

Commentary

THE NEWS RECORD

Editorial

VOTE NO! On Nuclear Dump

Regardless of your political persuasion, your vote is needed in next Tuesday's election. Democrats and Republicans will go to the polls to select candidates for the November general elections.

Democrats will choose candidates for the House and Senate, county commission, school board and tax collector. Republicans will be asked to choose Senate, county commission and school board candidates.

While we don't wish to diminish the importance of these races, the most important vote in Tuesday's election doesn't involve any political office. Rather, it is a question upon which could hang the fate of our mountains and way of life.

We urge all Madison Countians—Democrats, Republicans and independents alike to vote NO in the referendum concerning the location of a nuclear waste repository in North Carolina. No matter who else you vote for, even if you don't vote for any of the political candidates in Tuesday's races, please take the time to cast your vote against the nuclear waste dump. Nothing you do on Tuesday will be more important.

Although the question on the ballot is referred to as a "non-binding referendum," it is vitally important that North Carolinians express their opposition to the Department of Energy's proposal to store nuclear waste within our borders. The bureaucrats in Washington will be watching carefully to gauge the strength of opposition they will face here in North Carolina.

A near unanimous vote opposing the nuclear waste dump might force them to think twice before dumping on North Carolina. For the sake of our future, VOTE NO to nuclear waste on May 6.

By LISTON B. RAMSEY

For generations, Western North Carolina was regarded as "The Lost Province."

The Smokies and the Blue Ridge formed natural barriers that locked the region into economic, cultural and social isolation. The West's life blood, its young people, was drained away as more and more of them left for so-called greener pastures.

Fortunately, we had some good things going for us—fine people, natural beauty and environmental foresight.

These assets combined to bring about a gradual but remarkable reversal of fortunes in the mountains.

The 1960 Census showed that only four western counties gained in population from 1950 to 1960. By the 1980 Census the situation had been turned completely around—every county in the region showed a gain in population.

The progress has continued to the point where today we are riding a crest of development never before equalled in our history.

Suddenly, all of this is threatened by a proposal to make Western North Carolina the dumping ground for high-level radioactive waste.

The federal government is considering building a dump in either the Elk River Complex, which reaches into Buncombe, Haywood and Madison counties, or at a site east of Raleigh. We do not want this dump, and on May 6 we will have the opportunity to let the federal government know that we don't want it.

The May 6 primary ballot will include a referendum for or against "the location within the State of North Carolina of a high-level radioactive waste and spent nuclear fuel disposal site."

My vote will be "against," and I urge each and every eligible voter to do likewise.

Since the referendum will not be binding on the federal government, some people say it will be meaningless and a waste of time. I disagree. It is an opportunity to have our collective voices heard in Washington. It is a healthy exercise of expression of public opinion. It is democracy at its best.

It is extremely important that we vote against the dump en masse and that the issue carries by an overwhelming majority. Let's all cast our vote against the dump.

To put a dangerous facility of this type anywhere in Western North Carolina would be incredible. Experts tell us that the stored waste would eventually leak out, the only question being how long it would take and how large a threat it would be. Imagine what it would do to property values, not to mention the environment.

Let's not let a hazardous waste dump shut the door of opportunity that we struggled so long to open.

On May 6, vote against placing a hazardous waste depository in our fair state.

Representing the 52nd House District, Mr. Ramsey is Speaker of the N.C. House of Representatives.

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Heard And Seen

By POP STORY



DURING THE PAST WEEK

Some weeks I almost go bananas when I suddenly realize that the deadline for this column is nearing and my mind draws a blank. I think of what I've heard and seen during the past week and wonder what I'll write. Because of a few nagging physical (and mental) handicaps, I'm not in circulation like I used to be.

During the past week, however, I attended a supper at the Madison High cafeteria held by the younger members of the First Baptist Church. The dinner was held to raise funds for a trip they plan to take to Caswell. The meal was delicious and a large crowd attended. I always enjoy the good fellowship at such events.

I also had the opportunity to meet with Christine Streppa, who resides on Long Branch Rd. with her husband, Art, and

their children. Chris attends UNC-A, where she is majoring in journalism. She visited my printing office one day last week to get information on a project she is doing for her classes. She's busy writing a history of The News Record as a class assignment.

I showed her how The News Record was formerly produced with "hot" type and she was interested in the linotype, the flatbed printing press and the other outdated equipment I still use.

My fellow Lions Club member Wade Huey told me all about a recent trip he and Louise made to several western states during the club meeting last Monday night.

I'm glad to see that our pastor, Buddy Freeman, is improving after being "under the weather" for several days.

THE ONLY WAY
REAGAN WOULD
HELP THE
AMERICAN
FARMER....



UNITED FEATURES S.W. 08/66 DAYTON OHIO NEWS

Know Comment

By JOSEPH GODWIN



City patrolman Kenneth Byrd had recently recovered a man's wallet and had just finished a brief examination of it.

"Joe, let me show you something," he said. "let me show you how much 'identification' a man can carry in his wallet that won't identify him."

Seeing that I did not understand what he meant, he continued.

"Of course, by making phone calls and writing letters, we can find out whose wallet this is. But I'm talking about right now. Just look at all this stuff."

"Here are four credit cards—Amoco, Gulf, Shell, and Exxon—with the name 'James Gorman' on them. There is a name, but what do we know of the man? No address.

"A Social Security health insurance card, but no address. Membership cards in AAA motor club and Medplus, but no address.

"There was not one penny of money

in the wallet, but here are VISA, MasterCard, and American Express; but still no address.

"We don't know who James Gorman is—or was—nor do we know where he came from nor where he is—or was—going.

"Here is a Blue Cross-Blue Shield card for a woman whose name is not Gorman. She could be Gorman's daughter or his remarried mother. Who knows? There is no address for her and the card does not indicate how old she is.

"This American Express Registry Service card has James Gorman's name on it, but no address nor telephone number.

"Look at this tiny little piece of paper. All it has on it are two numbers: FA1801 and FB1541. I happen to know that those are code numbers to use in replacing Ford car keys.

This is a membership card in the Masons—Pine Level Lodge. Something has been spilled on it, and I can't tell where Pine Level Lodge is.

"Let's see. Here are some more membership cards—a VFW card from Post Number 4538, but no address. And North Carolina Farm Bureau. The typed name and the signature of James Gorman are on it, but no address.

"These look like a bunch of serial numbers for something...just a small piece of paper with nothing but four long numbers on it."

Ken then put all of those temporarily useless documents back into the well-worn wallet and closed it.

"Wait a minute," I said. "Look at his driver's license. It will have an address on it."

In a helpless tone, Ken said, "There is no driver's license in here—no money, no address. As of this minute, right now, we have no idea where

James Gorman lives, where he came from, nor where he is going."

Noting a tightly folded piece of paper at Ken's feet, I asked him, "Is that something you dropped out of his wallet?"

The paper had been folded twice. It was quite dirty and worn slick on the outside. Ken picked up the paper, opened it, and his expression changed as he read slowly:

"So I go not knowing
—I would not if I might
I would rather walk in the dark
with God
Than go alone in the light; I
would rather walk with him by faith
Than walk alone by sight.
...James Gorman."

After a moment of what appeared to be deep thought, Ken looked straight into my eyes and said "Joe, we still don't know where he came from...but I now have an idea where he is going."

Laurel Student Writes To President Reagan

Amanda Gunter of Marshall sent a letter last month to President Reagan, protesting the proposed nuclear waste dump being placed in Western North Carolina. Although President Reagan did not reply, she did receive a letter from the Department of Energy explaining their position.

Amanda Gunter, age 9, is a fourth grade student at Laurel School, and the daughter of Jerry and Beth Gunter.

Following is her letter:

Dear President Reagan,
My name is Amanda Gunter. I am nine years old. I go to Laurel Elementary School. I have a very good teacher her name is Mrs. Barbara Ramsey. She is the best teacher I have ever had!

Why I wrote this letter is because of the Nuclear Waste Dump. I don't

want it put in Madison or Buncombe County. I love my state. When I grow up and have children of my own I want them to have a safe place to play.

Now, I have got a brother and a sister. My sister is one year old and my brother is three years old. I want them to have a safe place to play.

If you DON'T put the waste dump in Madison or Buncombe I will tell everyone I know to vote for you! But if you DO put the dump in Madison or Buncombe I will tell everyone I know NOT to vote for you.

I know you are a good President but I don't want the Nuclear waste dump put in Madison or Buncombe County! PLEASE, PLEASE, PLEASE, don't put the Nuclear Waste Dump in Madison or Buncombe.

Thank you,
Amanda Gail Gunter.

Reader Applauds New Generation Mountaineers

Dear Editor:

As a Madison County native and property owner, I have followed with interest your recent coverage of the proposed nuclear waste repository. It has been refreshing to read of the protest participation by Madison Countians who are sometimes termed apathetic by outsiders. There seems to be a new and courageous generation of mountaineer who cares about his homeland, and more importantly, is willing to start an effort to keep it.

For too long, Madison County has been exploited by others: from its timber and minerals to highways and folk arts. Now our "one little eye

lamb" the mountains which cannot be removed from us, are in danger of being rendered "untouchable." It is indeed time to stand and be counted; not as 'Bloody Madison', but as calm, collected and informed Madison County.

The citizens who have already taken time to write letters, prepare speeches and otherwise petition against this atrocity have my gratitude and respect, as does The News Record for its enlightenment and encouragement.

Very truly,
Josephine Frazier Fisher
Sylva, N.C.