

# THE NEWS RECORD

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## Auto - Truck Crash Claims Family Lives

By CAROLE HANNA

Four persons were killed and one seriously injured in a highway accident Monday night on U.S. 23 at the foot of Murray Mountain four miles north of Mars Hill.

According to N.C. Trooper Arthur Cooper, Thomas Richard Tanner, 31; and Glenda Gayle Tanner, 24; and their two children were killed instantly when their 1978 Datsun station wagon was hit by a tractor trailer truck, jumped a guardrail and went down an embankment.

The Tanner children were David Jonathan, age 3; and Jennifer Marie, age 16 months.

Cooper said the driver of the truck, Ronald Eugene Jones, 29, of Ft. Pierce, Fla. was listed in serious condition Monday night at Memorial Mission Hospital

in Asheville. The Tanner family were from Bonners Ferry, Idaho.

The Highway Patrol report said the accident occurred at 9:25 p.m. An eyewitness said the large tractor trailer rig went out of control on a steep curve, jack-knifed and slammed into the rear of the Tanner car, and both the trailer and the car went over the guard rail.

Dale Hylemon of Mars Hill reported the accident immediately after it happened and Mars Hill fire and rescue units responded to the scene.

Trooper Cooper said the truck was headed south, down the mountain and the Tanner vehicle was headed north when the two collided.

Dan Sluder, owner of Sluder's Texaco station just south of the scene of the accident said there have been three accidents at the same site in the last four months.

## Campaigns Underway

Municipal elections on Nov. 3 promise to be anything but dull in two of the county's three towns as women are among the candidates for the office of mayor in both Marshall and Hot Springs, and numerous candidates are vying for the three council seats in each of two towns. Mars Hill voters will have nothing to mull over since only the incumbent officials have filed for election there.

Four candidates are in the running for the office of mayor in Marshall, including Mrs. Marion Jones Wallin who threw her hat in the ring just before closing of the filing period on Friday. Wallin will face incumbent mayor Lawrence Ponder, Charles (Ham) Crowe, and Albert (Speedy) Rector for the post.

Mrs. Wallin, 58, said she is running because she "wants people to be involved" with municipal government. She said she plans to have an "open door policy" at Town Hall if elected. Until recently, she had been employed with the county Department of Social Services for 21 years, and has been a resident of the county for 23 years. She taught school for over 11 years and is a former home economics extension agent.

Crowe is a plumbing contractor currently employed by the town, and "Speedy" Rector, 66, is employed by Conover Glove Co. in Marshall. Ponder, 43, is also a self-employed contractor.

A total of 10 candidates are seeking the three alderman seats available in Marshall, including incumbents James R. Penland, S.L. Nix and Jackie Davis.

The seven others are James Booth Marler, John Dodson, Cleophas (Pee Wee) Ward, Harold Anders, Roy Reeves, Ed. L. Niles and Sonny Lunsford.

In Hot Springs, Mayor Swann Huff chose not to seek re-election and will watch three hopefuls contend for the mayor's office.

Deborah Ponder Baker, currently an alderman, joined the race to become the first woman in the history of the town to run for that office. According to some sources, Mrs. Baker is also the first woman to serve there as alderman. She is employed as director of the School Food Service in the county.

Other contenders for the mayor's seat are Frank Roberts and Richard Waltz.

Candidates for the three Hot Springs alderman seats are incumbents Jerry Ramsey and Wesley H. Staude, Curtis Roberts, Arthur Roberts, Franklin (Hank) Holmes, Rex Brindle and Ernest D. Autry who served as an alderman in the past.

Some political wags in Mars Hill are saying, "When you've got a good thing, don't change it." And, by the looks of the filing books, the feeling is apparently widespread in the community.

Mayor Bill Powell and aldermen Arthur Wood, Gordon Randolph and Carl Eller are the only candidates to file for election in the county's largest municipality. Unless a strong write-in vote occurs at the polls on Nov. 3, the incumbents are essentially, but not officially, elected to their same posts for another term.



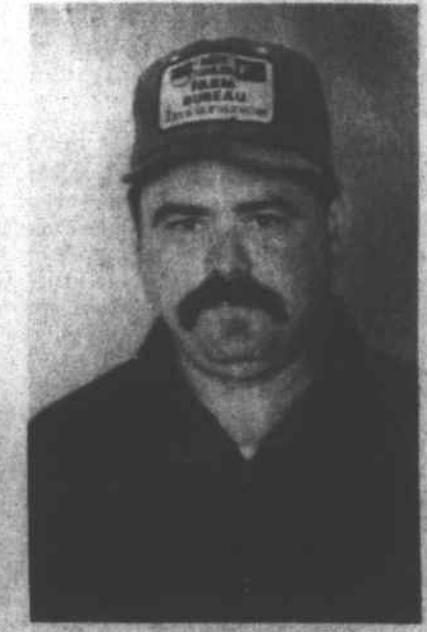
James R. Penland



Marion J. Wallin



John Dodson



Harold Anders

### At School Board Meeting

## Cox Resigns In Protest

By NICHOLAS HANCOCK  
Editor

Faced with an unusually heavy agenda, the Madison County Board of Education wasted no time at its October meeting Monday morning in reviewing requests and recommendations and taking action on items of business.

In voice-called votes, the board:

• Approved the purchase of a new cast iron boiler for Laurel Elementary School at a cost of \$5,853.12.

• Approved the settlement of damages done to a fence at Hot Springs Elementary School when it was hit by an automobile. The board collected \$350 from the driver's insurance company to repair the fence.

• Approved the following substitute employees: Daisy Franklin at Laurel School; Wilma Holl, cafeteria substitute; Richard Allison, bus driver; Doris Conner, teacher; and Helen Ponder, teacher, all at Hot Springs School.

• Approved the exchange of a new bus scheduled for 1982-83 for a bus now to be equipped with a wheelchair lift for Laurel School. The board will pay \$2,540 for the lift, and announced it would be in operation in about three weeks.

• Approved the transfer of approximately one-half acre of property at Spring Creek School to Madison County so that the property can subsequently be deeded to the West Madison Volunteer Fire Department for use as a construction site for a fire department building.

• Denied the request for transfer of student records belonging to Janet Worley to Haywood County schools.

(See 'Custody' story this page.)

• Approved employment of Barbara Bullman at Marshall School and Debra Reese at Mars Hill School as aides in the K-3 reading program. The approval was retroactive to the time of their employment at the beginning of the school year.

• Approved the interior decorations submitted by architect Bertram King for the Marshall-Walnut consolidated school.

• Approved a change in the current school calendar and designated Nov. 8 as a school day since there are no state or county elections held this year on that date.

• Approved the transfer of \$5,689.14 from local current expense funds to the Employment Work Experience grant fund in order to receive state monies to continue the EWE program at Madison High School. The board will receive \$20,222.32 in state money for the program, and was told it can use \$1,415 in drop-out program money to help with the match.

• Accepted the resignation of David L. Cox, electronics teacher at Madison High, effective Oct. 20, and approved the recommendation of Principal David Wyatt for hiring Covin Rathbone as the replacement for Cox.

In his letter to the board, Cox stated he was resigning "in protest of school scheduling policies for the occupational department which 'have reduced me to the status of baby sitter.'"

Cox told The News Record his problem centered around having three different levels of students in one electronics class, and that he thought occupational classes were supposed to be limited to 18 students while he has 20.

In his letter, he stated he believed these policies were, "if not in direct violation of state and federal guidelines, at least highly unethical when considered in the light of student educational needs and the professional requirements of teachers." He said he had brought the specifics of the problem to the attention of the department head and the principal "with no results."

When asked to comment on Cox's allegations, board chairman Bobby Ponder said, "Knowing the personnel at the high school, I feel he would be treated fair and square." Principal David Wyatt said he had talked with Cox, but declined any comment on the allegations.

• Approved the employment of Linda Jenkins as a substitute teacher at Madison High.

• Approved the requests of several parents to allow their children to continue to attend a school outside their school district within the county for the remainder of the year. The requests were in compliance with a district attendance policy resolution adopted at the September meeting.

In other business the board was informed of the District School Board Association meeting scheduled at Erwin High School on Oct. 15 at 3:30 p.m., and of the N.C. School Board Association meeting set for Nov. 12-14 at Wilmington.

The board also received advice concerning school liability insurance from school board attorney Larry Leake in a one-hour executive session. No action was taken by the board when it returned to open session.



**BIG CATS** — Catfish, that is. Frank Johnson of Walnut reported catching these three which weighed 30, 20 and 14 pounds Thursday near Stackhouse on the French Broad River. Johnson said he had a little help from his friends, Al and Charles, from Erwin, Tenn.

## Student 'Custody' Remains An Issue

By NICHOLAS HANCOCK  
Editor

Monday's board of education meeting zipped along like a well-oiled machine, covering some 20 items of business, until the wheels of efficiency were slowed nearly to a stop as the grating sounds of student reassignments and record transfers were once again heard in the Madison County Courthouse.

The late afternoon portion of the board meeting could have been a scene right out of "Kramer Vs. Kramer" as an impassioned appeal was made to board members to review student assignments "with the best interest of each child in mind." And, the subsequent silence spoke more than any words in the emotionally charged atmosphere.

The board heard evidence of a family having to split up for the year — some members living in Madison — some in Buncombe County — so children can continue to attend Buncombe schools. The board itself, stated it has been conducting investigations as to the whereabouts of the 51 Sandy Mush area students to see who is in compliance with the Sept. 30, 1980 court-related consent agreement, and who is not.

Mr. Hector Langhi, a Sandy Mush resident and father of three children involved in the consent agreement, appeared before the board and said his wife and two children named in the agreement were now residing in Buncombe County so those children can attend Erwin High School. He said he and one son still live in Madison County, but that he has not his name up for sale in order to move into Buncombe.

The board had granted permission for that one transfer last August at Erwin when it was known that year.

record with a statement, Langhi said. "As you well know, for 30-plus years, the Madison County school board agreed with the people in the Sandy Mush area that in the best interest of their youngsters it would be better that they go to Buncombe County schools.

"I know that this board has jurisdiction over all the youngsters that reside in Madison County. I also know that this board by law, and common decency dictates, that it does everything in the best interest of each and every child — not all the children, but each and every child.

"I know that the only reason this board wants our children is for the money from the state and federal government. I know that that's against the law.

"Gentlemen, you're using our children as pawns in a money game. That is not only in violation of the law, but it also raises serious moral questions. You're using the kids.

"I appeal to this board to review the assignment requests in spite of the court agreement that has been made. And, review it with the best interest of each child in mind and get out of the prostituting posture you're in and get some integrity in this board.

"It's a sad commentary of our times when our kids become so valuable in the terms of dollars and cents that a board can run roughshod over their best interests in the mind scramble to get at that money.

## Madison Manor Nursing Center Makes Cuts In Staff

By NICHOLAS HANCOCK

Madison Manor Nursing Center will make cutbacks in the workforce beginning Oct. 10, according to David George, administrator of the newly opened nursing home located in Mars Hill.

George said the staff reductions will effect the maintenance, housekeeping, laundry and dietary departments, and are the result of anticipated limitations in the funding for the Medicaid program.

In an interview Friday, George said the center has already incurred the loss of two positions. Maintenance supervisor Dean Ledford is no longer employed there, and another employee resigned when his hours were cut back to three per day.

On the other hand, the center is hiring persons in the nursing department, but George said he is experiencing "some difficulty" in obtaining licensed nurses for the 100 patient facility.

In an effort to maintain a high quality of care and service to residents of the home, George said the center is looking for community volunteers to take up the slack. "We are soliciting volunteers who are 18 years of age or older and

are in good physical health," he said.

He said volunteers are needed for the feeding assistance program seven days per week from 5 to 6 p.m., and for the work therapy programs at the center. High school juniors and seniors are being recruited for the work therapy program which will involve working in a nursing unit capacity in the home to assist nursing

"This program is designed for students interested in the health occupations and is being developed in conjunction with Madison High School," he said.

But while staff cutbacks will occur in some areas of operation, George said "12 people are coming into the center in the direct patient care positions."

There are 51 nurse patients

we want to get in," he said, indicating the center is planning to open the south wing of the facility on Oct. 19.

Cutbacks in Medicaid funding could have adverse effects on the facility's operations. According to George, Medicaid is currently paying 85 percent of patients' costs. Patients are charged \$25 per day for private care and \$10 per day for skilled care.