

Laurel VFD Saves Home

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Community Calendar

Laurel VFD Ham Shoot Planned

The Laurel VFD will sponsor a ham shoot on March 16 beginning at 1 p.m. Everyone is invited to attend. Proceeds will benefit the fire company.

Baseball, Softball Signup Set

Final registration for baseball and softball youth league will be held on March 15 from 10 a.m. until noon in the cafeteria of Marshall Elementary School. Registration is open to all boys and girls ages six through 15. New players must furnish a copy of their birth certificate.

Nuclear Dump Meeting Planned

In Spring Creek On March 21

There will be a citizen's awareness meeting concerning the proposed nuclear waste storage facility on March 21 at the Spring Creek Volunteer Fire Dept. station house. The meeting is sponsored by the Madison County Nuclear Waste Education Committee. Jerry Plemmons will be the featured speaker. All area residents are invited to attend.

Alzheimer's Support Group To Meet

The Madison County Alzheimer's Disease Support Group will meet on March 18 at 7 p.m. in the Marshall Senior Citizen's Center on Long Branch Rd. The group is open to all family members, friends, professionals and caregivers of Alzheimer's victims. The purpose of the group is to provide an opportunity for shared experiences and emotional support as well as information exchanges and assistance in caring for persons afflicted with a dementing illness.

For more information on the group, call Vivienne Direcks at 689-3246 or Marian Plaut at 649-2367.

Mars Hill VFD Dinner

The Mars Hill Volunteer Fire Dept. will hold a ham and roast beef dinner on March 16 from noon until 1:30 p.m. in the cafeteria of Mars Hill Elementary School. Cost is \$3.50 per person. Proceeds will benefit the fire department's programs.

200 Attend GOP Dinner

By ANDREW FULLER

Madison County Republicans held their annual Lincoln Day dinner in Mars Hill on Saturday night. An estimated 200 local Republicans attended the fundraiser held in the cafeteria of Mars Hill College.

The diners heard brief speeches from local candidates and enjoyed a buffet of fried chicken and steak.

Former U.S. Ambassador to Romania David Funderburk, a candidate for the U.S. Senate, addressed the Mars Hill gathering. Funderburk described the tyranny of life in communist countries, called for a return of school prayer and reiterated his opposition to abortion.

Funderburk also criticized the news media, saying, "The news media does not help a conservative candidate get elected." The former ambassador will face Rep. James Broyhill in the May 6 primary. Broyhill did not attend the Mars Hill dinner.

Steen Calls For Forum

Mars Hill dentist Reese A. Steen, a Democratic challenger in the May 6 primary, has called for a public debate on the issues. Steen called for the public forum in a letter sent to the other Democratic candidates in the race for the Madison County Board of Commissioners.

Steen released the letter to The News Record on Tuesday. Copies of the letter were mailed to county commissioners Ervin Adams, James Ledford and Virginia Anderson and challengers Bobby Capps and John Hensley.

Warning that local Republicans "are working hard and have a real good field of candidates for the fall election", Steen told the other candidates "It is imperative that we give the Democrats of Madison County the information they need to choose the best people for our face-off with the Republicans in November."

Steen asked interested candidates to contact either himself or county chairman Swan Huff or the local news media if they were interested in his suggestion.

Court House Repair Contracts Awarded

Roof Replacement To Cost \$204,697

By ROBERT KOENIG

Contracts for the county courthouse repair project were awarded last week. The Madison County commissioners announced the contract winners following the opening of bids on March 6.

Contracts for the roof removal and replacement and electrical work were awarded. In both cases, the contracts were awarded to the lowest bidder.

Mars Hill architect Wayne Roberts read the bids during Thursday's meeting. Before the opening, Roberts expressed concern that the two bids received on the project might come in too high. Afterwards, he expressed surprise that the bids were as low as they were.

The low bid for removing and replacing the courthouse roof was submitted by H and M Constructors of Asheville. Cost for removing and replacing the existing roof are \$189,300.

The J. Cole Construction Co. submitted a bid of \$213,400 for the project.

The commissioners received three bids for the electrical contract work on the project. The winning low bid of \$15,397 was submitted by Hyatt Electric Co.

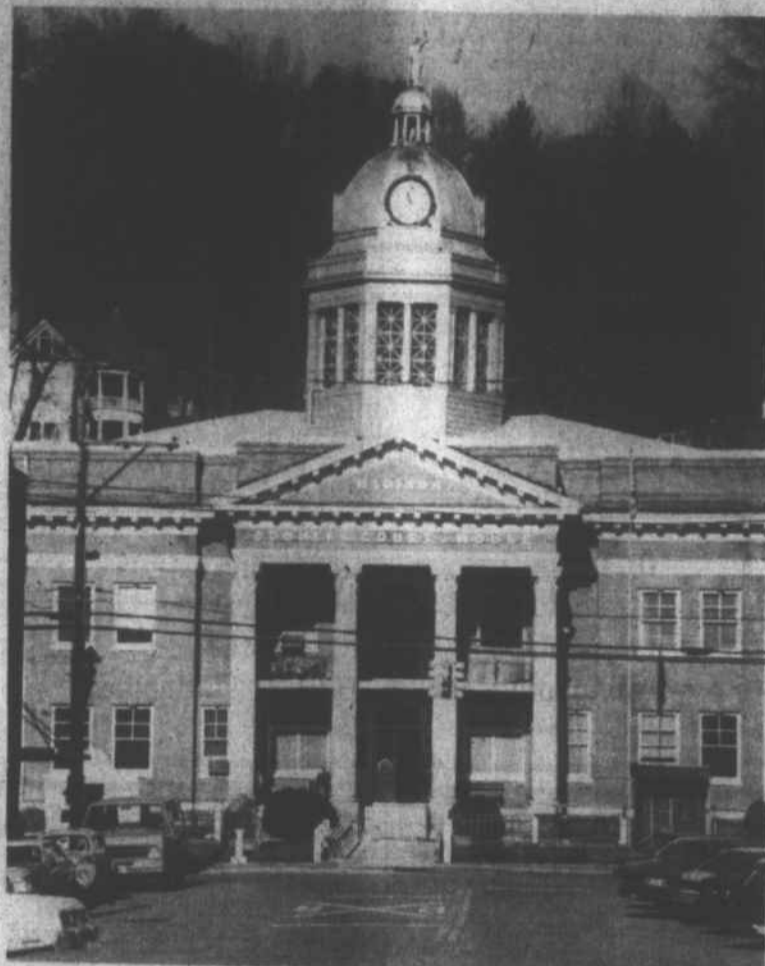
Hayes and Lunsford Electric Co. presented a bid of \$15,502 and the M.B. Haynes Electric Corp. submitted a bid of \$15,750.

The commissioners met briefly in executive session before announcing the winners of the bidding.

Contracts for the project were signed on Monday. County workers have begun removing debris and records stored on the upper floor of the courthouse in preparation for the project.

Roberts told The News Record in a telephone interview that work to remove the 16-ton cupola will begin next week with the removal of the statue of "Blind Justice." He estimated that removal of the cupola may take up to three weeks.

Plans call for the cupola to be removed in one piece and placed on the courthouse lawn. It will then be studied to determine if repairs can be made. The contracts signed on Monday do not provide for returning the cupola to its original position once the roof is replaced.



WORK ON THE MADISON COUNTY COURT HOUSE began on Monday. The project to remove and replacing the building's roof is expected to take two months. Workers will begin preparing to remove the 16.5-ton cupola next week.

Marshall To Seek Block Grant Funds

Marshall will once again apply for a Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) to fund a housing rehabilitation project on Cotton Mill Hill. The town's request for funding of the project was rejected last year.

The town's aldermen agreed to seek the grant during their monthly meeting Monday night in Town Hall after hearing from Madison County Housing Authority director Sam Parker.

Parker reported on progress on a similar project underway on Island Rd. and explained the CDBG program to the aldermen.

Cost of the Cotton Mill project is not known. Rules governing the CDBG program allow Marshall to apply for up to \$250,000 for housing rehabilitation projects. Parker will prepare cost estimates on the project to be presented at the April meeting.

The aldermen also awarded a contract for the installation of water and sewer lines on Island Rd. The contract was awarded to Hobson Construction Co. of Asheville for a low bid of \$36,425. The installation project is part of a CDBG program and will be paid for with the block grant funds.

Board member Faye Reid did not attend Monday's meeting. She was

reported to be hospitalized, with pneumonia, but was expected to be released from the hospital later this week.

Cecilia Ward also did not attend Monday's meeting. The monthly financial report was delivered by town secretary Linda Dodson.

Mrs. Dodson told the aldermen that the town's budget was within line, although both the fire and police departments were over budget. The overage was caused by the purchases of new patrol cars and a furnace for the fire station.

The board discussed dropping the police department's Main Street telephones as a cost-saving measure. The phones, costing about \$200 per month, are seldom used. Mayor Anita Ward also questioned the police fuel bill and suggested that patrolmen shut off their engines when not patrolling.

Mrs. Dodson also reported that the town has begun saving money on both overtime and utility charges. A new work schedule for town workers has cut down overtime from an average of eight hours per week to one.

Booth Marler was praised for his work with the town crew on the aging water system. Mrs. Dodson reported

that the town pumped 7,449,000 gals. of water in Feb. while billing for 3,513,200 gals.

Mrs. Dodson said that the 7,449,000 gals. pumped in Feb. was 3,513,000 gals. less than the town has averaged over the past five months. The board members all praised Marler for helping the town crew identify leaking lines. Mayor Ward said, "If we ever have enough gold, we should make a crown for Booth."

Delinquent water customers still have outstanding bills totalling some \$15,000, but Mrs. Dodson reported that collections have improved since the board agreed to cut service to delinquent customers.

Many of the delinquents have come to Town Hall to work out repayment schedules. Mayor Ward reiterated her promise to cut service to delinquents who do not meet their payments. Some \$2-3,000 in water bills are owed by former customers who have since left town, Mrs. Dodson said.

The board agreed to sell the town's old patrol car to Charles Allen for \$400. Allen was the only one to submit a bid on the old car.

Eileen Payne of Cotton Mill told the aldermen that the resident housing a

hog in their front yard has not removed the animal as requested. The board agreed to take the problem to District Attorney Tom Risher for further action. Earlier, the aldermen sent a letter to the hog's owner demanding its removal.

The aldermen also approved a contract with the Marshall Youth Boosters for use of the Blannerhassett Is. baseball field. Youth teams will have use of the field on Mondays through Saturdays from April through early July except for April 29 and July 4, when the Marshall VFD will sponsor a circus and rodeo.

The field will be available for adult softball following the close of the Youth League season. Mayor Ward had hoped to accommodate both the youth and adult leagues, but Donna Ward and others representing the youth league said such a plan was unworkable.

Although approving the contract for use of the field, the aldermen rejected an appeal for funds from the Youth League for repairs to the field and bleachers. Board member John Dodson told Ward that the town had not budgeted funds for recreation in the present budget.

WCU Professors Debate Economic Effects Of Nuclear Waste Dump

By BILL STUDENC

The Waynesville Mountaineer
The location of a nuclear waste repository in Western North Carolina should have no appreciable impact on the area's multi-million dollar tourism industry, according to a Western Carolina University economics professor.

Dr. Frank O'Connor, one of three WCU professors who spoke at an informational forum Thursday at First Baptist Church in Canton, shocked a crowd of about 200 people when he said the effect of a WNC repository on tourism would be negligible.

"As far as tourism, I see rather little impact," O'Connor said, sending a wave of murmurs and gasps through the audience, consisting mostly of people opposed to a WNC repository.

Opponents of a nuclear waste storage facility have contended that tourists would no longer flock to the

mountains of WNC if a repository is located here.

And those opponents let their feelings be known to O'Connor and the panel of professors at Thursday's meeting.

"I could disagree with everything Dr. O'Connor has said and we could still be friends," said Dr. Robert Earnest, a Waynesville pediatrician and spokesman for the Haywood Anti-dump Leadership Team (HALT).

Earnest cited a pair of studies indicating that tourism would be seriously damaged by location of a nuclear waste repository in WNC.

Tourists at the Canyonland National Park in Nevada were recently asked if they would come to the park if they knew that a nuclear waste repository was located nearby. According to the survey, more than 80 percent said they would.

In a similar survey conducted in

Asheville, 47 percent of those who were asked said they would not come to the area if they knew a radioactive waste storage facility was nearby.

Dr. Gordon McKinney, head of the WCU history department, said that the wording of the question made the results somewhat misleading.

The surveys specifically asked, "If you KNEW that a nuclear waste repository was located nearby, would you still visit this area?"

"Most transient tourists do not investigate the location of nuclear repositories," McKinney said. "At least until the year 2000, the statistics from that study would not be applicable for this area."

According to the Nuclear Waste Policy Act (the federal legislation authorizing one repository and the identification of a site for a second repository), that second facility would not be constructed until 1998.

O'Connor also surprised the crowd with his statement that he doubted the second-home market, another staple of the WNC economy, would suffer if a nuclear waste facility was located in the area.

Repository opponents have also used that argument in their fight against location of a nuclear waste facility in WNC.

"The area around Highlands and Cashiers is booming," O'Connor said. "It is within 30 miles of the Oconee Nuclear Plant and is well within the perimeter of the area that would be adversely affected by an accident at that plant."

One Maggie Valley man in the audience disagreed.

"Western North Carolina has become the retirement haven in the United States," the man said. "There is no question about that. I mean anybody who has ever been here knows that."