

THE NEWS RECORD

SERVING THE PEOPLE OF MADISON COUNTY

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SHERIFF E.Y. PONDER is shown standing in an acre of marijuana which was seized

Sunday on Caldwell Branch on Big Pine. The plants ranged from eight to 12 feet high.

Officers Burn Record 'Grass' Haul, Arrest 2

Sheriff Ponder, deputies and others seized an estimated 8,000 pounds of marijuana Sunday in a remote area of Madison County in what Ponder stated was the largest single growth ever taken in this county. It will be recalled that a little more marijuana was seized about a year ago, but it was from several different locations.

Sunday's haul was cut down in the Caldwell Branch section of Big Pine, about 18 miles northwest of Marshall. Patrick Irwin, 24, and Roy W. Hatfield Jr., 33, natives of Connecticut who have lived in this county since last March, were arrested and charged with the manufacture and possession of controlled substance. They have been released under \$2,000 bonds each, Ponder said.

The marijuana, which covered an entire acre, had the street value of between \$100,000 and \$300,000, Ponder stated.

In describing the seizure of the marijuana, Ponder said he and Deputy Clate Grindstaff, Gerald Davis and others, started the search about 5 a.m. Sunday morning and stayed on the job for 14 hours. Using a four-wheel drive truck they went to the scene to find an acre of marijuana growing, with most of the "weed" eight to 12 feet high and ready to harvest in two or three weeks. Ponder stated that a large barn had been built on the property presumably to store the marijuana.

Trucks were loaded with the marijuana and returned to Marshall where it was stored in an empty building on Bridge Street and closely watched Sunday night by officers to prevent anyone breaking into the building.

A preliminary hearing of Irwin and Hatfield is scheduled for Aug. 10 in District Court here.

MARIJUANA BURNED
Despite heavy showers, the captured marijuana was burned Monday afternoon in the incinerator on the Island under the direction of Sheriff Ponder. Many persons braved the showers to see some 8,000 pounds of the "weed" go up in smoke.



BILLOWS of smoke and fire roared into rainy skies Monday afternoon as some 8,000 pounds of marijuana, with street values estimated between \$100,000 and

\$300,000, went up in smoke. The burning took place at the incinerator on the Island here. (Phot by Jim Story)

To Pave Roads

Madison County Gets \$283,000 Less

The N. C. Department of Transportation will have \$283,000 less this fiscal year to spend on Madison County's unpaved secondary roads than last year.

That is because state government has allocated less money for secondary roads everywhere and because the DOT will no longer take into consideration the fact road construction in mountain counties costs more than it does in the piedmont or coastal plain.

It is that last fact that hits hardest at western counties. If the state has less money it can afford to spend on roads and allocates it equitably, all share alike. But if geographic realities are ignored, mountain counties suffer.

If all counties are allotted money according to miles of unpaved roads — that's the way current legislation reads — mountain counties will fall progressively behind piedmont and coastal plain counties in the condition of their roads. It is a simple dollars and cents fact: if mountain roads cost more per mile to build, as they do, fewer roads can be built than elsewhere in the state. And

when all those in the piedmont and coastal plain have been paved, the mountains will still have long stretches in gravel and dust.

Madison County has 318 miles of unpaved roads now. State government has allotted \$399,200 for paving some of them this fiscal year (ending June 30, 1978). Last year Madison got \$682,200 in its initial allocation; more came later. That's a difference of \$283,000 without the supplement.

Madison is faring the same way as her neighbors. Haywood, for instance, has 242 miles of unpaved roads; she got \$477,200 last year in the initial allocation and will receive \$303,900 this year, a difference of \$175,000. Buncombe, expecting to get about \$900,000, will get closer to \$471,000.

Altogether, the seven counties in the 13th Highway Division which includes Madison will receive \$2,250,000 this year compared to \$4,226,700 last year.

With 141 miles of unpaved roads Yancey will get \$177,700. Mitchell, with 146 miles, will get \$182,900.

Bridges, Secondary Roads Discussed At Hearing Here

By JIM STORY
Bridges and secondary roads in Madison County were the main topics at the public hearing held Wednesday night of last week at the courthouse here.

Highway officials, including Joe Randall, of the State Board of Transportation; Jim Medlin, division engineer; Daniel Martin, assistant division engineer; and Don Dawson, district engineer; explained to the sparse gathering a "recommended program" and heard questions from several persons present, including Dr. Don Anderson, a member of the Madison County Board of Education, other representatives from Mars Hill, and citizens from Grapevine.

The meeting was opened by Mrs. Virginia Anderson, chairperson of the county board of commissioners, who presided. Mrs. Anderson recognized

Randall who explained the purpose of the meeting and introduced Daniel Martin, assistant division engineer, who outlined needs of the county secondary roads.

He pointed out that there were 375 miles of unpaved secondary roads which, if improved and paved, would cost approximately \$30,000,000.

Martin also said that there were 580 miles of paved secondary roads in the county which would cost approximately \$11,000,000 to widen approximately 25 percent of these roads.

He then spoke of the condition of some of the 216 bridges that need to be replaced, but added that this would be approximately \$7,400,000. Martin and Jim Medlin, division engineer, both emphasized the need for rebuilt bridges or for vast improvements due to problems of school buses, log

trucks, fuel trucks, feed trucks and other large vehicles not being able to legally cross many of the bridges. Total county needs for secondary roads is estimated to be \$48,400,000, it was stated.

The recommended program suggested was to use all the money allocated, which is only \$399,900, to replace some of these bridges. Also, to go over these bridges with representatives of the county school board and the commissioners for their approvals.

Officials also told the gathering that where possible repairs would be feasible this would be done, but pointed out that the average cost of repairs was \$1,000 per foot.

Dr. Anderson led a discussion relative to how the secondary road funds were appropriated this year. Randall explained that he is doing all he can to determine answers to some of the questions relative to how the

interpretation concerning allocations of secondary road funds were decided.

The Grapevine spokesman's comments and questions involved a bridge in that area.

Also attending the hearing was Jim Ledford, a member

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Electricity's Going Off Sunday

French Broad Electric Membership Corporation has scheduled power outages Sunday at both their Marshall and Mars Hill substations, weather permitting.

The Marshall substation is scheduled to be off between the hours of 1 and 5 p.m. to allow CP&L crews to repair switches near the Marshall substation. This will affect the following areas: in and around Marshall, Walnut Creek,

Grapevine, East Fork, Little Pine, Walnut, Big Pine, Spring Creek, Laurel and the Hot Springs area.

The Mars Hill substation will be off from 2 to 3:30 p.m. for French Broad EMC crews to remove a booster bank of transformers and do cable splicing. This will affect persons in and around Mars Hill, California Creek, Upper Big Laurel, Middle Fork, Beech Glen, Paint Fork,

Barnardsville and Younglife.

The cooperative urges its members to keep their freezers closed during any extended outage. If a freezer is full it will stay frozen for about two days if it is not opened. A freezer that is half full should stay frozen for about 24 hours. The outage scheduled for Sunday should not be long enough to cause concern for member's freezers or

refrigerators. Stores and filling stations are urged to take proper precautions for their freezers. As long as these freezers are not opened, ice cream and other frozen food should be all right.

French Broad EMC regrets any inconvenience this outage may cause the members and thanks you for your cooperation during this time.

Dance, Folk Festival Set For August 4 - 6

The 50th annual Mountain Dance and Folk Festival, the traditional showcase for Southern Appalachian talent, will take place on the nights of Aug. 4, 5, and 6 in the Thomas Wolfe Auditorium of the Asheville Civic Center.

Founded by the late folklorist, Bascom Lamar Lunsford, of South Turkey Creek, the festival will present old-time mountain music from which Bluegrass sprang and ballads sung in accents kin to those heard when they were aired by the Court of Henry IV.

Musical instruments will include fiddles, dulcimers, five-string banjos, dobros, mouth and jaws harps, musical saws and simple mountain tune bows. However, the emphasis will be on dancing, mountain style. During the three nights of the festival, 352 clog, buck and great circle style square dancers will swirl across the stage.

The traditional opening time is, "along about sundown", in the words of the minstrel of South Turkey Creek. This year, around 7 p.m. each evening, Lamar Lunsford, son of the founder and a veteran of 50 festivals, will officially open the show with "The Gray Eagle." While the fiddlers are playing this favorite tune of Bascom Lunsford, an old-time dancer will show the younger dancers how it should be done. Quentin Ramsey of Madison

County will be the master of ceremonies. He will introduce cloggers and smooth dancers from mountain areas such as Spillcorn Creek, Noontootly, Deep Gap, Sandy Mush, Max Patch and Bushy Mountain, who will compete for the giant dance cups. Winners of the smooth dance and clog dance divisions reign for the year following the festival as champions, "the best in the

mountains." Current champions, the Rough Creek Cloggers of Haywood County and the Valley Springs Smooth Dancers of Limestone, will be on hand Saturday night to defend their titles against the winners of Thursday and Friday nights competition. The team from Limestone won in 1975 and 1976. According to

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U. S. Program To Help Poor Pay Fuel Bills

Lonnie Burton, executive director of the Opportunity Corporation of Madison-Buncombe counties stated that the Opportunity Corporation has been designed as the local administering agency for the special Crisis Intervention program.

Burton stated the purpose of this program is to provide funds to relieve part of the burden of last winter's energy costs on the poor and near

poor. In Gov. James B. Hunt Jr.'s recent news release, the program which begins Tuesday will provide aid in two ways:

1. advance payments of \$100 to utility companies and fuel suppliers to cover future winter bills for low-income citizens over 60 years old who have had trouble meeting last winter's fuel bills;

2. payments of up to \$250 to utility companies and fuel suppliers for low-income persons who have had service shut off because of unpaid bills from last winter.

Gov. Hunt stated that the state's allocation of \$4,020,000.00 for the special Crisis Intervention program will be distributed by the SECO in the Department of Natural Resources and Community Development.

Burton stated that locally, the Opportunity Corporation of Madison-Buncombe counties is administering the program in both Madison and Buncombe county. The allocation

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