

WATAUGA DEMOCRAT

An Independent Weekly Newspaper—Established in the Year Eighteen Eight—Eight

VOL. 53, NO. 6

BOONE, WATAUGA COUNTY, NORTH CAROLINA, THURSDAY, AUGUST 15, 1940

\$1.50 A YEAR

THREE PERISH IN FLOOD

Death Toll Mounts In Appaling Disaster

COMMERCE GROUP TO HEAR OVENS

Ladies' Night Banquet Chamber of Commerce Friday Evening; Motion Picture Presented

The members of the Boone Chamber of Commerce, their wives and girl friends will have dinner Friday evening, August 16, in the basement of the Boone Baptist church and the annual ladies' night banquet of the commerce group promises to be one of the most enjoyable events of the season.

David Ovens, vice-president and general manager of the J. B. Ivey store in Charlotte, will deliver the banquet address. Besides being one of the leaders in the mercantile field, Mr. Ovens is known as one of the south's most entertaining after dinner speakers.

A film travelogue, "The Golden Gate International Exposition," will be presented as a feature of the program, and consists of a preview of the Golden Gate international exposition, San Francisco. Those who have not made the trip to the west coast exposition will want to see this film. Those who have been will wish to see it again.

Mr. H. W. Wilcox, president of the Chamber of Commerce, urges everyone to come. Those who can't have their wife or girl friend along are urged to come anyway.

Watauga Native

Dies In Caldwell

Lenoir, Aug. 9.—Funeral rites were held Wednesday at 2 p. m. for Mrs. H. G. Church, 49, who died at the home here Tuesday morning at 8:30 o'clock.

The services were conducted from the residence by Rev. R. L. Isbell, with interment following at Bellevue cemetery.

Mrs. Church was a native of Watauga county, being the former Miss Rowena Story, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. W. N. Story.

Surviving are her mother, Mrs. W. N. Story; her husband, H. G. Church; two daughters, Mrs. S. Everhart and Ebel Church, all of Lenoir; four brothers, Arnold, Leonard, Charlie, Jasper and Conrad Story of Blowing Rock; and three sisters, Mrs. Effie Robbins, Mrs. Della Triplett and Mrs. Moquette Church, all of Blowing Rock.

Auction Sale of Warehouse Property

The surplus lots belonging to the Mountain Burley Warehouse corporation, which front on Grand boulevard in Daniel Boone Park, are to be sold soon, perhaps on the 24th, by S. C. Eggers and Co., local realtors, and more complete announcement of the auction will be made later.

The lots are approximately 25 by 100 feet, sixteen will be included in the auction, and it is expected there will be a ready demand for the realty.

Democrat Comes Out In Spite of Storm

Despite the fact that Tuesday afternoon and evening, water flooded The Democrat building, with resultant loss of time on the part of the employees of the local newspaper, the sheet comes out practically on time.

We regret that our readers in rural areas will receive this issue some days hence, but just the same the paper must go to press. The very difficult conditions under which this newspaper is being published can be well understood, and further apologies for its quality this week are quite unnecessary.

FARMERS TO MEET IN BOONE TUESDAY

Farmers From 25 Counties Will Gather at Appalachian College For Important Meet

All farmers in Watauga county are urged to attend the Western Carolina farmers convention which will be held at Appalachian Teachers College on August 20 and 21. The program will start at 1 p. m. on Tuesday.

From reports received by the county agent's office, large delegations of farmers from at least 25 counties in the western part of North Carolina will attend this big event.

Mr. J. C. McAnnis, director of agricultural relations division of the Tennessee Valley Authority, will make the main address of the conference on Tuesday afternoon, August 20.

We believe that this will be the largest and most important farm meeting that has ever been held in Watauga county. Therefore, it is hoped that at least 500 Watauga farmers will be present at 1 o'clock Tuesday afternoon, August 20, when the program starts.

COUNTY SCHOOLS

TO OPEN AUG. 20

Additional Janitors and Teachers Are Appointed at August Meeting of Board

At the regular meeting of the board of education held on the first Monday, it was agreed that all the schools of the county will begin on August 28, with the exception of the Boone schools, and those connected with the Boone schools. The opening date for Boone will be announced later.

The following additional teachers were approved: Ruth Sherwood, Rominger school; Mrs. Mary Lee Bingham Glenn, Mabel school, and Mrs. Helen Trexler, Castle school. Janitors approved are: P. H. Smith, Blowing Rock school; Hairston Coffey, Vaile Crucis school, and Mr. Storie, Boone school.

Hundreds Of Thousands Of Dollars Damage As Raging Waters Sweep Watauga County

At least two lives have been lost and untold damage done to growing crops, highways and other properties as a result of the torrential rains which have been falling in Watauga county since the week-end, and which reached flood proportions Tuesday afternoon. All the principal highways into the city are closed and it is not known this morning when traffic may be resumed.

The first fatalities of the flood came Tuesday night when a landslide crashed into the home of Wilburn Greene on the side of Howard's Creek and literally pushed his dwelling into the raging waters. The body of one child has been recovered, while today volunteer workers from Boone and other points are making every effort to recover the body of the second victim. Representatives of the Reins-Sturdivant Funeral Home, traveling across Howard's Knob to the scene of the disaster, carried Mrs. Greene a distance of two miles en route to the Watauga Hospital, where she is described as being in a critical condition from shock and exposure.

A Major Disaster

The flood, which is believed to have been the most severe to visit Watauga county within memory, has brought incalculable damage to farm crops, highways, streets and buildings and not for several days will it be possible to make a complete accounting of the losses suffered in this region.

Several hours before the flood had reached its crest late Tuesday afternoon, Highway Engineer James H. Councill stated that the highways had been damaged more in this county than at any time since the advent of the good roads system. At about seven o'clock all the state highways into the city were closed to travel, and for the first time in many years people of the county are without any outside transportation and communication facilities. Highway engineers and maintenance men were unavailable this morning, as they put forth super-human efforts to restore transportation facilities to a devastated region and there is no way of telling just when this will be accomplished or how.

Farm Damage Heavy

County Agent Harry Hamilton says that perhaps a hundred thousand dollars damage has been done to farm lands and growing crops in every section of the county. Along the courses of the Watauga and New Rivers, as well as up and down Cove Creek, growing crops have been largely inundated, and those which have not been literally washed away are all but ruined. Mr. Hamilton says the largest damage has likely been done to corn, hay and small grain, but points out that burley tobacco came in for its share of the destruction since most of the crop of the weed had been planted in lowlands because of the superior fertility of the soil along the rivers and creeks. Small branches and creeks were turned into raging torrents and the damage along these water courses is practically as heavy as along the river bottoms.

Mr. Hamilton states that one bright feature of the picture is that large acreages of hillsides had been diverted from row crops in the past few years and seeded to pasture. Had these steep fields remained in cultivation Mr. Hamilton says that the damage to the farmlands would have been infinitely greater.

Town Shares Disaster

Between five and six o'clock Tuesday afternoon the main street of the city was flooded and most of the business houses on the south side of the street beginning with the Watauga Democrat building and extending to Belk's store, were flooded. Business men and crews of town employees worked in the streets until midnight in an effort to turn the water from the flooded buildings.

The culvert carrying the watershed from Rich Mountain which passes under the street at The Democrat building, was choked when the rain reached flood proportions and the terrific volume of water rushed down the streets.

North Water street was literally washed away up by the county office building and large sheets of the asphalt surfacing and crushed stone clogged King street. A section of the same street near the Boone Steam Laundry was washed away, a wash-out isolated the railway depot from main street, and both the eastern entrances to the Watauga hospital are closed by washouts. The damage to the streets and buildings in the city has been variously estimated at from \$50,000 to \$100,000.

This morning rock, gravel and all kinds of debris choked King street, and the branch down from the mountains still detoured the choked culvert and coursed down the street. A road machine from the prison camp spent a good part of the morning clearing out roadways and pushed the debris into piles so that traffic in the city could be resumed.

Railway Damaged

The lines of the Linville River railway which have always remained open regardless of the weather until now, are seriously damaged and the train which was due to have arrived yesterday afternoon, is marooned somewhere between Elk Park and Shulls Mills. The last word from the train was when it passed Elk Park early in the afternoon. A track walker has reported that the railway is washed out down the creek from Hodges Gap, both road bed and trestles being destroyed, and it is thought quite likely that the bridge across Watauga River has gone out. Railway officials cannot estimate the amount of damage, but speculation was that travel might be resumed after a few days.

Power Dam Washes Out

The New River Light and Power Company's dam on Middle Fork four miles from town withstood the flood until late afternoon, when a section of the structure next to the highway went

Flood Bulletin!

At press time, The Democrat is informed that Calvin Greene and wife of Stony Fork, are patients in the Watauga hospital as a result of flood and that a 14-year-old son is missing. Coroner Kelley states that a body is floating on a pond in that locality which cannot be reached and which may be that of the dead lad.

Unconfirmed reports are that an emergency hospital has been established in a church in Stony Fork township and that several wounded people are being cared for there by Boone physicians. The same report says there are eight deaths there.

It is also reported that the other child of Wilburn Greene of Howards Creek has been found in a tree near the scene of the disaster. The 18-months old child was said to have been alive.

(Continued on page eight)