

## Reddies River Project

There is, for a little while, left in this county a place I have learned to love. I say "a little while" because it is doomed to go the way most wild and untouched areas are going. They are falling to the bulldozer of progress. The ever-stretching fingers of man in his quest to destroy the last foothold of nature. I am saddened at the thought because this beautiful wild river where trout still survive in its native state will soon be blocked by one of man's most ingenious devices: an earthen dam.

I have heard it said if left alone the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers will soon have every branch, creek, and river dammed by the year 2000. This I do not dispute, for already they in the name of flood control and progress have in the last 3 years been by themselves the foremost destructive force gathered in history to combat nature.

The Reddies River project is probably one of the most absurd yet. The river itself is little more than 15 miles long, and the country it runs thru is mostly wild, unused except in the upper stretches where fertile bottoms exist.

The river starts on the south side of the Parkway off old 16 highway and in its headwaters some of the most beautiful falls in the county exist. They harbor a few wild native trout and stocked trout.

The river at its widest is no

more than 60 feet, and it ends its journey at the Wilkesboro-North Wilkesboro bridge. It already has a dam across it about a mile before its junction with the Yadkin. This dam is the water reservoir for the city of North Wilkesboro.

The most harmful of the effects of this proposed dam is obvious:

1. The increase in water level will raise the water temperature; therefore, the ability of the trout population to survive is decreased.

2. The oxygen content of the water will also be decreased.

3. Some of the most beautiful part of the county will be flooded.

4. It will be just another pool of water that will in enough time become another stinking silt pond.

The dam across the Yadkin above Wilkesboro already has started to decay and smell like a cesspool.

I hope the people of this county can see the consequences of this action and register their feelings of opposition. I do not like to think that this will go unnoticed. This is one thing I sincerely believe is a worthwhile project. Therefore, I ask all those who are interested just to drive up old Highway 16 some evening and see for themselves this beautiful area and let your feelings be known to the proper authorities.

—Richard Harrold

## Ramblin' With Richard

The Chicken Trade or How To Trade a Bike For a Crow

By Richard Harrold

Many years ago a trade took place that shall go down in history as the Great Chicken Trade, Crow optional. It all started when my Uncle Bank gave my cousin Billy a new 26-inch, balloon-tired Schwinn bike with battery-operated horn. This seems like any ordinary occurrence except for one minor detail: Bill did not want it. But, as you can guess, I did. Here is where the trade started.

In those days a bike was the status symbol for any 6-year old, and a chicken was a real honest-to-goodness chicken, not one of your modern white Leghorns, but a genuine Rhode Island Red.

When it became apparent that Billy did not want the bike, I began my systematic campaign to wheedle my dad into trying to trade for the bike. It was no easy matter. First of all, Dad is not easy to con. Secondly, he couldn't feature a 6-year old riding a 26-inch bike.

My first tactic was to be real smart, do all my chores, mind and behave. It should have worked, but it didn't. Next, the old hold-your-breath trick in a rage till you turn blue. Right? Wrong, he always threw water on me.

Then the last alternative — mama, right? Right. Now if anyone could do it mama could. Her approach was direct. She would walk up to Pap and say, "Get that screaming kid that bike, or I'm going to kill him." It worked!

The dickering started something like this. "How much are you wanting for that old bike, Bank," Pap asked.

"Old nothing. I just bought

it last week," Bank replied.

"Well, whatever, I'll give you \$50 for it, seeing as how Billy there don't want it, and Richard is driving us crazy wanting one."

"Lord no, I couldn't possibly take that. Tell you what I will do though. Gimme \$50 and that old 12-gauge shotgun and we can deal," Bank replied.

"No, reckon I can't do that," responded Dad. Well people, right then my old ticker almost did a Fred Sanford. You know "the big one" was taking place. Then, of all things in the world to bring my world back into focus appeared. Ah, chicken! Remember? A chicken.

Bank took one look at that old Rhode Island Red, closed one eye, looked up at Pap and said "How many them thar chickens you got, Lonnie?"

"Oh! I don't know, 'bout 73 I guess," he eased out.

"Well, now tell you what I'll do. I'll take them chickens for that bicycle."

"I don't know 'bout that. I'll have to ask Dessie 'bout it," Dad quipped.

"She'll do it! She'll do it!" I screamed.

"Blap!" a heavy hand answered my screams.

Just about that time my savior arrived. I ran to her skirt, cried a lot, begged a lot, and her nerves completely collapsed.

Needless to say, that night after dark, 73 real honest-to-goodness Rhode Island Red chickens and one 26-inch balloon-tired Schwinn bike with battery operated horn had new owners.

Now I suppose you want to know how the bike-crow trade came about. Well, you are going to have to wait till the next issue for that goody.

## Where It's At Dept.

The Daytime Place to Be

Hey gang! Word's out.

Need a place you can escape to the books for a bit? Just head on up the red carpeted stairway in the Commons, into the library.

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So, whether it's a clean, well-lit study area, or just a place to relax and thrash out a crossword puzzle, Learning Resources has it. It's the daytime place to be.

—Gary McNeil

## Wilkes County Folklore



By Charles Osborne

### THE HAUNTED CHIMNEY

One of my favorite pastimes as a child was sitting around on a dark night listening to my grandmother recount legends of her younger days. When bedtime came, I would tiptoe into my bedroom, jump into bed, pull the covers over my head and spend a night wrapped in a world of ghosts, witches, and broken-hearted lovers. In this story, and in the series which will follow, I would like to share with you some of the more colorful legends of the land of Wilkes told to me as a child.

In a lonely hollow, near the Smithy's Creek area of W. Kerr Scott reservoir, stand the ruins of an old stone chimney, the last remnants of an almost forgotten homestead. No one remembers the names of the couple who lived there, but most of the older people in that area recall their tragic end.

One night the couple had a terrible argument. The husband, in a violent rage, began to beat his wife. The next morning, neighbors found her broken, lifeless body lying on the floor at the foot of the bed. The husband disappeared and was never brought to trial to pay for his brutal crime.

The house fell into disrepair and after several years totally collapsed, leaving only the crumbling chimney as a bleak reminder of the sad couple who had lived there.

It was not long until strange occurrences were reported near the chimney. Local residents passing by the chimney at night suddenly found themselves surrounded by a litteral rain of rocks.

In an eyewitness account, a local lady tells about passing the chimney one night with her elder son and daughter. Knowing full well what would occur as soon as they approached the chimney, the lady picked up her daughter, and with the son leading made a dash for safety. Suddenly rocks began to fall all around them. Then, as suddenly as it had started, the barrage of rocks stopped. This happened so often that folks were no longer startled by the extraordinary rain of rocks.

As new roads were built, the old logging road by the chimney fell into disuse and was covered by creeping underbrush. Today, no footsteps disturb the chimney's domain, nor has anyone ever discovered its secret.



Mrs. Katherine Case surveys her handiwork created in Carpentry Class.

## Y. B.s Done It Again

By Judy Hollers

Y. B. is one man any lady would love to have around the house! He knows how to build anything and everything. Some women aren't as fortunate as Mrs. Y. B. Johnson, so they are coming to Y. B.'s Tuesday-Thursday night carpentry class to become their own "handy-women."

There are 4 ladies and 10 men in the carpentry class. All they have to do is furnish their materials, and they can make whatever they wish. Our own Mr. and Mrs. Jim Payne are one of the couples in the class. Y. B. reports that Mr. Payne is doing a fine job helping Mrs. Payne construct 5 miniature

dry sinks. The other couple is Mr. and Mrs. Jimmy Brinegar. Mrs. Brinegar has built a bathroom cabinet and a sewing center. Another member of the class is Mrs. Katherine Case who is building a paint, storage, and work center in the form of shelves and a workbench. She has also put formica on a cabinet top. Mrs. Moxley is doing some remodeling in one of her homes. She has brought material and dressed it, cased some doors and windows, and built a section of base and wall cabinets in a kitchen. The men are building cabinets, what-nots, birdhouses, portable dog houses (wonder why?), storage shelves, and dressing mantles and chestnut lumber. Y. B.

says they're all running him ragged clamoring for his attention for their individual projects.

Wow! If Y. B. can motivate carpentry creativeness in women as well as men, he must have magic up his sleeve. What's next, Y. B.?