

January 9, 1985

Former NR Publisher, Wife Dead
In Murder-Suicide Story On Page 5

Community Calendar

Marshall Board Meets Jan. 14

The Marshall Board of Aldermen will meet on Jan. 14 at 7:30 p.m. in the Town Hall.

Mars Hill Town Meeting Postponed

The Mars Hill Board of Aldermen will meet on Jan. 14 at 7:30 p.m. in the Mars Hill Town Hall.

Hot Springs VFD To Meet

The Hot Springs Volunteer Fire Dept. will hold a meeting for all members on Jan. 21 at 7 p.m. in the Hot Springs Town Hall. All members are asked to attend.

Laurel Turkey Shoot Set

The Laurel VFD will hold a turkey shoot on Jan. 12 at 11 a.m. at the fire station field. Everyone is welcome to participate. All proceeds will be used to purchase equipment for the company.

Narcotics Anonymous Group Formed In Marshall

The Willingness To Try Group, a chapter of Narcotics Anonymous, has been formed and will meet on Thursday nights at the Marshall Presbyterian Church. The meetings will feature open discussions and are open to the public at no charge. For more information, call the Narcotics Anonymous Help Line at 258-4537.

Correction

In last week's Community Calendar, we incorrectly reported that the Hot Springs Board of Aldermen would meet on Jan. 4 at 7:30 p.m. The meeting in question took place on Jan. 7. The News Record apologizes for any inconvenience caused by this mistake.

The next meeting of the Hot Springs Board of Aldermen is scheduled for Feb. 4 at 7:30 p.m.

Ledford Elected Land Of Sky Chairman

James T. Ledford, chairman of the Madison County Board of Commissioners, was recently elected to serve as chairman of the Land of Sky Regional Council. Ledford succeeds William Ives of Transylvania.

Ledford has been a member of the council for 12 years as a Madison County representative within the council. He was also named to represent the four-county region as a member of the North Carolina Joint Regional Forum, a forum of county and municipal officials which advises on development of policies and programs affecting regional councils and local governments.

Also named to the council's board were Hendersonville Mayor Don Michalove, named first vice chairman; Buncombe County Commission chairman R. Curtis Ratcliffe, named as second vice chairman; Montreat Mayor John Abernathy, named as secretary and Laurel Park Mayor John Carter, named as treasurer. Transylvania County Commissioner Fred Kilstrom and Brevard councilman Cornelius Hunt were also appointed as at-large members of the council.

Ledford and the fellow officers will be installed on Jan. 30 during the council's annual dinner in Hendersonville.

Betty Wild Named To Committee

Marshall Mayor Betty Wild has been appointed as a member of the North Carolina League of Municipalities' Community and Economic Development Policy Committee, one of the league's four standing committees. Wild was appointed to the post by Horace Whitley, president of the league. She will serve a two-year term on the committee chaired by Fayetteville Mayor Bill Hurley.

The committee serves to provide advice to the league's board of directors.

The committee's first meeting of the year will be held on March 5 in Raleigh.



BETTY WILD

MHC Receives \$5000

Mars Hill College President Fred Bentley has announced that the school has received a donation of \$5,000 from Wachovia Bank and Trust. The check was delivered recently by Herbert Buckner, manager of Wachovia's Marshall branch.

The donation is the second payment of a \$15,000 pledge Wachovia made in 1983 as part of the Madison Assurance Campaign. The college began the fund-raising drive while undergoing financial difficulties. Bentley thanked Buckner and Wachovia, saying, "Wachovia's continuing support is evidence of their continuing interest in the success of Mars Hill College as well as higher education in general."

THE NEWS RECORD

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Hot Springs To Cash Bonds To Pay Off ESC Debt

By ROBERT KOENIG

It was standing room only at Hot Springs' Town Hall Monday night for the monthly meeting of the Board of Aldermen. Some 30 concerned town residents crowded into the hall to hear details of the town's debt to the North Carolina Employment Security Commission (ESC.)

Residents first learned of the \$30,000 debt at the December meeting of the board. Discussion of the debt, stemming from unemployment claims following a 1979 HUD housing rehabilitation project, occupied most of Monday's meeting.

At the conclusion of the meeting, the board voted to redeem three certificates of deposit worth \$25,000 in order to repay the ESC bill. The town is hoping that the lump sum payment will convince ESC officials to forgive some \$4,000 in interest and penalties on the debt.

On a motion introduced by Kenny Ramsey and seconded by alderman Waylon Puryear, the board voted to cash in a \$5,000 note belonging to the town and two \$10,000 notes belonging to the Hot Springs Volunteer Fire Dept.

The two \$10,000 CDs being held by the fire department are what remains of \$30,000 in grants approved by the General Assembly for improvements. The other \$5,000 note is the remainder of a \$35,000 General

Assembly appropriation to the town for the purchase of a new garbage truck.

The town recently purchased a truck for \$30,000 and completed an overhaul of the fire truck. Mayor Baker said that the League of Municipalities had approved using the funds to repay the ESC.

During the meeting, the board also voted to incorporate the town's General Fund and water and sewer funds. The action was taken, Baker said, upon the recommendation of the town's auditor.

Redeeming the CDs will leave the fire department with \$6,000 with which to make additional improvements to the town's fire truck and equipment.

Although cashing in the notes will erase the town's savings, the latest financial statement indicates Hot Springs will still have some \$22,978 in cash on hand, with lesser amounts remaining in revenue sharing and Powell Bill funds.

The debt to the ESC stemmed from unemployment claims paid to workers on a HUD housing rehabilitation project in 1978-79. Hot Springs was notified in April, 1983 that it was liable for repayment of the claims paid by ESC. The town had repaid some \$15,000 of the debt prior to the announcement at last month's board meeting. Marshall paid off a similar

debt of \$37,000 from a HUD project in six installments of \$6,500 in 1984.

Hot Springs' debt was so large because the town does not make unemployment tax payments on employees, making it fully accountable for any unemployment claims.

The town officials voted to cash in the saving certificates rather than face a takeover of town services by the N.C. League of Municipalities. Had the town's savings not paid a substantial portion of the debt, the League of Municipalities could have taken over the workings of the town's government and set property tax rates high enough to retire the debt.

Hot Springs and Marshall were two of 27 North Carolina municipalities facing debts to the ESC stemming from HUD projects in the late 1970's.

In other matter discussed at Monday's meeting, the board heard from Tom Bowman of the Old Smoky Cable Co. regarding cable television service to Hot Springs. Bowman's company is attempting to restore service following the departure of the former cable franchise operator.

Bowman told the aldermen that he hopes to have service to Hot Springs homes returned within the next week and to be able to offer up to 12 stations within the next 60 days. He said his company also has plans to open a store in Hot Springs offering repairs and satellites.

Old Smoky Cable, Inc. has not been awarded a franchise as of yet. Mayor Baker instructed Bowman to continue to operate the system and that the town would prepare a franchise agreement for consideration at the February meeting.

The town opened bids received for the administration of a \$137,000 street paving project being funded by a Community Development Block Grant. The low bid of \$4,257 was submitted by the Land of the Sky Regional Council. The Madison County Housing Authority also submitted a bid of \$10,000 which would include a final audit of the project. The aldermen tabled a final decision on awarding the contract.

Mayor Baker said that town is hoping the state Dept. of Transportation will be able to assist in the repaving project.

The aldermen also tabled a request for the installation of a septic tank presented by W.C. and Ruth Spencer of LaBelle, Fla.

On motions presented by Kenny Ramsey, the board voted to require all town department heads to attend the monthly meeting of the Board of Aldermen and made the installation of septic tank hookups a first priority for the town crew.

Board member Gerry Ramsey did not attend Monday's meeting.

Cutshall Cleared Of Assault Charge

Mars Hill Chief of Police R.J. Cutshall was found not guilty of a charge of assault inflicting serious bodily harm during Thursday's session of the Madison County District Court.

Cutshall had been charged by former Mars Hill police officer William Lisenbee following a dispute in the town police station on Dec. 13 during which Cutshall suspended the officer.

Madison County District Court Judge Alexander Lyerly found Cutshall innocent following some 45 minutes of testimony from the two men.

Lisenbee told the court that Cutshall struck him with the back of his hand as he was attempting to leave the station, knocking him into a wall and injuring his neck. He told the court he wore a brace for several days following the incident.

The incident began, Lisenbee said, when Cutshall ordered him back to

the police station shortly after midnight on Dec. 13. Cutshall ordered Lisenbee back to the station after discovering that he had double initialed security stickers placed on Mars Hill businesses. The stickers were being used in response to a series of break-ins in the area.

Lisenbee admitted initialed the stickers twice, saying he did so in order to concentrate on suspicious traffic which may have been linked to the break-ins. In an earlier telephone interview with The News Record, Lisenbee said he was acting on the suggestion of assistant police chief Sizemore.

Summing up the testimony of the plaintiff and complainant, Assistant District Attorney James L. Baker told the court, "Really, there are just two different accounts of what happened." Lisenbee said he regretted there were no witnesses to the incident.

Following the trial, Cutshall told reporters he was pleased with the verdict and that the double initialed was only one reason he recommended firing Lisenbee.

Mars Hill Mayor Bill Powell convened a special meeting of the town's Board of Aldermen on Dec. 19 to investigate the incident. The aldermen voted to dismiss Lisenbee following the hearing.

Prior to working for the Mars Hill force, Lisenbee was a member of the Marshall Police Dept. and ran unsuccessfully for Madison County Sheriff in 1982.

Cutshall's trial was one of several cases involving assault heard during the Jan. 3 session of court. James English was found guilty of simple assault and was sentenced to an active 30-day jail sentence. English was originally charged with assault with a deadly weapon.

Pattie Tipton was found not guilty

on charges of assault and resisting arrest. Also found not guilty of assault charges were Donna English and Robbie Banks. Larry Davis was acquitted of charges of assault and communicating threats.

The court also dismissed charges of assault on a female and communicating threats against Champ Rice, Jr. and charges of larceny against both Floyd Rollins and Gary Ball.

Tim Cole entered a guilty plea to a charge of communicating threats and received a suspended two-year sentence and was ordered to pay a \$500 counsel fee for his court-appointed attorney. Charges of making harassing telephone calls and assault by pointing a gun against Cole were dismissed.

Joey Robinson and Tony King both failed to appear to answer charges of assault in unrelated cases. The court issued arrest orders for both men.

Redmon Dam Returns To Service

Major renovations to the Redmon Dam hydroelectric plant have been completed and the 75-year old power plant has been returned to service.

The Carolina Power and Light Co. recently completed the installation of new turbines and generators at the plant, increasing the dam's generating capacity by five times.

Built in 1910 by Captain W.T. Weaver to provide electricity to operate Asheville's electric trolley car system, it was later purchased by the Asheville Power and Light Co., which merged with CP&L in 1926.

"It's our oldest power plant, but it's been completely modernized," said Cletus Clark, a CP&L spokesman. "About the only piece of old equipment left here is a 1909 motor that

was once used to raise and lower the headgates of the plant. We call it our museum piece."

Not only the oldest plant, but the smallest as well, the Redmon Dam provides an inexpensive source of electricity by using the waters of the French Broad River.

"It's economical power. There are no fuel costs with hydroelectric power, and even with the money we've spent on the renovation, the plant will more than pay for itself," said Warren Hilliard, a senior engineer on the modernization project.

The red brick powerhouse beside the dam still looks much the same as it did in the 1920's. The changes made to the powerhouse, however, are on



REDMON DAM AS IT APPEARS TODAY, ready to return to service at five times its original capacity.

the inside where a computer systems allows CP&L to control the dam from the company's Skyland facility. Speaking of the renovations, Clark said, "We've taken an old power plant and made it into a completely automated new plant."

The renovations will allow Redmon Dam to generate up to 5,000 kilowatts. There is no storage capacity at the plant, which operates as a "run of the river" hydro facility. The amount of electricity the dam is capable of generating is determined by the river flow. The 535-foot long dam is 32 feet

high. Bob Buckner is the sole operator of the plant, a job he has held for the past 14 years. Referring to the dam, Buckner said, "There's a lot of history here, and a lot of memories for me."

A second hydroelectric dam, Capicola, is currently under construction in Marshall below Redmon Dam. The Capicola Dam project is expected to be completed early this year. The plant will be operated by the French Broad Electric Membership Corp.



PHOTOGRAPH FROM THE 1920's shows that the red brick powerhouse has remained virtually unchanged over the years.