

Black MOUNTAIN NEWS

Serving the Swannanoa Valley

Second class postage paid at Black Mountain, NC 28711

Thursday, January 6, 1983 Volume 31, Number 1

Member of the NCPA

25¢



Sculptor Dr. John Mack Walker of Montreat stands next to his "Adoration of the Magi," carved from a juniper tree. "It was like the three kings were in the tree," Dr. Walker said. To the left, "St. Paul" is on the road to Damascus when Christ appears to him. Again, the wood suggested the subject to the sculptor. In the crotch of a walnut tree, Dr. Walker found "the power of this person in the wood."

Ordinary people, extraordinary art

by Cynthia Reimer

What have present day bear hunters and hound dogs, women in sunbonnets and men in bib overalls, dulcimers and gizzard baskets to do with the 2,000 year old story of the life of Christ?

To Montreat sculptor Dr. John Mack Walker, the answer is "everything."

Dr. Walker uses mountain people and mountain settings to depict scenes from the New Testament. The West Virginia mountain-born retired minister believes the ageless story is best told in modern terms.

"To me the Gospel story is contemporary," he said. "I feel that trying



An early-disciple of Jesus mentioned only once in Acts 21:16 inspired "Mnason Remembers." Luke and Paul spent a night with the man on their way to Jerusalem.

to imagine what characters looked like in long white robes 2,000 years ago is not too helpful. It makes it very remote."

Carved in blocks of cherry, rosewood, walnut and other beautiful hardwoods, some of his scenes have dimensions of only a few inches; others are several feet in height or width.

Dr. Walker uses mountain people from West Virginia and North Carolina as models for the characters of Jesus, the Disciples and others. "Since I was born in the mountains of West Virginia, the mountains have always been my first love," Dr. Walker explained. "I see the (Biblical) scenes in terms of the people I know."

In a large sculpture called "Christ Teaching," Christ appears in a boat preaching to a group in contemporary dress on the hillside. One man in the

crowd holds a dulcimer on his knees; a woman in a sunbonnet carries a woven basket.

In "Walk to Emmaus," the figures wear bib overalls. One carries a sack of grain, another a basket of apples. At their feet is a bear hound and a tiny blooming trillium.

In "Christ in Winter," Dr. Walker draws from John 10:22, the only time winter is mentioned in the Gospel. The walnut figures wear overcoats and heavy sweaters.

Dr. Walker works on each sculpture four to six months. He carves from sketches and a clay model with chisels, gouges and knives. He uses no power tools, roughing the chunks of wood out with a chisel.

He has had no formal instruction. "I was raised on a farm, most country boys have a pocket knife, you know. I enjoyed whittling things," Dr. Walker said.

His early inspiration came from the Confederate Memorial and statues of famous southerners in Richmond. "I was always impressed by the three-dimensional," he said.

He is presently at work on a piece in mountain cherry depicting Christ calling the fishermen Peter and Andrew from the book of Mark.

Dr. Walker's sculpture is on display from 9 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. at the Montreat Historical Foundation through the spring. He has recently had his works in the North Carolina Museum of Art's annual exhibit, at the Mint Museum in Charlotte, St. John's Gallery in Wilmington and at Duke University.

None of the 28 scenes from the life of



In "Invitation to Zaccheus," the tax collector is called from the tree he climbed to view a visit of Jesus.

Christ is for sale because Dr. Walker wants to keep them together. He has donated works to churches and semi-

by Cynthia Reimer

Nothing's certain in this world but death and taxes, and in Buncombe County you can't even count on the taxes this year.

Those unfortunate thousands (10-12,000 by county estimates) whose only crime is to have a last name beginning with one of the last few letters of the alphabet will be penalized through no fault of their own.

County property tax notices for 1982 have been delayed to residents because the county failed to compute and mail them out in time for the Jan. 5 deadline. Those who can't pay their taxes before the deadline will be forced to pay a two-percent penalty set by North Carolina state law.

Who's fault it is, is the question in the minds of many who stood in line at the courthouse for up to four hours to get their estimates, as well as those who

will pay the two percent penalty when their bill arrives after the payment deadline.

In statements to the press last week, County Commissioner Jesse Ledbetter called the situation a "fiasco" and



A maidservant wears a country kerchief and a man warms himself by a fire in "Peter's Denial." "I think the Gospel story should be very plain," Dr. Walker said. "It should combine matter-of-factness with the mystery."

Family violence

by Cynthia Reimer

Her nose is bleeding, one eye is black and a lump throbs on the side of her head where she hit the stone mantle of the fireplace. She huddles, crying, against the wall until she hears her husband's footsteps leave the room.

Then she pulls herself to her feet, wakens her three young children and quietly they tiptoe from the house in their night clothes. They drive around and around in the family station wagon, too ashamed to stop because they might be seen.

At the house, he smashes the glass he has been drinking from with the last of his rage and sinks into a chair. He is, already, sorry he hit her again.

★★★

This scene is replayed thousands of times a year—7,500 times in 1978—in Buncombe County.

"It is learned behavior, and it can be unlearned," said Ann Von Brock, director of the Helpmate Program for Buncombe County. "Some women are not actually aware it's against the law to be assaulted by their spouse."

Men who hit their wives often learned the behavior from their fathers. "Generally, it's the only way they know how to deal with a situation. They might be scared but it comes out as anger. It gets to be a pattern. Children pick up that's

blamed it on the fact that no one is in charge over the three departments involved in the tax process: the Board of Tax Supervision, the computer section and the tax collector.

Commission Chairman R. Curtis Rat-

Tax 'fiasco'--whose fault?

cliff sees the problem this way: "Unlike all other 99 counties in the state, the office of Tax Supervisor is not under the auspices of the Board of Commissioners; it is basically an autonomous board much like the Supreme Court. We had nothing to do with the hiring of a New Jersey firm to conduct our re-evaluation in 1982.

"The board's only involvement in the tax process is the county's data processing department. We simply process whatever the tax supervisor has completed to prepare for the tax collector. ...Our computer section has kept up with the workload the tax supervisor has generated."

Tax officials fielded questions Monday night at a taxpayers meeting held at Reynolds School. The taxpayers were told that a motion to waive the penalty for January would be introduced before the Board of Commissioners Tuesday.

However, Tax Collector R.D. Eskridge said he planned to abide by the state law which fixes a two percent penalty to delinquent bills despite any action by the county commissioners.

Eskridge said he does not plan to run for re-election next year.

Taxpayers asked officials why the state penalty law must be enforced when a state law requiring tax bills to be mailed in September obviously was not enforced.

No one had an answer.

Meanwhile, the county offered free coffee and donuts to the crowds still waiting at the courthouse in Asheville this week for the privilege of "rendering unto Caesar."

City taxes delayed by county backlog

The Black Mountain Town Board called a meeting Monday night to pass a resolution which will keep town taxpayers from paying penalty for a billing delay that is not their fault.

The town depends on county information to compute Black Mountain taxes, due Jan. 5. Because of the county billing backlog, Black Mountain employees have only billed out through last names beginning with Hu.

"They have really put us in the hole," said Town Clerk Al Richardson. "We're at the county's mercy."

The Black Mountain tax office remained open Friday, which was a town

holiday, to process taxes. According to Suzanne Turner, all those who wanted to pay before Jan. 1 were provided with a tax estimate by Friday.

Black Mountain taxpayers will be allowed 30 days after they receive their tax bills to pay them. A two percent penalty will be shown on the bill, but if it is paid within 30 days, the penalty will be removed.

About 1,350 Black Mountain taxpayers had been billed by the weekend, with 2,000 still to receive their notices. According to Richardson, that could take another three weeks.

Town employees have say in policy manual

by Cynthia Reimer

The biggest change to affect town employees in a new policy manual proposed by the Town Board is the elimination of overtime pay.

Four aldermen and Mayor Tom Sobol met with the employees during a public hearing on Monday at City Hall.

In the first six months of the year, the town has paid out \$13,716 in overtime wages alone to its employees.

The board proposed a system of granting compensation time in lieu of overtime pay for employees who work over 40 hours, except in the departments of public safety. Alderman Mike Begley called the system where the employee would receive an hour and a half off for each hour overtime worked

"a way for us to keep the budget fairly predictable."

Mayor Sobol said the system was used by state, federal and most other municipal employers. "It's fair for you all, and it's fair to those who are paying us all, and that is the taxpayers," he told the group.

Sobol said the new policy manual, which must be voted on by the board at a regular meeting, was intended to "clarify and simplify" the old one.

Other areas changed included legal holidays raised to nine per year and annual leave extended at 15 and 20 years of service.

Sobol opened the hearing by commending town employees for "the most work and enthusiasm by town employees in the 13 and 14 years I've been involved with the town."

Fire broke out in the Church Street home of Mrs. Joyce LePlant about 2:30 p.m. Tuesday. When Black Mountain firemen arrived three rooms and the attic of the home were in flames.

Firemen said the fire started in the kitchen when a frying pan containing cooking grease was left on the stove.

No damage estimate was available Wednesday morning, but firemen said the damage was "extensive" to three rooms and the attic and the only contents of the house not damaged was that in the bedrooms.

Fire broke out in the Church Street home of Mrs. Joyce LePlant about 2:30 p.m. Tuesday. When Black Mountain firemen arrived three rooms and the attic of the home were in flames.

Firemen said the fire started in the kitchen when a frying pan containing cooking grease was left on the stove.

No damage estimate was available Wednesday morning, but firemen said the damage was "extensive" to three rooms and the attic and the only contents of the house not damaged was that in the bedrooms.

Firemen said the fire started in the kitchen when a frying pan containing cooking grease was left on the stove.

No damage estimate was available Wednesday morning, but firemen said the damage was "extensive" to three rooms and the attic and the only contents of the house not damaged was that in the bedrooms.

Firemen said the fire started in the kitchen when a frying pan containing cooking grease was left on the stove.

No damage estimate was available Wednesday morning, but firemen said the damage was "extensive" to three rooms and the attic and the only contents of the house not damaged was that in the bedrooms.

No one had an answer.

Meanwhile, the county offered free coffee and donuts to the crowds still waiting at the courthouse in Asheville this week for the privilege of "rendering unto Caesar."

Fire damages home

Black Mountain firemen fought a house fire on Church Street early Tuesday afternoon after grease in a frying pan caught fire on the stove.

Black Mountain firemen fought a house fire on Church Street early Tuesday afternoon after grease in a frying pan caught fire on the stove.

Black Mountain firemen fought a house fire on Church Street early Tuesday afternoon after grease in a frying pan caught fire on the stove.

Black Mountain firemen fought a house fire on Church Street early Tuesday afternoon after grease in a frying pan caught fire on the stove.

Black Mountain firemen fought a house fire on Church Street early Tuesday afternoon after grease in a frying pan caught fire on the stove.

Black Mountain firemen fought a house fire on Church Street early Tuesday afternoon after grease in a frying pan caught fire on the stove.

Black Mountain firemen fought a house fire on Church Street early Tuesday afternoon after grease in a frying pan caught fire on the stove.

Black Mountain firemen fought a house fire on Church Street early Tuesday afternoon after grease in a frying pan caught fire on the stove.

Black Mountain firemen fought a house fire on Church Street early Tuesday afternoon after grease in a frying pan caught fire on the stove.

Black Mountain firemen fought a house fire on Church Street early Tuesday afternoon after grease in a frying pan caught fire on the stove.

Black Mountain firemen fought a house fire on Church Street early Tuesday afternoon after grease in a frying pan caught fire on the stove.

Black Mountain firemen fought a house fire on Church Street early Tuesday afternoon after grease in a frying pan caught fire on the stove.

Black Mountain firemen fought a house fire on Church Street early Tuesday afternoon after grease in a frying pan caught fire on the stove.

Black Mountain firemen fought a house fire on Church Street early Tuesday afternoon after grease in a frying pan caught fire on the stove.

Black Mountain firemen fought a house fire on Church Street early Tuesday afternoon after grease in a frying pan caught fire on the stove.

Black Mountain firemen fought a house fire on Church Street early Tuesday afternoon after grease in a frying pan caught fire on the stove.

Black Mountain firemen fought a house fire on Church Street early Tuesday afternoon after grease in a frying pan caught fire on the stove.

Black Mountain firemen fought a house fire on Church Street early Tuesday afternoon after grease in a frying pan caught fire on the stove.

Black Mountain firemen fought a house fire on Church Street early Tuesday afternoon after grease in a frying pan caught fire on the stove.

Black Mountain firemen fought a house fire on Church Street early Tuesday afternoon after grease in a frying pan caught fire on the stove.

Black Mountain firemen fought a house fire on Church Street early Tuesday afternoon after grease in a frying pan caught fire on the stove.

Black Mountain firemen fought a house fire on Church Street early Tuesday afternoon after grease in a frying pan caught fire on the stove.

Black Mountain firemen fought a house fire on Church Street early Tuesday afternoon after grease in a frying pan caught fire on the stove.

Black Mountain firemen fought a house fire on Church Street early Tuesday afternoon after grease in a frying pan caught fire on the stove.

Black Mountain firemen fought a house fire on Church Street early Tuesday afternoon after grease in a frying pan caught fire on the stove.

Black Mountain firemen fought a house fire on Church Street early Tuesday afternoon after grease in a frying pan caught fire on the stove.

Black Mountain firemen fought a house fire on Church Street early Tuesday afternoon after grease in a frying pan caught fire on the stove.

Black Mountain firemen fought a house fire on Church Street early Tuesday afternoon after grease in a frying pan caught fire on the stove.

Black Mountain firemen fought a house fire on Church Street early Tuesday afternoon after grease in a frying pan caught fire on the stove.

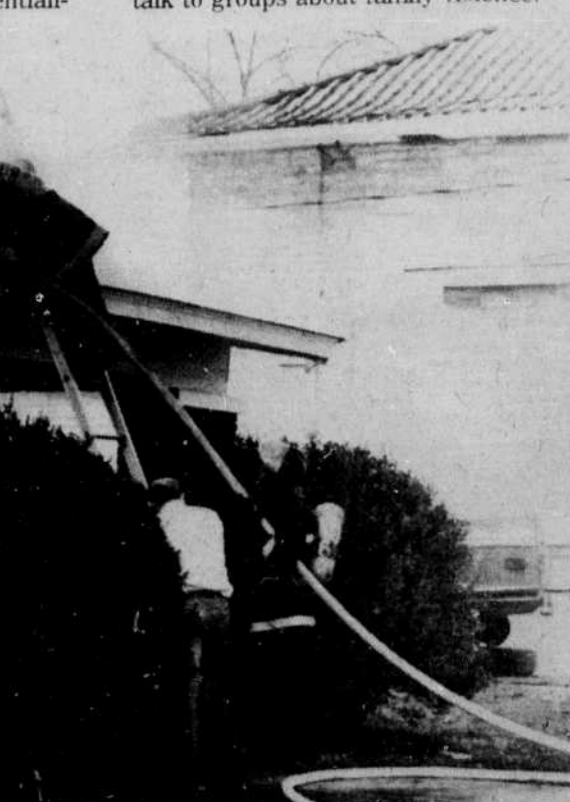
Black Mountain firemen fought a house fire on Church Street early Tuesday afternoon after grease in a frying pan caught fire on the stove.

Black Mountain firemen fought a house fire on Church Street early Tuesday afternoon after grease in a frying pan caught fire on the stove.

Black Mountain firemen fought a house fire on Church Street early Tuesday afternoon after grease in a frying pan caught fire on the stove.

Black Mountain firemen fought a house fire on Church Street early Tuesday afternoon after grease in a frying pan caught fire on the stove.

Black Mountain firemen fought a house fire on Church Street early Tuesday afternoon after grease in a frying pan caught fire on the stove.



Black Mountain firemen fought a house fire on Church Street early Tuesday afternoon after grease in a frying pan caught fire on the stove.