



Big Masses Of Ice, River Threaten Marshall

Battle Looms Over Elections Board, Precincts

Tense Meeting At Mars Hill; Restraining Order Is Issued

Democrats Split; Two Sets Of Nominees To Be Submitted For Board

A fight for control of the election machinery in Madison County was brought into the open last week by the two warring factions.

The controversy centers about the makeup of the new county board of elections which will pick the precinct officials to supervise the May 31 primary and the November general election. One faction wants the two Democratic members of the new board selected from a slate of M. B. Blankenship, Auburn Wyatt and C. T. Sprinkle, while the other backs Marvin Ball, Levi Ponder and Emery Wallin. Blankenship and Ball are members of the present board.

The two lists of recommendations have been submitted to Democratic State Chairman John D. Larkins. Larkins, contacted in Chapel Hill Saturday, said he will not act on the matter until he has more information. The recommendations of the local groups are not binding on the state chairman, but the law provides that the state board of elections must select the county board members from lists recommended by party state chairmen. Larkins, if he wishes, can ignore both lists and submit three names of his own choosing, it was stated.

Chairman Larkins told the Citizen-Times that he had received telephone calls from William W. Peek in support of the Blankenship-Wyatt-Sprinkle group, and from Zeno Ponder backing the Hall-Ponder-Wallin slate. Peek is superintendent of the Madison County public schools, and Ponder, brother of Sheriff E. Y. Ponder, is active in farm organizations. Both Peek and Ponder are controversial figures in Madison County politics.

The differences came to a boil earlier in the week when it was disclosed that two members of the present board of elections — Democrat Blankenship and Republican W. V. Farmer — had met in secret and eliminated seven voting precincts: Ward Two



ZENO PONDER
... leads one faction



WILLIAM W. PEEK
... spokesman for other

(Walnut) and Ward Three (Laurel Fork) in Township One, Ward One (White Rock) and Ward Two (Little Laurel) in Township Two, Ward Two (Middle Fork) in Township Four, Ward One (Lower Spring Creek) in Township Eight and Ward One (Big Laurel) in Township Ten.

Ball, the third member of the board, said he was not advised of any Monday meeting and was not

SCHOOLS ARE POSTPONED UNTIL MONDAY

W. W. Peek, superintendent, announced today that all Madison County schools would not open until Monday due to hazardous road conditions. Mr. Peek also stated that if more precipitation comes before Monday it is possible that schools may be further delayed. Announcement will be made through press and radio this weekend, Mr. Peek said.

Unemployment Benefits Are Given For 1957

Raleigh, Feb. 20 — Henry E. Kendall, chairman of the Employment Security Commission for North Carolina, today announced that a final tally of benefit disbursements by the state agency indicated that unemployment insurance benefits totaled \$33,445,860 for 1957 and covered 1,865,800 payments. In 1956 the ESC made 1,488,400 payments totaling \$25,118,200. Only in the calendar year 1954 when \$37,537,653 was disbursed have benefit outlays been higher than during the calendar year just ended.

Kendall said that among the 27,499 insured workers employed in the Asheville Employment Security office area, the average number of unemployed in the average week during 1957 was 1082, representing 2.79 per cent of the State total.

4-Foot Snake Is Killed By Jeter Worley Saturday

Jeter Worley, of Marshall, had an unusual experience for February when he spotted a 4-foot long black snake near his home last Saturday. He grabbed a shovel and killed the reptile but no one would believe him when he told about it. In order to prove that he was telling the truth, Mr. Worley brought the snake to Marshall Wednesday and visited The News-Record office. "Maybe if you put it in the paper people will believe it," Mr. Worley said.

Basketball Tourney To Start Next Wednesday

ASC REPORTS ON SOIL BANK PARTICIPATION

10 million acres that would otherwise have been planted to surplus allotment crops have been planted in the Soil Bank's Reserve Program by farmers throughout the Nation. As an interesting comparison to this overwhelming participation in the Acreage Reserve, E. W. Avent, in charge of Soil Bank work for the Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation State Committee, said that nationwide participation in the other half of the program — the Conservation Reserve — totaled only one million acres. The sign-up of one million acres in the Conservation Reserve Program has been going on since 1955, while

Sources For Children Are Being

A quiet search is under way in North Carolina for scholarship resources to help outstanding high school seniors from the State's lowest income families go on to college or vocational school. Exceptionally well-qualified students in families receiving aid to dependent children (ADC) have been recommended by caseworkers in county departments of public welfare and by the principals of the high schools the students attend. Local scholarship resources in each community are being sought to help finance college or vocational training beyond high school graduation for such students.

This is the plan now being carried out by the State Board of Public Welfare which supervises aid to dependent children (ADC) as one of the public assistance programs of the State. This is one

Ice-Covered Island Causes Postponement; Pairings Are Made

W. W. Peek, superintendent, announced here today that the Madison County High School Basketball Tournament, scheduled to begin Wednesday night of this week, had been postponed one week — until Wednesday night, February 26. Huge ice packs on the Island caused the postponement.

Opening night pairings are as follows:

6:00 p. m. — Girls: Laurel vs. Hot Springs.

7:00 p. m. — Boys: Mars Hill vs. Spring Creek.

8:00 p. m. — Girls: Marshall vs. Spring Creek.

9:00 p. m. — Boys: Hot Springs vs. Laurel.

The Mars Hill and Walnut girls drew byes in the opening round and the Marshall and Walnut boys also drew byes in opening round play.

Woodworkers To Meet February 27 At Cullowhee

A woodworkers' conference dealing with the subject "Wood Finishing" will be held Thursday, February 27, at Western Carolina College, Cullowhee, N. C. The meeting will begin at 8:30 a. m. in the woodworking shop located in the Stillwell Building. All woodworkers and others interested in this subject are cordially invited to attend. The one-day meeting will feature discussions and demonstrations of finishing techniques, new developments in finishing material and their use, and everyday problems of wood finishing.

NOTICE

Please do not build fires on or around Meter Boxes trying to thaw the ice. It will warp and ruin meters and they are costly.

CITY OFFICIALS

Island Covered; Bridges In Danger Of Collapsing

'58 SOIL CONSERVATION PROGRAM

As the hours passed, the water beneath the ice packs pushed them up and up until at 11:00 o'clock the solid ice crest reached the "floor" of the bridges and to the top of the wall at either end of Main Street. Twice, the icy masses moved swiftly down the river but both times came to sudden stops as it jammed.

Attempts to dynamite the tons of ice near Martin's Rock were futile. Stick after stick were fired but so deep were the layers of ice, that the dynamite had no more effect than would a two-inch firecracker.

Adding to the anticipation was the condition of the river and ice on the Blannhasset Island. By mid-morning the ice had overflowed onto the Island and against the three buildings, making it impossible to reach the school plant. Ice was pushed by more ice until the street behind the Island was covered. It was indeed a sad experience for everyone as hundreds watched from the banks and railroad tracks.

To add to the already alarming situation, the river started "backing up" into two storm outlets on Main Street between the REA Building and the Marshall Presbyterian Church. By early Tuesday afternoon, it was impossible for cars to move through the water, more than two-feet deep, without stalling or ruining the brakes. Highway officials closed the highway at this point at 3:30 o'clock to all vehicles.

Fortunately at 4:30 o'clock, waters started receding and the street was again opened to traffic.

Water reached many basements doing considerable damage but did not get into the street floors of any business places.

The unusual and picturesque appearance of the river caused many amateur photographers to

Street Closed To Traffic For While; Photographers Have Field Day

Marshall experienced one of its most fearsome days in history Tuesday when tons of ice jammed in the French Broad River. Sub-zero weather Monday night completely froze the usually swift French Broad and it had the appearance of rugged white cotton when daylight arrived Tuesday.

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LIKE ARCTIC WASTELAND, frozen French Broad River at Marshall this week was threatening and treacherous. As river froze nearly solidly across, pressure mounted against old Asheville Highway Bridge (left) which crosses river from center of town opposite the Courthouse to Bailey's Branch Road which goes through Sandy Mush to Asheville.



Spur bridge (at right in photo) serves Marshall High School on Blannhasset Island. Presence of this ice pack on downstream side of Marshall caused storm sewers to back water into business district (center), with depths up to three feet. View looks toward Asheville. Water in front of Presbyterian Church between two and three feet deep. Meanwhile, on



the upstream, south side of town, the Old Cotton Mill Hill Bridge (right) was also blanketed by ice, although conditions appeared worse at the downstream bridge. The icy crush abated somewhat by late afternoon, and waters in the streets subsided.

Out courtesy Asheville Citizen-Times. Photos by Gumble and Bell