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School Board Faces 'Mammoth' Decisions

By BILL STUDENC
Editor

Madison County school officials will await the results of a state inspection of facilities before they decide how to spend more than \$7.7 million that may be available for new school construction over the next decade.

That report is not expected from the state Division of School Planning until mid-December; the Madison County School Board must adopt a long-range plan for the renovation and repair of school facilities by Jan. 1.

The Madison County Board of Education and the Madison County Board of Commissioners met jointly Friday to begin the discussion of how to spend at least \$7,790,018 in state money that will become available over the next 10 years.

School officials admit they have some important decisions to make by the end of the year. They must decide where to construct new school buildings, where to repair current facilities and, possibly, where to consolidate

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Madison County school board chairman

schools.

"We are faced with some mammoth decisions that will be significantly changing public education in Madison County for the next 50 years or so," said James Baker, school board chairman. "We have a great burden on us." Robert Edwards, superintendent of Madison County

schools, gave both boards a history of public education in the county.

"At one time in this county, we had 58 schools," Edwards said. "We are down to eight schools now."

Among the possibilities school officials will be considering during the next month is whether further consolidation of county schools is needed.

"Of course, we have various problems at our existing schools," Baker said. "Dealing with those problems may create some other problems -- transportation problems, problems within communities which might have strong feelings about schools being closed and their children being transported long distances to other schools."

Before school board members start making those hard decisions, they want to look at the results of a Division of School Planning survey of Madison County schools conducted by a 10-member committee that visited the county recently.

But it is likely that Madison County will see some new

schools built in the next 10 years.

"I think we can pretty well safely assume that the recommendation we will receive will call for some pretty drastic changes in our educational system," Baker said. "We will be looking at the possibility of making some pretty abrupt construction, rather than repair buildings that have been in use for many years."

"To bring an older building up to standards, it will cost more to renovate a 40-year-old building than to build a new one," Edwards said.

One factor which is making the school board's job more difficult is the fact that the school system also may be eligible for a portion of \$95 million in "critical needs money" recently made available by the state.

School officials have already estimated Madison's total renovation and construction needs at \$36,890,460. That estimate includes the replacement of all schools in the county -- except Madison High School and Marshall

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BILL STUDENC PHOTO

Employees and customers at Marshall's Super 10 Store were surprised Tuesday afternoon when a car crashed through the store's front windows. No one was injured in the accident.

Car Crashes Through Storefront

By BILL STUDENC
Editor

The Super 10 store in Marshall looked somewhat like a used car showroom Tuesday afternoon when an 18-year-old woman drove her car through the store's front window.

Ingrid Michelle Gordin of 580 N. Bear Creek Road, Marshall, was pulling into a parking spot in front of Super 10 in the Ingles Plaza about 4:05 p.m. Tuesday, only to discover that her car would not stop, according

to authorities.

"The girl said she was pulling in here to do some shopping and her brakes failed," said Denny Goforth of the Marshall Police Department.

"She said she just didn't have any brakes. She pumped them two or three times and just kept coming and came on through here," Goforth said, pointing to a gaping hole in the plate glass window that had been the front of the store.

Gordin, who was alone in the car at

the time of the accident, was not injured. No employees or customers inside the store were hurt.

"For some reason, I was looking up and I saw her. I could see she was going to come on through," said Donna Wallin, store manager.

Wallin said she ran over to the car to see if the driver had been hurt.

"She was scared to death," she said. "I reached in and turned off the motor. I saw a child can seat in the

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New Weaverville Council Holds Planning Session

By BILL STUDENC
Editor

The newly elected Weaverville Town Council, meeting in a special planning retreat Saturday in Asheville, began plotting the course of the town over the next two years.

Council members, after taking their oaths of office last Thursday, gathered Saturday at the Sheraton Inn to discuss their ideas for Weaverville's future.

"Each member had different reasons why they ran for office that they want to get accomplished," Weaverville Mayor Reese Lasher said Tuesday. "Saturday's meeting was a chance to exchange those ideas."

Foremost among the council members' concerns was solving the town's long-standing water supply problems, Lasher said.

Weaverville officials have placed a moratorium on providing water ser-

vice to customers outside the town limits until a new water supply can be developed.

Town officials have reached an interim agreement with the Asheville-Buncombe Water Authority that should provide sufficient water to Weaverville until the town can locate its own source.

Each council member, during the campaign, said the town's water problem was the most important issue. They continued to voice that belief at Saturday's planning retreat, Lasher said.

"After that (the water issue), several projects ranked very high on the list," he said.

Some council members said the town should develop recreational opportunities for its residents -- possibly including a new swimming pool complex.

Others were more concerned with

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BILL STUDENC PHOTO

Weaverville councilmen Bernie Koesters, Ann Williams, Harold Payne, Franklin Spears and Ronnie Davis take their oaths of office.

Light Turnout At AIDS Seminar; Speakers Stress Education, Prevention

By EMMA LOU WAMBLES
News Record Correspondent

Dr. Otis Duck of Mars Hill said he had envisioned the Little Theater of Madison High School filled to capacity for Monday night's AIDS awareness program.

Duck, a member of the N.C. Speakers Bureau on AIDS, and other speakers were a little disappointed when only about 50 people showed up for the special AIDS awareness presentation, the first of its kind in Madison County.

The program sponsors say that a 50

syndrome, the deadly virus that is making headlines worldwide.

Presenters also say the attendance in Madison County was good compared to the attendance of similar programs in adjoining counties.

The program was presented by the Madison County school system and the Madison County Health Department as part of the statewide observance of "AIDS Awareness Week." Gov. James Martin proclaimed the special week to help North Carolina residents gain a better understanding of the AIDS virus, how it is spread and how it is not spread, and awareness

reported cases of AIDS involving Madison County residents, according to literature distributed during Monday's program. The neighboring counties of Buncombe, Hawwood, McDowell, Macon and Catawba have had a total of 11 cases, however, indicating that AIDS is a growing problem in Western North Carolina.

Statewide, there have been 253 AIDS cases -- 158 of them fatal, according to statistics provided Monday. In the United States, some 41,500 cases of AIDS have been reported, while another 1 million to 1.5 million people are infected with the virus but show

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Widening Of U.S. 23 Gets Moved Up On State Road List

By BILL STUDENC
Editor

The N.C. Board of Transportation has pushed the upgrading of U.S. 23 north of Mars Hill to a four-lane highway higher on its list of road projects planned for the next nine years.

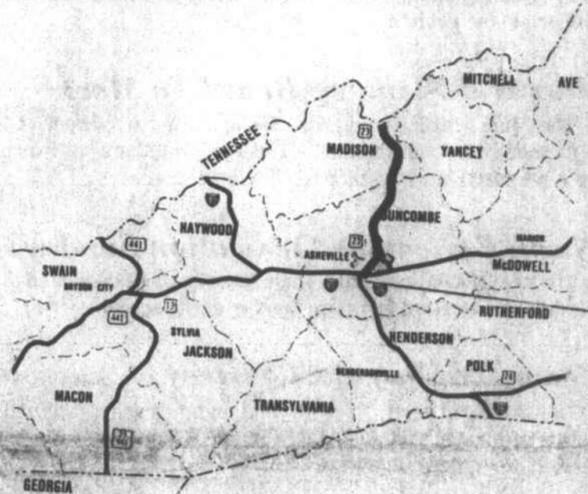
The board, during a meeting Friday in Raleigh, agreed to begin planning in 1993 and right-of-way acquisition for the expanded highway in 1995.

Previously, improvements to U.S. 23 through Madison County had been included in the state's Transportation Improvement Program for feasibility study only.

The board's action Friday officially places the project into its TIP program, moving up the timetable for the creation of a four-lane freeway from Mars Hill to the Tennessee line.

"This project was not even in TIP at all," said John Sutton of Candler, who represents Division 13 (including Madison and Buncombe) on the state board.

"This project, we feel, is an essential project for Madison County and Buncombe County and, for that matter, Western North Carolina as a whole," Sutton said Monday. "But this is a project that, quite frankly, we don't have the available funds to do."



U.S. 23 from Asheville to the Tennessee state line will be a four-lane highway, under the recently approved Transportation Improvement Program.

Sutton estimated the cost of improving the 10-mile section of U.S. 23 from Mars Hill to Sams Gap at \$48 million to \$64 million. That is the minimum cost for a four-lane highway, and would not include the cost of upgrading the road to meet interstate standards.

Some local officials have called for the extension of Interstate 26, which now ends in Asheville, along U.S. 19-23.

Acquisition of right of way for the highway will cost some \$8 million.

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Field House Proposed For Madison

By BILL STUDENC
Editor

Madison County officials are enlisting the help of House Speaker Liston B. Ramsey in their efforts to build an athletic field house at Madison High School.

Robert Capps, chairman of the Madison County Board of Commissioners, told members of the Madison County Board of Education earlier this month that he had contacted Ramsey to seek his assistance in obtaining state funding for a field house.

"I talked to him (Ramsey) and he told me to go ahead and get some information about how much money we'd need and come up with a design and then get back in touch with him," Capps said this week.

The school board has already hired architect Wayne Roberts to prepare plans for a field house and come up with a cost estimate.

Roberts told the board last week that a properly equipped field house would cost between \$200,000 and \$250,000.

The proposed field house would include dressing rooms for two teams, showers, public restrooms, a concession stand, offices, a storage area, and a classroom or weightroom.

The best site for the field house would be on the west end of the football field at O.E. Roberts Stadium because that's the location closest to existing water and sewer lines, Roberts said.

Ramsey, contacted at his home this week, said he was surprised in one county officials having so quickly

I haven't been around yet in the way of a field house. Ramsey

Burley Sales To Begin

From Staff Reports

Western North Carolina burley tobacco farmers are gearing up for Monday's opening day at the market.

Sales will be held Monday through Wednesday of next week before stopping for the Thanksgiving holiday.

Sales will resume Nov. 30 and continue Monday through Thursday until Dec. 17, when the Christmas break begins. The market will reopen in January, after the Christmas and New Year holidays.

Madison and Buncombe county farmers are now in the process of their tobacco into

Johnson City and Greenville, Tenn.

Recent rains have helped burley producers get their crop ready for market. Farmers were having difficulty preparing their tobacco for market because dry weather during October made it brittle and easy to crumble.

But rainfall last week and this week has helped maintain the dry crop, allowing farmers to transport it in market without fear of a season's hard work crumbling away.

According to burley experts, growers can expect their product to sell for about \$1.50 per pound last year -- \$1.25 per pound