

February 15, 1985

Community  
CalendarUtilities Commission Hearing  
Set For Feb. 19

The North Carolina Utilities Commission will conduct a public hearing in Marshall on Feb. 19 to hear public comments regarding the latest rate increase request by Continental Telephone of North Carolina.

The hearing will be held at the Marshall First Baptist Church at 11 a.m. The meeting had earlier been scheduled for the Dept. of Social Services conference room, but was changed in order to accommodate an expected large audience.

The meeting is open to the public.

## Country Music Show Set

There will be a Country Music Show at the Marshall Recreation Center on Feb. 22 at 7:30 p.m. Entertainment will be provided by the Madison High School string band and the Bounty Hunter band.

Admission is \$3 for adults, \$1 for children under 12.

## Parenting Classes Offered

Parenting classes are being held each Tuesday evening at 7:30 p.m. in the Marshall Senior Citizens Center on Long Branch Rd. The classes are free and open to all parents.

Sessions will focus on disciplining children and on child development. For more information, contact Marian Plaut or Steve Michaels at 649-2367.

Snowstorm Closes Schools,  
Downs Power Lines

A winter snowstorm hit the Western Carolina mountains early Tuesday morning, blanketing Madison County in up to two feet of snow. The snow came on the heels of heavy rains which fell on Monday, swelling streams and the French Broad River.

Tuesday's storm brought power outages to French Broad EMC and CP&L customers throughout the county. Hardest hit were residents of Hot Springs and the Grapevine communities, where power was out until Wednesday afternoon. Shorter blackouts were also reported in Marshall, Walnut and Mars Hill as ice and downed trees caused problems for line crews.

The storm also forced the closing of Madison County schools. Schools were closed on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday and are not expected to reopen before Monday.

## Helms Supports

## Farm Credit Plan

Sen. Jesse A. Helms, Chairman of the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry, said Secretary Block's announcement of credit relief measures for financially-strapped farmers is "timely and substantial assistance that will help farmers obtain funds necessary for Spring planting."

"These new guidelines will help farmers and bankers make more effective use of the credit initiatives announced by President Reagan last year," said Helms. "It will also help to alleviate the substantial backlog of loan applications so that farmers can obtain necessary credit in a timely manner."

"Secretary Block and President Reagan are to be commended for using the full extent of their authority to provide this timely, short-term relief.

Because of the short lending season, it would not be possible for Congress to pass legislation that would provide the necessary relief for this year," said Helms.

The measures announced would modify a credit program implemented in September by allowing banks to write down interest rates on loans to farmers in exchange for a government guarantee for up to 90 percent of the loan. Banks will still have the option of obtaining the guarantee by writing off 10 percent of the loan principal.

"This plan will call for all sectors of the farm financial community, including producers, commercial bankers, and Federal financial personnel to cooperate in an effort to provide timely operating loans," said Helms.

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Hendon Calls For  
Spending Freeze

Eleventh District Congressman Bill Hendon called a Monday afternoon press conference in Asheville to unveil a new trailer he will use as a mobile office.

Hendon also told reporters that he supports a freeze on government spending at 1984 levels, except for defense and Social Security and other retirement programs.

Hendon said, "I think the best way to control it is to freeze federal spending dead in its tracks, except for Social Security and retirement benefits."

He said that President Reagan's proposed defense budget will be cut in the Congress, saying, "We're all for a strong defense, but 13 percent in these times? No way."

Hendon said he would push for freezing Medicare and Medicaid payments at last year's level and said he opposed the elimination of federal research funding, the Appalachian Regional Commission and the Small Business Administration.

Regarding suggestions for dismantling the tobacco support program made by Agriculture Secretary John Block, Hendon said, "We've got a lot of hard negotiating to do with the secretary. His proposal is not the greatest idea I've ever heard. This is a negotiating process and that's what we have senators and congressmen for. We have a hard fight in front of us on a great many issues. I'm just glad to be a part of it."

Hendon also reiterated his call for a constitutional amendment to require a balanced federal budget, calling it "...the only real hope we have."

The new mobile congressional office Hendon unveiled at Monday's conference will be used on weekends to take the congressman to outlying areas in the 11th District. Hendon said the van was primarily used by New York Rep. Geraldine Ferraro in her Queens district. The van is being loaned for \$20 a month and will be paid with funds from Hendon's constituent service budget.

## THE NEWS RECORD

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Marshall Suspends  
Chief Of Police

By ROBERT KOENIG

Marshall aldermen John Dodson and Sammy Lunsford voted Wednesday to suspend the town's chief of police, Joe Griffey.

The decision to suspend Griffey came at the end of an emergency meeting of the town board called by Dodson on Wednesday morning. Marshall Mayor Betty Wild and aldermen Ed Niles opposed the decision.

Immediately following the emergency meeting, Wild met with town attorney Charles Mashburn. Following that meeting, she announced that she would comply with the decision to suspend Griffey of his duties as police chief.

Later Wednesday, Mayor Wild appointed Larry Davis as the town's acting police chief.

Dodson called for the police chief's suspension following a shooting incident with a motorist Friday night on U.S. 25-70. Dodson asked for an investigation of the incident Monday evening during the regularly scheduled meeting of the board.

At that Monday night meeting,

Griffey gave the aldermen a verbal account of what transpired Friday night. Griffey was not present at Wednesday's emergency meeting.

Dodson said he spoke with both Atorney General Lacey Thornburg and District Attorney Tom Rusher on Tuesday concerning the incident. At Wednesday's meeting, police officer Larry Davis, who was driving the

police car during the Friday night chase, told the board what had happened.

Davis said he began pursuing a Jeep, model and year unknown, when the vehicle pulled in front of the police car on the Marshall By-pass near the shopping center.

When the car first pulled in front of the police car, Davis said, he thought the driver was drunk because of the erratic way the car was being handled. Davis noted, however, that the driver's performance improved when the police car's blue light was turned on.

Davis followed the vehicle, attempting to stop it as it drive south on U.S. 25-70. Davis said that Griffey, who

was in the passenger seat, began shooting at the vehicle's tires in an attempt to stop the vehicle. Davis said nine shots were fired, six from Griffey's service revolver and three from Davis' gun. Davis said Griffey fired all nine shots.

The police managed to get the vehicle stopped on Tillery Branch Rd. after the driver, identified as a

28-year old Weaverville resident, attempted to elude the police on Tillery Branch. Davis said most of the shots were fired while the police car was behind the Jeep. Several shots were also fired while the police car was alongside the Jeep. One shot hit the Jeep's left rear tire.

Davis said that when the Jeep was finally stopped, Griffey pointed his gun at the suspect, saying, "If you move, you're a dead son of a bitch."

Davis said the driver charged with reckless driving, driving without an operator's license, failure to stop for a blue light and misdemeanor possession of marijuana. At the time of his arrest, Davis said, Roberts appeared "scared to death." Roberts then

began cursing the officers and beat his head against a divider in the police car.

According to Davis, the suspect was taken to the Madison County Jail where he was charged with misdemeanor possession of marijuana. While at the jail, a counselor from Blue Ridge Mental Health, where the suspect had been receiving counseling, was called. Davis said that the man was later released into the custody of his parents.

Dodson told the meeting that both Attorney General Lacey Thornburg and District Attorney Tom Rusher had said that Griffey did not have the right to shoot at the fleeing suspect. The district attorney's office is currently investigating the incident. After telling his version of the incident to the aldermen, Davis met with assistant District Attorney Jim Baker on Wednesday afternoon.

Mayor Betty Wild defended the police chief, saying, "He made a split-second decision. He didn't know what he had in front of him at the

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## Dodson Calls For Investigation

By ROBERT KOENIG

With the sound of dripping water providing background music, the Marshall Board of Aldermen held their regularly scheduled monthly meeting in Town Hall Monday night. Leaks in the Town Hall roof had town employees scrambling for buckets to catch the water.

The aldermen received the monthly financial report from Cecilia Ward. The report indicated that the town's finances are running low, with only \$45,000 remaining in the general fund for the 1985 fiscal year which ends

June 30. However, a \$35,000 capital expense entered last month for the purchase of the town's new garbage truck was not in the general fund budget. Subtracting that \$35,000 expense means that approximately \$81,000 remains in the general fund budget for the remainder of the year.

Mrs. Ward did not present the board with the monthly report of the town's water and sewer system because of delays in sending out the monthly bills for January. Freezing weather delayed the monthly reading of the meters. Linda Dodson said that

water bills should be in the mail later this week.

The freezing weather also prompted the aldermen to approve adjustments to the January bills. Many Marshall homeowners were forced to run their water taps continuously during last month's sub-zero weather to prevent pipes from freezing. Earlier, Sammy Lunsford estimated that the town had pumped 18 million gallons during the month, twice the normal amount.

The aldermen voted to disregard the January meter readings and to

charge each customer the same rate they paid during December.

The chief order of business during Monday's session was discussion of a shooting incident Friday night during a chase on U.S. 25-70. Board member John Dodson questioned police chief Joe Griffey on the incident.

Griffey told the aldermen that he and officer Larry Davis were on U.S. 25-70 in front of the Ingles Shopping Center when a Jeep pulled in front of them, forcing them off the road.

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## Bus Driver Charged

## Sheriff Returns Three Missing Youngsters

By ROBERT KOENIG

Two Marshall Elementary School students and a teenager reported missing on Monday were returned to Madison County Wednesday afternoon by Sheriff E.Y. Ponder. A school bus driver, Ronnie Ball, has been charged in connection with the youths' disappearance.

Merrilee Goforth, 12, and Teresa Payne, 13, of the Little Pine community and Jeff Bailey, 15, were located at a rest stop on Interstate 40 near Statesville by Madison County Sheriff E.Y. Ponder.

Ponder found the three youngsters and Ball after contacting relatives of the bus driver.

Ball, 39, is charged with two counts of contributing to the

delinquency of a minor and abduction. He was being held Thursday in the Madison County jail in lieu of bail. A bonding hearing for Ball was scheduled for Friday in Madison County District Court.

Upon their return to Marshall, the youngsters were examined by a physician. Both Goforth and Payne were released to the custody of their parents and no charges were filed. Payne is alleged to have helped the two girls leave the county and is being held in the Juvenile Detention Center in Leicester.

The two Marshall Elementary School students were reported missing from school on Monday. The girls left the school with Ball and met Bailey in Marshall before leaving the county for parts unknown.

Ramsey Re-Elected  
As Speaker Of The House

By ROBERT KOENIG

Rep. Liston B. Ramsey of Marshall made history last week when he became the first man ever elected to a third term as speaker of the North Carolina House of Representatives. Ramsey's election as leader of the lower house came on the opening day of the General Assembly.

The 55-year old legislator was nominated for the unprecedented third term by his district seatmate, Rep. Charles Beall of Canton. In nominating Ramsey, Beall told the House members, "It is with utmost pleasure and pride that I nominate for Speaker of this body, my distinguished colleague and associate from the 2nd District, the honorable Liston Bryan Ramsey."

His election to a third consecutive term will be extraordinary but this is entirely fitting, for Liston Ramsey is an extraordinary person. Liston Ramsey was essentially created for greatness, for service beyond the realm of what is ordinary or merely

average, sufficient or adequate.

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow said, "In this world, a man must be either a hammer or an anvil." Liston Ramsey is a hammer.

He is a leader, a doer of deeds who takes his responsibilities seriously. If he thinks something is worth doing, he puts his whole self into it. Add to this quality a demonstrated devotion to public service, a razor-sharp insight into issues and a loyalty to the legislature as an institution, and you have the ingredients of a success story unparalleled in North Carolina history.

"His road to success has been paved by a thorough knowledge of the legislative process. He is a master of legislative rules and procedures—a master, that is the only word for it."

Those of you who will be serving under his guidance for the first time will readily see that I do not exaggerate in exaggeration when I say that no knowledge of the inner workings of

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