

SWEARS Eyes Legal Action Against County For Radios

By Wally Avett
Staff Writer

The executive board of SWEARS took a dim view this week of Cherokee County withdrawing from a seven-county law enforcement radio network, dispatching a man to Raleigh to check with the state Attorney General's office on possible legal action against Cherokee.

SWEARS stands for Southwestern Enforcement and Rights Service. With headquarters in Waynesville, it works with lawmen in the seven counties of this end of the state.

Under a SWEARS plan, all county and town officers in the

counties of Cherokee, Clay, Graham, Swain, Jackson Macon and Haywood counties were to be linked together in one large radio network. All the towns and counties, including Cherokee, approved the plan back in February but the Cherokee Commissioners recently rescinded all past actions on the radio system.

Charles Hipps of Waynesville, planning director for SWEARS, told The Scout Tuesday that a meeting was held that morning in his office of the executive board of SWEARS to consider the matter. The executive board is made up of a representative of each county plus a representative of the courts, one person from the

probation office, one from the parole board and a man from the solicitor's office.

Cherokee County is represented by John Carringer, Hipps said, but Carringer was not present at the meeting. Hipps said eight of the 11 board members were present, taking a hard line on the Cherokee County withdrawal.

"They passed a resolution reciting the fact that the Cherokee County commissioners had authorized the planning unit to procure this special radio equipment and they fully expect the Cherokee commissioners to pay for the equipment," Hipps said.

"The action taken by the SWEARS board was that the

Cherokee commissioners are morally and legally obligated for this radio equipment and we expect payment," he added.

Hipps said he was going to Raleigh on Wednesday of this week and would speak with the Attorney General's office on what legal action would be necessary.

A loophole, of sorts, was revealed by Hipps Tuesday to The Scout. The two Republicans on the Cherokee three-man commissioners' board have voted to rescind all action approving the radio system and made no allowance in this year's budget for payment of the county's share of the cost, expected to be about \$1,000 a year for the next five to eight years.

Hipps said Tuesday that according to the agreement made by all the counties and towns involved earlier this year, the first payment on the system would not actually be due until August of next year. This would indicate that the Cherokee commissioners could put off action for awhile on the matter and if they decided to go along with the system, would not have to raise the money until next Summer when they work out a new county budget.

County Commissioner Jack Lovingood, who made the motion that the county rescind its previous action in joining the radio system, maintained Tuesday that Sheriff Blain Stalcup was not authorized to sign the radio contract with Motorola for this county and said the Cherokee commissioners therefore were not bound to any agreement.

Sheriff Stalcup, a Democrat, says the new radios are badly needed by his department. The system would give all his men new radios to use on regular county law enforcement, he said, with the added advantage of being tied into Sheriff's and town police offices in the other counties.

The Cherokee County sheriff has said that withdrawal from the radio system was a political blow at him by the Republican commissioners, a charge denied by Lovingood.

Approval by the Federal Communications Commission

(FCC) had been the only item blocking operation of the new radio system and Hipps said Tuesday that he had just received word of the FCC okay.

"Engineers are putting in the equipment now in some of the counties and we're going to go ahead and try to install it in Cherokee, as planned, in about two weeks," he said.

He said if Cherokee refused to accept the equipment, legal action would begin right away.



Peck Hyatt.....Murphy hurler in 1900.

Bill Gray Photos

Uncle Peck Hyatt Remembers Pitching to Young Ty Cobb

The kids, grown up now, remember him as the kind old man who ran the little store near the school. They still call him Uncle Peck...

Tyrus Raymond Cobb, the fabulous Georgia peach of major league baseball, remembered him as a fast-balling left-hander... Peck Hyatt, now 88 years old, sat in his comfortable home on East Avenue in Murphy last week and rolled back the years, telling of Summers more than 70 years ago.

"I was about 16 or 17 then," Uncle Peck remembers. "Our regular team had Winslow McKeever at first base, Jerry Davidson at second and Toby Fain as the shortstop. George Leatherwood was at third and I played left field when I wasn't pitching. Lowery Axley played center field and Vic Hubbard played right. Frank Mauney and Hayes Leatherwood both were catchers and Shad Hull was the other pitcher."

Young Cobb, who have been about 13 or 14 at the time, enjoyed spending time with his grandparents, Mr. and Mrs. John Cobb, who lived in the Gold Branch section. "We'd send a buggy and team out to get him, bring him into town to play ball," Uncle Peck said.

Ty Cobb mentions the

informal games in his autobiography "My Life In Baseball," writing of going by buggy into either Murphy or Andrews for the game he loved. In his native Royston, Ga., his father frowned on ball; his grandfather, however, didn't mind.

Destined to begin a long career with the Detroit Tigers in 1905 at age 18, Cobb would have been a spindly youngster when he faced the pitching of southpaw Peck Hyatt. In his book, Cobb admits he had trouble with left-handed pitchers and he was a weak hitter when he began in the big leagues, facts Uncle Peck already knew.

But as a youth, Cobb was already forging the base-stealing skills which would make him famous.

"He'd steal bases on you in spite of everything you could do," the old pitcher recollects. He said young Cobb did not spike defending players or engage in fights, both activities attributed to him in the major league years.

"He wasn't a hitter at all. He just couldn't hit the ball although later on, in the big leagues, he got to be a better hitter."

Years later, when Ty Cobb was firmly established among

the greats of American baseball, he returned to Murphy on one of his periodic visits to see his kinfolk here.

"I heard he was down at the livery stable, renting a rig to go out to see his people," Uncle Peck says. "I went down there and walked up to him and said 'Do you remember me?'"

"He looked at me for a minute and then he said 'You were that damned little left-handed pitcher they used to have in Murphy.'"

Cobb died in the Summer of 1961. During his playing career he held the American League batting championship 12 times and his lifetime batting average, at .367, was the highest ever in the major leagues. At his death, the New York Herald Tribune, in a memorial editorial, said simply that "he was the world's greatest ballplayer."

Like many other hurlers, before and since, Uncle Peck's arm went bad on him and his pitching days were soon over. He held a variety of jobs over the years.

His father, the late Robert Hyatt, ran a store in Murphy more than 60 years in Murphy and Peck Hyatt drove a two-horse wagon delivering groceries. For the grand sum of \$1 a week, he drove a buggy for

Tom Sword's livery stable, hauling a drummer (salesman) and his sample cases on a regular route from Murphy to Hayesville, Young Harris and Blairsville and back.

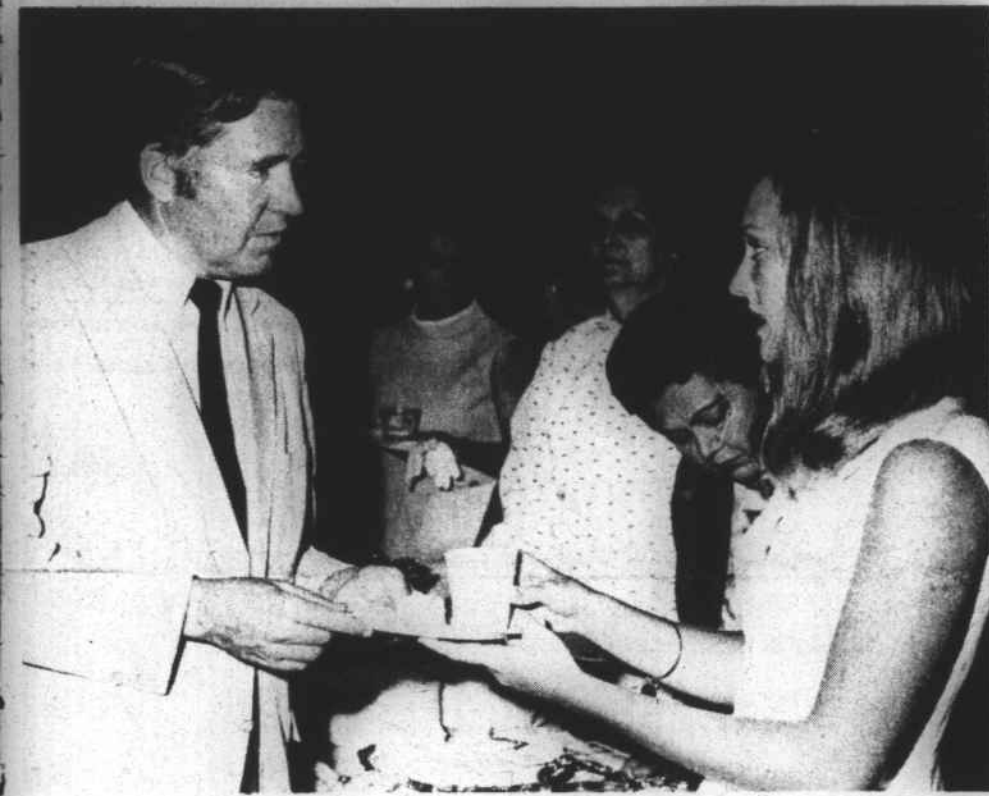
Later he worked for the Tennessee Copper Company and for a number of years was a housepainter.

Hyatt also worked for the Post Office in Murphy for some years and then entered his last public occupation, the one he enjoyed most according to his wife, the former Effie Jay Johnson of Ogretta.

The Hyatts lived at what is now the site of the A&P store and at the request of local officials, opened a small store to sell candy, crackers, drinks, ice cream and other "knick-knacks" to the children at the nearby Murphy school.

"We called it Peck's Place," Mrs. Hyatt says. "And he enjoyed that more than anything. We sold to the children on credit and he gave a lot of stuff away."

"If I saw a child who looked hungry and didn't have any money, I fed it," Uncle Peck said. "I gave away a lot of lunches, I couldn't bear to see them go hungry."



Young Voters

Lt. Gov. Pat Taylor visited Clay and Cherokee counties on Wednesday of last week and like other possible Democratic candidates for governor, will have to consider the young voters, those aged 18-20 now also

eligible to vote in all elections. Serving him with cake and coffee at a reception in Murphy was 18-year-old Markie Carringer, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. John Carringer. (Staff Photo)



Weaver Carringer

Carringer Promoted

Weaver Carringer was promoted to assistant general manager this week by Jack Owens, publisher and general manager of The Scout.

A veteran employee, Carringer has worked with The Scout since 1961 in a variety of jobs, with time out for a two-year hitch in the U.S. Army.

He is a native of Brasstown and a 1961 graduate of Murphy High School. He is married to the former Gail Lee of Atlanta, Ga. and they are living in the Hanging Dog community.

"Carringer will serve as general office manager for us," Owens said, "with responsibility in the areas of personnel, purchasing and office management."

"He has grown with the Scout over the past 10 years and we're proud to have such a bright young man on our management team," Owens added.

Clay Course Seeks Bids

On Clubhouse

Advertising for bids begins this week for a new clubhouse at the Chatuge Shores Golf Course near Hayesville.

Tom Day, chairman of the Clay County Rural Development Authority which constructed the course, says construction bids will open on Sept. 10.

Foy and Lee, architects of Waynesville, drew the plans, which call for a new clubhouse, tennis courts, a swimming pool and a playground at the popular Clay County course.

The group Day heads built the course with a \$250,000 loan from the Farmers Home Administration. A loan was approved about the first of June by the FHA for \$145,000 for the new clubhouse and the other additions.

The clubhouse will be of an Alpine appearance, Day said, to harmonize with the numerous A-frame cottages already built on the lake shore.

PIGSKIN PREVIEW

Area football fans will get a chance on Friday night to see their favorite teams in action, in scrimmage games slated for Murphy and Hayesville in preparation for the coming season.

Murphy will scrimmage against Robbinsville and Hayesville will work out against Franklin in controlled games with no punting and kickoffs.



American Thread Team Wins 2 Tournaments

American Thread's girls softball team won the tournament at Ducktown, Tenn. last Thursday night with a victory over Providence Hospital and returned to Murphy to beat the strong Martins Creek girls on Saturday night and win the N.C. Far West Women's Slow Pitch tournament here. Both the American Thread and Martins Creek girls will be going to Canton this week, to play in the state Class B and C competition, respectively. Pictured

on Saturday night with their trophy for the win in Murphy, are, left to right, front row: Judy Nichols, Nancy Derreberry, Sue Queen, Peggy Lindsey and Judy Garland; standing, Janice Henson, Brenda Wilson, Betty Payne, Nancy Curtis, Martha Seay and Deanna Davis; back row, Jimmy Cole, assistant manager, James Morrow, team manager, Gary Barnett, assistant manager. (Staff Photo)

Lieutenant Governor Tests Political Water

Lt. Gov. Pat Taylor visited in Clay and Cherokee counties on Wednesday of last week, testing the political waters with an eye toward running for governor next year.

The lieutenant governor met with the Democratic party

faithful in Hayesville on Wednesday afternoon and moved on to Murphy for a reception at the Power Board Building here that night, attended by about 50.

"I came out for politics," he said, but declined to make a

formal announcement as to whether he would be a candidate for the Democratic nomination for governor.

"I'm not making any announcement yet and I'm not asking for any declaration of support from you," he said, adding that he has been traveling for about the past three weeks about the state sapping public opinion on his possible candidacy.

Taylor made no promises but commented that "I've seen all the bad roads in Western North Carolina on this trip... I'm impressed with the need for roads here."

Sunday in Raleigh he released the results of a poll he commissioned to determine his political strength. He said of those interviewed by a professional New York pollster, 34 percent said they would vote for him, 24 percent leaned toward other possible Democratic candidates. The rest said they were undecided.

Taylor said he was encouraged by the poll and expected to make an official announcement in about six to seven weeks on his candidacy.

In addition to Taylor and Morgan, other possible Democratic candidates include Hugh Morton, a developer from Wilmington and Linville, and State Senator Hargrove (Skipper) Bowles of Greensboro.

Local Indians To Organize

Cherokee County citizens with Indian blood will hold a county organizational meeting on Thursday night at the home of Bailey Coleman.

This is the first step in setting up this county as an Indian voting unit, separate and apart from the Indian settlement in the Snowbird section of Graham County.

In past Cherokee tribal elections, those who lived in this county had to travel to Snowbird to cast their ballots and complaints have been raised that the Snowbird crowd gave Indian citizens of Cherokee County little voice in tribal politics.

An election for chief, vice chief and council members will be held on Sept. 2 and local Indian leaders are in the process of getting the Tomotla Community Center approved as the polling place for residents of Cherokee County.

The meeting begins at Coleman's house on Thursday night at 8 o'clock. He lives off Joe Brown highway in the Grape Creek section.

All enrolled members of the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians who are over 18 years old are urged to attend.

Tri-Tech Schedules Graduation

Tri-County Technical Institute will hold its annual graduation ceremonies on Thursday night at 8 o'clock at Peachtree Elementary School auditorium.

John M. Reynolds of Asheville, a member of the North Carolina State Board of Education, will be the speaker.

Holland McSwain, who heads Tri-Tech, said certificates and diplomas will be available for those who have completed the regular curriculum courses or the high school equivalency study program over the past year.

Not all who have completed their studies are expected to be present at the graduation, he added. "Some of our welding graduates went to work recently for a construction company in Wilmington at \$5 an hour," he said smiling. "We don't really expect them to come back for their certificates."

McSwain said more than 40 people in the tri-county area of Clay, Cherokee and Graham have passed their tests for the equivalent of a high school diploma in the last year and over 100 have completed regular curriculum courses, such as welding, surveying, cosmetology, etc.

A complete list of Tri-Tech graduates can be found inside page 10 of this issue.