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Board Says Free Renovations Misleading

By STEVE FERGUSON

The Madison County Board of Education declined an offer Monday from a Spring Creek group to make free repairs to Spring Creek Elementary School because the group's intentions were considered misleading by the board.

Bill Barutio of Spring Creek addressed the board saying he represented 90 percent of the parents living in that area. He said almost \$5,000 had been raised in pledges and other money in a "Save Our School" campaign.

Spring Creek is scheduled to be closed at the end of the next school year as part of a county school consolidation plan.

Earlier this year, the board approved Barutio's request to tour the facility and survey for needed repairs, as long as he went with the county maintenance supervisor and the principal of the school. He listed his findings in what he considered to be order of priority:

- Barutio said he found an "inadequate" water supply to the school. Whenever a commode was flushed in the school, other water sources could not be used, he said.

Representatives from Caldwell

drilling said the low water supply could be from small pipes running to the school or a well that is too shallow, Barutio said, and added that Caldwell Drilling would supply the labor and machinery free of charge and the Spring Creek Development Committee would pay for the pipe or other materials necessary to drill the well.

•He also claimed windows in the school were "beyond repairable. One fell out of the principal's office the week before we went there to tour the school," he said. Officials from Westall and Company suggested installation of 85 double-glazed windows.

Barutio said the committee has been running an "Adopt-a-window" campaign in which donors pay \$100 to purchase one window for the school. In return, donors would get a plaque to place under their "adopted" window. To date, he said \$5,000 has been raised in this campaign.

"Again, this is at no expense to the school board," Barutio said.

- Poorly placed bathrooms should be turned into dressing rooms for visiting athletic teams, Barutio said, and a centrally located toilet should be added.

"We look forward to working with

the school board in effecting these repairs as soon as possible," he said.

Board member James Baker called Barutio's presentation misleading and said he had had several Spring Creek residents visiting and calling his office about the matter.

Spring Creek residents showed him a petition titled: "Save Our School." According to Baker, they asked him if the petition meant they will keep Spring Creek School open.

The board's consolidation plan calls for Spring Creek School to be closed at the end of the 1988-89 school year.

Baker said he objected to the title "Save Our School."

In response to Baker's statement that he had had several calls and visits from Spring Creek residents, Barutio asked, "Who are these people? I represent 90 percent of the parents on Spring Creek."

"I'm not obligated to tell you that," Baker said.

Baker charged Barutio with misleading the residents with the petition titled "Save Our School."

Said Barutio, "But that's what we're trying to do."

Barutio referred to the July 9th meeting when the board approved

Barutio's plan to tour the school and report damages, provided he was accompanied by the principal and the county maintenance supervisor.

"If only for a year these kids need to be in a safe, productive learning environment," Barutio said.

"But that's not what you're trying to do at all, is it, Mr. Barutio?" Baker said. "You're confusing people. I'm going to have to be opposed to this."

"Your reaction is an insult to the people of Spring Creek," Barutio answered.

Barutio's proposal died when no board member would make a motion to approve the matter.

In other action the board learned from Tamma Moriarty, vice president of Marshall Primary PTA that Moriarty has written a grant application to buy two video laser disk players and the accompanying software package, estimated to cost \$11,000.

Moriarty said the "Windows on Science" program taught students with exciting video images.

"I remember trying to watch these movies when I was in school and trying to stay awake," Moriarty said. "This is nothing like that."

She said the cost of the program might be funded by Wachovia Bank

and Trust. The bank's average contribution to such projects is \$12,000.

"This is so new that field testing in the earth science disk was just finished last year," Moriarty said. "I remember when I went to school, it was hard not to go to sleep in front of those movies. This is nothing like that at all."

Moriarty asked the board for permission to seek funding from Wachovia Bank and Trust. "Their average grant is between \$12,680 and \$14,557," she said. "We're asking for \$11,812.13. This is a very expensive program."

"Some are more expensive than that," said Superintendent Bob Edwards. "It depends on the research that has gone into it."

Moriarty said preliminary results showed 78 percent of the teachers surveyed said the program increased comprehension, 93 percent said it was easy to set up and 89 percent said it improved their students' motivation.

"It is a great proposal," said Bobby

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Tamma Moriarty

Buncombe Joins Vulcan Lawsuit

By STEVE FERGUSON

Buncombe County commissioners have joined a lawsuit to block construction of a rock quarry in the Flat Creek community by Vulcan Materials Company.

"The people out in Flat Creek came to us and asked us to support them," said Buncombe County Commissioner Jesse Ledbetter. "We supported two parts of their suit: one, that there be no construction until the suit is settled, and two, that there be an environmental impact statement."

The commissioners voted earlier this year to ask for an environmental impact statement from Vulcan.

"During negotiations with the state, the company and the state ignored our request," Ledbetter said. "I didn't like to see that ignored. That was a slap in the face to the commissioners."

Ledbetter said state law didn't allow the commissioners to require an impact study. County attorneys told the board that their vote would have no effect.

Area residents have filed suit claiming a quarry would contaminate nearby wells, groundwater supplies and would be noisy and dusty.

Flat Creek resident and engineer J.C. Bumgarner has said the mine could lower groundwater levels.

Vulcan denies those claims, saying that several independent reports show the mine would have no adverse effects on the area.

Sirrine Environmental Consultants of Greenville, S.C., reported the quarry would have no effect on wells outside the company's property and that effects on Flat Creek would be minimal, since the quarry would not discharge operations water into the creek.

A blasting report prepared by

Philip R. Berger and Associates of Pittsburgh, Pa., said that "without question, blasting will cause no damage to wells or other underground facilities located on adjacent properties, nor will it constitute a physical hazard to any neighboring structure or roadway," according to Guy K. Mitchell Jr., vice president of Vulcan Materials Company.

A hydraulic analysis for floodway protection, also done by Sirrine, indicated that the quarry would have no effect on the flow of Flat Creek nor on the creek's floodplain.

Brierley and Lyman Inc. of Denver concluded the proposed quarry "would be stable and would produce minimum disturbances to the area surrounding the site" after examining the soil slopes in the area.

"The inaccurate allegations that Vulcan's submittals lack detail or that we have no concern for the welfare of the Weaverville community are not based on fact," Mitchell said in a letter to the commissioners.

Spokeswoman for Vulcan Gayle Anderson said the studies done, while not official environmental impact statements, are enough.

"We have conducted very extensive environmental testing," Anderson said. "We believe that information is adequate and sufficient."

Anderson also said groundwater would not be affected by the quarry.

"The reports, in essence, say the quarry has no effect on the groundwater surrounding it," she said. "Vulcan typically has monitor wells on its property and we have never had a problem at another site."

Vulcan operates 13 quarries in North Carolina alone.

Mars Hill Zones New Areas Into Town

by HASSIE PONDER

After a heated discussion at the Mars Hill town board meeting, aldermen approved the rezoning of a tract of land just north of the town limits on N.C. 213.

The battle over rezoning N.C. 213 began several weeks ago, when Donald Payne asked the aldermen to rezone his property off N.C. 213 from an R-1 residential area to a C-2 commercial area so he could build a car wash.

The board denied Payne's original request until they could hear from the Mars Hill Planning Board.

The planning board did not recommend the change because it would be "spot zoning," which is illegal in North Carolina.

Once Payne brought up the issue of rezoning his land, Town Manager Darhyl Boone told the board that several others have asked about the rezoning of N.C. 213. Several residents and landowners in the area requested the city limits be extended a mile farther so that rezoning could take place.

After the planning board and aldermen examined the land in question, the zoning board submitted recommendations.

When Monday night's meeting convened, the Mars Hill board had not made a decision on the rezoning issue.

Mayor Joseph Godwin began the meeting by cautioning the group that the board was not there to make a decision and said that no decision would be reached at the meeting.

"We can't make everybody happy. Sometimes we make people mad. We're going to make some people mad here tonight," Godwin said. Godwin instructed the crowd to speak to the business at hand clearly and orderly and opened the floor for discussion.

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Three Apply For Beer & Wine Permits

By EMMA LOU WAMBLES

Three Hot Springs businesses applied for beer and wine sale licenses Tuesday morning and were told at a special hearing a decision would be made within the next week.

Mayor Kenny Ramsey said Alcohol Law Enforcement supervisor Bill Williams conducted the hearing at the town and collected applications from Ramsey, in the name of Ramsey's Amusements, from Joe Justice for Carolina Grocery, and from Larry Hunt for Larry's Exxon.

Ramsey said the town would benefit from the sale of beer and wine through sales and beverage taxes, which he has estimated at \$7,000 to \$8,000 annually.

If the applications are approved, the action will make Hot Springs the only Madison County location offering beer and wine sales and the first time since 1948 such sales were allowed.

Last month the town held a special election on the question of beer and wine sales, which passed by a 36-vote margin.

Hot Springs had allowed off-premises liquor sales, but the North Carolina ABC Board closed the state-

operated store recently because of poor sales volume.

A total of 129 residents voted in favor of off-premises beer sales while 93 voters opposed it.

On the same ballot 119 voters approved the sale of unfortified wine while 95 voters opposed that item.

Unfortified wine is lower in alcohol content than many wines, with an alcohol content of around 11 or 12 percent. Fortified wine usually has about 20 percent alcohol content.

The town's mayor called the vote a positive move for the town of 700 people.

"We get the bottles and cans already," Ramsey said, referring to alcohol purchased in neighboring communities but consumed in Hot Springs.

The mayor said the legalization of beer and wine sales will help boost tourism in the area. Ramsey, owner of The Trail Cafe, said he often is asked by vacationers where they can buy beer.

At Monday night's meeting, the Hot Springs Board of Aldermen agreed to act as the governing body enforcing

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County Car Wrecked As Rumors Spark Search

By STEVE FERGUSON

Three Madison deputies on a marijuana hunt Thursday were surprised to find three TV stations and authorities from several counties hunting for them.

A county police car was wrecked as an indirect result of that hunt when a deputy from Mars Hill drove to Marshall to help in the search.

Deputies Tony Case, Vance Ingle and Marty Johnson left the sheriff's office at 5 p.m. Thursday on a tip that there was marijuana growing in the Stackhouse area. Shortly thereafter, dispatcher Teresa Case said she received a call from an ex-deputy who had overheard a conversation in Petersburg about the three.

"He asked me if we had anybody out in the woods," Case said. "Then he said he overheard people talking and saying they were going to shoot them, or that they had shot them already." Next Case received another call from someone saying he had heard of a deputy being shot and the others being surrounded. A third caller, who refused to identify himself, said he heard people in Petersburg bragging about shooting three deputies. A fourth caller, also anonymous, said he "hoped all the S.O.B.'s were dead."

Case was unable to raise the three on the radio. She called a deputy patrol officer to go into Stackhouse to

look for them. Madison County law officials began to gather in Marshall, along with S.B.I. officers and highway patrolmen. News crews from channels 4, 7 and 13 arrived at the sheriff's office.

"I was getting worried," said Sheriff Dedrick Brown. "I came

down to the office around 8 p.m. The S.B.I. came down and all the TV stations came. I don't know how everybody found out about it. We even had several surrounding counties standing by."

Madison County lawmen began organizing a search team. They went

to where Case, Ingle and Johnson had left their car to go into the woods to hunt for the pot, near Stackhouse and Sandy Bottom Roads in Walnut.

While the search teams were forming, three startled deputies walked

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Deputy Dana Fox escaped injury in an accident Thursday

New Editor Announced

Ceryl Koenig, General Manager of The News Record, has announced the appointment of Hugh Koontz, a Virginia newsman, as its editor effective this week.

Hugh D. Koontz III, 43, has worked for several daily and weekly newspapers in Virginia and South Carolina as editor and reporter, Koenig said.

Koontz is a 1972 graduate of Virginia Commonwealth University at Richmond, Va., and has been in the newspaper business for 15 years.

"We are looking forward to having Hugh work for us as editor," said Koenig. "He brings with him considerable journalistic experience and a strong newspaper background."

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