

THE NEWS RECORD

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Contract Set For New Laurel Clinic

After many months of hard work, delays, and disappointments, members of the Laurel community finally have signed a contract for construction of a new medical center.

Tom Wallin, chairman of the board of the Hot Springs Health Program, signed a contract on Friday, Feb. 29 with H & M Constructors of Asheville calling for completion of the new facility at a total cost of \$155,212. Representing H & M at the signing was Jim Cole.

As of last summer, the amount budgeted for the new center was only \$126,400. A series of problems locating a contractor who would do the job delayed the project all fall, causing local backers to wonder if their dream for a modern facility would remain no more than a dream.

But in a series of quick funding "victories" during the last few weeks, project leaders managed to raise the available budget dramatically

and to meet the price of H & M, owned by Ellis Canady of Asheville, for the construction work.

The first break came last week from the Kate B. Reynolds Health Care Trust, a private foundation based in Winston-Salem. The Reynolds Trust had donated \$13,311 in December for the building, \$10,000 of which was intended specifically for equipment and furnishings. (The rest was to complete the community's

portion of required matching funds.) When informed of the funding predicament, Reynolds agreed to release the \$10,000 to help pay for actual construction.

The next break came at about the same time when the Appalachian Regional Commission agreed to put up an additional grant of \$13,000. "They weren't even very upset," said Michael Norins, director of the Hot Springs Health Project. "They said we

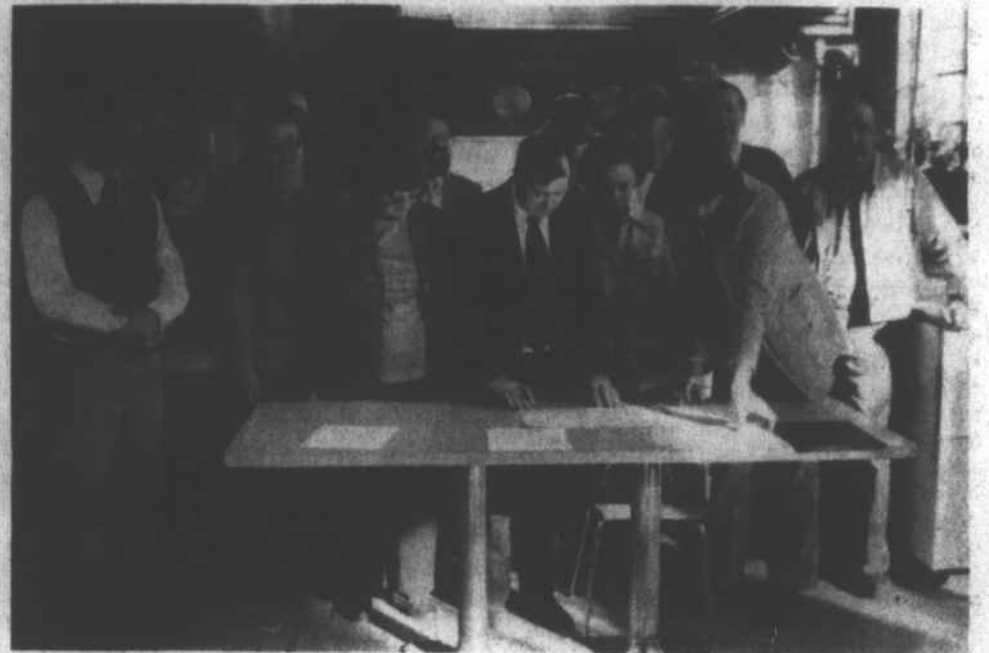
had one of the lowest overruns they had seen in a project of this kind."

The new building will be located at Laurel's principal highway intersection, in Belva, where highways 208, 212, and the Big Laurel road come together. It will supersede the present facility, located in the home of Glendora Cutshall for nearly the last 10 years. Before the donation of that modest facility, there was virtually no medical care for residents anywhere in the region. From the Laurel School, the nearest doctor was in Greenville, Tenn., about 25 miles and 45 minutes' drive away.

So Laurel residents got together early last year and decided to do something about it. Their determination resulted in one of the most successful self-help campaigns in the history of the county. Under the chairmanship of Dennis Tweed, the Building Committee fanned out through the area and put the matter in person to their neighbors.

"The response was unbelievable," said Tweed. "I live up on Cutshalltown Road — not the richest section of the county. But one of my neighbors heard about the plan and he brought \$200 over to my house, and said if we needed any more to let him know. Why, I raised over \$1,100 just on that road alone."

By April 1979 the members (Continued on Page 2)



TOM WALLIN, left, chairman of the board of the Hot Springs Health Program, signs the long-awaited contract to build a new facility for the Laurel Medical Center. At his left is Helen Shelton, treasurer of the fundraising committee. Also signing, for H&M Constructors of Asheville, is Jim Cole, the contractor for the project. Gathered around them at Laurel School for the signing ceremony are members of the building committee, which raised \$16,047.81 by door-to-door solicitation: Neple Adams, Louis Zimmerman, Carol Gunter, Oleta Shelton, Earlis Metcalf, Alma Brackens, Vanda Cook, Myrtle Ray, Dennis Tweed (chairman), and Marie Tweed. Committee members not shown: Ada Jean Shelton, Janie Franklin, and Raymond Cantrell. Also present were Michael Norins, director of the HSHP (far left), and Taylor Barnhill, project architect (at rear, with beard).

'Active' Solar Heating System Installed In House In Walnut

One of the first active solar heating systems in the county was started up last week at the Rev. Jimmy Buckner's home near Walnut.

An active solar system in one that carries heat from one part of a building to another, usually by pumped water. A passive solar system is one

that has no moving parts, and usually consists of windows, skylights, or greenhouses that trap the sun's heat.

The pump at the Buckners was started last Wednesday morning on a bright, sunny day with the outside temperature in the 20s and the solar collectors half covered

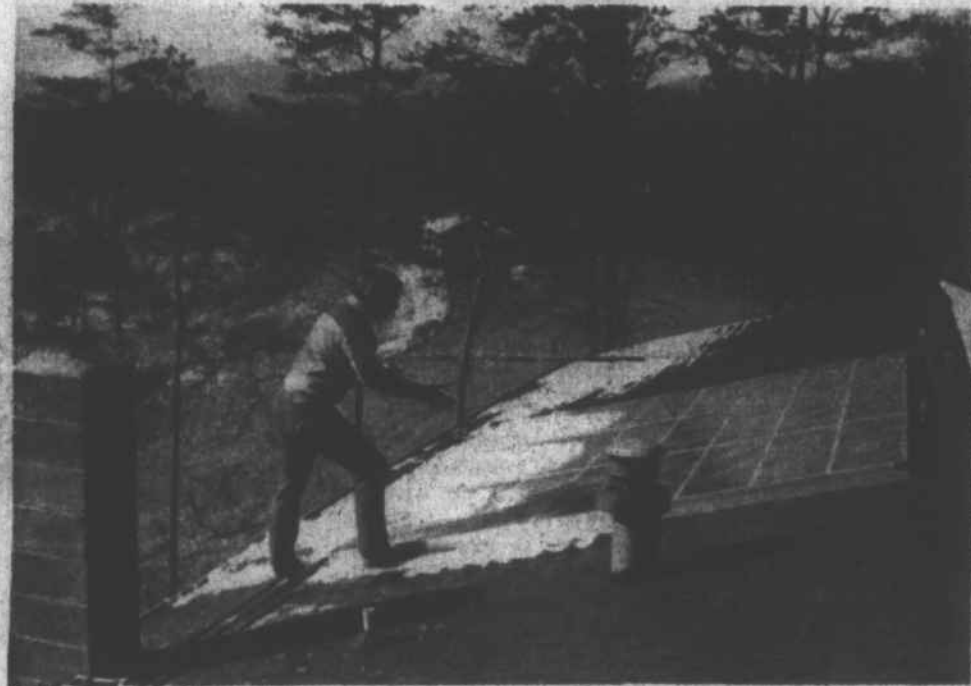
with snow. By 11:30 the snow was gone, temperature in the roof pipes had climbed to 92 degrees F and the storage tank was heating steadily. Ted Reavis, who sold and installed the system, monitored the temperatures intently, and seemed pleased with the overall performance.

"On a clear day, the water in this 210-gallon storage tank will rise to about 140 degrees," he said, pointing at a box-shaped steel tank with copper tubing running in and out. "As soon as it gets above 100 degrees, this little switch device called an Aquastat starts it moving upstairs to a heat exchanger."

This metal-finned heat exchanger works like the radiator of a car. A fan blows through it, transferring the heat from the water to the air of the house.

Solar heat is gathered by three solar panels on the south-facing roof of the house. The panels, which cover 120 square feet, are made of black-painted copper (the best heat conductor, except for silver or gold) and ribbed with half-inch copper tubes every four inches. The tubing carries cold water from one side of the panels to the other, up and down, and by the time the water leaves the solar collector it is hot water.

The hot "water" is actually a 50/50 mixture of water and propylene glycol, a kind of alcohol similar to anti-freeze. This keeps the fluid from freezing on extra-cold nights. Propylene glycol is used because it is harmless to humans if it should somehow (Continued on Page 3)



TED REAVIS, who installed an active solar heating system at Jimmy and Delsie Buckner's home near Walnut, clears snow off the solar panels on the roof.

County Suffers Rash Of Strep Illness

Over the past two weeks, public health workers and school officials have reported an unusual number of cases of strep throat, some of them the type known as scarlet fever.

Most of the strep cases have been concentrated around Marshall, where a week ago 95 children were home sick from Marshall Elementary School from a student body of 545.

The Walnut-Marshall Medical Center reports that of 60 throat cultures tested during the last two weeks, 21 gave a positive result for strep.

In Mars Hill, Frederick Anderson, principal of the elementary school, reports three doctor-confirmed cases of scarlet fever among students.

"I can't remember another outbreak of strep like this," said Garnette Sprinkle at the Madison County Health Department. "Of course, this is the time of year when you expect this kind of thing." She pointed out that since scarlet fever is no longer on the list of diseases that must be reported to public health authorities, an accurate count of cases in the county is not possible.

Previous to the introduction of penicillin several decades ago, scarlet fever was a highly feared form of strep throat that sometimes led to serious complications, such as rheumatic fever, which can damage the heart, or nephritis, a kind of kidney disease.

Nowadays, however, prompt treatment with penicillin

effectively shortens or stops the course of strep throat illness.

Strep is named for the streptococcal bacteria that cause the infection. Scarlet fever is a strep infection in which the bacteria make a toxin, or poison, that produces a rash. Not everyone with strep infection will produce a rash, and not everyone is allergic to the toxin.

Thus, in a family of three children a streptococcal infection might produce the following: one child may get a scarlet fever because he can

without feeling sick.

At the beginning of scarlet fever, the patient feels tired, restless and irritable. Then comes a fever, sore throat, and often vomiting. The skin feels hot and dry. After a day or so, bright red spots break out, starting in the body creases such as the armpits. The rash may spread to the neck, chest and back.

If untreated, the rash may cover the entire body, causing a "strawberry tongue" and, after two weeks or so, peeling of the skin.

Not only have new

medicines reduced the dangers of scarlet fever, but not resist the poison; a second child may develop a sore throat but no rash; and the third may carry the germs the disease itself has become less severe in the past 30 years for reasons that scientists do not yet understand.

None of the cases in Madison County are known to have advanced beyond the spotty stage, and the wave of strep seems already to be subsiding.

"I think we turned the corner about last week as far as absences went," said Marshall Elementary School Principal Fred Haynie. "We're down from 95 to the 50's and 60's now, which is about normal for this time of year."

"For awhile, many people were worried. The health department told us that we should send any students with sore throats to a doctor, and that scared some of the parents. We've had a lot of tales of how bad scarlet fever used to be, with the skin peeling off hands and feet. One of our teachers had scarlet fever in the old days, with the peeling and everything, and this time she had it again and it just wasn't the same. Today the doctors are not nearly so concerned."

This report was confirmed by Dr. John Laird of the Walnut-Marshall Medical Center. "We consider scarlet fever to be more than a strep throat with a rash," he said. "It's just nothing like it used to be."

Former Employee Of United 5 & 10 Is Charged With Embezzling Goods

A former employee of the United 5 & 10 on the Marshall by-pass has been arrested and charged with felonious embezzlement for diverting and attempting to sell the firm's merchandise in a convenience store in Leicester.

Hugh Parton, now listed as living in Fletcher, is a former manager of United 5 & 10, which is owned by Variety Wholesalers Inc. of Fuquay-

Varina. According to Buncombe County Sheriff Thomas Morrissey, Parton and Victor Vient of Candler are accused of setting up an outlet called Shop 'N Save on the Leicester Highway and offering a "guesstimated" \$5,000 to \$6,000 worth of Variety Wholesalers' goods for sale.

The thefts were discovered by Joe Holland, a regional manager of Variety

Wholesalers, when he drove to the Shop 'N Save store and identified a key-making machine that belonged to his firm.

Holland, contacted by telephone in his office in Fuquay-Varina, would not elaborate on the matter.

Parton and Vient were selling such items as panty hose, baseball caps, cat hats, keys - "everything imaginable that would go into a convenience

store," said the sheriff's office.

Much of the embezzled material apparently came from a store in Tryon that was closed down by Variety Wholesalers. The material was to be forwarded to outlets in Marshall and elsewhere. When it never arrived, the managers of the firm became suspicious and began an investigation.



ALFRED AND CAROL DIRAGO pause from loading in supplies for opening day at the Rock Cafe. The Diragos have bought the cafe from Mr. and Mrs. Claude Davis

and plan to be open Mondays through Saturdays from 6 a.m. to 7 p.m., and Sundays from 7 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

Diragos Buy Rock Cafe

The City Cafe in Marshall once again became the Rock Cafe this week as new owners moved in to take up where Page and Priddy Brigan left off.

Alfred and Carol Dirago opened their doors on Monday, March 3 to the public and had a "dedication dinner" for fellow members of the First Baptist Church in Marshall on Wednesday evening. Like the Brigans, the

Diragos plan to raise much of their own food — vegetables, beef, pork, and possibly rabbits — and to stay open seven days a week.

And they will offer a full menu, averaging five hot dinners each day, plus homemade bread, biscuits, and cornbread. Typical dishes will be chicken and gravy, stuffed peppers, meatloaf, country steak, and Al's special four-bean casserole with sausage

and hamburger. Plans are to be open from 6 a.m. to 7 p.m. Monday through Saturday, and from 7 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. on Sunday.

"It will be a lot of work," said Al Dirago as he and Carol moved in their bags, crates and boxes of food, "but I think there's a definite need for a restaurant where you can get home-cooked food. There are a lot of people in the county (Continued on Page 3)

Students Come To Help With County Chores

Several groups of college volunteers began arriving in Madison County this week to meet with young people, share in the culture of the mountains, and most important, to help out in chores from cutting wood to repairing houses.

According to Father Frank Reese of the Hot Springs Jesuit Residence, the first group consists of 32 students and two faculty members from Villanova University in Pennsylvania. The group is spending the daylight hours of this week on Rich Mountain, sawing and chopping firewood for the elderly.

Other groups will be coming from Indiana State University, Georgetown University, Siena Heights College in Michigan, and Walsh Jesuit High School in Ohio.

They will help several carpenters repair houses, and work with the people at the Opportunity Corporation at various tasks. Some will join the aides at day care centers, caring for children and cleaning.

The groups will also meet with the members of the Appalachian Scholars Program at Mars Hill College and listen to the music of some local ballad singers.