

Editorials

Students In Limbo

Things are still pretty much in limbo concerning the fate of 51 school students living in Madison County but currently attending Buncombe County schools.

The Madison County Board of Education issued a mandage earlier this year stating all students residing in the county would attend Madison County schools. The board sited loss of teacher allocations and an effort to protect the Madison school system as reasons for their action.

Students and parents living along the Madison-Buncombe County line, and who have been associated with Buncombe schools for many years, decided to test the Madison board's action by formally appealing to the board to release the students to Buncombe.

The board dutifully listened to each request for transfer, and subsequently granted five releases out of the 60 some cases.

Attorneys representing the students then obtained a Superior Court order restraining the Madison school board from enforcing the attendance policy issued by

the board on July 21.

A court hearing in Burnsville resulted in an injunction to continue the restraining order until a special session of court could be set up sometime in September. Judge Frank Snapp requested the special session for September 8. Word from the Administrative Offices of the Court in Raleigh has it that the court trial has been tentatively set for September 29. Hopefully, the court trial can be held on that day without postponement.

We say hopefully because the trial should be able to put an end to this matter, and allow the students to settle into the educational process, no matter where the location.

We hope the parents and attorneys representing the students, and the Madison County Board of Education, will work toward a speedy solution to this matter and spare the children from being punted back and forth across a county goal line.

The kids are entitled to a stable educational atmosphere. It is less than fair to keep them in limbo much longer.

Speak Up

Much too often we are prone to accept things as being "that's the way it is" without questioning or voicing our opinions to the sources that send things down the pike. Many times we have little opportunity to be heard.

But, on Monday, Sept. 22, consumers of electric power in our area, and that means virtually all of us, will have a chance to speak up and be heard by the North Carolina Utilities Commission. The commission will be conducting a public hearing in Asheville on that day.

At the hearing, the Utilities Commission will listen to comments from the public, organizations and agencies concerning new ways to allocate the cost of producing electricity for consumer use.

Six plans for reallocating the costs are being proposed by the commission, and the

results will probably create a new rate structure that will shift the rate burden. Which way, no one knows at this point.

The outcome of the six plans will depend largely on the comments and testimony heard at the hearing in Asheville and at other locations across the state.

It is important to all of us that someone shows up at the hearing to give comments about these proposals. Interested persons or groups can find out more about the proposals and arrange to present testimony before the commission by contacting the Utilities Commission in Raleigh at least 10 days before the Asheville hearing.

The News Record will try to obtain more information about the time and location of the hearing and pass it along to you in our next issue.

Heard And Seen

By POP STORY

The final score Friday night at Enka read 28-13 in favor of the Enka Jets over the Madison Patriots in the opening football game of the season. Statistics disclosed that the Jets had 214 yards rushing to the Patriots' 135. In the air, the Jets had 54 yards to the Patriots' 47. The above statistics would point to a one-sided game — not true. Take away about five minutes of the second quarter when Lady Luck deserted the Patriots and the game would have been mighty close.

The Patriots scored on its first possession when a Jet fumble was recovered by the Pats Steve Fish on the third play of the game. A Tim Merrill pass completion put the ball on the Jet's 15 and two plays later Kevin Barnette plunged over from the five. Hensley's EP attempt was wide but Madison had a 6-0 lead. Soon thereafter Greg Pressley scored from the one yard line to tie the game but a fumble on the EP attempt left the score deadlocked 6-6 as the quarter ended.

It was at this point that the Jets showed a stingy defense while their offense overpowered the Patriots. On a sustained drive the Jets marched downfield to the Pat 2 and Allen Revis went over guard for the TD. A 2-point conversion sent the score to 14-6 with 3:01 left in the period. The turning point of the game came seconds later when a pass was picked off by Enka's Randy Campbell who sprinted 33 yards for a TD. Another two-point conversion was scored by the Jets and upped the score to 22-6 with 1:47 left in the half. However, Mike Hensley from punt formation caught the Jets offguard and ran to the Enka 22 and a Merrill to Fish pass completion gave the Pats this second TD. Hensley's placement narrowed the score to 22-13 at halftime.

The Jets added an insurance TD in the third quarter when Bob Baldwin, the Jets amazing quarterback, went over from the 1-yard stripe to complete the game's scoring. The final period was scoreless as both defenses were outstanding.

Although the Patriots were defeated local fans were pleased with the aggressiveness and determination of the team. "We lost but things are looking up for the Patriots this season," one loyal Patriot fan remarked. "I liked the way those defensive boys played and I was also glad to see

their offensive strength," another fan said following the game.

That seemed to be the general feeling of the large following of Patriot fans who saw the game. "Tom Merrill, Mike Hensley, Kevin Barnette, Alex Feliss were impressive as was the entire Patriot line play," a fan remarked.

The Patriots travel to A.C. Reynolds this Friday night to do battle with the Rockets and from this writer's viewpoint the Rockets had better be ready because the Patriots are no "pushovers" — no indeed.

The Marshall High School class of 1950 held a reunion in the Marshall school cafeteria on the island last Saturday night and it was a thrilling reunion from the class which was known as "The Wild Crowd." About 30 members of the class and their spouses were present and thoroughly enjoyed being together once again. Thelma Fisher Freeman was in charge, assisted by Ruby Lewis Bennett, of Lincoln Park, Mich. Mrs. Moody (Frances) Chandler and Mrs. Stephen (Selwyn) Eure, former teachers, were recognized and made brief remarks. Other guests present included Principal Fred Haynie and his wife; Moody Chandler; and Mr. and Mrs. Jim Story, who with Mrs. Chandler chaperoned the class to Washington, D.C. in March of 1950.

This writer was asked to welcome the group and give the invocation.

The informal "program" (without a speaker) seemed most popular as it gave more time for reminiscing and fellowship. Principal Haynie directed a tour through the school which was enjoyed.

Numerous gifts were presented members and a huge 30th Anniversary cake was cut for dessert (with ice cream).

I hadn't seen many of the Class of '50 in years but it was a great pleasure to see and talk with them again. Incidentally, many of the wives (and husbands) looked great... in fact, many are more attractive than they were in 1950.

Scrap books and newspaper clippings, plus pictures, were on display and everyone enjoyed looking at them.

It is hoped that the 1950 class will have another reunion and not wait another 30 years.

Regardless Of Fame, Fatigue

Lewis Family Remain 'Down-Home'

By NICHOLAS HANCOCK

One of the nicer aspects of working in the news media is getting the opportunity occasionally to hobnob with entertainers or celebrities that pass through your area.

A press card will get you backstage, or sometimes a promoter or agent will invite you to a social gathering to meet the notable personages.

Many times, celebrities are much different at these gatherings than they are on stage. Not so with the singing Lewis Family. These folks are just down-home Lincolnton, Ga. people whether they are

spiffed up before microphones or sitting around on wooden benches chatting with visitors and putting away bunches of barbecued chicken.

And, chatting with friends, old and new, is what the nine members of the bluegrass gospel group like to do.

The occasion was a pre-performance barbecue chicken supper at Jim Drake's. The Lewis Family were giving a benefit concert for a local accident victim.

The family consists of "Pop" and "Mom" Lewis; their two sons, "Little Roy"

and Wallace; three daughters, Polly, Miggie and Janice; and two grandchildren, 22-year-old Travis and 8-year-old Lewis Phillips (Janice's son).

The Lewises spend a lot of time on the road traveling the entire eastern half of the U.S., and they have been doing this since "Little Roy" was just a wee tyke like little Lewis. ("Little Roy" is now 30-ish going on 10.)

But, with all the fatigue of travel and sometimes forgetting what state they're in, the Lewis Family seem to never lose respect and kindness for the fans and people they meet

along the way. And, they always retain their sense of humor.

"Little Roy" is just as much clown off stage as he is on. He delighted in putting in his stage prop, goofy false teeth at the supper and telling tales of going into McDonald's and scaring unsuspecting waitresses.

And, the "down-home" realness and flavor comes through when Polly proudly talks about her oldest daughter entering the Georgia Miss Teenage pageant and being invited to sing with a young group that entertains in

the Lincolnton area.

At 75, "Pop" Lewis is the kindly patriarch of the clan; taking a grandpa's pride in little Lewis Phillips, and still ruling the roost when it comes to his now grown children.

Polly: "I'd like a Coke, Pop, get me one."

Pop: "Go get it yourself." Teaching both respect and independence with one short statement.

They're lovely people. Real people. Kind and joyous, whether performing or relaxing. When they're in the area again, it will be worth the trip to meet them.



THE LEWIS FAMILY: (Kneeling) "Little Roy" and "Pop". (Back row) Lewis

Phillips, Wallace, "Mom," Polly, Travis, Janice and Miggie. (Photo by N. Hancock)

Oliver Gave Solid Show

The headliner at the Friday night concert at the Madison County Music Park was Rita Coolidge, and not one but two warm-up acts entertained the audience before the top-billed Ms. Coolidge came on stage. Oliver (Swofford) and Booker T. Jones each did 45 minute sets before roughly 1,000 spectators.

Jones rhythm and blues, and disco flavored numbers, were performed well although he borrowed a bit too much from other popular performers and writers such as the Doobie Brothers.

Ms. Coolidge was in good voice and form, and gave the audience what they expected to see in a veteran, professional performer. It's always nice to hear a distinctive voice come across in person just like it does on your home stereo.

But the pleasant surprise of the evening was in the form of Oliver. William Oliver Swofford, a native of North Wilkesboro, was well known and popular in the '70s when

his songs, "Good Morning Starshine" and "Jean" were on the charts and being played all over the country. "Starshine" was a million seller and "Jean" earned him a Grammy nomination from the recorded music industry.

His own star has slipped somewhat in the popular music sky, not having a "hit" in several years since "Jean." However, the status of being a "hit," or rather not being one, hasn't seemed to take anything away from Oliver. Except maybe the money that comes with star recognition.

Oliver's performance Friday evening was as solid as anyone would hope to see at a live presentation. His singing and overall sound were fine by any standards.

Perhaps the so-so response from the audience was caused by the fact that many of the young people probably never heard of Oliver, or if they had, they forgot quickly in the world of fleeting fame and glory where today's idol is

replaced tomorrow by what's-his-name.

No matter. Oliver's songs were good, be they old or new. "Starshine" was as fresh under the stars at the park as it was when you could find it on most radio stations across the dial.

Another enjoyable aspect of his performance was that he did not try to cater to the mood or whims of the audience in order to gain their favor, a trap that lures many performers looking for a comeback.

Even with occasional shouts of "Let's party!" or "Bring on Rita," Oliver continued his set with his material and easy-going stage banter that showed no trace or hint of anything off-color that many of today's performers use to hold the attention of their audiences.

Oliver did "his thing" so to speak. And, it allowed those that could, to see just where he was coming from: a place very solid, and inside himself.

By NICHOLAS HANCOCK



Oliver Swofford

LETTERS WELCOMED
We welcome letters to the editor. All we ask is that they be reasonably brief, in good taste and contain no libelous statements. However, letters will not be published if they are not signed by one or

more individuals. "Parents" or "Concerned Citizens" does not constitute a signature. Please include your return address and phone number.

G. Nicholas Hancock
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Telephone Directories To Arrive

Business and residential customers of Western Carolina Telephone Company and Westco Telephone Company should be receiving copies of the new telephone directory for five communities in this area.

The communities included in the directory are Weaverville, Marshall, Mars Hill, Hot Springs and Guntertown. Jack Gouge, customer services superintendent for the companies in Weaverville, said today that the new directories are scheduled to be shipped on Thursday, Aug. 28.