

### Danger Ahead

Two Duke University scientists who have been conducting geological tests near the site of a Carolina Light and Power Co. atomic power plant scheduled to begin operating this spring are expressing a new kind of fear to the Atomic Energy Commission.

The team of scientists predicts that an earthquake of catastrophic size is going to hit the area of the power plant in Brunswick County near Southport "within 10 years."

They said this earthquake is going to be of magnitude never seen before in the U.S.; one which, if atomic particles were loosed in the process would endanger many million of lives on the Eastern Seaboard of the nation

And an earthquake of the size predicted, around seven on the Richter scale, will rattle the teeth of folks in Transylvania, some 300 miles air distance from Brunswick.

It is only in the last three years or so that scientists have been able to predict the site of impending earthquakes. They have learned the positive signs. Within two more years perhaps they can predict the time of the happening of such catastrophic events. Now the timetable reads "within years."

What we're saying is that their prediction, and we doubt they'd dare make it if their findings had not been checked and rechecked, is for real.

This is no science-fiction pipe-dream, nor is it a publicity gag to call attention to Duke University and its president, Terry Sanford, who is also a 1976 candidate for President of the U. S.

For the safety of the eastern half of the nation, we had all better believe the prediction has foundation and is for real.

Undoubtedly the scientists have tested the speed of seismic waves: the pressure waves which bore forward; and the shear waves which travel at right angles in the earth. And they mentioned the fact that the earth on which the atomic power plant rests has risen one quarter of an inch a year for the last three years. This means in scientific language that it is a "dilatant" region, a pressure area. By measuring the size of the area of dilatancy, the size of the earthquake can be predicted.

Their prediction is frightening.

Even more frightening is having the atomic plant sitting right in the middle of the area. A spokesman has said that an earthquake wouldn't harm the plant.

Hogwash!! Man hasn't built anything yet that an earthquake the size of this predicted one couldn't rip asunder.

We want other scientists to check the findings of the Duke folks, and if their conclusion is the same, Carolina Light and Power must not be allowed to begin atomic operation of that plant. Even a remote possibility of deadly radioactivity scattering to the four winds in the Eastern U.S. is unthinkable.

We have no idea how much money CP&L has sunk in that plant, but we know it's in the hundreds of millions, and we know that no firm can withstand that kind of loss.

And CP&L, of course, would never have considered the site knowing what they've been told now.

The power firm and the A.E.C. have one whale of a decision to make at the moment.

On second thought, they don't. The lives of too many people are at stake. If the Duke scientists' findings are verified, only one decision can be made, and that one in favor of the people.

And in case the plant should be abandoned, we think the people of the U.S. would be more than willing to recompense CP&L a major part of its loss. Certainly, we think they'd do it gladly to remove such a danger.

If as has been done in years past, the U.S. can pay a single cotton grower more than \$4 million a year in subsidies, certainly it can dig up a much larger sum to eliminate a catastrophic hazard to millions.

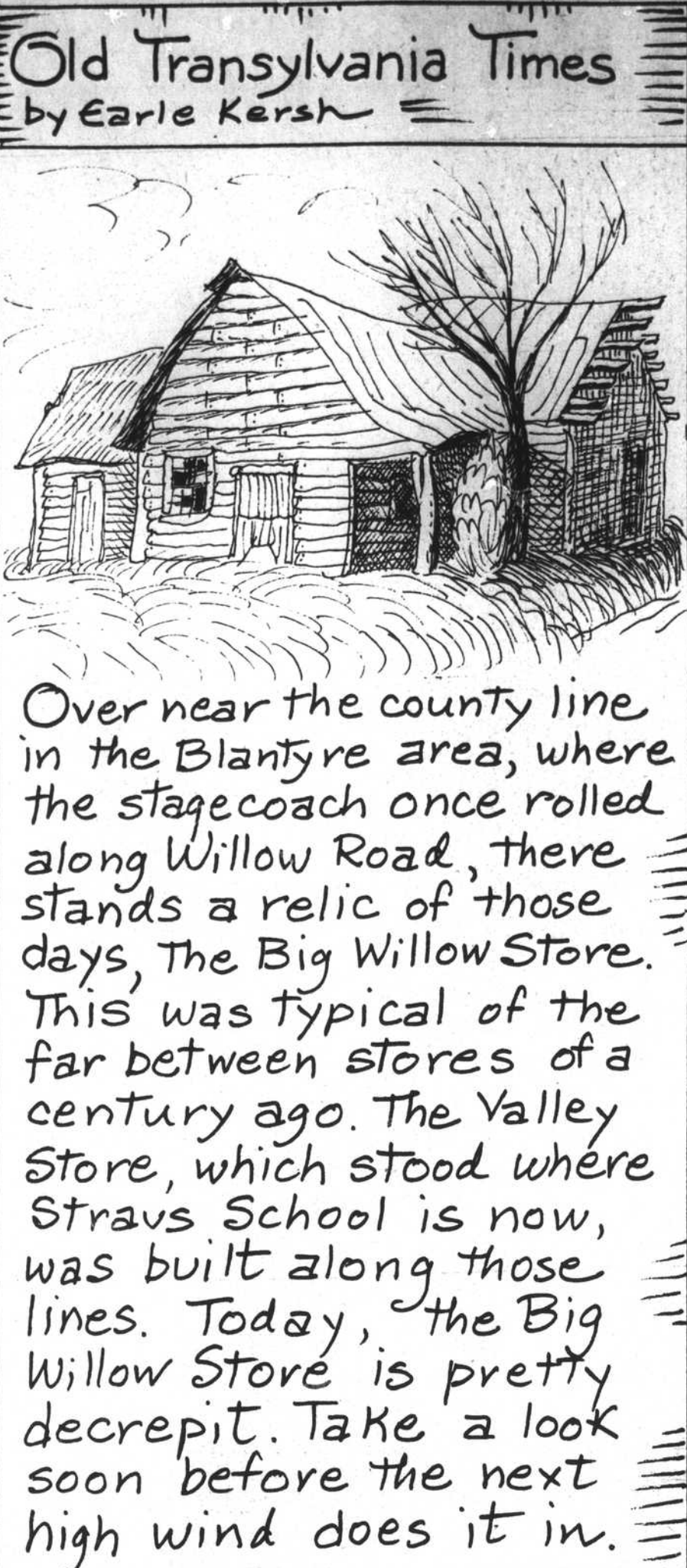
### Good Going, Jim

James Ladd, the son of Mr. and Mrs. David Ladd, and a senior at Brevard High School, has been named a finalist in the Morehead Scholarship competition.

He's one of six youngsters chosen from Western North Carolina to go to the finals at Chapel Hill the last of this month.

He's managing editor of the high school's newspaper, "The Broadcaster," so we've become somewhat acquainted with him over the last few months.

Personable, dependable, dedicated, and brilliant are words to describe him. We're betting he gets one of the Moreheads, each of which pays for a total four-year college education. We're so certain we won't even cross our fingers. He has what it takes to be a winner.



Old Transylvania Times by Earle Kersh

Over near the county line in the Blantyre area, where the stagecoach once rolled along Willow Road, there stands a relic of those days, The Big Willow Store. This was typical of the far between stores of a century ago. The Valley Store, which stood where Straus School is now, was built along those lines. Today, the Big Willow Store is pretty decrepit. Take a look soon before the next high wind does it in.

### Report To Hill Country

BY CECIL HILL, State Senator

The General Assembly got down to some real work this week. The Senate has been organized from the first day, and the Speaker of the House has appointed most of his committees.

At this time, about 60 bills have been introduced in both the Senate and the House. All committees are at work, and some laws have already passed.

This week the Joint Appropriations Committees of the House and the Senate met to consider the budget. The Advisory Budget Commission proposes a budget totaling \$3,382,010,703 for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1976, and \$3,509,260,570 for the next fiscal year.

The budget followed the text set forth in the State of the State address by Governor Holshouser last week.

I do not think the legislature will adopt a budget of this size for the next biennium. The feeling of most members of the General Assembly is somewhat gloomy.

Members of the legislature daily are receiving reports of shutdowns in businesses back home, and this is reflected daily in debates in both houses.

Some counties are reporting unemployment is excess of 25 per cent. In urban counties with large black populations, unemployment in the black communities may run as high as 40 per cent.

Many statewide organizations have been entertaining the legislators

and advising them of their needs during the next biennium.

There is a general belief by many of the economists speaking to us that things will worsen during the next few months, and we are advised not to be misled by what is happening in the stock market at this time.

Some of the economists believe that the rate of interest will decline slightly but not much more, particularly for the long term. More and more economists are predicting that gasoline rationing may be coming, probably before the summer is over.

At least one prominent economist close to the federal administration is stating publicly that Secretary of Agriculture Butz will resign in the very near future.

I introduced a bill providing for joint control by officers enforcing the drug abuse act in Henderson and Transylvania Counties. The matter was heard in committee on Friday of this week and will be taken up on the floor of the Senate shortly.

I think this is a good bill. These officers would not be restricted by county lines when they are in the process of making an arrest.

The bill eliminating the waiting period of one week before unemployment benefits can be paid is now the law of the State.

I urge all of you to write me your opinion on any problems or pending legislation at any time.

### Dentistry New Medal For Scouts

Boy Scouts in Transylvania County beginning this week will be able to earn a new merit badge in dentistry. Counselors for the scouts earning the badge will be recruited from Brevard dentists.

The new merit badge is being introduced this week in connection with two national observances - National Children's Dental Health Week and the Boy Scouts' 65th anniversary celebration on Saturday, Feb. 8.

The badge is a joint project of the Boy Scouts of America and the American Dental Association.

The prevention-oriented merit badge teaches the scout the importance of good oral health and stresses self-care for controlling dental disease. It also offers an exploration experience for careers in dentistry.

Dr. Milton V. Massey, First N.C. District Dental Society president, explained the types of requirements that the Scouts would have to meet in order to earn the badge.

"Among the things the Scout will be called upon to learn will be the nutritional requirements and the role of fluorides in maintaining good oral health, the techniques of plaque control, first aid for oral injuries and the role the dentist plays in overall health care."

Each scout will work with a dentist-counselor to meet the requirements for the badge.

The merit badge program is an elective, educational plan that provides broad insights into many fields of skill and knowledge. There are more than 100 merit badges available, each with a strong potential as a career or hobby.

## EDITORIAL PAGE THE TRANSYLVANIA TIMES

# Diminishing Fossil Fuels-- Aid To Man?

Could diminishing fossil fuel supplies ultimately hold more benefit than loss for man?

Hydrocarbons released in the burning of fossil fuels react in the atmosphere and sunlight to cause a buildup of ozone, a gas composed of one more atom of oxygen per molecule than the oxygen man normally breathes.

But ozone offers a perplexing dilemma. While not harmful in natural concentrations, and even beneficial for some uses, ozone can injure health and damage plants and materials when it builds up near the surface of the earth. In the stratosphere, where ozone is naturally found in greatest concentration, it is essential to life on earth.

The ozone dilemma lies in the danger that man is adding to the buildup on earth, where he is better off without it, while possibly reducing the amount of ozone in the stratosphere, where he must have it to survive.

Dr. Gerald Watson, meteorologist in North Carolina State University's Department of Geosciences points out that of all the matter in the stratosphere, only 10 parts per million are ozone.

### VITAL IMPORTANCE

"Even this small amount is incredibly important," Dr. Watson says. "The gas absorbs the burning ultraviolet rays of the sun, and without it living things as we know them would probably never have existed on earth."

Ozone elicited widespread attention recently when scientists expressed the fear that the propellant used in aerosol cans might be destroying the ozone layer some 12 to 18 miles above the earth in the mid-stratosphere. The propellant, Freon, is a chemical compound which contains chlorine. Chlorine causes ozone to be converted to ordinary oxygen which will not absorb the sun's ultraviolet rays.

Dr. Halbert Carmichael of the NCSU Department of Chemistry has long been interested in a Freon compound which does not contain chlorine, research which might now have added significance.

Dr. Carmichael says that although it has not been proven conclusively that Freon from aerosols is causing the decomposition of ozone in the stratosphere, there is evidence that the gas, which has a long chemical life, has moved from the northern to the southern hemisphere.

### ULTRAVIOLET DANGER?

Man has been using aerosols for about 15 or 20 years, Dr. Carmichael says. Scientists reason that if it took Freon that long to disperse from north to south, the compound could also be traveling up into the stratosphere now and for a long time into the future. It might be causing an imbalance in normal ozone production in the stratosphere, allowing ultraviolet light to filter through to the surface of the earth.

But what about ozone near the surface of the earth?

Dr. Carmichael notes that extremely small amounts of ozone are found naturally near the earth's surface.

Man-made sources of ozone come from high voltage electrical equipment such as x-ray machine. But the real culprit is the ozone that is produced when man burns fossil fuels, particularly in automobiles.

Dr. Carmichael explains that, in the presence of

sunlight, burning processes release compounds which lead to the formation of ozone. Burning fossil fuels leads to a buildup of ozone. Scientists have found that ozone is the most reactive component of city smog.

Once considered good therapy, ozone was prescribed for respiratory disease because of its ability to kill harmful bacteria. Dr. Charles Smallwood of the Department of Civil Engineering notes that the French use ozone as a water purifier instead of chlorine.

Now recognized as a dangerous irritant to eyes, throat and lungs in concentration, ozone is known to injure health, to crack and corrode some materials and to damage plant life.

Dr. Wendell McKenzie, NCSU geneticist, is conducting research to learn if exposure to ozone has a longterm genetic effect on human chromosomes. He is studying blood samples collected from volunteers who are exposed to safe levels of ozone (not as heavy as the concentrations found in polluted cities.)

Blood samples are studied before exposure and at various intervals after exposure to determine if changes occur in the chromosome structure.

"It is possible," Dr. McKenzie says, "that although we may see little effect from ozone exposure now, genetic mutations might occur as far as 30 years in the future."

Dr. Udo Blum and Dr. Charles Anderson of the Department of Botany have been researching the effects of ozone on soybeans and ladino clover. They find that the gas damages some plants while other plants seem to be resistant.

In the School of Forestry, Dr. Robert Weir's work in forestry genetics indicates that some strains of pine trees are affected more adversely than others by ozone, depending on other environmental conditions. He notes that Southern forests abound in 35-40 mile rings around major metropolitan areas.

"We are concerned about a reduction in growth as a result of air pollution," he states, adding that ozone is the most difficult component of air pollution to control.

Dr. Walter Heck, with the Agricultural Research Service of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, is working with EPA and the Department of Botany at NCSU. Most of his research on horticultural and plant crops has been concerned with effects of ozone and indicated that some plants are sensitive even to the levels of pollution found in such relatively "clean" cities as Raleigh and Asheville.

Dr. Heck says, "If we almost eliminate our use of fossil fuels—and go to clean forms of energy such as solar, geothermal, wind, or even nuclear power, our air pollution problems would be essentially licked."

### MEDICAL CARE

One-fifth of all persons under age 65 in the United States do not have any insurance to help them defray the costs of medical care. And among persons with health insurance, many do not have complete coverage. For example, half the population under age 65 lacks coverage for physician office and home visits, says Mrs. Justine Rozier, extension family resource management specialist, North Carolina State University.

## The Transylvania Times

100 Broad Street Brevard, N. C. 28712

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