



LEONARD LA FOND

JO ANN SEVERSON

Milwaukee Pair, Accused Of Slaying, In Jail Here

By JOE C. MINOR

"I sure would like to be home in Milwaukee."

That's about all Jo Anne Severson, 18, and Leonard La Fond, 20, would say last week in Watauga County jail, after being brought here on first degree murder warrants by Sheriff Ernest M. Hodges and his deputies.

Warrants against the Wisconsin pair allege that they killed Dr. Lewis A. Finn, 72, Chicago chemist, near Blowing Rock on July 26. They have been in federal custody since their arrests several months ago. La Fond in New Mexico, and Miss Severson in Texas. They were arrested by FBI agents for transporting a stolen car—belonging to Dr. Finn—in interstate commerce.

After their arrests, according to reports at the time, the two directed FBI agents to Dr. Finn's body. The body was found in Mammoth Cave National Park, Ky. It was wrapped in an Army blanket and concealed under canvas. The area in which the body was found was overgrown with vines, indicating it had been in the park for several weeks.

Positive identification of the body was made by Dr. Max Korkosh, Chicago dentist, and Richard Finn, a brother, of Denver.

The couple were reported to have said they had disposed of Dr. Finn's remains at the place they named. Dr. Finn had been missing since late in July when he left the home of a brother at West Palm Beach, Fla., to visit another brother at Yuma, Ariz.

La Fond would make no statement concerning his confinement. Miss Severson said she would like to talk but was afraid to until she obtained a lawyer. Each one was reading a book when visited Friday. Miss Severson said she had made a "lot of friends" since being locked up—"more than I had before."

Lacking jurisdiction in the death the federal government agreed to release the pair to the state for prosecution. State murder warrants against La Fond and Miss Severson were issued October 12. Since being returned to North Carolina, La Fond has been in Forsyth County Jail in Winston-Salem, and Miss Severson has been in Stanley County Jail at Albemarle. The federal authorities have detainees on the pair on the stolen car charges.

In September Ray J. Abbaticchio, Jr., special agent in charge of the Charlotte FBI office, said an "extensive investigation" showed the killing occurred in Watauga County, but he did not disclose what evidence indicated this.

Federal agents at San Antonio, Texas, refused to confirm reports by tenants of the rooming house where the girl stayed that the agents found a "frog sticker" knife in her suitcase lining when she was picked up.

Tenants were reported to have said one agent handed a knife to another, saying, "Take good care of that, that may be the weapon we're searching for."

La Fond, it was reported, admitted when he was arrested at Truth-or-Consequences, N. M., on August 10, that he had sold Dr. Finn's car at El Paso, Tex., on

August 8. Dr. Finn's papers and identification cards were found in La Fond's possession.

La Fond said he found the car abandoned along a road "somewhere in Kentucky." When authorities found the car at El Paso it still contained all Dr. Finn's fishing tackle and photographic equipment except a camera and a bedroll.

James C. Farthing, of Lenoir, solicitor of the 16th District, is expected to seek to obtain murder indictments against the pair at the January 23 term of Watauga Superior Court.

It also is expected, if true bills are obtained, that La Fond and Miss Severson will go on trial during that term of Superior Court.

March of Dimes Drive Started in Watauga

The annual March of Dimes campaign, designed to raise additional funds for the care of those stricken with polio, got under way in Watauga county Tuesday.

Messrs. Hugh Hagaman and Stacey C. Eggers are co-chairmen of the campaign this year and state that an organization is being set up designed to raise the county's share of the needed money at the earliest possible date.

It is pointed out that despite the effectiveness of the Salk vaccine, the problem of caring for and ministering to those already stricken is still will us. A number of Watauga county people have been

afflicted, and are still to be ministered to. So complete cooperation of the people is being urged.

Many activities are being planned for the campaign period, details of which will be announced shortly.

First Baby Born

The first baby of the New Year to be born at Watauga Hospital was Tuesday morning at 12:57. The parents of the little girl are Mr. and Mrs. Jack Vines of Sugar Grove. Hospital attendants don't know whether or not there were other babies born earlier in the county.

Dr. Wm. Plemmons To Address Annual C. of C. Meeting Thursday

Burley Sales Resumed With \$58.52 Average

The Boone burley tobacco market resumed sales following the holidays Tuesday, January 3, and sold 125,000 pounds for an average price of \$58.52 per hundred.

Total sales through Tuesday were 2,247,596 pounds, for which \$1,296,177.08 was paid to growers for a season's average of \$57.67.

Burley is maintaining the high price level which prevailed at Boone during the last two weeks before the Christmas recess, and no appreciable decline is foreseen by local warehousemen in the brief selling time remaining.

It has been announced that the drawing for the free 1956 G.M.C. truck for which tickets have been issued throughout the season by R. C. Coleman and associates, will be held next Wednesday, January 11, at 12:30 p. m. at Mountain Burley Warehouse No. 1. If the holder of the winning ticket is not present at the drawing, the number will be publicized, and ample time will be given the winner to claim the prize.

Tickets will continue to be given until the date of the drawing, it was announced.

T. B. Seal Sale Short In County

Receipts of the Watauga County Christmas Seal sale stands at \$1,828.75, according to Miss Helen Underdown, sale chairman.

This total falls \$171.25 short of the drive goal, Miss Underdown said.

She added that it is hoped contributions will continue through January and that the quota may still be reached.

Burley Growers O.K. Quotas in Balloting

Ninety-nine and eight-tenths per cent of the voters taking part in the Burley referendum in Watauga county December 29, cast their bal-

Health Group Maps Plans For Future Program

An executive committee meeting of the Watauga Health Council was held Monday night, December 5 at the health department office, Dr. Jack Martin, president, presiding.

Present as a consultant was Miss Grace Daniel, director of the section of health education of the North Carolina State Board of Health.

It was decided to call a meeting on Tuesday, January 17 at 7:30 p. m. in the Grand Jury room of the courthouse, to be attended by a representative of each community in the county. At that time specific plans will be made to undertake a continuing program which will be the result of a study of recognized health needs. Making use of the resources available to meet those needs, followed by plans as to how best to use them.

The health council will work closely with the community betterment association in those communities, so far organized, and in others through local groups in the neighborhoods.

It is hoped that each community will be well represented at this important meeting.

Health education consultation is available from both the State Board of Health and from the State Medical Society to make this program a vital factor in more healthful living in Watauga county.



ALFRED B. BOYLES

Charlotte Man Will Head Horn Publicity

Alfred B. Boyles of Charlotte has been appointed director of public relations for "Horn in the West, Boone's outdoor drama, which is again to be presented by the Carolina Playmakers June 30 through September 3.

Mr. Boyles, who has been closely identified with the theatrical world most of his life, started his career at the age of fourteen as a vetriologist. While serving with the army in India during the last world war he was selected by Melvin Douglas, stage and screen star, to head the first unit of GI entertainers sent to the front lines to help build the morale of the soldiers.

In the fall of 1948 Mr. Boyles joined the Veterans' Hospital Programs, a Protestant church organization organized to provide entertainment for the patients of veterans' hospitals. In addition to heading the national publicity and

promotion for the organization, he was treasurer and later vice-president. When the programs for hospitalized veterans was charted in 1954, Boyles was elected President and National Chairman.

Associated with him in bringing cheer to the wounded and ill in the veterans hospitals, have been many well-known stars, including the well-known McGuire sisters, of the Godfrey tv show.

Mr. Boyles is a native of West Virginia, having graduated from Morris Harvey College in Charleston, W. Va. He did his graduate work at the Duke University Divinity School.

He is married to the former, Mary Eva Sipe of Charleston, West Virginia. They have one son, Randy. They will establish their home in Boone.

Mrs. Hodges Is Taken By Death

Mrs. Grace Geneva Hodges, 56, of Boone, Route 2, died at home Sunday, January 1.

Graveside services were held at 3:30 p. m., January 3, at the Mountlawn Memorial Park in Boone, conducted by the Rev. E. F. Troutman and the Rev. J. K. Parker, Jr.

She is survived by the husband, Finley P. Hodges; two sons, Robert D. Hodges, Hendersonville, and Charles Hodges, Boone; three daughters, Mrs. Howard Wilfong, Charlotte, Mrs. W. M. Dixon, Boone, and Mrs. Burkett Younce, Orlando, Fla.; and five brothers, one sister, and nine grandchildren.

Arrested For Felling Trees

Myrl G. Brooks, Parkway Forest Service Ranger tells the Democrat that Robert Bradshaw of Blowing Rock was arrested on a charge of cutting Christmas trees on Park Service property.

Taken before Commissioner Ralph Davis in North Wilkesboro he was fined \$50, Mr. Brooks says. The Ranger asks for the cooperation of the people in the preservation of Government property in this area, for the pleasure of the people here and of the large number of visitors to the area.

Scout Meeting Is Postponed

The January meeting of the Boy Scout district committee and round table has been postponed from its regular time to Monday night, January 9, according to an announcement by Dr. J. T. C. Wright, district chairman. The postponement was made necessary by complications in the schedule of Joe Davenport, field executive.

The meeting will be held at the Parkway School, and will be the first scout meeting to be held outside Boone. Other meetings later will be held at the headquarters of other scout troops throughout the county.

JEWELRY STORE LOOT RETURNED WITH GREETING

Montreal, Jan. 1.—Somebody looted a Montreal jewelry store's outdoor showcase Christmas Day.

Now all the loot—a silver bowl, wine glasses and several silver brooches—has been returned.

Eric Ohman, owner of the store, said there was a note with the stuff, reading "Happy New Year."

New Officers To Be Installed; Other Features

The annual meeting of the Chamber of Commerce will be held at the Demonstration School on Thursday evening at 6:30. The program will include some special music, some group singing led by Milton Greer, the address by Dr. William Plemmons, and installation of new officers and board by Watt Gragg.

A turkey dinner will be served by Mrs. Ralph Tugman and her associates at 6:30 followed by the program.

The meeting is not limited to the members of the Chamber of Commerce and all persons interested in the growth of Boone are urged to attend. Tickets may be secured from Leo Pritchett at the college, Wayne Richardson at Boone Durg Company, Richard Kelley at Reins-Sturdivant, Louis Smith at his office, G. C. Greene, Jr., at Greene Buick, Paul Coffey at the Parkway Hardware, or at the Chamber of Commerce office. Reservations may be made by calling AM 4-3846.

It is Ladies' Night, and already 60 reservations have been made by the Rotary Club, 52 reservations have been made by the IRC, in addition to the members of the Chamber of Commerce.

The program following is the program for the gathering:

Invocation, the Rev. E. H. Lowman.

Call to order, Stanley A. Harris. Introduction of guest—Rotary members and wives by L. H. Smith; IRC guests, Fred Gragg or Richard Morehouse; Lions club and wives, Dr. Lee Reynolds; guests from college, Leo Pritchett. Special music, Nicholas Erneston.

Report of president, Stanley A. Harris.

Reading, William C. Ross.

Introduction of speaker, L. H. Smith.

Speaker, Dr. William Plemmons, president Appalachian State Teachers College.

Report of nominating committee and election of officers, Willis W. Chester.

Induction of new officers and board, Watt Gragg.

Benediction, the Rev. Edwin Troutman.

Shepherd To Continue As ASC Office Manager

Mr. M. L. Shepherd was re-elected office manager at the meeting of the ASC committee held Friday, December 30.

After giving careful consideration to each application received "with regard to experience, skilled background, and responsibility required of an office manager" the decision was made to keep Mr. Shepherd in the post he has held for many years.

The Committee, it is stated, is anxious to work with all farmers in carrying out a better ASC program in Watauga county in the coming year.

Chas. Vannoy Funeral Held

Charlie Enoch Vannoy, 78, died Friday, December 30, at his home in the Bamboo community.

Funeral services were held at 2 p. m. Saturday, December 31, at the Mount Vernon Baptist Church, conducted by the Rev. Barney Oliver and the Rev. Will Cook, and burial was in the Vannoy cemetery.

He is survived by his widow, Mrs. Edwinnie Vannoy; seven brothers, James, of Columbus, Montana, Tell, of Lake Stevens, Wash., Larry, of Snohomish, Wash., Letcher, of Banner Elk, Wiley, of Boone, Russell, of Todd, and Dale, of Boone; and a sister, Mrs. Murray Brown, of Deep Gap.



A BIG ONE . . . Scene along the street during the big snow which fell March 2, 1942. Eighteen inches came down in this territory and was whipped by the wind into huge drifts. Business houses failed to open, mail and buses were stopped, and the towaways completely isolated. Photo is one of a number made by Paul A. Coffey.