

MADISON COUNTY LIBRARY
GENERAL DELIVERY
MARSHALL NC 28753

00039

28753

THE NEWS RECORD

Serving The People Of Our Communities Since 1901

Vol. 87 No. 31

Thursday, July 30, 1987

25¢

District Attorney Seeks Missing County Records

By BILL STUDENC
Editor

The District Attorney's Office is looking into allegations that Madison County Tax Collector Harold Wallin destroyed county tax records more than 10 years old.

The probe into those accusations comes on the heels of charges last month by the State Bureau of Investigation that Wallin failed to discharge his duties by not collecting interest and penalties on back taxes.

Wallin had been scheduled to appear in court Monday on four misdemeanor charges, but the case was continued until Aug. 27.

The latest allegations were made earlier this month by Betty Wild, Wallin's unsuccessful Republican opponent for tax collector in the November election.

Wild told the Madison County Board of Commissioners during a recent budget hearing that she had asked to see old tax records to determine what Madison County residents have not been paying their taxes.

"I think there should be an investigation. Somebody has to be responsible," Wild said. "All of a sudden, we want to see some books and they're not available for us to look at."

Wild said Wallin told her that the records had been destroyed. Wallin has denied that he destroyed any tax records.

According to state law, no public records can be destroyed without the approval of the N.C. Department of Cultural Resources and the permission of the governing body — in this case, the board of commissioners.

-Continued on back page



Liston B. Ramsey seeks state appropriations

Madison, Marshall May Get \$665,000 From Legislature

By BILL STUDENC
Editor

The town of Marshall could receive up to \$365,000 from the state if the General Assembly approves special appropriations requested by House Speaker Liston B. Ramsey for his hometown.

That \$365,000 is among more than \$665,000 in budget requests made by Ramsey for projects in Madison County.

Ramsey has asked his fellow legislators to approve \$240,000 in state money to help Marshall fund a water and sewer system renovation project. He has also asked for \$125,000 from the state for water and sewer

lines for industrial expansion and the Madison County campus of Asheville-Buncombe Technical College.

The \$240,000 request, if approved when the General Assembly completes its work on the state budget package, would help Marshall complete an extensive renovation project at its aging sewage treatment plant. The cost of that work, which should enable the town to meet its wastewater treatment needs for 20 years, is estimated at more than \$1 million.

"At my request, I had some friends of mine visit the town board several weeks ago and work up a project for the town," Ramsey said Tuesday in a

telephone interview from Raleigh. "We think that federal money to the tune of \$800,000 will be available in September 1988 for water and sewer line repair, refurbishing and possibly replacement."

But, in order for Marshall to qualify for the federal money, the town must put up some \$240,000 in matching funds. That's where the state comes in.

"There's no way our little town could come up with \$240,000 to match that federal money," Ramsey said.

Ramsey has also asked the General Assembly to allocate \$125,000 to Marshall for the extension of water and sewer lines.

-Continued on back page

Blue Mold Reported In WNC

From The Mountaineer

Despite warnings from N.C. Agricultural Extension Service personnel, blue mold is making a comeback in area tobacco fields where proper precautions were not taken to prevent it — including a field in Weaverville.

Blue mold, a fungus disease, can cause total devastation of a tobacco crop, but can be controlled with specific fungicides.

The mold has been reported in burley tobacco fields in Greene County, Tenn., and just recently in a field near Weaverville. All reported locations have been fields not treated.

A fungus pathogen brought into Western North Carolina by southerly winds and air currents causes blue mold. The fungus does not "over-

-Continued on back page



BILL STUDENC PHOTO

This sign located in a cornfield off U.S. 19-23 near Flat Creek sums up the feelings of many residents about a proposed rock quarry in

their community. A public hearing on the quarry has been set for Aug. 6.

Rock Quarry Foes Prepare For Battle

By BILL STUDENC
Editor

They're billing it as "North Buncombe versus Vulcan."

No, the Weaverville-area high school football team won't be taking on a squad of refugees from "Star Trek." But a group of North Buncombe County residents will be going head-to-head with a Winston-Salem mining company that wants to build a gravel quarry in the Flat Creek area.

The battle will take place at 7 p.m. Aug. 6 at Flat Creek Elementary School during a public hearing called by the N.C. Department of Natural Resources and Community Development.

Organizers of a community effort against the proposed rock quarry are trying to convince North Buncombe and South Madison residents to attend next Thursday's meeting to voice their opposition to Vulcan

Materials Corp. plans.

Flat Creek residents have already placed signs saying "Stop Vulcan Quarry" along U.S. 19-23 near the 99.64-acre tract that the company wants to convert into a mine. And they intend to erect signs reading "North Buncombe Versus Vulcan" later this week, said Gary Hensley, one of the organizers of the community effort.

"That's what it's boiling down to — North Buncombe versus Vulcan," Hensley said Tuesday.

"We feel like the burden of proof that this will be a detrimental impact on the North Buncombe-Mars Hill area has been placed on the community. It's the community versus a large corporation," he said.

Flat Creek residents would like for the state to get involved in the issue, Hensley said.

-Continued on back page

Tourism Expert: Regional Promotion The Key For Madison

By BILL STUDENC
Editor

Madison County's best bet for boosting its travel and tourism industry may be to join with other Western North Carolina counties in a regional promotion effort.

That was one of the suggestions made by a panel of travel and tourism experts during a panel discussion in Mars Hill last Thursday.

WNC counties along the Great Smoky Mountains National Park are

forming a regional promotion group — Smoky Mountain Host. High Country Host, a regional effort to attract tourists to WNC's northernmost mountain counties, has been in existence for several years and is showing signs of success, said Robert E. Shepherd, executive director of the Land-of-Sky Regional Council.

If Madison and other WNC counties don't want to be left behind in the race for tourism dollars, those counties must join the trend toward regional promotion, Shepherd told a

group of about 50 people at the meeting, sponsored by the Madison County Chamber of Commerce, the League of Women Voters and the Community Development Organization of Mars Hill.

"Western North Carolina communities have always had a tendency to work entirely on their own," Shepherd said. "But tourists don't come to Marshall, or to Cullowhee or to Franklin. They pick a larger destination, like the Great Smoky Mountain area."

Regional promotion efforts in Northeast Georgia, and East Tennessee have been extremely successful in attracting additional tourists to those areas, he said.

The advantage of such a regional effort is that adjacent counties can pool their sometimes-meager resources. That will allow the counties, as a group, to pay for more promotional materials than they could individually, Shepherd said.

Currently, tourism is the third-highest ranking industry in North

Carolina, said Richard Stiles, a regional economist with Western North Carolina Tomorrow. By the year 2000, it should be the number-one industry.

Although tourism has been on the upswing in Madison County, the industry's growth has not kept pace with the rest of the state, Stiles said.

"The good news is that Madison County's tourism and travel revenues from 1985 to 1986 increased 65 percent, to \$369,000," he said. "You are on your way, but you've still got a

long way to go."

Tourism means big bucks for the local economy. A daily average of 100 tourists is equal to nearly \$1 million in retail sales, Stiles said. And that money, in turn, can educate 156 school children, he said.

Stiles agreed that Madison County and WNC need to use promotion to attract more tourists — and more of their dollars.

"Tourism is like any other business — there's a product and a market," he

-Continued on back page

Two Candidates File For Weaverville Race

From Staff Reports

Two candidates — one newcomer and one incumbent — have filed for seats on the Weaverville Town Council.

Bernard Koesters, who is seeking his second term as a Weaverville councilman, was the first candidate to file for November's municipal election in Weaverville, according to the Buncombe County Board of Elections. Koesters, of 37 Lakeshore Drive, filed last Thursday for the councilman's race.

Brenda Murphy, 35, of 28 College Street, filed Friday for the councilman's race, according to the election board. This is her first attempt at public office.

Murphy, a Weaverville homemaker and school bus driver for handicapped children, is hoping to fill one of a couple vacancies expected on the Weaverville Town Council.

To get a copy of the

she said, saying she was not looking to unseat any of the current council members. "I think we have a good board with the exception of one, and that one's coming off."

Murphy said she is interested in the on-going Lake Louise renovation project and in the proposed annexation of a new golf course in the Reems Creek area.

The Weaverville Police Department is another item high on Murphy's agenda, if elected to the council.

"We need more officers if we're going to annex anywhere," she said. "The police department needs more cars. I would just like to see the police department updated."

Several Weaverville residents encouraged Murphy to run for town council "to get certain things done for the town," she said.

To get a copy of the



BILL STUDENC PHOTO

Land off Reems Creek Road near Weaverville is the site of a proposed \$35 million golf course and development.

Golf Course Coming To Reems Creek

By STEVE FERGUSON
Staff Writer

Weaverville has been chosen as the site for a \$35 million golf club, with construction set to begin in September.

The project, set between Union Chapel and Pink Fox roads near Reems Creek Road, covers 250 acres and will include 180 single-family lots and 75 multi-family lots along with an 18-hole, par 72 golf course. Other plans include a swimming pool, tennis courts and a clubhouse.

Reems Creek Golf Club will have lots ready to build on in July 1989, and should be open for golf by spring of 1990.

"It seems like Reems Creek was a natural," said project manager Fred Beasly. "It's got beauty, and with direct access to (U.S.) 19-23 it has an excellent transit system."

Beasly said that one of the primary

concern in choosing the location.

"We looked for two years for an appropriate site. You've got to have plenty of land, and the south side of Asheville was too congested and too expensive."

Of the first 99 lots available, Beasly said he has already sold 65, primarily to area residents.

"We thought we'd have more out-of-state buyers and more retired people," he said. "But 90 percent of our people are local."

Beasly said he feels the club fills a needed gap in the local real estate market.

"We are trying to be annexed into the town of Weaverville to give (property owners) the convenience of living downtown with the atmosphere of living away from town," he said.

Local residents would be able to play the course by paying a green fee.