

Community Calendar

County Republicans To Meet Friday

The Madison County Republican Party will hold an important meeting at the Madison County Courthouse on Friday, September 5, beginning at 7 p.m. Fall campaign plans will be finalized. All members and candidates are urged to attend.

American Legion Meets Tonight

The American Legion Post 317 will hold their meeting on September 4 beginning at 7 p.m. in the Legion Hall on Backstreet. All members are urged to attend.

Sluder Family Reunion

The annual Sluder reunion will be held September 7 at 1 p.m. in the Woodfin Community Center. All relatives and friends are invited to attend and bring a picnic lunch. For more information call 683-4236.

Phillips Family Reunion Set

The descendants of Robert Marion and Rachel Fender Phillips will hold a family reunion September 14 at the home of Ralph Phillips in Konnarock, Virginia. All friends and relatives are invited to attend. For more information contact Jack Phillips at 689-5115.

Square Dance Class Offered

The Greater Ivy Community Center will hold beginning Western Square Dance classes every Thursday starting September 4, from 8 p.m. to 10 p.m. Costs is \$2 per person. Instructor for the classes is Gary Mundy.

FBEMC Signs Agreement With Federal Power Agency

By ROBERT KOENIG

Officials with the French Broad Electric Membership Corp. (FBEMC) and the Southeastern Power Administration (SEPA) signed an agreement last week that will help reduce local electric bills. Unfortunately, FBEMC customers may not enjoy the reduced rates for very long.

The agreement signed last week calls for SEPA to supply French Broad EMC with 8,200 kilowatt hours of peaking power each month. The cheaper SEPA power will help reduce the peak charges FBEMC pays to Carolina Power and Light (CP&L), the co-operative's principal power supplier. By lowering the peak rates each month by using SEPA-furnished power, French Broad EMC officials estimate the cooperative will save as much as \$1 million per year.

While the agreement with SEPA is good news for local FBEMC customers, officials warn that savings as a result of the agreement will soon be offset by an expected rate increase by CP&L.

FBEMC general manager Charles Tolley estimates that immediate savings to the average residential customer will be between \$2-3 per month. However, Tolley is quick to add that the anticipated CP&L rate increase will force FBEMC to pass along additional costs to members.

The FBEMC board of directors will meet on Sept. 23 to decide how the savings as a result of the SEPA agreement will be used. "They can do one of three things," Tolley said. "They can wait until CP&L raises rates and put the money in escrow to keep our rate increase down. Or they can lower rates now, or give back the money to customers in the form of credits on their bills."

Tolley is concerned that customers won't realize that their rates have been reduced if CP&L acts quickly on an expected rate increase. "We've been telling customers that this was coming for three years. If we raise our rates right after this, they'll want to know what we did with the money."

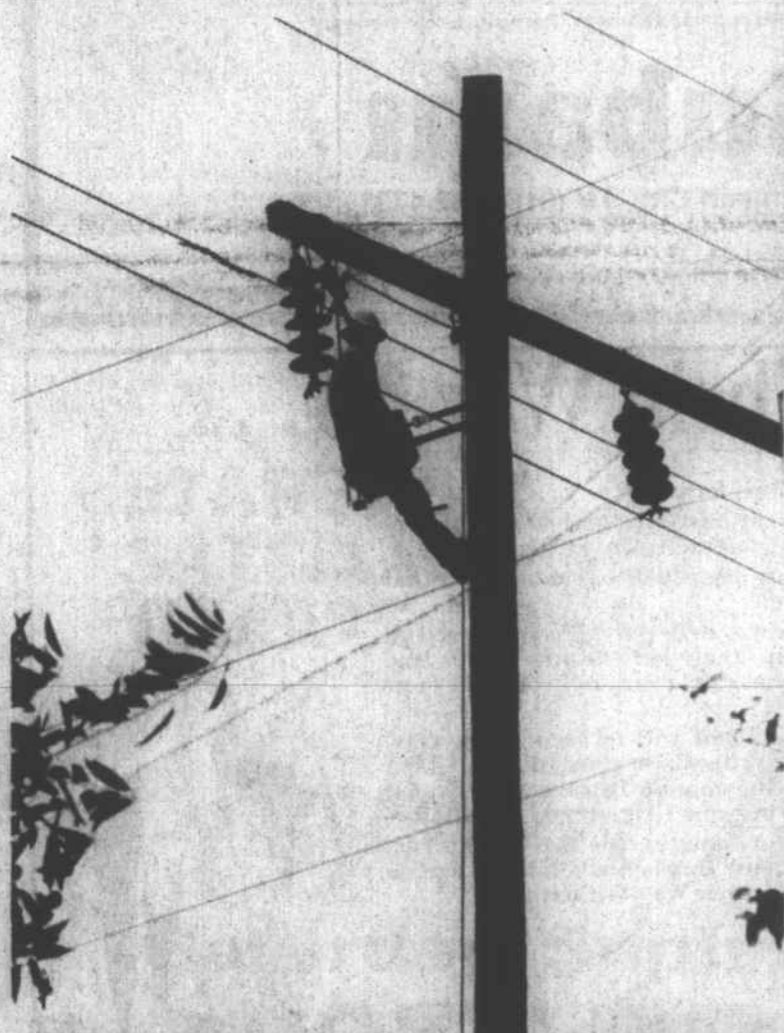


OFFICIALS WITH FRENCH BROAD EMC signed agreement with the Southeastern Power Authority last week to purchase low-cost power from the federal agency. In photo above, FBEMC president John O. Corbett, left, and I.E. Clevenger, right, review documents with SEPA administrator Harry Geisinger.

Although the average FBEMC customer now using 550 kilowatt hours per month will see a savings of about \$3 per month as a result of the latest agreement, local customers' bills will increase if CP&L is granted a substantial increase as is expected. Tolley said the last rate increase, of five percent, came in April, 1985.

The FBEMC general manager said that CP&L can be expected to seek a wholesale price rate increase soon, when the cost of the Sharon Harris nuclear plant construction can be included in the rate increase. The Raleigh nuclear plant is expected to begin operations in early 1987.

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FBEMC LINEMAN MAKES REPAIRS following accident that blacked-out parts of Mars Hill and Marshall last week.

Photo by William Lee

Construction Accident Causes Blackout

Residents in Marshall and Mars Hill were without power last Thursday, August 28, when power lines along Sweetwater Rd. in Marshall were knocked down.

For most, the lack of electricity lasted only an hour and twenty minutes, from 10:15 to 11:35 a.m. Residents along Sweetwater Rd. were without power for most of the day as repair crews from Carolina Power and Electric and French Broad Electric repaired the two transmitter lines that went down.

Cause of the downed lines was due to nearby construction of a new roadway from U.S. 25-70 to the Little Pine and Redmon Dam area. Bulldozers at the site accidentally toppled a tree, according to Richard Thomason, operations engineer for French Broad Electric.

According to Thomason, electricity was restored as quickly as possible by rerouting its power through another substation.

December Hearing To Decide Depot's Fate

By WILLIAM LEE

In a special meeting called last Wednesday night the Marshall Board of Aldermen heard from Richard Kingston, of the Marshall Town Planning Board, about progress made in saving the old Southern Railroad depot building.

Kingston told the board that a portion of downtown Marshall has been placed on a statewide study list by the N.C. Department of Cultural Resources. Those buildings and other monuments or points of interest will be considered for future nomination to the National Register of Historic Places.

While the depot is currently not on the statewide list, Kingston said that the Dept. of Cultural Resources will place it before its review committee in October for inclusion.

Kingston said the railroad was close to having a wrecking crew tear down the depot two weeks ago before the Public Utilities Commission stepped in with an injunction to save it. The PUC has scheduled a public hearing for December to determine the fate of the Marshall depot.



MARSHALL'S RAILROAD DEPOT

A citizens group, Friends of the Marshall Depot, has recently been formed to come up with a plan for the renovation and future use of the depot if it can be saved.

Kingston told the board that he felt Southern Railroad wants to cooperate in saving the depot as a historical place, and is awaiting a proposal from the town for its purchase or removal. Kingston said the railroad is willing to lease the property to the town, but would require the property to be insured for \$5 million. Kingston said

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Marshall To Extend Sewer, Water Lines, Install Fire Hydrants

By WILLIAM LEE

The Marshall Board of Aldermen voted last week to allocate its share of Senate Bill 2 (water and sewer funds, distributed through the county commissioners) for four projects in the town.

A total of \$65,342 has been given to Marshall by the Madison County Board of Commissioners. The amount was increased by an additional \$5,000 granted to Marshall two weeks ago. All funds must be matched by the town's own monies.

The first three projects on the Marshall list call for the extension of water and sewer lines within the town limits.

The town plans to extend lines on the west side of the French Broad through Woods Valley. An area the town has been trying to complete for a number of years but has not been able to do so because of a lack of funds.

In March the town allocated \$10,000 of its toward the completion of those lines, and will use an equal amount of the state funds.

Another 1,000 feet of water line is needed along Roberts Hill Rd. The project is has been funded through a state grant, but that has only paid for 25 percent of costs. The town will be funding another 25 percent on its own, with the other half coming from the state funds.

The town also plans to complete an additional 1,000 feet of sewer and water lines along Upper Walnut Creek Rd. The area has experienced particular problems with stormwater drainage that the town hopes to remedy.

The town also allocated funds for two additional sludge beds to be constructed at its sewage treatment plant. The town's treatment plant has been working beyond full capacity in recent years and the additional beds have been suggested by the State Department of Natural Resources and Community Development. Marshall has been forced to remove its sludge under NRCD guidelines prohibiting effluent from the plant to be spilled into the French Broad.

Costs of the two additional sludge beds was estimated at \$40,000 to \$50,000 by the town's engineer, Gary McGill. McGill said the four projects would come close to fulfilling the town's \$130,000 commitment.

Aldermen Ed Niles asked that the town consider repairing its water mains with any left over funds. McGill warned, however, that the state would consider such a repair as maintenance work and would be excluded from the water and sewer funds.

The Board of Aldermen instead voted to hold three more fire hydrants, two at Madison High and one at Marshall Primary. The nearest hydrant to the schools was along 25-70 at the Ingal's Shopping Center.

The town of Marshall is also currently considering means of shutting down its water tank atop Mashburn Hill for cleaning. Aldermen John Dodson and engineer Gary McGill are currently studying the possibility of routing all water lines through the second tank near the county landfill while the other is emptied. The cleaning process would take approximately three weeks.

Aldermen Ed Niles suggested that the use tank might not provide enough water if drought conditions were to continue. McGill said he would look into the possibility of a temporary water storage tank. McGill said that the city of Asheville has used one in the past.