

# THE NEWS RECORD

SERVING THE PEOPLE OF MADISON COUNTY

On the Inside . . .

When to start  
caring for teeth?  
Turn to page 3

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## County School Officials Plan Testing Programs

The Madison County School officials, in accordance with the N.C. Competency Testing Law and the Annual Testing Law of 1977, will implement the competency testing program at Madison High School in grade eleven and the annual testing program in grades one, two, three and six in all elementary schools in the county and in grade nine at Madison High.

The N.C. Legislature enacted the Competency Test Law in an attempt to assure that high school graduates possess minimum skills and knowledge necessary to function as a member of society, to provide a means of identifying strengths and weaknesses in the education process and to establish additional means for making the educational system accountable to the public for results.

All students in grade eleven will be tested. This year the competency testing program will be a pilot project — test results will be used for research purposes only. The competency test covers the areas of language arts and mathematics. Groups of students in the state will take different tests so that the N.C. Testing Commission can "test the tests" in order to make a final decision for test adoption for the school year of 1977-78 when the law becomes fully in effect. Madison County eleventh grade students have

been selected by the computer to take only mathematics tests this year. Testing will begin Feb. 27 and continue through March 10. The N.C. Department of Public Instruction contracted with McGraw-Hill Co. for the testing materials and the scoring of the tests.

The Annual Testing Program in grades one, two, three, six and nine will be used to assess the effectiveness of the education process and to assure that each pupil receives the maximum educational benefits from the education process. Initially the testing will be limited to the basic subjects of reading, mathematics, and language skills. Testing in other areas will be considered for subsequent years. The California Achievement Tests will be given. McGraw-Hill will furnish booklets and score the tests. Testing at these grade levels will occur April 4-19.

Special administration procedures will be made for exceptional children in the testing program. Administrators of the tests will deal with exceptional children according to established testing practices and the type and nature of the handicap. Students who are identified as educable mentally retarded (EMR) may be excluded from the testing with approval from the local school board. Parents of an EMR

(Continued on Page 8)

## \$20,000 Fund Drive Set For New Medical Center

The realization of the proposed medical center between Marshall and Walnut came closer at a meeting of interested citizens last Thursday night held in the Madison high school cafeteria where more than 25 persons attended.

The new medical center will be located in the former Madison Grill Building which will be purchased by the Marshall-Walnut communities to be used as a permanent medical center.

Tom Wallin, chairman of the Hot Springs Health Program, presided at the meeting and stated that an option to purchase the property has been negotiated. He also said that the new facility will be under the supervision of the Hot Springs Health Program.

Preliminary remodeling is underway on the interior of the building and when completed will replace the present Walnut Clinic which has been in service several years.

### FUND-RAISING DRIVE

At Thursday night's meeting, plans were made for a fund-raising drive throughout the county to officially start next month. Wallin stated, however, that leaders are now contacting people who will volunteer to work in the drive. He also said that a goal of \$20,000 has been set to help defray costs for renovating the former restaurant into a modern medical center.

Another important meeting to finalize plans for the drive will be held Feb. 28 at 7:30 p.m. in the Madison High School cafeteria when instructions, plans, and other pertinent information will be given to fund solicitors.

"I would like for all those who expressed their support in the beginning to attend the meeting and become involved in this urgent project," Wallin commented.

"When the new center is completed it will be staffed by a full time doctor, a family nurse practitioner (FNP), and other personnel and will be one of the most well-equipped medical centers in Western North Carolina, and will serve citizens throughout the county," Wallin concluded.



## \$465,615 For County Secondary Roads

Madison County can look forward to receiving more than \$465,000 in benefits from the highway bond funds that will be used to improve secondary roads.

The N.C. Board of Transportation has approved an initial allocation of \$30 million from the funds authorized by the State Highway Bond Act of 1977 to be used to improve the State's Secondary Roads System.

Madison County's share of the \$30 million allocation is \$465,615 and is based on a formula prescribed by law. This formula puts all counties on an equal footing by considering the number of unpaved miles of secondary roads in any given county and the relationship of this mileage to the overall mileage of unpaved secondary roads in the state.

Madison County has 317 miles of unpaved roads, while the total mileage of unpaved state maintained secondary roads in North Carolina is 20,476. The \$30 million allocation, approved by the Board of Transportation during its February meeting in Boone, averages out to approximately \$1,465 per unpaved mile.

The "Bond Fund Allocation" is in addition to the \$417,000 already allocated to Madison County for secondary road im-

provements earlier this fiscal year.

"We are glad to be able to put Highway Bond funds to work immediately for the people. It was their overwhelming support at the polls that made the State's Highway Bond Act of 1977 and these initial funds a reality," commented State Secretary of Transportation Thomas W. Bradshaw Jr. "It is such continued citizen participation and support that will enable us to make vast improvements in our highway and transportation systems that will benefit all North Carolinians," concluded Bradshaw.

The \$300 million highway bond act, approved by the voters last November, directs that, over a five-year period,

\$75 million will be used to improve the state's secondary roads system, while \$175 million is for improvements to the primary system and \$50 million is for the state's urban road system.

The Highway Bond funds will be used to meet a variety of improvement needs on the state's secondary roads system.

"Board members and state highway officials will work very closely with local and county officials in determining the best usage of these highway bond funds and in selecting local highway project priorities," explained Board of Transportation member John Millard Gilkey of Marion.

## Election News

### Jimmie Ramsey Announces As School Board Candidate

James A. (Jimmie) Ramsey, of Route 4, Marshall, a Democratic candidate for the Madison County Board of Education, District II, is the son of Mr. and Mrs. Mack Ramsey Jr. of Marshall.

He is a 1974 graduate of Madison High School where he was an outstanding athlete, playing varsity basketball, football and baseball and was

on the track team. He was president of his senior class and was active in all school activities. He is a member of the N.C. Emergency Medical Technicians, the Marshall Volunteer Fire Department and a member of the Walnut Presbyterian Church.

A self-employed farmer, he is married to the former Miss Pam Maxwell.

In announcing his candidacy, Ramsey stated that if nominated and elected he will work toward the upbuilding and welfare of the educational system and the children.



JIMMIE RAMSEY

### Henderson Withdraws From Primary

Clarence Henderson, listed as a candidate for sheriff in the May 2 primary, stated this week that he has withdrawn from the primary.

In making the announcement, Henderson stated that his decision was his own and that there had been no pressure from either political party. He further stated, "I will publish a statement at a later date."

### Terry Wyatt Withdraws From Primary

Terry A. Wyatt, of Upper Laurel (District I) has withdrawn his candidacy for Board of Education in the Republican Primary on May 2, it was announced this week.

PRELIMINARY interior remodeling is in progress for the new Marshall-Walnut Medical Center located between Marshall and Walnut in the former Madison Grill Building. A fund-raising

drive will begin soon to help defray costs of renovating. When completed the facility will be one of the finest in Western North Carolina. (Photo by Jim Story)

## County Achievement Home Gets Administrative Board

Virginia Anderson, Chairman of the County Commissioners, announced this week the composition of the new administrative board for the Madison Achievement Home.

Designated as members were:

Virginia Anderson — Chairman, Madison County Commissioners; Robert H. Lacey — Judge, Juvenile Court; E.Y. Ponder — Sheriff, Madison County; Robert Edwards — Superintendent, Madison County Schools; Don Harrell — Director, Madison County Dept. of Social Services; Linda Carter — Juvenile Court Counselor; Claudio Rabello — Psychologist, Blue Ridge Mental Health Center; Rev. George Moore — Pastor, Marshall Presbyterian Church; D. Otis Duck — Member at large, Mars Hill; Mrs. Susie Jones — Member at large, Mars Hill; Joe Justice — Member at large, Spring Creek.

In its two recent sessions, the board elected Don Harrell, Director of Madison County DSS as its chairman. The Rev. George Moore of Marshall Presbyterian Church, elected Vice-Chairman and Susie Jones of Mars Hill, secretary. A revised version of the by-laws specifying the functions of the board and its methods of

operation was then approved. In other action, the board approved a contract with Yancey County whereby a specified number of service days at the home were sold for use by Yancey County youths. A similar contract may be entered into with Mitchell County but these negotiations are still in the exploratory stage. Acting on a recommendation from the 456 Task Force, the board designated the Rev. James Long from Mars Hill as Community Liaison for the Achievement Home. Discussion of budgetary matters followed a report that the State Office in

Black Mountain had turned over to the county the first check (see picture) of "Community Based Alternatives" funds. This check

(Continued on Page 8)

### Jackie Davis Elected Fire Chief Here

Jackie Davis, of the Rollins section of Marshall, and a member of the board of aldermen, was recently elected fire chief of the Marshall Volunteer Fire Department.

Ray Crowe and Bobby Allen are assistant chiefs. Davis succeeds Bobby Pegg, who recently resigned as fire chief.



COUNTY COMMISSION CHAIRMAN Virginia Anderson receives first "Community Based Alternatives" check for \$3,380 from Bernie Lewis, field consultant for the Department of Human Resources in Black Mountain.

## Board Upholds Fowler Suspension

The Madison County Board of Education conducted a private hearing at Madison High School Feb. 9 in order to determine whether the suspension of Don Fowler from his teaching duties at Madison High School, which was put into effect Jan. 30, should be upheld. The board, after hearing evidence presented on behalf of the school administration and evidence presented on behalf of Fowler, voted to uphold and continue the suspension of Fowler from his teaching duties at Madison High.

Robert L. Edwards, the superintendent of the Madison County School system will now, as required by law, initiate dismissal proceedings

against Fowler. This will be accomplished by the superintendent recommending to the Board of Education that Fowler's employment relationship with the Madison County School system be terminated. Within 15 days after the making of this recommendation, Fowler has the right to request that a panel of the Professional Review Committee be sent into the county for the purpose of making an investigation into the facts surrounding the proposed dismissal of Fowler, and then to make recommendations to the board of education as to whether or not the grounds for the recommendation of the superintendent are true and substantiated.

## Madison Musicians In All-State Bands

Some 350 high school musicians will attend the Western District All-State Band Clinic at Western Carolina University this Friday and Saturday.

Participants from Madison High School include Paul Babelay, percussion; Danny Plant, clarinet; Eric Knitley, alto saxophone; Susan Cox,

trumpet; James Brigman, horn; and Anthony Willis, trombone.

The event, sponsored by the Western North Carolina Bandmasters Association, will include a full range of rehearsals and other musical experiences culminating in a final concert in WCU's Hoey Auditorium at 6:30 p.m. Feb. 18.

Candidates wishing to be introduced through the columns of this newspaper may furnish a brief biography (with or without picture) including address, education background, church and civic memberships, when married and to whom, and other information, and we will publish this initial information without cost. After the initial writeup further space desired will be classed "political advertising," with the cost being \$1 per column inch. Note: such wording "Vote For," etc. will not be accepted in free initial writeup. —The Editor