



Mars Hill Demonstration Hits Marshall Tuesday

Both Sides Air Their Differences In Raleigh

Dr. Duck Speaks For Better Schools Committee; 15 Are In Attendance

Raleigh — Two sides in a Madison County dispute over firing of Mars Hill School principal Ralph E. Neill Jr., had a face-to-face showdown before the State Board of Education Thursday.

A group led by Dr. W. Otis Duck of Mars Hill leveled a series of six specific charges against Madison school authorities, protested Neill's firing was "illegal and without just cause," and tried to block the state board's approval of Madison Supt. Fred Anderson pending an investigation of the Madison affair.

The board later weighed the statements against Anderson briefly, decided the allegations involving him were "technical trivialities," and approved his election by the Madison Board of Education.

The second group was led by Zeno Ponder, member of the Madison school board and county Democratic leader, who came to Raleigh Wednesday after the presence of Dr. Duck's group became known. (Duck and his company came Tuesday, aired his grievance to a Senate committee Wednesday.)

In an hour-long session, the two sides put their cases to the state board, and at times, to each other.

At one point, Ponder and Duck became heated in arguing over (Continued To Page Six)

CHAIRMEN FOR DAIRY MONTH ARE ANNOUNCED

Wade Huey has been named Madison County chairman for June Dairy Month and Mrs. Zeno Ponder has been named Woman's chairman. Their appointment was announced this week by John F. Brown of Black Mountain, Western North Carolina chairman and Mrs. Sylvia Carr of Asheville, area woman's chairman.

June Dairy Month is a nationwide promotion program to call attention to the importance of the dairy industry and to point out the contribution of dairy products (Continued To Page Eight)

ONLY 98 SHOW UP AT MARS HILL SCHOOL ON WED.

Only 98 of Mars Hill School's 943 pupils showed up for classes yesterday (Wednesday) morning as a protest movement against the firing of Principal Ralph E. Neill Jr., continued.

School buses, only two of which operated Tuesday, followed schedule and picked up the students who were ready for school. The drivers called off their one-day strike after Neill asked them to resume operations.

Mars Hill teachers were on hand and taught all classes for which they had students.

J. G. Gardner, Madison County School Board member from the Mars Hill school district who named members of the local school committee, said Wednesday that he and his family were disturbed Tuesday night by cars which drove back and forth in front of his home on Walker Branch Road.

Occupants of the cars, Gardner said, threw trash and lighted (Continued To Last Page)

Teachers Named For Spring Creek, Hot Springs, Laurel

Few Changes In Rosters; Others Lists Available Soon

Superintendent Fred W. Anderson this week announced the principals and teachers for Spring Creek, Hot Springs and Laurel Schools. Principals and teachers for other county schools will be announced later, Mr. Anderson said.

Those for the three schools are:

SPRING CREEK
HIGH SCHOOL: Owen W. Fish, principal; Patricia Jamerson, Arlene Reese, Howard Trimble.

ELEMENTARY: Jack V. Joyce, Ruby Price, Martha Lou Fleming, Caney J. Smith, Jessie Mae Lunsford, Jeanette Meadows, (Continued To Last Page)

RHODODENDRON FESTIVAL PLANS ARE ANNOUNCED

The 15th Annual North Carolina Rhododendron Festival will be held this year on June 22, 23, 24, and 25th, according to the Bakersville Lions Club, which has been sponsoring this event since it started.

This year, visitors to the Festival will see two new events added to the already popular mountain top festival. On Thursday night, June 22, something new in the form of A Junior Miss Rhododendron Pageant will be featured with girls eight through eleven being judged on talent, swim suit, and evening gown competition. A Junior Miss Rhododendron Queen will be chosen and she will appear in many events with the regular (Continued To Last Page)

Whitten Confirmed Acting Postmaster

Hot Springs — Official appointment of William T. Whitten as acting postmaster of Hot Springs has been confirmed by certificate of appointment and correspondence from J. Edward Day, Postmaster General.

The certificate was presented to Whitten Monday in Hot Springs by Ralph Green, field service officer, and Willard T. Martin, associate field service officer.

WALNUT ALUMNI BANQUET TO BE HELD MAY 27

The 14th annual Walnut High School Alumni Banquet will be held Saturday night, May 27, at 7:30 o'clock at the school.

An interesting program is planned. Plates will be \$1.50 each with the dues amounting to 50 cents. Those planning on attending are asked to notify Miss Odessa Henderson, Walnut, N. C.

The time to avoid many fatal accidents is before they occur. Afterwards, it is too late to do the victims any good.

County Students Enter School Bus Rodeo At Biltmore

The 6th Annual School Bus Rodeo for District 29, sponsored by the Governor's Traffic Safety Council, will be held at Biltmore High School Athletic Field, Saturday, May 13.

Competition is open to graduating seniors of the 1960-61 school year. Each contestant must have driven a school bus one year and possess an accident free-violation record.

Contestants will be judged on the basis of knowledge, skill and attitudes in the safe operation of school buses. The competition will be conducted by the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction, State Board of Education, and Department of Motor Vehicles.

District 29 is composed of Transylvania, Buncombe, Yancey, Madison and Mitchell counties.

Contestants from Madison County are Jerry Ricker, Marshall High School; Nicky Roberts, Walnut High School; Woody Ammons, Mars Hill High School; and T. V. Tweed, Laurel High School.

Citizens For Better Schools In Raleigh May 4

Appearing before the State Board of Education in Raleigh from Madison County last Thursday concerning the ouster of Ralph E. Neill Jr., as Mars Hill principal, were the following citizens:

J. Clyde Brown, Fred Holcombe, Dr. and Mrs. Otis Duck, Judson Edwards, Rex Allen, F. R. Elam, Benian Boone, Everett Robinson, Bobby Robinson, Bruce Murray, Liston B. Ramsey, Zeno H. Ponder, Brown Ammons and Eugene Reese.

Coon Hunters' Club To Sponsor Fish Fry May 17

The French Broad Coon Hunters' Club will sponsor a fish fry at Old Mill Wheel Wednesday, May 17, from 5 p. m., to 8 p. m.

The proceeds will go to restock coons in Madison and Buncombe counties.

ATTENTION, FIREMEN

Allen Duckett, Marshall Fire Chief, announces that a fire drill will be held on the Island Friday night at 7:30. All firemen are urged to be present.

MADISON COUNTY HEALTH DEPT. CLINIC CALENDAR

Thursday, May 11, 1:00-4:00 p. m., General Immunization Clinic, Mars Hill Town Hall.

Friday, May 12, 9:00-12:00 a. m., General Immunization Clinic; 1:00-4:00 p. m., Health Center.

Monday, May 15, 1:00-3:00 p. m., General Immunization Clinic, Hot Springs Recreation Building.

Tuesday, May 16, 9:00-12:00 a. m., 1:00-4:00 p. m., General Immunization Clinic, Health Center.

Thursday, May 18, 1:00-4:00 p. m., General Immunization Clinic, Mars Hill Town Hall.

Friday, May 19, 9:00-1:00 p. m., Chest X-ray Clinic, Health Center (by appointment only); 9:12:00 a. m., 1:00-4:00 p. m., General Immunization Clinic, Health Center.

Monday, May 22, 1:00-3:00 p. m., General Immunization Clinic, Hot Springs Recreation Bldg.

Thursday, May 25, 1:00-4:00 p. m., General Immunization Clinic, Mars Hill Town Hall.

Friday, May 26, 9:00-12:00 a. m., 1:00-4:00 p. m., General Immunization Clinic, Health Center.

Monday, May 29, 1:00-3:00 p. m., General Immunization Clinic, Hot Springs Recreation Bldg.

Tuesday, May 30, 9:00-12:00 a. m., 1:00-4:00 p. m., General Immunization Clinic, Health Center.

600 Fill Courthouse; Ponder, Anderson Speak

E. B. BAILEY IS PRINCIPAL AT MARS HILL

The Mars Hill School Committee Monday night elected Erskine B. Bailey of Yancey County to succeed Ralph E. Neill as principal of Mars Hill School.

The committee on April 18 voted against giving Neill a contract for next year and since that time had received several applications for the position.

Committee chairman D. M. Robinson, in announcing Bailey's election, said the committee carefully screened "about six" applications before picking its man.

All five members of the committee — Robinson, B. B. Ammons, Eugene Reese, Paul Gillis and O. E. Anderson Jr. — voted in favor of Bailey, who served as principal of the school for a period of about five years before leaving some 20 years ago.

Tempers Flare And Heated Words Exchanged At Protest Meeting

An impromptu mass meeting in the Madison County Courthouse here between school officials and irate citizens of the Mars Hill School District ended in a stalemate Tuesday afternoon.

Zeno Ponder, a member of the County Board of Education, and Fred W. Anderson, county school superintendent, faced more than 600 persons who crowded into the courtroom.

The two reminded the gathering that the Mars Hill School Committee had acted within the law last month when it refused to offer Ralph E. Neill Jr., a contract for next year and later elected Erskine Bailey of Yancey County to succeed Neill as principal.

The meeting was the end result of an early morning mothers march on the Mars Hill School. The mothers, carrying signs and chanting slogans, began picketing the school about 8:30 a. m.

By 11 a. m., a large crowd of parents, former students and other interested parties had gathered at the school. A suggestion that they go to Marshall caught the crowd's fancy and in short order about 100 cars were on the way here.

Arriving here about 11:30 a. m., the citizens parked their cars on (Continued To Last Page)

Mars Hill Faculty Declines To Sign Offered Statement

Teachers of Mars Hill School refused to sign a statement to accept further employment when Fred W. Anderson, superintendent of Madison County Schools, offered it to them at an informal meeting Monday in the school.

The faculty met with the County Board of Education at the board's request which came after 30 of the teachers had signed a statement declaring that they would not teach at Mars Hill next year unless the local school committee "reconsiders its action" in refusing to elect principal Ralph E. Neill Jr. for the next year.

After two hours of questions and answers, the meeting broke up when Henry Clay Edwards, one of the teachers, emotionally left the room after reading the statement proposed by the board.

Tears In Eyes
Although several of the teachers

remained to talk with the Board members, most of them trickled out in small groups, many of them with tears in their eyes.

The teachers were told that the Mars Hill School Committee was to meet Monday night to elect a principal and that the board wanted to know if the faculty would remain at Mars Hill.

Although many of the teachers indicated they might sign the document at a different time and place, several of them bluntly told the board that if Neill goes they will go with him.

Many of them particularly objected to the last two paragraphs of the statement which expressed a confidence in the Mars Hill School Committee to choose the best possible principal and regretted (Continued To Page Three)

Mars Hill School Bus Drivers Go On Strike Tues.

The Mars Hill school crisis deepened Tuesday as at least nine of the school's 13 bus drivers went on strike to protest the firing of Principal Ralph E. Neill.

Neill said only about 75 of the 383 students were in school Tuesday morning. He said most of them came on two buses which did run. One bus is out of order.

Meanwhile, mothers began arriving at the school this morning and started a protest demonstration.

Neill said the decision by the bus drivers to go on strike was (Continued To Page Six)



MASS PROTEST MEETING Tuesday in the Courthouse at Marshall was an outgrowth of a mothers' march on Mars Hill School earlier in the day to protest the firing of Principal Ralph E. Neill Jr. In the picture at the left Zeno Ponder, a member of the Madison County Board of Education, interrupted a state-

ment while Rex Allen, a former county commissioner and spokesman for the protesting citizens, raised his hands in an attempt to restore order. During the meeting people in the crowd kept posters prominently displayed — while back at the school bus drivers were lounging on buses which they brought to school

empty. Before the meeting in the Courthouse, a crowd estimated at more than 600 paraded up and down the main street in Marshall carrying signs and chanting slogans.

— Col. Correy Ashcraft, Editor-Press