



IN FULL BLOSSOM—Trees like this one near Grandfather Mountain tell you it's spring. Trees in the western end of the county near Deep Gap had a head start in the blooming season, coming out almost a week before trees in the higher-elevation Foscoe area. (Staff photo)



BETSY RANDALL

Betsy Randall To Be Page In N. C. Assembly

Betsy Randall, a junior at Watauga High School, has been appointed a page in the 1969 General Assembly session in Raleigh for May 5-9.

Daughter of Dr. and Mrs. Robert L. Randall of 517 Grand Blvd., Betsy was appointed to the post by House Speaker Earl W. Vaughn of Eden. She was recommended by the Wake County Democratic delegation.

She will report for duty at 1 p. m. on Monday May 5. Her duties will involve working with members of the House of Representatives and the staff of the General Assembly. During the week she will be expected to maintain her studies from Watauga High School through assignments formulated in advance by her teachers.

Betsy is a member of the Beta Club, a junior marshal, band member, varsity debater, Spanish honor club, and is vice-president of the United Methodist Youth Fellowship. She has been selected as a Youth Fellowship delegate to the United Nations in June.

Chamber Commerce Board Meets Tuesday

The Boone Chamber of Commerce monthly board of directors meeting will be held Tuesday, May 5 at the Cardinal Restaurant, Blowing Rock Road, Boone at noon. There are many important items to be discussed

Soil Treatment Helps In Control Of Burley Diseases

Losses to the destructive black root rot disease in burley tobacco can be reduced by the use of a chemical soil treatment. Savings of \$250 to almost \$500 per acre had been made on fields where the disease is present.

"Chemical soil treatment is a new but important part of the total black root rot control program," said Furney A. Todd, extension tobacco disease specialist at North Carolina State University. In addition to soil treatments, Todd said the control program involves rotating tobacco with resistant crops, planting resistant varieties and following a complete planted disease control program.

He explained that the cost of soil treatment "is low and the value received from less than 30 pounds of tobacco will pay the bill." He said, "I believe the use of a chemical soil treatment pays in fields where the infestation of black root rot is high and especially in fields where tobacco follows tobacco."

Two materials have been tested and found effective through

the N. C. State University Research on Wheels program. Telson applied at the rate of 12 gallons per acre and Vorlex applied at the rate of six gallons per acre are effective in reducing black root rot and increasing the performance of resistant varieties, especially those carrying low levels of resistance such as Burley 21

and Ky, 16. Good results from soil treatments were recorded from tests last year on the farms of E. A. Orr in Graham County, Arlie Hodges in Watauga, Charles Wilson in Yancey and J. E. Holman in Ashe. Two varieties were included in tests on the Orr and Hodges (Continued on page two)

Accidents In City Noted By Police

Driving on the wrong side of the road was the cause of half of Boone's traffic accidents last week.

Monday Hoyt Edward Shoemaker, 52, of Route 3 Boone was charged by Boone Police Officer Coy Issacs with driving left of center after he had sideswiped a 1968 Oldsmobile driven by a Lenoir resident, Virginia Gail Russell, 18, of 516 North Pressnell Street, Lenoir, was traveling south on Blowing Rock Road at the

Clement Street intersection when the 1949 Chevrolet operated by Shoemaker crossed over the center line and hit the Russell car.

According to Issacs' report the Chevrolet traveled 150 feet before stopping following the accident.

Ellard James Cornell, 16, of Route 2, Vilas, was also charged with driving left of center on Highway 105 Tuesday. In a 1962 Plymouth, Cornell (Continued on Page Three)

Parkway Open To Travel; Campgrounds Open Today

All of the Blue Ridge Parkway motor road is now open for public travel according to Superintendent Granville B. Liles.

Campgrounds on the Parkway will open on May 1st with the exception of Peaks of Otter in Virginia, and Crabtree Meadows and Mt. Pisgah in North Carolina which will not open until May 15. Picnicking will be permitted in the campgrounds until the picnic areas are opened on May 15. Fees for camping will be collected and the \$7 Golden Eagle Passport will again be valid at all Parkway camp-

grounds. Daily fees include 50¢ for purchaser only or \$1 for purchaser and all accompanying him in a private vehicle.

Visitor centers will open on weekends only from May 1 through June 14, after which they will be open seven days each week during the remainder of the season.

Concession facilities will be open by May 1st with the exception of the housekeeping cabins at Rocky Knob. This includes Mabry Mill as well as all other public use facilities on the Parkway. The Peaks of Otter

Lodge and Dining Room opened on April 2.

It is expected that the dogwood will be in full bloom by the end of April. At lower elevations serviceberry and redbud are beginning a good show. About mid-May flame azalea blooms; and in early to mid-June the mountain laurel and purple rhododendron. The higher the elevation, the later the bloom, and summer will have taken over elsewhere in the Parkway when spring finally reaches the high mountains in western North Carolina.

New \$50,000 Appraisal

Lower Tax Rate Is Seen As Ratio Is Upped In Co.

Tax To Apply To Larger Part Of Value

BY CHARLIE HAMILTON

The Watauga County tax rate is expected to drop some for 1969-70 following a move that will raise the tax base ratio from 45 to 65 per cent.

The drop in tax rate was forecast by Tax Supervisor James C. Lyons after the county commissioners voted last month for the increase in the real property tax base ratio to 65 per cent.

But it does not necessarily mean that your county tax bill will drop.

Lyons also reported that a new plan for assessing personal property taxes may be adopted this year by the county. It is designed to catch up with many citizens who have avoided paying their fair amount of personal property taxes.

The increase in the tax ratio is not designed to bring in additional revenue from established properties, Lyons said. "It simply is a move to bring Watauga County into full conformity with state law."

The trick of avoiding a higher tax on an existing property under the increased ratio will be simply to lower the tax rate, Lyons said.

In addition, state law requires that real and personal properties taxes be levied at the same ratios. Thus, with the real property tax ratio being raised to 65 per cent, the personal property tax ratio will be dropped to that figure from its traditional 100 per cent.

Also, state statutes put a ceiling of 20 cents on the amount of the tax levy that can be allocated to the general fund of the county. The big fund is in need of a larger share of tax incomes, Lyons said. The increased tax ratio will allow more funds for the general fund.

Lyons, of course, could not say how much the tax rate will be lowered since the County Commissioners have not adopted the new fiscal budget. However, using the present tax rate of \$1.23 per hundred dollars valuation and taxed at the 45 per cent ratio, under the higher ratio, a tax rate of \$1.00 conceivably may suffice, Lyons said. However, this is not necessarily accurate prediction.

Naturally, with the present style of listing personal property on the "honour system," the revenue to be produced next year by the personal property tax based on 65 per cent ratio would be reduced.

To correct this situation, Lyons said he plans to recommend to the commissioners that the county adopt the "percentage" plan for assessing personal property taxes.

Under this plan, citizens (Continued on page seven)



PROUD PRESIDENTIAL COUPLE—Dr. and Mrs. William H. Plemmons were surprised and pleased Friday night when they attended an appreciation dinner at ASU. Mrs. Plemmons was presented a stereo console and Dr. Plemmons was presented a new car. He plans to retire June 30 after 14 years as president at ASU.

Dr. And Mrs. Plemmons Given Honor By ASU Faculty, Others

Dr. William H. Plemmons was surprised when he was presented a garden hoe Friday night but the sight of a new car and a stereo console left him and Mrs. Plemmons almost speechless.

Dr. Plemmons, due to retire June 30 after 14 years as president of Appalachian State University, and Mrs. Plemmons

were honored at an appreciation dinner Friday night at University Cafeteria.

Some 350 persons attended the event sponsored by faculty members, administrative personnel and ASU's board of trustees.

The big surprise of the dinner came when the doors of the cafeteria were thrown wide for the

entrance of a new Ford Bronco, a gift to Plemmons from the sponsoring groups.

Mrs. Plemmons was presented a big stereo console in appreciation of her being so cooperative and interested in the school.

Earlier, Dr. Plemmons presented a garden hoe by Stanley Harris Sr. on behalf of the Boone Rotary Club. It was a tribute to Dr. Plemmons' support as a member of the club and of his participation in the club's tobacco-growing project.

Dr. Plemmons responded with, "These have been happy, delightful years . . . and a wonderful experience. I can't think of a better way to close out my career in education than as president of Appalachian. I speak from the depths of my heart when I say, thank you . . . and bless you."

Dr. Frank Randall, chairman of ASU's Faculty Senate, presided at the dinner ceremony. Dr. John Barden, Professor Emeritus of Education, gave the introduction and Rogers Whitener, assistant professor of English, presented the tribute.

Miss Mary Brown Allgood, chairman of the home economics department, presented the stereo to Mrs. Plemmons and John Welborn, director of food services, handed the new car keys to the honored couple.

Named Chairman Planning Board

Ned Trivette, director of business affairs at ASU, has been named chairman of the new Watauga County Planning Board.

Trivette and two other officers were selected Tuesday night (April 22) at the board's organizational meeting held in the county tax collector's conference room.

Other officers of the seven-man board are A. T. Adams, vice chairman, and Jerry Adams, secretary-treasurer.

Other members of the board named by the county commissioners are Wade Moretz, Col. Clyde Miller (Ret.), John Broyles and Kays Gary.

Trivette said the board plans regular public meetings on the third Tuesday night of each month. The next meeting will be held May 20 in the courthouse.

Among the first items to be considered by the new board will be submitting an application for a federal grant to study the feasibility of a comprehensive

water and sewerage plan for Watauga County.

Other counties which have applied for and received such grants have used them to finance engineering studies for such



NED TRIVETTE

Talent Award Auditions To Be Held At ASU

Special Talent Award auditions in piano and voice for incoming freshmen and transfer students to Appalachian State University, are scheduled on Saturday, May 3, from 9:00 to 12:00 a. m.

The auditions will be held in L. C. Greer Hall. Interested students should contact the chairman of the music department for details and application blanks. All students are required to bring their own accompanist.

Special Talent Awards in all instruments, piano, and voice are available each year to talented students at the basic rate of \$50 per quarter or \$150 per year. Students do not have to major in music to receive the award with the exception of voice majors. Auditions for on-campus students will be held May 10.

systems. One county, Anson, developed a plan which was financed by a referendum to install a county-wide water system. Its installation began more than a year ago.

Trivette said that the board hopes that federal funds will be available to finance formal studies of other Watauga problems. He listed at the top of the priority list: roads into the area, availability of land for development and housing.

Trivette said the planning board will not serve primarily as a zoning body for the county. He said, however, that the board is empowered to make recommendations on land use to the Board of County Commissioners who have zoning power.

Houses Costing More In Watauga Co.

How much can the average family in Watauga County afford to spend for a home?

How much of a load may it take on in the form of monthly housing costs, based on its current level of income, without going overboard?

The questions arise at this time because, locally and in most other sections of the country, the traditional home-buying season is at hand.

More families go house hunting during the Spring and Summer months than at any other time of year.

Some help in making these decisions, for families in various income brackets, comes from the Federal Housing Administration and the American Bankers Association.

As a rule of thumb, they feel, the cost of a home should not be much more than twice annual income before Federal taxes.

Families in low income brackets sometimes have to pay as much as 2 1/2 times income to get suitable accommodations while those with large earnings generally buy homes that cost considerably less than twice their annual income.

Because the average income in Watauga County has moved upward, local families are in a position to go in for more expensive housing than in former years.

Their before-tax earnings, which represent the combined income of two or more persons in a large proportion of families, amount to about \$7,500 per household, according to the latest figures.

Therefore, applying the guidelines, local families at the average income level may safely expend approximately \$19,500 for a home.

Many Watauga County families have incomes that are higher or lower than the local norm. Those who are in the \$20,000 or so income range buy more expensive homes but actually spend a smaller proportion of their income in doing so.

On the other hand, a family at the \$6,500 level will be able to afford a home costing no more than \$13,000 to \$17,000.

As to carrying costs, which include mortgage payments, taxes, insurance, utilities and maintenance, they should be no greater than 1/5th of monthly income, according to the recommendations.