

## Marshall To Cut Off Water To 35 Customers

By ROBERT KOENIG

Faced with more than \$16,000 in delinquent bills and cash flow problems, Marshall aldermen unanimously voted to begin cutting off water taps during Monday's meeting at Town Hall. Some 35 delinquent customers will have their water shut off this week unless they pay their bills in full.

The aldermen decided on the action after hearing the monthly financial report. Town secretary Linda Dodson told the board that the town's Water and Sewer fund has just \$3,000 remaining and more than \$16,000 in outstanding bills. Dodson presented the aldermen with a list of the 35 largest delinquent bills.

When told that the 35 customers owed the town about \$10,000, board member Faye Reid moved to cut off service unless payment was made in full. Reid's motion was seconded by Ed Niles and passed without opposition.

Board member Ed Niles said, "We're not running this like a business. If I'm going to pay my water bill, I want to see notices sent out. They should pay or we should cut them off."

The monthly financial report indicates that Marshall has had to transfer some \$24,359 from the General Fund to the Water and Sewer Fund during the current fiscal year. Despite the infusion of funds, Mrs. Dodson told the aldermen "With another payroll, we're going to be broke."

Town workers were to begin shutting off service on Wednesday. Delinquent water customers having their

service terminated will have to pay their bills in full and pay a reinstallation charge to have service resumed.

The aldermen earlier this year turned over a number of delinquent accounts to an Asheville collection agency. The agency is attempting to collect from former Marshall residents who have left town with unpaid water bills.

In other business transacted during the monthly meeting, the aldermen heard from Boy Scout leaders Dennis Rector and Ben Frisby Jr. The men asked the aldermen to assist in repairs to the town's recreation center.

Rector said the center is being used by members of the Marshall Boy Scout troops. The scouts have helped clean the building and Rector complained of trash left inside the building. Rector said the scouts collected 12 trash bags full of empty beer cans and liquor bottles on Oct. 4th.

Rector said the scouts also removed several mattresses that had been left on the gymnasium floor. "I don't know what went on there, and I guess we'll never know, but that's not the way things should be run," the scoutmaster said. Rector added that he found several marijuana cigarettes during the Oct. 4 clean-up.

The swimming pool at the center was closed shortly after Labor Day, but Faye Reid complained that security at the center is inadequate. Reid told the board, "Anyone who wants to has access to that building."

Mayor Anita Ward ordered town police to step up patrols around the center in response to Reid's complaint.

Rector and Frisby both warned the aldermen that the building will suffer expensive damages if repairs to the roof are not made quickly. Frisby told the aldermen, "If it's not fixed right now, it'll be a major job next year." Frisby said water damage is undermining the roof's wooden structure.

Mayor Ward suggested the scouts use the old REA warehouse in Rollins for their meetings, but the building's proximity to the railroad tracks was cited as a safety factor making use of the building unwise.

Pointing out that the town of Newland sponsors the local troop in Yancey County, Rector said, "I'd like to see Marshall get behind the Boy Scouts. I'd like to see the community support us and get behind us." Rector said the Marshall troops currently have some 60 boys, ranging from first graders to high school students.

The aldermen agreed to solicit cost estimates for reroofing the center, but warned that grant funds would probably be needed to fund the project.

At Mayor Ward's request, the aldermen voted to order one member of the town crew to be on call on weekends for emergencies.

Marshall VFD chief Jimmy Ramsey reported on progress in installing a fire hydrant at Madison H.S. Ramsey told the aldermen that the Madison County Board of Education has agreed to pay the \$5,161 cost of installing a hydrant at the school. Ramsey warned, however, that it is uncertain whether a hydrant at the school would have enough water

pressure to operate properly because the school is at the same elevation as the town's reservoir.

Ramsey said a pumping station may be needed to increase pressure to required levels.

The aldermen also approved a resolution presented by Ruth Gregory to authorize construction of welcome signs on Southern Railway property.

The board went into an executive session at 9:10 p.m. to discuss several contracts. When they returned to open session some 35 minutes later, the board announced that the town would renew Richard Kingston's five-year lease on a Main Street office formerly used as Town Hall.

Kingston's present \$35 per month contract expires at the end of the month. The aldermen agreed to renew the lease for \$100 a month, prompting a protest from the harp-sichord maker.

Kingston pointed out that he had made improvements to the building, given the town a right-of-way across his property and pays the utility bills for the Water Dept. office below his second-floor offices. Kingston's arguments failed to move the aldermen, who agreed to install meter and electric meters at the Water Dept., but refused to reduce the rent.

Asked if he would agree to the increase, a stoic Kingston said, "What choice do I have?"

The meeting was adjourned at 10 p.m. The next regularly scheduled monthly meeting will be held on Nov. 10 at 7:30 p.m.



JUSTICE WAS RETURNED to top of Madison County Court House last week.- More pictures on Page 3.

## School Board Considers High School Renovations

By WILLIAM LEE

The Madison County Board of Education considered proposals submitted by consulting engineers to convert Madison High School to an oil heating system during last week's monthly meeting.

The board took no action at its meeting last Wednesday after being advised by Superintendent Robert L. Edwards that the conversion could not be made until next summer.

The recommendations by the consulting engineer for the State Board of Education call for construction of a boiler room and two separate boiler systems; a steam boiler to heat the administration offices, lunchroom and gymnasium, and a boiler system tied to a chill water loop for the rest of the school.

Edwards also informed the board that the school would operate on a dual system that could be switched over to the existing electrical heating system at any time.

"In that way, we can take advantage of whatever would be the least expensive form of heating our high school should the cost of electricity drop," Edwards said.

Board member Franklin Anderson added that he doubted the cost of electricity would ever go below that of oil. "Even so, the price of electricity is

often tied to the cost of fuel oil. The main advantage to oil heat is that we can shop around for the best price."

For the offices, lunchroom and gymnasium area of the school an oil fired steam boiler would be installed with steam piping and coils installed in the existing airhandling roof top units. Heated water for the gymnasium and cafeteria would also be provided through this system.

For the rest of the building, the state engineer recommended installing a hot water boiler that would be tied into the current cooling system, using the existing water loop coils for heating during the winter. Such a conversion would also require alterations to the pneumatic system so its thermostat would keep open the valves during the winter.

According to a conservative estimate given by state engineer Virgil Wassermann, an oil heating system would save the Madison County Board of Education approximately \$25,000 a year. At its estimated cost for construction, Wassermann projected a payback for the investment within five years.

Monthly electric bills for the high school currently exceed \$7,000 per month during winter months. The school board would use its capital construction funds for the conversion.

Superintendent Edwards gave the board a rundown of its expected revenues regarding new capital outlay funds that will be generated through the new half-cent sales tax option.

Madison County currently receives \$377,000 from the first half-cent option, started in 1983. The board of education is allocated the minimum 40 percent by the county commission, or approximately \$151,000.

The additional half-cent option passed by the General Assembly this year will give the board of education a total of approximately \$528,000 over the next school year. The revenues will be doled out in quarterly allocations of about \$140,000 for the first three quarters of the budget year, with the remainder being paid at the end of the fiscal year.

The board decided to make no changes in its expenditure of its capital outlay funds, opting to wait until after the election as board member Ed Gentry suggested.

"Whoever is on the board will have funds we've never had before, but will still require wise spending," said board member Gerald Young.

The board did receive an estimate from Reece Electric for electrical repairs as required by recent state inspection. The state insurance inspec-

tion last year cited numerous fire and safety violations in all Madison County schools.

Reece Electric submitted an estimate of \$5,129 for all schools except Mars Hill. Reece Electric is one of only two licensed electricians in Madison County. The other licensed electrician, Ron Martin, has not been approached about the repairs at Mars Hill School as yet.

The board asked that the estimate be returned to Reece Electric and resubmitted as an actual bid for the work.

In other business, a leave of absence for one month was granted to Doris Dickerson, secretary at Mars Hill School. The board also approved the list of substitutes submitted by Walnut School, Marshall Primary, and Madison High. At Walnut, Doreen Sheely was approved as a substitute art teacher, and Debra Jones was hired to work in the lunchroom. Francis Reece was given permanent status at the high school cafeteria, and Angela Simpson was approved as a substitute teacher. Carolyn Reems was approved as a substitute teacher at Marshall Primary, while Regina Reed and Ann Sawyer were added as bus drivers at the school.

## Community Calendar

### GOP Plans Dinner, Meeting

The Madison County Republican Party will sponsor a fundraising dinner on Oct. 18 at 7 p.m. in the cafeteria of Mars Hill College. Tickets are available at Republican campaign headquarters in Marshall.

Local Republicans will also hold a meeting on Oct. 22 at 7 p.m. at their Main Street headquarters. Residents interested in working on Election Day are urged to attend.

### Mars Hill VFW Turkey Shoot

The Mars Hill Veterans of Foreign Wars will hold a turkey shoot at the animal clinic on Old Hwy. 36 at 10 a.m. every Saturday until Christmas.

### Laurel VFD Pig Roast

The Laurel Volunteer Fire Dept. will hold a pig roast on Oct. 26 from noon until 2 p.m. at the station house. Dinner includes pork, pinto beans, slaw, bread, dessert and drinks. Admission is \$3 for adults, \$2.50 for children. The public is invited to attend.

### Friend Of The Depot Meet Tonight

Friends of the Marshall Depot will meet in the Madison County Court House at 7 p.m. tonight to discuss plans to preserve the abandoned station.

### Folklife Festival Planned

The eighth grade class at Marshall Elementary School is planning a fall Folklife Festival for Nov. 8. The festival on Blannerhassett Island will celebrate the students' mountain heritage. All local churches and civic groups are invited to participate in the festival. Groups interested in preparing traditional mountain foods are needed. Anyone interested in helping with this project should call principal Fred Haynie at 849-2434.

### Energy Help Available

Applications for the Low-Income Energy Assistance Program will be accepted at a number of locations until Nov. 30. The program provides a one-time cash payment to poor families to assist with winter heating costs. Families in public housing and those receiving rental assistance are also eligible for a partial payment. Applications must furnish proof of household income, including Social Security, unemployment, and other income. Applications should be submitted to the Madison County Dept. of Social Services, 100 Main Street, Marshall, N.C. 28753. All applications will receive a response check by mail or in person. The representative will accept applications and provide information on the program. The program is available to all low-income households in Madison County.

## Mars Hill College To Honor Dr. Duck

Dr. W.Otis Duck, the Mars Hill physician who has cared for several generations of townspeople and college students, will be awarded an honorary Doctor of Humane Letters degree during the Mars Hill College's annual Founder's Day Convocation, Tuesday, October 21.

Dr. Duck officially retired from his family practice at the end of June, ending a 40-year career of health care in the area. He will become an adjunct member of the college faculty and will serve as the school's medical director.

A native of Madison County, Dr. Duck traces his family heritage to one of the founders of the school, Berry Duck. He is an alumnus of Mars Hill, Class of 1947, and completed his undergraduate studies at Wake Forest College. His medical training was conducted at Bowman Medical College in Philadelphia, and he initially resided in Mars Hill, N.C. during his medical studies. He spent a year in Europe during World

War II and returned to Mars Hill after the war to begin his family practice with the late Dr. Locke Robinson.

He established the Community Medical Center in Mars Hill, being joined in a partnership agreement with Dr. Ernest Powell in 1962.

Dr. Duck has served four terms as a trustee of the school and has served as its chairman. In civic affairs, he has been a member of the Mars Hill aldermen and served briefly as mayor. He has also served on the board of education. He is a descendent of the Mars Hill Baptist Church and has served as chairman of that body.

In recognition of his contributions to the college and the community, the college recognized him as "Alumnus of the Year" in 1974.

The degree to be awarded Dr. Duck is only one of eight such honorary degrees to be given at Mars Hill College. Other honorees include the late Dr. Duck's brother, William, who was awarded a D.D.S. degree in 1974, and Dr. Duck's son, Dr. W.Otis Duck, Jr., who was awarded a D.D.S. degree in 1975.