

The News-Record

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JAMES I. STORY, Editor

SUBSCRIPTION RATES IN MADISON COUNTIES	RATES IN ADJOINING COUNTIES	SUBSCRIPTION RATES OUTSIDE MADISON COUNTY
15 Months \$4.50	15 Months \$6.00	
12 Months 4.00	12 Months 5.00	
9 Months 3.50	9 Months 4.00	
6 Months 3.00	6 Months 3.00	
4 Months 2.50	4 Months 2.50	

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AIR MAIL 40¢ Per Week

EDITORIAL

Recent incidents involving misconduct by "outsiders" have resulted in concern by players and parents of both the Marshall and Laurel areas. This is a deplorable situation which should be stopped immediately before other incidents, perhaps worse, occur.

Although misconduct has been evidenced at basketball games during recent months, the latest incident occurred near Marshall on Highway 25-70 a few nights ago when someone threw a rock into the Laurel Activity Bus when the team was returning from a game at East Yancey. The same night the Marshall teams were playing at Sylva-Webster high school. This points a guilty finger at "outsiders" and not players.

This rock-throwing incident is not only cowardly but could result in serious damage.

We have no idea who instigates these incidents or who is guilty but this sort of behaviour must be stopped.

Cane River has recently experienced embarrassment by similar rock-throwing and because of this innocent players and the school's reputation have been damaged.

We heard one parent remark that it was a shame that things had gone so far between Marshall and Laurel that it was actually dangerous to attend a game. This particular parent had a daughter on one of the teams. This is disgraceful!

These seems to be a small minority of persons involved. For the most part, parents, players, students, officials and fans are fine people of both Marshall and Laurel who deplore such nonsense. This bitter feeling between these few trouble-makers should be stopped before more serious damage is done.

Whether or not these incidents are caused by actual competition of basketball or personal hate from some other source we do not know.

In the next two years, if plans go through, the players of Marshall and Laurel will be on the same team when the consolidated high school is completed. The combined loyalty of all county teams at present will be concentrated for one county team.

These sectional "differences" should be dissolved NOW so that the athletic atmosphere will be conducive to better sportsmanship, both of players and fans, when that time comes.

Efficiency

Congratulations to the Southern Railway officials and crewmen for doing such an efficient job at clearing up the wreck in such a short time.

When the tracks were littered with tilted and wrecked freight cars with some embedded in buildings and some in the French Broad River, the average person would have surmised that it would take probably a week to get things straightened out. The efficiency by which the crewmen worked, however, had the main lines open for train traffic late Saturday night and clearing was completed on Monday for the most part.

Each workman had his particular job to do and did it with great speed.

This writer talked with many of the officials and workmen and found them to be most cooperative and friendly. We appreciate the consideration afforded "the press" in allowing us to go within the roped off areas to take pictures and mingle with the men.

We sympathize with the Southern Railway with the immense cost and expense caused by such accidents.

Again, we commend everyone for a difficult job well done.

Haulers secure loads

Motor vehicles hauling rock, gravel, stone, or other similar substance must secure their load to prevent any of the load from dropping, shifting, leaking, or otherwise escaping onto the highway.

Assistant Motor Vehicle Commissioner J. M. Penny announced today that the Highway Patrol and enforcement officers of the License and Theft Division of the Department are enforcing a law which became effective January 1, 1972.

According to Penny, the law provides that "trucks, trailers, or other vehicles when loaded with rock, gravel, stone, or other similar substance which could blow, leak, shift, or drop shall not be driven or moved on any highway unless the height of the load against all four walls does not extend above a horizontal line six inches below their tops when loaded at the loading point, or if so loaded, unless the load shall be securely covered by tarpaulin or some other suitable covering."

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Time No Longer Stands Still In Madison County

By **CONNIE BLACKWELL**
Citizen-Times Staff Writer

MARSHALL — Madison County is no longer a place where time stands still.

Until recently it was typical of the Southern Appalachian counties included in the excellent book by Nancy and Bruce Roberts, "Where Time Stood Still," but, during the past year it has accelerated tremendously.

Among other things construction is underway near here for the county's first shopping center, for 50 units of low rent housing and for a consolidated high school. The county's recreational opportunities have also been expanded.

Marshall, the county seat, is in the process of enlarging its city limits and application has been made to the Appalachian Regional Commission for funds for a new sewerage and water system. Bids will be opened Jan. 25 on six miles of U.S. 19-23 improvement, a four-lane, interstate-standard highway from north of Weaverville to N.C. 38 according to State Highway Commissioner Novil Hawkins of Mars Hill. The project is estimated at about \$8 million.

Hawkins also said that contracts on N.C. 213 from Mars Hill to Marshall and from Marshall to Spring Creek are expected to be let this year, which will leave a five-mile section across the mountains to be let next year. When these roads are completed, access will be available by good roads to practically all sections of the county.

In fact, as Robert Edwards, school superintendent, says, "We don't have any problems that money and roads won't solve."

The Opportunity Corporation of Madison and Buncombe Counties deserves credit for much of the progress to date in health care and community services during the past few years.

And Mars Hill College, a four-year Baptist institution, has done its share to help. The college, with a payroll of 272 and an operating budget of more than \$3 million, is the largest "industry" in the county.

In addition to staff and faculty member participation in drives, such as the committee that spearheaded the school consolidation drive which was headed by Mars Hill President, Dr. Fred Bentley, the school has co-sponsored VISTA projects; operates the only Upward Bound program in Western North Carolina for high school students; operates the accreditation center for the Career Opportunities Program; and provides facilities for public meetings, cultural, sports and entertainment events, and offers applied music lessons and summer recreation programs for local young people.

Last year, a group of students worked on tracking down pesticide pollution in county streams and made a survey of public sentiment on a sanitary landfill and solid waste collection which will be invaluable in the county's plans for such a system. Students also studied other water pollution problems and made a survey of junked cars in the county which, hopefully, will aid in the county's removal of the discarded vehicles.

All of the proposed programs, no matter how good, including those spearheaded by the college, depend on money and roads, as Edwards said. Also to be taken into consideration, however, is the geography of the county, the attitude of the people and the political situation.

Madison is bordered by Buncombe, Haywood and Yancey Counties and the State of Tennessee, was established in 1860 from



CONNIE BLACKWELL

Buncombe and Yancey, and includes 456 square miles (281,840 acres) of mostly "hills and hollows." It does not have the water resources or flat land available for heavy industry.

Walnut was originally the county seat, then called Jewell (or Duel) Hill, but Marshall has been county seat for about 100 years now. The town, situated on the banks of the French Broad River, is described by natives as "one mile long, one street wide and sky high."

The town is fixing to expand out of that long, narrow valley, however, by annexing a section of the 25-70 Bypass, located over the top of the ridge, the section that includes the new shopping center and school. Mayor Laredo Ponder says papers are being prepared now for the annexation.

Most of the county's economy is agricultural, although County Extension Agent Earl Wise says, "We have a smaller number of farmers each year. The average income from each farm is larger but the bigger farmers are buying up the little operators and there are fewer farms with more acreage."

Wise says about 1,500 of the county's 16,000 population (1970 census) consider themselves farmers. The total 1970 income from agricultural sources was \$8,137,575. He said the 1971 income is expected to be down slightly because too much rain hurt the tobacco and other crops.

Figures for the past year are not totaled yet, he said, except for burley tobacco, \$3,477,000, and tomatoes, \$1,388,000. New crops tried out last year and expected to increase in future years are trellis cucumbers and strawberries. Wise said also that several greenhouses have begun operations here.

The people in Madison County remain rurally oriented with strong ties to the land. They are somewhat defensive about their county, especially with strangers.

They say, and rightly, that things happen in other Western North Carolina counties that are just the same or worse than in Madison... but somehow whatever happens here is news.

The people are mainly Protestant, strongly individualistic, believe in minding their own business and expect the same of others, have a well-developed sense of responsibility and hospitality.

A description of Appalachian people in the Roberts' book is very appropriate to Madison — "a courageous, sometimes ornery people determined to live life in their own way."

Even today, they don't accept outsiders quickly or easily, and with good reason. Madison people have long memories and the outsiders who came in and bought property and rights in the last part of the 19th Century and the first years of this one took advantage many times of mountaineers who couldn't read and conned them into selling their birthright for a handful of silver.

Also, writers and reporters have visited the county briefly, forgotten to learn about the background and culture there, and transplanted Madison County

events into alien cultures, those with which the writers are familiar. And too many of the resulting stories have left false impressions of the people here and their way of life.

No story on Madison is complete without a discussion of politics and without mentioning the Ponders, particularly Zeno who seems to deflect controversy from the rest of the Democrats sort of like a lightning rod.

Ponders have lived in the county almost from the beginning of a settlement there, a J. M. Ponder is listed as township clerk in West Fork in 1870. But this branch of the family began making news after World War II.

Zeno returned from college and the war dissatisfied with the progress of his home county compared to the rest of the country. He says he realized the reason Madison wasn't making progress was because the county had been Republican since the days of the War Between the States and the state was consistently Democrat, leaving Madison on the short end of receiving state funds and getting roads built.

He traces the seriousness with which politics is taken in Madison back to the Civil War when most of the residents were Union sympathizers and consequently became Republicans while a smaller number of Confederate sympathizers became Democrats.

"Bitterness over the war developed into long feuds and quarrels between families leaving hatreds that are passed down to this day," Ponder says.

So he set out to build a two-party system in the county and there are those who think he did a magnificent job and others who class him just a little above the Devil himself.

He made himself felt in politics for the first time in 1960, when two of the handful of Democrats ever elected in the county went into office. One was E. Y. Ponder who was elected sheriff. Zeno credits his older brother, E. Y., for his getting through college and taking an interest in the county. "He kept after me until I finished the way our parents wanted one of us to."

E. Y. has been Sheriff ever since except for the four-year term between 1964 and 1968, when the Republicans won. He is not the big, burley stereotyped mountain lawman but is highly respected by fellow law officers. A Buncombe County deputy said not long ago, "E. Y. got more courage than anybody I know. He's gone by himself back into the Laurels to pick up (a suspect) and I'll bet he doesn't even have a gun. But he'll bring the guy back!"

The Ponders insist all they want is for the county to progress with a healthy political climate which means competition between both parties.

Joe L. Morgan, GOP county chairman, said there will be a two-party system in the future with keen competition in the upcoming elections. He said, "In the decade between 1954 and 1964, we almost had a closed society here and the people had little or no control. I hope in the future, there will be a de-emphasis on petty politics and more emphasis on improving human values. I believe Republicanism is synonymous with national integrity and fiscal soundness and I think people here are beginning to recognize that."

Morgan said, "The main need now is for a restoration of political balance and a new confidence in public officials." He said political science shows that tactics used in Soviet Russia are similar to those used in some small country governments, and that a two-party system is important but politics should

not be ingrained in every facet of individual's lives in a county.

Others who have been influential in getting the county moving in recent years are N. C. Rep. Liston Ramsay; Solicitor Clyde Roberts; William Powell, mayor of Mars Hill; Dedrick Bowman; Delmar Payne; and Ed Masab-

BERTHES...
To Mr. and Mrs. Harry D. Docherty, Hot Springs, a daughter, January 22, 1972, in Memorial Mission Hospital.



A One-Street-Wide County Seat

Marshall, county seat of Madison County, is planning the annexation of land between the "one mile long, one street wide, sky-high" town and the U.S. 25-70

Bypass which will include the territory at the top of the picture now being graded for a new shopping center and consolidated

school, and possibly a new industry. The problem with any construction in this county is finding level land. (Staff Photos by Malcolm Gamble)



New Construction In Madison

The graded area in the foreground is part of the 5.38 acre site of Madison County Plaza, the county's first shopping center which will be built by Harry Gierentanner of Asheville for about \$495,000. It will house up to 10 tenants in 45,000 square feet. Across the road, the 25-70 By-

pass is the site for the new consolidated school. This is the first new school to be built here in about 30 years and is being partially financed by a county bond issue approved by voters in May, 1970, for \$950,000. Federal funds on the \$3 million school amount to \$715,000 and state funds are

\$384,000. The school will house an estimated 1,000 students, about 165 teachers; will include a 3,000-seat gymnasium, 59 classrooms, labs, offices, and vocational education facilities; and will be heated electrically and have air conditioning.



Madison Housing Units

Shown here on Walnut Creek Road near Marshall are some of the 50 unfinished, low-rent units to be constructed by the Marshall Housing Authority. The units will include 13 structures with apartments ranging from one to four-bedroom,

and with 16 constructed especially for the elderly. Also included will be a community, office and maintenance building. The \$1 million project will be financed entirely by federal funds. Four other units will be built on this site and the rest are to be

built on Main Street in Marshall. Mrs. J. B. Tweed is executive director of the project, and Leonard Baker is chairman of the housing authority. Behind the structures is a hill of solid rock, one of the hazards of construction in Madison County.

turn, attorney and chairman of the board of Citizens Bank and Trust Co. here.

Masaburn says, and most of the others agree, that the development future of the county is in the recreational field. The Wolf Laurel Ski Resort, started several years ago by Bald Mountain Development Corporation is

perhaps the largest in the county.

Located near the Tennessee line, the development includes vacation home sites, a motor lodge, trout streams, golf courses and a ski slope that is due to open within the next weekend or so.

Other recreational op-

portunities include the U. S. Forest Service's Rocky Bluff Campground, located two miles south of Hot Springs on N. C. 208 on Spring Creek. It has 23 tent sites, 23 trailer sites, and restrooms on five acres of land.

There are also large and small game hunts held on the

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