



THE NEWS RECORD

Serving The People Of Madison County Since 1901

Vol. 87 No. 1

Thursday, January 1, 1987

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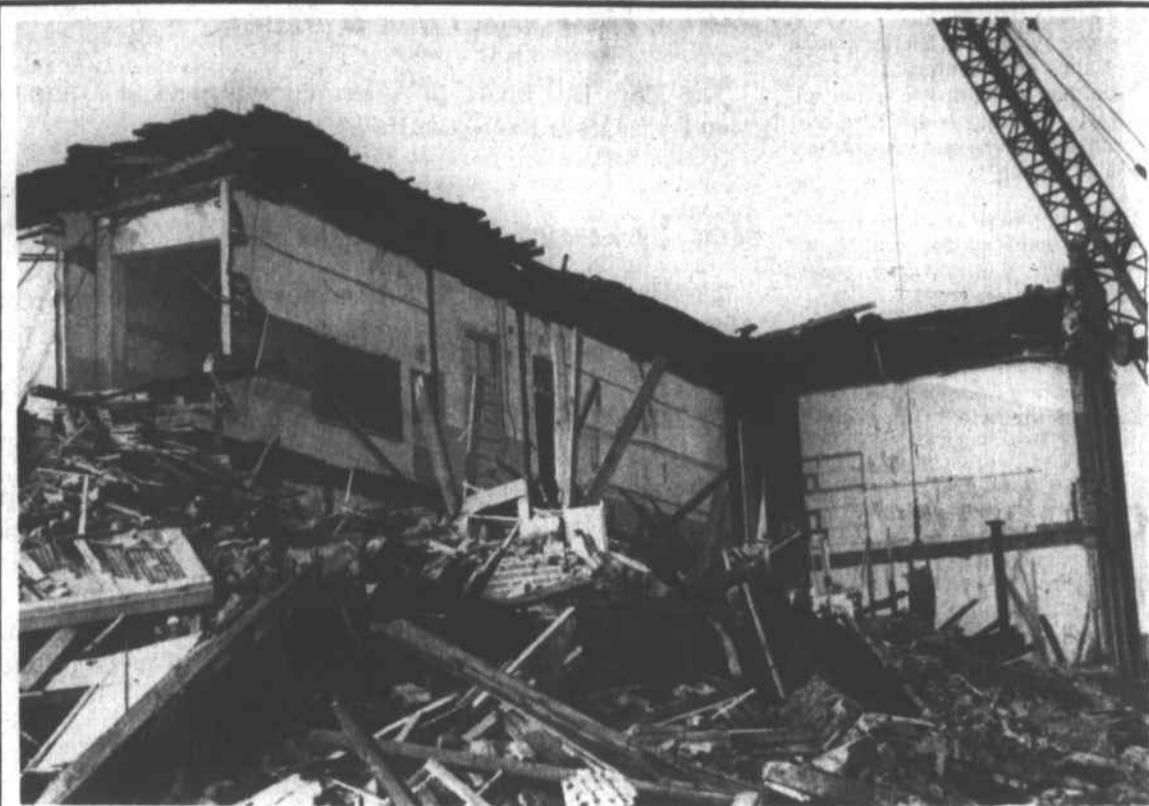


Photo by Chick Squire

Walls Come Tumblin' Down

With children home for the Christmas-New Year's holidays, workers had a chance last week to begin demolishing the old Weaverville Primary School, declared structurally unsafe. Demolition should be complete by the time children

report back for classes Monday. Construction of a new, \$500,000 building should begin within two months. Classes are currently being held in temporary trailer classrooms.

Mars Hill Board Adopts Sign Rules

By BILL STUDENC
Editor

After nearly a year of debate, discussion and delay, the Mars Hill Board of Aldermen finally approved a zoning ordinance, including regulations on commercial signs and outdoor advertising, during a special meeting Monday night.

The ordinance includes a ban on the construction of any additional off-premises signs -- billboards -- and calls for the removal of existing billboards in most of the town and its one-mile extraterritorial zone.

Approval came after Jim Edwards, planning director of Land-of-Sky Regional Council, met with board members to answer a few remaining questions about the much-discussed section of the zoning ordinance regulating signs.

The ordinance adopted Monday limits the heights of on-premises ground signs, or business signs, to 25 feet, regulates the total area of all signs and bans the construction of any new off-premises signs.

Billboards currently in place must be removed within a maximum of five years, depending upon the value of the sign, according to the or-

dinance.

Already, there are exceptions. Signs along U.S. 19-23, a federal-aid primary highway, will not come under the Mars Hill ordinance. Those signs -- both business signs and billboards -- are regulated by the federal Highway Beautification Act, Edwards told the board.

Some board members had previously expressed concern that the ordinance, as written, might force the removal of such signs as the large Texaco sign, some 65 feet high, along U.S. 19-23.

"The federal regulations have priority over local ordinances," Mars Hill Mayor Owen Tilson said.

The town could have called for the removal of non-conforming signs along U.S. 19-23, but would have had to pay the sign owners a cash sum for their investment in the signs, according to federal law.

And that, town officials said, was simply too expensive.

Under the Mars Hill ordinance, owners of non-conforming signs that must be removed will be compensated through an amortization schedule which allows signs to remain in place for a certain period of

time. That schedule is:

- One year, for signs with a replacement value of up to \$500.
- Two years, for signs with a replacement value of \$501 to \$1,500.
- Three years, for signs with a replacement value of \$1,501 to \$3,000.
- Four years, for signs with a replacement value of \$3,001 to \$5,000.
- Five years, for signs with a replacement value of more than \$5,000.

The new ordinance also limits the size of on-premises business signs. In C-1 commercial and industrial zones, the maximum size is 32 square feet per side, up to 64 square feet for the entire sign. In C-2 commercial zones, that limit increases to 100 square feet per side, up to 200 square feet for the entire sign.

The ordinance also creates a Board of Adjustments, which has the authority to grant variances to allow the construction of signs that don't conform to regulations.

"What ever size we pick, there are going to be exceptions," said Wayne Roberts of the Mars Hill Planning Board.

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Highway Caused End Of Booming Craft Industry

By ELIZABETH D. SQUIRE
Feature Writer

(Last of two parts)

Annie Shelton Gosnell says she was born about the time that Frances L. Goodrich came to Allandstand and started Allandstand Cottage Industries.

Mrs. Gosnell grew up admiring the founder of those Allandstand industries, which flourished from the late 1880s to about 1930.

She remembers her mother, Susie Dudley Shelton, drawing the curved lines, like vines and little leaves, that were part of the design of coverlets her mother made, by embroidering homespun cloth.

The embroidery thread was dyed with natural dyes and Mrs. Gosnell went with her mother to see Teddy Tweed, who ran a "blue pot." Mrs.

Tweed's hands were always blue from dyeing yarn.

According to Miss Goodrich's book, "Mountain Homespun," the "blue pot" was a fermented mixture of indigo, madder, bran and home dripped lye, always prepared in a big iron pot, taking great skill to control and producing a beautiful clear blue.

Later, after she was married, Mrs. Gosnell ran the Allandstand Industries Shop, just down the hill from her house, and when a prospective buyer came she would stop her housework and go down to the store. Some customers were "kind of money-like folks," probably tourists. Some wanted to look but not buy.

The log-cabin shop had shelves with a few large items like coverlets, but mostly Mrs. Gosnell sold smaller items. Her favorites were the corn-



Photo by Elizabeth Squire

Annie Shelton Gosnell, left, shows off one of her latest craft projects to her daughter-in-law, Christine Gosnell.

shuck dolls, she recalls.

Nell Thomas, who lived in Allandstand as a child, remembers that the shop sold wreaths and brooms, each made out of one piece of hickory, split and shaved. Also there were brooms

made from home-raised broom corn, and hats made out of braided corn shucks, and quilts.

She remembers the quiltings. Ten or 12 women would get together, br-

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County OKs A-B Tech Campus For Madison

By BILL STUDENC
Editor

A satellite campus of Asheville-Buncombe Technical College to serve Madison County has been formally approved by the Madison County Board of Commissioners.

The commissioners agreed Dec. 18 to build a satellite campus on an undetermined site in Madison County, using \$800,000 appropriated by the General Assembly last year.

According to a resolution adopted by the commissioners, the county will contract with the A-B Tech Board of Trustees to build the satellite campus on county property.

The facility will then be leased to A-B Tech's Board of Trustees.

Approval of the plan by the commissioners on Thursday became necessary when A-B Tech President Harvey Haynes told the board that

the previous commissioners had apparently approved the plan, but never adopted a formal resolution.

The only site that had been discussed between the previous commissioners and A-B Tech was property on Long Branch Road.

The commissioners agreed to check out the site over the weekend before meeting with the school officials again last Monday for final approval of the site.

But at that meeting, the site was not discussed. County attorney Larry Leake said the commissioners would bring the topic back up in January.

Robert Edwards, superintendent of Madison County schools, suggested that property near Madison High School be used for the satellite facility.

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1986: A Year Of Drought, Politics, Nuclear Threat

By BILL STUDENC
Editor

The year 1986 may well be remembered by Madison County residents as a year of vast political change.

It was the year that legendary Sheriff E.Y. Ponder lost his badge to Republican Dedrick Brown in an election that saw the GOP make major moves into a traditional Democratic stronghold.

Republicans also took control of the Board of Education. Democrats avoided a Republican sweep by main-

taining control of the Madison County Board of Commissioners. Voters still called for change in county government, however, as the incumbent commissioners failed to survive the May primary.

The threat of Madison County becoming a dumping ground for the nation's nuclear garbage hogged the headlines from January through May. A 105-acre tract in Madison, Buncombe and Haywood counties was one of 12 sites considered by the U.S. Department of Energy for a nuclear waste repository. DOE's announcement sparked a tremendous upwelling of public opposition, which continued until a May announcement that the search for a dump site had been called off.

1986 will also be remembered as the year of the big drought, perhaps the worst in a century. A nearly yearlong dry spell forced officials to call for cutbacks in water usage, while county farmers were hard hit by the lack of rainfall.

On this, the first day of 1987, here's a look back at 1986, as reported in the pages of The News Record:

JANUARY

The year began with the dismissal of mail fraud charges against Madison County Democratic leader Zeno Ponder. The U.S. Attorney's Office had charged Ponder, his wife, Marie, a nephew, Leonard, and, a

business associate, Marshall Kanner, with 17 counts of mail fraud in connection with land purchases made in Madison County in 1982. Federal prosecutors had charged that Ponder, then a member of the N.C. Board of Transportation, used inside information to purchase property along the route of a planned Spring Creek-Marshall road.

But on Jan. 7, U.S. District Court Judge Woodrow Jones dismissed the charges, saying that federal prosecutors had failed to prove their case.

Ponder later blasted the charges as "politically motivated," and accused U.S. Sen. Jesse Helms, a Republican, of ordering the prosecution.

Meanwhile, Dedrick Brown threw his name into the hat as a Republican contender for sheriff of Madison County. Incumbent commissioners James Ledford, Ervin Adams and Virginia Anderson filed for reelection, along with incumbent school board members Robert Z. Ponder, Ed Gentry, Floyd Wallin, Gerald Young and Frederick Anderson, and Clerk of Superior Court James Cody and Tax Collector Harold Wallin.

A Madison County grand jury called for an investigation into county board chairman James Ledford's business transactions with the county. Audits showed that county agencies purchased goods and services



E.Y. Ponder ... loses election

from service stations operated by Ledford, a potential conflict of interest. But District Attorney Thomas Risher later in January announced that Ledford would not be charged, and blamed accounting errors for the discrepancies.

Madison County learned in mid-January that a 105-acre tract in Madison, Buncombe and Haywood counties was one of 12 sites under consideration for a nuclear waste storage facility. That announcement

by the U.S. Department of Energy sparked a massive public outcry which did not subside until May.

In Mars Hill, town officials began to look at an ordinance which would regulate signs and billboards.

Sheriff E.Y. Ponder filed for reelection, while Democratic challengers Robert Capps, Reese Steen and John Hensley entered the race for county commissioner.

FEBRUARY

February began on a good note -- with the startup of a new digital switching system by Contel, enabling residents on one side of the county to telephone, toll-free, residents on the other side of the county.

The town of Hot Springs unveiled a new Town Hall. Officials from Hot Springs, Mars Hill and Madison County government passed resolutions in opposition to a nuclear waste dump in Western North Carolina. Some 500 residents attended a meeting in Mars Hill to hear how state officials planned to fight the proposed repository.

Later that month, 1,500 WNC residents packed the Thomas Wolfe Auditorium in Asheville to voice to DOE officials their concerns about the repository. The public hearing, which lasted until nearly 2 a.m., came to an end only after Civic Center workers pulled the plug on microphones.

The Madison County Nuclear Waste Education Committee formed in response to the nuclear threat.

More candidates for local office entered various races as the filing deadline came in early February. Republicans Bob Phillips, Clarence Cutshall, Clarence Faulkner, Joe Fowler and Howard Allen joined the county commissioners race, while Democratic challengers Rita Murray and Donald Massey and Republicans Edward Krause, Dr. Lester Stowe, Mike Jenkins, Dewey Griffey Jr., Jimmy Dean Hensley and Assistant District Attorney Jim Baker entered the school board race.

William Bray and Jimmy Dean Rios, charged with first-degree murder in the September 1985 slaying of N.C. Highway Patrol Trooper Bobby Lee Coggins, entered pleas of not guilty during arraignment hearings in Yancey County. Coggins was shot on N.C. 209 near Hot Springs Sept. 14, setting off a massive three-day manhunt leading to the arrest of Bray and Rios.

Marshall's aldermen agreed to cut off water service to delinquent customers, after learning that nearly \$14,000 in charges were past due. The town also began looking at problems with its sewer plant. In Weaverville, the Town Council approved rezoning of land on Weaver Boulevard.

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Zeno Ponder ... charges dropped