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Board Takes Firm Stand On Moves

By NICHOLAS HANCOCK
Editor

The Madison County Board of Education was confronted with yet more decisions concerning requests for student transfers right up to its last regular meeting before school began Monday in the county.

The board heard two requests at its Aug. 4 meeting, — one for an in-system reassignment, and one for transfer to Asheville City Schools — and turned down both, more or less, after making it clear that they want to put a stop to students transferring out of the county "as they have in the past at a wholesale rate."

Mr. and Mrs. Glenn McGee of Long Branch Road in Marshall asked the board to reassign their five and one-half year old child from Marshall Elementary to Mars Hill Elementary because, they said, they are planning to sell their house and move into the Mars Hill School district as soon as possible.

Mrs. McGee explained she wanted to start her son in kindergarten at the school in which he would be enrolled for most of his grammar school years.

After establishing that the McGees had not yet started construction of a house in the Mars Hill district, the

board denied the request and said the child could be reassigned after the McGees took up residence in Mars Hill.

Mrs. McGee then asked the board why two families she said she knew of could live in Mars Hill and send their children to Marshall Elementary. The board said they were unaware of this situation and would look into it.

Board member Ed Gentry said, "There would have to be grave necessity to transfer a child out of one district into another," and he added, "I see no reason here for this transfer."

"Well what's the reason for not transferring our child?" Mr. McGee asked.

"The court order I have referred to," Gentry said. When the McGees pointed out that they were not named in the court order, and that it pertained to specific students requesting transfers out of the county, Gentry replied, "Not necessarily." Gentry said that was only his opinion and he was merely giving his comments as requested by board chairman Bobby Ponder.

Ponder said the board has made an attempt for the past two years to "get the students going outside the county back as well as keeping kids within their districts."

Mr. McGee said he suspected the problem in securing a transfer stemmed from politics in the school system. "I know we're Republicans and everybody else knows it," he said. "It's irritating as the devil — if you're not a Democrat you can't have a thing here," he said.

"There's not one person that's ever told me that they were proud of this school system," McGee said. "It's just something that bugs everybody here, and you all are the ones that have got to fix it. They say that politics in the schools is terrible. I don't think you're going to get away with it forever," he said.

Ponder refuted McGee's statement that politics played a part in denying their request for transfer, or in not hiring Mrs. McGee as a substitute teacher in the past. He said, "some of the best personnel we have are Republicans who were personally hired by me."

In another transfer case, Mr. and Mrs. Tom Roberts of the Sandy Mush community asked to board for permission to take their two young daughters (9 and 13 years old) to Asheville each day to school. The Roberts explained they both work in Asheville and it would be convenient to drop them off at their school and pick them up after school.

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Darrell Boone

New Mars Hill Town Manager

Darrell Boone, 26, took over the reigns as Mars Hill's new town manager on July 20 when Roger Swann stepped out of that position to work with a water resources management firm headquartered in Advance.

Boone, 26, previously worked as a purchasing agent for Quorum Textile Industries in Asheville. He is a 1972 graduate of Mars Hill High School, and received an associate degree in business administration from Asheville-Buncombe Technical College in 1975. He graduated from Mars Hill College with a bachelor of science degree in business administration in 1977. After graduating from Mars Hill, Boone was employed by the Milliken Corp. in Saluda, S.C.

A native of Madison County, Boone and his wife, Jean, have two children.

Summer's Over - School Begins



Madison County Library 9/81
Marshall, NC 28753



Photos by N. Hancock

YOUNGSTERS at Walnut Elementary School spilled out of the door and down the steps as the 2:30 bell signaled the end of the first day of school Monday in Madison County. Tiny first graders seemed a little bewildered by it all as they tried to figure out just which large yellow bus they were supposed to board for the trip back home, but

older students took everything in stride as they clambered aboard the vehicles and gave "hamish" waves and smiles at a nearby photographer. The day apparently went smoothly at the Walnut school. One teacher of the little ones remarked, "I didn't have a single one to cry today."

Biltmore Fails To Butter Up Board For Bid

By NICHOLAS HANCOCK
Editor

Despite the fact that Biltmore Dairies purchased nearly five million pounds of raw milk from Madison County dairymen last year to the tune of \$705,000, the board of education voted to accept Pet Dairies low bid making Pet the supplier of milk for the school system this year.

Board members Floyd Wallin and Dedrick Cody voted to accept the Pet bid, while Ed Gentry and Gerald Young, a Mars Hill dairyman, declined to vote.

Two Biltmore Dairy representatives were present at the August 4 school board meeting to inform the board that Biltmore was willing to equal Pet's low bid and ask the board to accept their offer for the milk contract. Board member Young spoke at length in favor of considering Biltmore's offer, but the

board followed chairman Bobby Ponder's lead in accepting the low bid as required by law.

"After advertising and accepting the low bid which was opened in public, I see no way we could go ahead and be legal if we accepted anything other than the low bid," Ponder said. "If we're not going to accept the low bid, why go to the trouble of bidding?" he added.

However, Young asked Ponder to have school superintendent Robert L. Edwards call the state school controller in Raleigh to inquire about the possibility of negating Pet's bid and substituting Biltmore's offer.

Edwards reported back to the board that both the controller and Mac Baldwin, assistant purchasing agent for N.C. schools, said the board was legally bound to accept the original low bid unless the board decided to reject

all the bids received.

The board conducted the vote on the matter after hearing Edward's report.

In other business the board:

• Accepted the resignation of Alex Farkas, resource teacher and bus driver at Marshall Elementary School. In a letter to Edwards, Farkas stated he was resigning his position "Due to the inability of the board to place me in my area of primary certification."

Present at the meeting, Farkas told The News Record that resigning was "not what I want to do, I wanted to put my 40 years in here and retire." He said his teacher certification was in physical education and that he had been trying for six years to get himself replaced in that field in the school system. He said that since 1975 he had requested in a statement at the end of his teacher evaluation forms that he be placed in a physical education position, but his requests were never granted.

Farkas said he is taking a position as a resource teacher at Flat Creek Elementary School, but "by taking that position it will get me closer to getting back into my area of certification or a regular classroom than I could possibly ever get here with the present administration," he said.

Farkas said he had taught a total of 10 years in the Madison system, and at one time taught physical education at Madison High School.

• Heard a report from Dr. Owen Fish, ESEA Title I director, who said he had received Title I allocations from the state Board of Education totalling \$376,662. Fish said that amount was five percent less than what was allocated last year.

• Heard a report from Dr. Bobby Jean Rice, county schools supervisor, who said 1980-81 test scores of Madison first, second, third and ninth graders in

reading and math skills showed that the students were performing above the national average in each category.

• Accepted the recommendation for hiring Harry Overby at Madison High School as band director. High School principal David Wyatt and Overby has been band director in Bladen County for the past five years. He is a graduate of A.C. Reynolds High School and Mars Hill College.

• Accepting the resignations of Kathy Fefer, who stated in a letter that she had accepted a teaching position at Erwin Middle School, and Nina Rogers, a kindergarten aide at Mars Hill Elementary.

• Approved the reassignment of Larry Wyatt from Hot Springs Elementary School to Marshall Elementary.

To Judicial Council By Green

Swain, Allsbrook Re-Appointed

Lt. Gov. Jimmy Green has announced the re-appointment of Senator Julian R. Allsbrook of Roanoke Rapids and Senator Robert S. Swain of Asheville to two-year terms on the Judicial Council.

Senator Allsbrook was originally appointed in 1977, and has served two full terms. Senator Swain was originally appointed in 1978 to fill the unexpired term of Luther J. Britt, Jr. Their present terms expire June 30, 1982.

Senator Swain, who practices law in Asheville, spent 12 years, from 1965 to 1967, as District Attorney for the 19th Judicial District of Buncombe and Madison Counties. He has been in the North Carolina Senate since the 1977 session, and represents the 26th Senatorial District, which is comprised of Buncombe, Madison, McDowell, and Yancey Counties. During the 1981 Session, Senator Swain serves as Chairman of the

Senate Committee on Courts and Judicial Districts and Criminal Justice. He is also Vice-Chairman of the Senate Committee on Alcoholic Beverage Control, and Vice-Chairman of the Senate Committee on Judiciary I.

Senator Allsbrook is serving his 14th term in the General Assembly, and 13th in the Senate. He has the most seniority of the 26 Senators which makes him Dean of

the Senate. Senator Allsbrook practices law in Roanoke Rapids. He represents the 9th Senatorial District, comprised of Edgecomb, Halifax, Martin, and Pitt Counties. During the 1981 Session, he serves as Chairman of the Senate Committee on Judiciary I. Considered an authority on constitutional law, Senator Allsbrook serves as Vice-Chairman of the Senate Committee on Constitutional Law and as Chairman of the Senate Committee on

Public Meeting

The Town of Marshall will hold a public hearing at 1:30 p.m. on Thursday, Aug. 20, at the Marshall Town Hall. The purpose of this meeting will be to discuss the Appalachian Regional Commission grant to construct a sewer line to the Madison County Industrial Park.