

# THE NEWS RECORD

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## A New CAW Director Is Based In Mars Hill

Connie Mahoney is a friendly, warm woman who has recently been named executive director of the Council on Appalachian Women, a three-year-old, 13-state organization with headquarters in Mars Hill.

She is a resident of Kingsport, Tenn. and the mother of five children, but still she manages to spend all her weekdays in Mars Hill and traveling throughout the Appalachian region. From her base in a tiny office in Founders Hall, she dedicates her considerable experience and drive to helping women deal with their problems and the broad changes thrust upon them by society.

"This is not a wealthy region," she said in an interview last week. "There is not much employment, and most of the wealth is controlled from outside the region. Women make up 53 percent of the population, and more of them are poor, old, and heads of households here than in other regions. Fewer of them work outside the home, though now they do more than they used to. The people here have poorer health, nutrition, and transportation than people elsewhere. Generally life here involves more stress.

"This is not to say that Appalachian women cannot do for themselves. They can, and they have been for a long time. They have been running farms, getting up early to pack lunches for their husbands and children, going to meetings to get the roads improved, picketing for better working conditions for the men. They've always been a great source of strength for the region.

"But I think that what they haven't done is to recognize there is a common thread that runs through all that women do. The thread is that these things are all done by women. Issues like nutrition and roads and schools and jobs all affect women's lives. And I believe that when women realize that they all share these issues, they achieve a common strength."

This common strength is what the Council on Appalachian Women is trying to build. The Council grew out of a meeting in Boone in October 1976, when about 200 Appalachian women from seven states gathered to discuss issues of common concern. After the meeting they wanted some means of keeping in touch with one another, and the idea of creating the council was born. In December 1976 about 35 of the women met again, at Mars Hill College, and this meeting gave birth to the Council on Appalachian Women — nonprofit organization dedicated to helping Appalachian women "develop their full mental, physical, and spiritual potential."

For the first 18 months of the council's existence it limped along on a shoe-string budget, barely able to pay for heat, lights, and telephone. Then the

Appalachian Regional Commission awarded it a \$54,630 grant, and the North Carolina Humanities Commission put in \$12,565. Mars Hill College had already donated the office where Jeanne Hoffman, of Mars Hill, the first staff director of the council, set up a headquarters. That office is now run by Connie Mahoney and Reva Shelton, the other member of the council staff.

The portion of the grant money donated by the North Carolina Humanities Commission supports an imaginative speaking program throughout the western part of our state.

author Wilma Dykeman Stokely.

"We can't reach everyone we want to reach," said Connie Mahoney. "We can't get out into every community in 13 states; that's impossible. We can't start individual nutrition centers or day care centers or rape crisis centers. But what we can do is help other people to do these things, and show them how other women have dealt with problems in their communities.

"It's my feeling that even if you've lived your whole life in a small community, there are (Continued on Page 2)



THE LICENSE PLATE BUSINESS was a seller's market last week as last-minute drivers formed lines as long as 500 feet outside Vernon Ramsey's R and R, on the Marshall Bypass, the county's only motor vehicle agency. Ramsey, Irene Clark, and Virginia Davis handled approximately 6,000 customers during the last five days before the Feb. 15 registration deadline. Altogether, they sold 11,600 stickers for cars, trucks,

motorcycles, and trailers; 520 stickers for large trucks; and 823 stickers for farm trucks. "This was unusual," said Ramsey. "We didn't have anything like this last year. The lines were so bad in Asheville that I'd say half our customers were from Buncombe County. Things will be easier next year, because they're starting the staggered registration system in July."

## Will Campbell, Dr. Lafayette Speak On Religion In South

Two of this country's most stimulating religious thinkers came to Madison County last week. During the first of several public appearances, they threw out a couple of challenges to a mixed audience of community people, teachers, and students at Belk Auditorium of Mars Hill College.

The Rev. Will Campbell of Mt. Juliet, Tenn., told his audience, made up largely of people belonging to an institution, that institutions are inherently bad.

And Dr. Bernard Lafayette, a native of Alabama who works with the Rev. Jesse Jackson in Operation PUSH in Chicago, warned his audience that the social activity of the 1960's is beginning again, and that they had better be ready for it.

The audience loved all of it. Both men were in the midst of the vast social changes of the '60s, when blacks began their struggle for equal rights, and both have been deeply concerned since then with the broader issues of human rights. They were invited here to speak on "Religion and the Changing South", as part of the Mellon Scholars' series.

Will Campbell, best known for his autobiography, Brother to a Dragonfly, and for founding Katallagete, a journal of southern churchmen, is a wry and irreverent speaker who likes nothing better than attacking clichés and poorly thought-out notions, especially those about the church and the South.

"Ever since I can remember," he said leaning on a wooden cane and peering through spectacles, "people have talked about a 'new South.' Why don't they ever talk about a 'new Midwest', or a 'new Far West'? What's so

new about the South?" He went on to say that if the South is changing, it is changing in ways imposed by the rest of the country. Some of those changes, he said, such as extending the franchise to blacks, are good; others, such as the institutionalization of the church, are not so good.

"All institutions — and that includes Mars Hill College — are after your soul, and most

of the time they win.

"They don't even accomplish their purpose. When I went to school, the institution was defined as an organization to meet the continuing needs of a group. If you teach that definition, and assume that all of us are inherently self-loving, self-preserving creatures, you have a problem.

"Original sin isn't a bad

way to define that problem. To me, original sin means that if you and I were on the side of the mountain as big as this room, we could probably walk it out that we both stay there. But if our piece of mountain-side starts to crumble so that there's just room for one of us, if I have anything to do with it, I know which one's going to go over the cliff."

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## Tomberline To Compete In N.C. Teen-ager Pageant



SUE TOMBERLIN

Suzanne Tomberlin, 17, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Gerald D. Tomberlin of Mars Hill, has been selected to be a finalist in the ninth annual Miss North Carolina National Teen-Ager Pageant. The pageant will be held in Raleigh April 5 at 7:30 p.m. Christie Dee Joiner of Traphill is the reigning Miss North Carolina National Teen-Ager and will crown the new queen. There will be contestants from all over the state competing in the three-day event. Prizes to be awarded include a \$500 cash scholarship, a tuition scholarship to Barbizon International, and an all-expense paid trip to the nationally televised Miss National Teen-Ager Pageant.

Contestants will be judged on scholastic achievement, leadership, poise-personality and appearance. (There is no swimsuit or talent competition). Each contestant will recite a 100-word essay on the subject, "What's Right About America."

Miss Tomberlin is being sponsored by the Mars Hill Lions Club. Her hobbies include skiing, cheerleading, dancing and sewing.

## Joe Justice Is Appointed To Lead Stewart Campaign

Carl Stewart, Speaker of the North Carolina House of Representatives, and Jeanne Hoffman, Madison County Coordinator for the Stewart for Lt. Governor Campaign, announce the appointment of Joe Justice of Spring Creek as co-chairman of the Madison County campaign.

Justice is a life-long resident of Madison County and an active Democrat. He has held numerous offices in the Democratic party and currently serves as chairman of

the Spring Creek precinct. Justice also serves as a member of the Board of Directors of French Broad Electric Membership Corporation.

In making the announcement Mrs. Hoffman stated, "Justice will make an invaluable contribution to this campaign. The Speaker is proud that he has agreed to serve, and I could not be more pleased. I look forward to working with him."

## Mars Hill Urges Re-enactment Of Revenue Sharing

On Jan. 7, the Mayor and Board of Aldermen of the Town of Mars Hill enthusiastically endorsed the continuation of General Revenue Sharing by approving a resolution in support of re-enactment of the General Revenue Sharing Program.

Revenue Sharing funds first began to flow to cities and towns in 1972, when Congress originated the new concept which allowed local flexibility

in spending federal funds. At the program's inception, the funds had to be spent on capital expenditures, but after 1975, Congress allowed towns and cities to use those funds for virtually any municipal purpose.

The Town of Mars Hill has used Revenue Sharing Funds for such projects as a new recreation park, and capital improvements such as public

building renovation and water improvement projects, and for public safety. A large percentage of the current budget is comprised of Revenue Sharing Funds.

Congress is deliberating the fate of the program, especially in light of all the pressures to balance the budget, cut spending, and curb inflation. The Board of Aldermen asked that each citizen contact their

Congressman and Senators in support of Revenue Sharing. The current program is scheduled to terminate on Sept. 30.

The Board of Aldermen has not arrived at a final formula for reducing services or raising taxes to offset any loss of these federal funds. Instead, they have committed themselves to an all-out effort to campaign for re-enactment in hopes of having the funds to

continue services next year. They have concluded, though, that contact with Congressmen by citizens and civic groups is important to the successful re-enactment campaign.

Mayor William P. Powell announced plans for several speaking engagements in the next couple months to inform citizens about Revenue Sharing in the hopes that they will

assist in the campaign.

The North Carolina League of Municipalities, of which the Town of Mars Hill is a member, recently approved a resolution at their 70th Annual Convention, marking General Revenue Sharing as their legislative priority for 1980. The Town of Mars Hill joins 839 other North Carolina towns and cities in this important re-enactment effort.



CONSTANCE MAHONEY, the new executive director of the Council on Appalachian Women, moved to her new office on the

Mars Hill campus last month. "There is a common thread that runs through all that women do," she says.

## Some 350 Skiers Take Advantage Of 'Madison County Ski Night'

When the weather reports called for rain last Friday night, many county residents were worried that Madison County Ski Night might be rained out. But at 6:30 when the Wolf Laurel chairlift started up the slope, the rain was still holding off. Only when the night ended did drops begin falling in earnest.

And the night was a great success. According to Varden Cody, hill manager, over 350 4-H members and county residents took advantage of

the reduced rates to ski on the slopes of Wolf Laurel.

With such a large number of skiers, the slopes were jammed, especially the beginners run. There, every few minutes, a runaway skier would zoom down through the instructors and students. More often than not the headlong rush would end in an awkward but effective nose-dive into the snow.

But after a few tries down the easy slopes, and various words of wisdom from the in-

structors, many beginners felt confident enough to go down the intermediate slope with only minor mishaps. Around the floodlit slopes many people enjoyed what was probably their first adventure on skis.

Because of the great interest in Madison County Ski Night, recreation director Kevin Morley advises that there may be a repeat on Feb. 29. Look for more news of this next week in The News Record.