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Madison Manor Nursing Home Scheduled To Open In Spring

By SCOTT FITZGERALD

On Tuesday, Jan. 13, Madison Manor Convalescence, Inc. held its first press conference to inform the area of the progress that has been made on Madison Manor, a 100-bed nursing home to operate in the county.

The nursing home which is now nearing completion will provide intermediate and skilled care to its patients. The Manor will provide on-staff physicians and physical therapists to provide complete medical and convalescent care.

The project which began construction last April, was designed through a non-profit organization in Madison County known as Madison County Convalescence, Inc. which was formed in 1973. The organization is headed by James Ledford, Mars Hill businessman and county commissioner chairman. Other members of the board include Robert Edwards, Virginia Anderson, Dr. Don Anderson, and Asheville attorney Larry Leake as acting secretary.

The organization has formed a partnership with Brookwood Investments in Atlanta, who have designated investment bonds to fund the

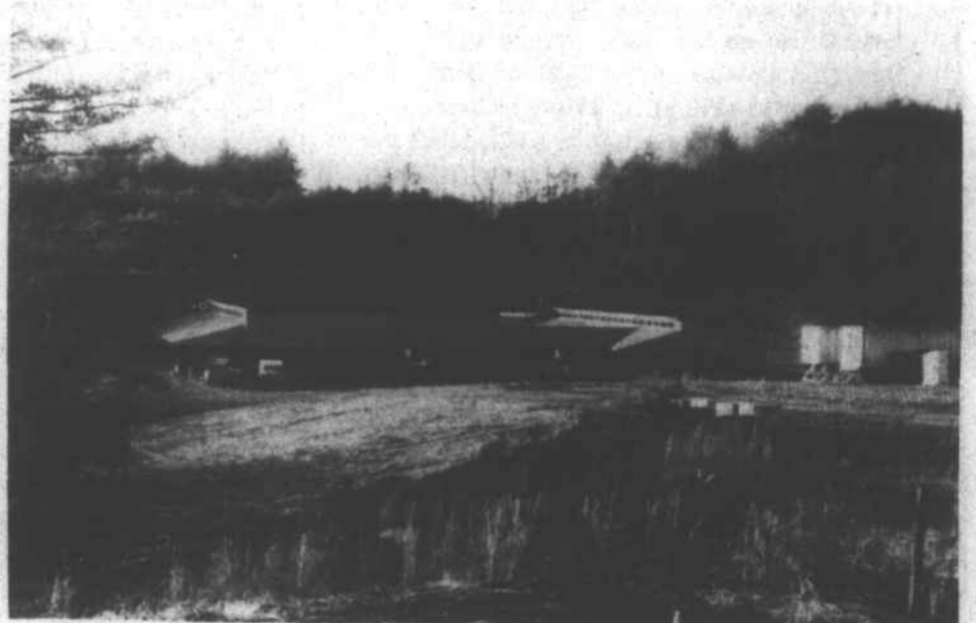
building and supplying of the project. The funding of the project amounted to \$1,900,000 which covers the purchase of land, the cost of the building of the complex and supplying the home with medical and domestic equipment.

The partnership has formed a managing agreement with Mediplex, Inc. Mediplex is a medical administrating company located in Jackson, Miss., that will be responsible for the management and administration of the nursing facility. The bonds that Brookwood issued will be paid back through percentage adjustments of the profits that Mediplex receives through the operation of the home.

The bonds were set up on an interest plan that called for their complete payment in 20 years. At that time, the facility and the land become the property and the responsibility of Madison County.

The nursing facility will also provide 60 to 70 jobs for the residents of the county. The facility will need nurses, aids, and staff members. Among the staff positions is the need for a head administrator, a medical director and a director of nursing.

Bobby Arnold, director of administration and finance at



Madison Manor Convalescent Home

Mediplex said, "We would like to hire as many as we could from the surrounding area. We would also like to involve Mars Hill College in providing internships, and we would like to include the CETA program as well."

The facility is being furnished to provide a comfortable and livable atmosphere for its patients. Also every precaution is being taken to meet the

state fire codes for the home. Allen McGinnis, architect of the project, said, "Each room is spacious and the halls open and pleasant. We don't want to present a hospital nature. We are sure the patients will be very comfortable."

The staff and faculty will be state licensed and the home already has an approval from Medicaid. Most of the cost to each patient will be funded by

Medicaid and Medicare. The average per person would be approximately \$30 to \$40 per day.

Upon opening the facility, Mediplex will only admit 4 to 6 patients per day. This is to insure that each patient is placed with ample aid and space. The facility will begin hiring staff personnel in the not distant future.



(Photo by Scott Fitzgerald)

DR. DON ANDERSON, Ken Gummels, James Ledford, and Virginia Anderson are a few of the members of the partnership of Brookwood Investments and

Madison County Convalescence. This partnership designed and secured the funds for the Nursing Home Project.

Flu Bug Hits Area Residents

By NICHOLAS HANCOCK
Editor

While incidences of Bangkok flu have reached epidemic proportions in neighboring Buncombe County and in other areas of the state, Madison County residents seem to be faring well under the influenza attack. A check with area doctors and medical clinics revealed that while numerous people are showing up with flu-like symptoms, the term epidemic would probably not apply to the local area.

Dr. Otis Duck of Mars Hill said patient traffic had been "pretty heavy for the last few days" with symptoms which resemble cases of flu, "but I've seen worse," he said.

Dr. Duck said he can't be sure if what his patients have is the Bangkok Strain A influenza, but he suspects some of the cases to be that. In order to know for sure, two blood specimens must be obtained three weeks apart for analysis. "It's a matter of finding out what you had, not what you've got," Duck said.

When asked what age range his "flu patients" are in, Duck

said he has treated patients "from one to 101 years old." His centenarian patient is the only one that has been hospitalized with the flu symptoms.

Dr. Ron Plemmons of the Hot Springs Medical Center commented that it was hard to say just how many flu patients the center has treated in the past two weeks. He said most of that center's patients have been school-aged children and young adults, and added that the center was seeing more patients than usual for this time of year.

Laurel Medical Center's Dr. Chipper Jones reported he has seen a few people with flu-like symptoms, "but not a whole lot." He has treated several people with respiratory illnesses, mostly young adults and middle age people. "I would say most of our patients would fall between the ages of 15 to 60, not many elderly people," Jones said.

Dr. Spencer at the Marshall-Walnut Medical Center could not be reached for comment, but the receptionist confessed that she thought she had it herself.

In Buncombe County, an estimated 15 to 20 percent of the county's population has the flu, according to Dr. James Tenney, Buncombe County health director. He said large numbers of people are visiting doctors, emergency rooms and clinics to try to get rid of the virus.

"These things just have to run their course," he said. He estimated the epidemic would last from two to three more weeks there.

In other areas of the state the viral infection is taking its toll. Davidson College was forced to cancel classes one day last week, and Mecklenburg County schools reported more than one-fourth of their students have been affected. Some hospitals in Western North Carolina are reporting high absenteeism among nurses and staff because growing illness among the workers.

Doctors and health officials are advising the public to avoid crowded places like department stores and malls to avoid catching the Bangkok bug.

Firemen Save Widow

By SCOTT FITZGERALD

On January 5 at 4:30 a.m. Mrs. Louise Dance came face to face with a nightmare that became a reality. Mrs. Dance was awakened by Jackie Jenkins, a Marshall volunteer fireman. Mrs. Dance's house was burning.

The fire which started in the ceiling over the back porch was spotted at 4 a.m. by Greg Massey and Ronny Buckner who were on their way to work at Ingle's grocery store. They notified Jackie Jenkins who set the rescue operations in motion.

Mrs. Dance, a native of Marshall, is a 66 year old widow who has lived in her white frame house for the last 17 years. "This was my first fire and let us hope it is definitely the last!" she said. Mrs. Dance like many others thought that it would never happen to her. Her home had no fire extinguishers nor smoke detectors. Needless to say, Mrs. Dance has indebted her life to the fire department of Marshall.

Though the damage to her house was extensive, the efforts of firemen under the direction of Fire Chief Jackie Davis saved most of her furniture and her personal belongings. Also, the fire was contained to the back porch, kitchen, and bathroom of the house. If the fire had not been



(Photo by Scott Fitzgerald)

MRS. LOUISE DANCE and her dog, Chuck are now resting safe and sound in a neighbor's house. Just days before, a fireman carried her from her burning home.

caught in time, the entire house would have been gutted. Mrs. Dance now realizes that people are never totally safe from the threat of fire. "If it hadn't been for the wonderful job the firemen did, the outcome could have been

disastrous. I'm very lucky that I didn't lose more than I did," she said.

It is not known when Mrs. Dance will be able to move back into her home. She is glad her house was insured.

Ramsey: Hard Session Ahead

Special to the News Record

By JINCY MESSER

With all his usual pomp and resplendent in his red bow tie, Secretary of State Thad Eure swore in 118 House members when the North Carolina General Assembly opened its 134th session at noon last Wednesday. Across the hall in the Senate 50 senators took the oath of office. The legislators are in high gear and ready to move along with the state's business. A feeling of being stingy with spending but keeping the state progressive is floating around in the air.

And there's a "Mountain Man from Madison" in the driver's seat of the House. A mountain flavor spilled out all around as droves and herds and busloads of mountain folk from the 44th House District poured in to see Liston Ramsey entrenched as House Speaker. The House Gallery bulged and overflowed into the halls as friends, constituents and proud relatives packed in.

Rep. Earnest Messer nominated Ramsey and praised him as being "honest, one whose word is his bond, tough as the mountains when he needs to be and knowing the legislative process from A to Z." There were batches of seconding speeches lauding the nominee's capabilities. Of course the



Rep. Liston B. Ramsey

election was primed ahead of time and moved without a hitch. There were no dissenting votes even amongst the 24 Republicans.

Throughout all the t' do Ramsey's wife, Florence, and daughter, Martha, sat close by and didn't miss a word. I know Liston is glad they heard all the adulation.

In his acceptance speech the newly elected Speaker warned that this ses-

sion would be hard and should "direct its efforts toward eliminating empty minds, empty stomachs and empty pocketbooks."

Staff officers were elected and Ramsey appointed some committees and promised their completion by the Monday night session.

Speaker Ramsey owns up to being a partisan Democrat and addicted to politics. He promises to be on hand for at least two Speaker's terms and maybe longer. It's going to be downright refreshing to have a Speaker who's not seeking a higher office.

Well, mountain folks do things up whole hog. The evening bash and feed and reception in Ramsey's honor was right on target. A beaming Speaker Ramsey, Gov. Jim Hunt and Lt. Gov. Jimmy Green greeted in the reception line and gawked as folks came on and on. There were oodles of finger-lickin' goodies, fancy meat balls and ham and roast beef biscuits (but no collard greens and corn bread) and lots of socializing around mountain style. 'Twas a great day!

Less than three hours after he was sworn in for his fourth House term, Rep. Jack Gardner of Smithfield, brother of actress Ava Gardner, died

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On the inside . . .

Peter Gott Instructs MHC Students In Traditional Log Cabin Building

See Lay-out Page 3 . . .

In the meantime, Mrs. Dance is staying with her next door neighbor, Mrs. Robert Allen whose son is on the fire department. "Everyone has been so helpful in taking me in and caring for me. I just hope it won't ever happen again,"

she said. She is making sure it won't happen again. When asked if she was going to install smoke detectors when she moved back, she said, "Definitely! Once the house is stable, I'll fix the barn door."

Bluff House Fire

By KEVIN MORLEY

A Bluff man and his two children narrowly escaped death as they fled from a raging fire that engulfed their home on Route 286 Sunday, Jan. 11.

Johnny Payne reported that he awakened around 11 p.m. on Sunday night and noticed a light coming from the kitchen. Assuming it was the kitchen light left on by one of his

children he got out of bed to check. When he got to the kitchen he found it engulfed in flames and had barely enough time to rouse and evacuate his two boys, Daniel, three, and Douglas, ten, before the entire kitchen collapsed.

By midnight their home was totally destroyed with only the flue left standing. The Payne family lost all their belongings except for a few articles of clothing.

Payne was not sure of the cause of the fire but he suspected either the electrical wiring or the wood stove flue. He recalled that the wall between the living room and kitchen was blazing when he went to check the light and it was that wall that contained the fire.