



# THE NEWS

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MEMBERS OF THE MADISON COUNTY Board of Education were sworn in for a new term in ceremonies held Wednesday in the Madison County Courthouse. From left, Gerald Young, Ed Gentry, Robert Ponder, Dedrick Cody and Floyd Wallin take the oath of office. Clerk of Courts, Jim Cody, right, administered the oath.

## School Board Approves '83-84 Budget Proposal

By ROBERT KOENIG

The Madison County Board of Education gave its approval to a proposed operating budget for the 1983-84 school year and the regular monthly meeting held April 6. The proposed budget calls for county expenditures totaling \$950,526. The total operating budget, including capital expenditures, and anticipated state and federal funding is \$5,478,720.

The proposed budget will be submitted to the county commissioners at their next meeting, scheduled for May 6.

Prior to Wednesday's meeting, the members of the board were sworn in for another four-year term by Madison County Clerk of Courts, Jim Cody. Board chairman Robert Z. Ponder took the oath of office to begin his fourth term. Dedrick Cody began his third term while members Ed Gentry, Gerald Young and Floyd Wallin were sworn to a second term in office. All five members won re-election in last November's general election.

Board member Floyd Wallin nominated Ponder for another term as

board chairman and the board unanimously approved Ponder's election.

In addition to approving the proposed budget, the board discusses plans for the upcoming school year. The board approved August 5, 1983 as the first day of the school year. School superintendent Robert Edwards had polled the county teachers on their choice for a starting date. Edwards reported that the teachers voted by a margin of 125 to 25 for the August 5 date over an August 8

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## Asheville Firm Accused In Rigging Of U.S. 25-70 Bid

By ROBERT KOENIG

An Asheville construction firm, Asheville Contracting Company, was removed from the Department of Transportation list of qualified bidders at a meeting of the State Board of Transportation in Raleigh Thursday. The board decided to remove the company after hearing in executive session an affidavit written by Ted Phillips of Knoxville, Tenn.

Phillips, of the construction firm of Phillips and Jordan, accused the Asheville company of conspiring to rig bidding on the U.S. 25-70 project in Buncombe and Madison counties. Phillips was found guilty in federal court in July, 1981 and was sentenced to 60 days in prison and fined \$250,000.

No further action has been taken against the firm at this time. The transportation board's action prevents the company from bidding on future highway projects. Contacted in Raleigh by telephone Monday, Gene Smith, a senior deputy with the Attorney General's highway section, said that no further action was being planned at this time by his office.

Smith said the affidavit, written by Phillips, charges that Baxter Taylor, president of Asheville Contracting, submitted a complimentary bid on part of the U.S. 25-70 project. A complimentary bid, Smith said, is one that is not competitive.

Smith said the transportation board also voted to remove Baxter Taylor from

the list of qualified bidders. Taylor was unavailable for comment on Monday. Jack Blevins of Asheville Contracting also had no comment except to say, "All that I know is what I read in the papers."

The transportation board also gave final approval to a number of road paving contracts for Western North Carolina counties. The board approved a contract with the Asheville Division of APAC-Carolina for the paving of two sections of primary road and 10 sections of secondary roads in Madison, Mitchell and Yancey counties. The company submitted a low bid of \$605,848 for the project.

The contract contains calls for paving three secondary roads in Madison County. The Asheville firm will repave a

1.8 miles section of Secondary Road (S.R.) 1175 north of Spring Creek, a .45 mile section of S.R. 1590 from S.R. 1589 near Marshall and 1.05 miles of S.R. 1355 in Mars Hill.

The project also calls for the repaving of two sections of N.C. Hwy. 80 in Yancey County and seven sections of secondary roads in Mitchell County. The APAC-Carolina Co. was also awarded four other projects in Buncombe, Henderson, Haywood, Jackson and Macon counties. Including the Madison County project, the firm was awarded contracts totaling \$1,768,816.

Gov. Jim Hunt has proclaimed April 17-23 and Sept. 19-24 as Clean-Up Litter Weeks in North Carolina for 1983.

During these two designated weeks, the North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) will implement a concentrated effort with the public to clean up litter along highways across the state.

Hunt noted that the state spends approximately \$2.2 million annually for litter control. The litter campaign is a partnership between state and local government and is a good way to involve people to accomplish a goal in a statewide effort.

During the April clean-up campaign, at least three transportation crews will be assigned to each of North Carolina's 100 counties and pick up litter on the days of April 18-22.

## Mars Hill College, A-B Tech Reach Joint Agreement

Mars Hill College and Asheville Buncombe Technical College signed an agreement April 8 which will expand academic opportunities for students of both schools.

The new agreement will allow graduates of A-B Tech to transfer to Mars Hill as juniors and complete a bachelor's degree there by taking general education courses along with several upper level classes related to their major at A-B Tech. For Mars Hill students, it will mean an expansion of their academic major possibilities by at least 14 courses.

Prior to the new agreement, a student who wanted a major in Hotel and Restaurant Management, for example, would complete the program at A-B Tech in approximately two years. Then, if he wanted a bachelor's degree, he would have to transfer to a college out of the area which offered such a degree or start over at a senior college such as Mars Hill and earn a business degree.

The new agreement between Mars Hill and A-B Tech allows such a student to keep his major from A-B Tech and complete approximately two years of general studies re-



Photo by Gary Fields Courtesy Asheville Citizen-Times

MARS HILL COLLEGE President Fred Bentley and A-B Tech President Harvey Haynes confer on new agreement.

quired of all students in a bachelor's program. This results in a significant savings in time and expense.

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## Marshall Aldermen Endorse Water Saving Project

The Marshall Board of Aldermen gave tentative approval Tuesday night to a water conservation program suggested by the Madison County Health Department.

Mike Bradley of the health department asked the aldermen to support a program to conserve water in Madison County through a campaign aimed at increasing public awareness and the installation of water-saving devices in homes.

Under the program, the towns of Marshall, Hot Springs and Mars Hill and the Board of County Commissioners would each invest \$800 for the purchase of kits containing the water-saving devices. The kits would be sold to the public throughout the county.

The three devices Bradley showed the aldermen were an aerator for kitchen faucets, a low-flow shower head and a volume-reducing toilet dam.

Bradley said the devices can be easily installed. Each saves water through restricting the flow in faucets, showers and toilets.

Bradley calculated that the installation of the low-flow shower head alone could save consumers as much as \$7 a month through reduced hot water costs.

The plan calls for purchasing 200 of the kits with funds advanced by the three county towns and county commis-

sioners. Revenues from the sale of the kits will reimburse the towns and county governments.

The Marshall aldermen voted to approve funding, subject to the approval of the town boards in Hot Springs and Mars Hill and the county commissioners.

The aldermen also met with Becky Williams to discuss plans for the town's application for a Community Block Development Grant. Details

of suggested improvements that will be sought through the grant will be discussed at a public meeting scheduled for Monday at 4 p.m. in the Marshall Town Hall.

## Bill Would Reduce Pot Penalties

State Senator Dennis Winner announced last week that he is introducing legislation in the General Assembly which would reduce criminal penalties for simple possession of marijuana. Winner was expected to introduce the legislation during the Monday night session in Raleigh.

Winner said that the bill would increase the amount of marijuana a person could

possess and still be charged with a misdemeanor. Currently, possession of up to one ounce of the drug is punishable by a \$100 fine. Possession of more than one ounce is a felony punishable by up to five years in jail.

A former judge in both the Superior and District Courts, Winner represents Madison and Buncombe County in the state senate. He was recently

appointed to the North Carolina Court Commission by Gov. Jim Hunt.

Under terms of the bill Winner had proposed, possession of up to eight ounces would be regarded as a misdemeanor carrying up to a two-year prison sentence. Winner's bill applies only to simple possession. It would not change penalties for the sale or delivery of the drug, both of

which are felonies.

Winner told reporters he introduced the bill at the request of the state district attorney's association. He said, "The DAs feel that it is unfair that with simple possession of an ounce of marijuana you can't be jailed, but for anything over that amount, even 3 1/2 ounces, you can get five years in prison."

## MHC Fund Drive Begins

Mars Hill College will begin a \$200,000 campaign among the residents of Madison County Monday entitled "Madison Assurance Campaign." The campaign will seek unrestricted gifts which the college may use where most needed or to the Golden M Club if the donor so desires. The month-long campaign will conclude May 18.

The fund raising effort resulted from responses the college received from area residents following a supportive editorial in The News Record.

"I have been encouraged by the support and willingness of the many county residents who have contacted us since the editorial appeared," stated Mars Hill

president Dr. Fred Bentley.

"Mars Hill College has made major contributions to Madison County for 127 years," he continued. "Many of our county leaders in politics, business and industry, education and religion have been educated at Mars Hill. As part of our commitment to the county's youth, we began a program in 1975 so that any Madison County young person who wanted an education could come to Mars Hill and receive a 75% discount in tuition."

The campaign will be conducted in five major divisions. John O. Corbett, retired Marshall businessman, and Mars Hill physician Dr. W. O. Duch, will co-chair the overall

effort. All of the five divisions have a chairman and several area coordinators who have volunteered their time and efforts to insure the campaign's success.

The Business and Industry division will be co-chaired by Ernest Teague, retired businessman, and Charles Tolley, manager of the French Broad Electric Cooperative. Area coordinators include Joe Justice of Hot Springs, Hal Johnson of the Northwestern Bank and Bryce Hall of First Union Bank in Marshall, and in Mars Hill, Randy Ferguson, manager of Asheville Federal, and Steve Fisher, manager of Western Bank. The Alumni and Friends division will be co-chaired by Lillian Campbell

and Mattee Mashburn of Marshall. The area coordinators include county commissioner Virginia Anderson of Hot Springs, retired businessman Bill Moore of Spring Creek, Sheriff E. Y. Ponder, Florence Ramsey of French Broad Electric, and Zeno Ponder, in Marshall and in Mars Hill, Bruce and Hazelwood Murray, of French Broad Chevrolet, and James Ledford, chairman of the county commissioners, and Louis and Pauline Zimmerman in Laurel.

In the public schools division, superintendent Bill Ellison will be the chairman. Area coordinators include John C. Wells, principal of