.

## School Board Awards Tenure To Nine County Teachers

The Madison County Board of Education awarded tenure to nine teachers and hired an additional six teachers during their meeting July 3.

The teachers receiving tenure are Carol Blair, Wilda Loomis, Karen Blevins, Carol Evans, Hary Overby, Barbara Penland, Billie Redmon, Deborah Boone and Lynn Plemmons.

The board also approved hiring Sandra Reeves, Melanie Blankenship, Allen Stines, Lula Meulenberg, Helen Norton and Anita Ward. Ward was hired as a part-time health careers instructor. The other five teachers were all hired as full-time workers.

Reeves will be assigned to Marshall Primary School.

Blankenship will teach at Marshall Elementary School and Norton was assigned to Mars Hill Elementary. Both Stines and Meulenberg were assigned to Hot Springs School.

The school board also accepted resignations from Susan Kiser, Beverly Hough and JoAnn Johnson. The three resignations together with the retirement of teachers Dorothy Chandler and Jacob Sams means that Madison County schools have gained two teacher positions over last year's allotment. The increase is due in part to legislation approved by the General Assembly during the short session that decreases the class size for kindergarten

through sixth grade.

In other action taken during last week's meeting, the board approved Standard Life as the carrier for student insurance.

The board also approved two transfers of students from Buncombe County schools. Charlie Moore and Kelly Sawyers received approval to attend Madison County school. The board also denied three transfer requests for students wishing to leave Madison County. Those denied were Glen Gosnell, James Cogdill and Darlene Turner.

The board also approved a one-year extension of an experimental attendance policy at Marshall Elementary School. Principal Fred Haynie reported that the experimen-

tal policy resulted in decreased absenteeism at the school this year.

Dr. Thomas Jones was also approved as a full-time psychologist. Jones has provided service to the county schools on a contract basis in the past.

Superintendent Robert Edwards delivered a progress report on construction at Mars Hill, Laurel and Marshall Primary schools. The system is in the process of installing a new roof in Mars Hill and preparing trailers for use at Marshall Primary. Work on the lunchroom at Laurel School has been completed.

The school board's next scheduled meeting will be held Aug. 1 at 10:30 a.m.

## Compromise Is Reached In Laurel Precinct Dispute

By ROBERT KOENIG

The Madison County Board of Commissioners redrew the boundaries of the Laurel precinct for the second time in less than two months Monday night after hearing appeals from Laurel voters opposed to the decision to split the precinct. Following an hour of public comment and a 20-minute closed session, the commissioners emerged with a compromise that satisfied the Laurel voters.

Under the compromise decision, Spillcorn and Big Laurel residents were returned to the Laurel precinct (Township 2) while voters in the Revere and Rice's Cove communities will form Township 11 created by the county commissioners on June 4.

Monday's special public hearing was called after Laurel residents petitioned the commissioners to rescind their June 4 decision creating a Revere-Spillcorn precinct from a portion of Laurel township. Terry Gunter presented the commissioners with a petition signed by some 530 Laurel area voters to the commissioners during their monthly meeting on July 2. After reading the petition, the commissioners voted to hold a public hearing.

When Monday night's meeting was called to order, opinions both for and against the division were heard.

Keith Ray of the Revere community opened the hearing by supporting the division. Ray said that the people of Revere and Spillcorn requested the division and said that voters in his community were aware that a division was being considered.

Ray told the hearing, "We don't want token political handouts from Shelton Laurel and Guntertown."

Ray discounted the cost of purchasing new voting machines and hiring election officials and said that "threats, lies and loosely-worded petitions have been circulating in Laurel." He said that many people who signed the petition opposing the division were misled into signing petitions both for and against the split.

Ray was one of the few who spoke in favor of the division during Monday's hearing.

Terry Gunter, who led the fight against the split, also addressed Monday's hearing. Gunter opened by presenting another petition, this one signed by 18 voters who stated they were misled into signing the anti-division petition.

Gunter then told the commissioners, "We have the majority by over 2 to 1 that don't want the precinct divided. If you continue to go through with this, you are setting the most dangerous precedence you ever have. Everytime there's a spat, there'll be a call for a

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## Johnson Charged With Murder Of Daughter

Richard Johnson of Hot Springs was arrested on murder charges last Wednesday in connection with the June 20 death of his daughter, five-year old Joyce Johnson. Johnson, 36, was arrested at his home by Madison County Sheriff E.Y. Ponder after preliminary autopsy results indicated the child had died as a result of poisoning.

Buncombe County medical examiner Dr. H.E. Hinman ordered the autopsy following the child's death at Memorial Mission Hospital in Asheville. The child had been treated twice before for an undetermined illness at the hospital. She was taken to Memorial Mission on June 17 by the Madison County EMS.

Following his arrest, Johnson was taken to Avery

County where he appeared before District Court Judge Phillip Ginn. Johnson was denied bail at the first appearance hearing and remains in the Madison County jail.

District Court is scheduled for Wednesday and Thursday of this week in Marshall. Johnson was not scheduled for a court appearance, but he is believed to have requested a bond hearing be set.

The Madison County Sheriff's Department is being assisted by the State Bureau of Investigation in the case.

The Madison County Department of Social Services assumed custody of an older child, Christopher, following the June 17 hospitalization of his sister. The child remains in foster care.

## Report To The Commissioners

# Committee Recommends Shift From Tobacco

Following are the major conclusions pertaining to agriculture-forestry and their relationship to economic development in Madison County. The more specific recommendations were shaped by and should be considered within the context of these major conclusions.

Agriculture and forestry in Madison County appear to offer little opportunity for full-time employment but should be promoted because of their important roles as income supplements. Therefore, recommendations are oriented toward enhancing part-time agriculture and forestry opportunities.

maintenance of the county's rural lifestyle and character. Since approximately 80 percent of the county's farmers are part-time, adequate non-farm job opportunities must be available so that residents can remain in the county, retain their agricultural lands, and pursue part-time agricultural interests.

Enhancing agriculture and forestry development should complement other economic development recommendations. As noted above, most residents need nonfarm jobs in order to pursue agriculture. Also, it is essential to note that maintenance of healthy agriculture sectors will help in pursuing other nonagricultural economic development goals. For example, good forest management and timber harvesting is beneficial, and perhaps

essential, to promotion of tourism and recreation. The county's quality of life is greatly dependent on the county's rural character which, of course, is derived from the existence of agriculture and forestland. Industrial prospects should be interested in a work force, that, because of an agricultural lifestyle, is stable and hardworking. In essence, the values of maintaining a viable agricultural and forestry sector go far beyond merely calculating farm- and forestry-related income.

The county's limited amount of suitable land for agriculture is a serious constraint that shapes all subsequent agricultural recommendations and should be a consideration in planning for other developments, especially industry and tourism.

ment tobacco for a while, not replace it. The following is recommended:

Each farmer must find the right combination of alternatives since not all can be produced everywhere in the county and, given their higher risks than tobacco, to avoid dependence on one crop.

The recommended alternative enterprises have been divided into long- and short-term categories. Many local farmers are currently pursuing these. The short-term list contains those items that a farmer could pursue quickly and expect income within one year. The long-term list contains those items that will not produce income for a number of years. A balance between the two lists is recommended.

SHORT TERM ENTERPRISES: Tomatoes, berries, and vegetables are recommended as the best short-term enterprises. Tomato production is highly speculative and requires maintaining high standards of quality and efficiency. However, in 1983 about 115 Madison County farmers grew tomatoes which resulted in over \$1 million in income. It is believed there is greater potential in berry production with the various bramble berries. Potential vegetables include cabbage, cauliflower, broccoli, and sweet corn. These are risky commodities and require intensive labor. Other short-term alternatives with potential include greenhouse crops, trout, and small-scale livestock using marginal land.

LONG TERM ENTERPRISES: Native and non-native ornamental shrubs are recommended as the best long-term enterprises. Native shrubs include hemlock, rhododendron, laurel, dogwood and flame azaleas.

While the market for Christmas trees is currently good, it may not warrant additional production because of possible surpluses by the end of the decade.

Grapes, glaucous, and black walnuts are possibilities that may be feasible to a limited number of farmers.

There must be a mechanism for increasing farmers' knowledge through technical assistance and training.

other's successes. This is an across-the-board need, and therefore, is discussed below in the subsection entitled "Increased Awareness About Existing Agricultural Programs and Alternative Enterprises". The farmer's decision to change to any alternative enterprise is a difficult one. A farmer cannot be convinced to change simply because it is a good idea in the long-run; he must have a reasonable chance to make money.

IMPROVED MANAGEMENT AND UTILIZATION OF FORESTLAND

Forestry has long valued and offers many potential contributions for improving rural areas. It is a