

Commentary

THE NEWS RECORD



'95' Is Rellie's Lucky Number

By POP STORY

I was invited to the surprise birthday party Sunday afternoon honoring Mrs. Rellie Allman on her 95th birthday. The party was given by ladies of the Bull Creek Baptist Church, of which she is a member, and held in the fellowship hall of the church.

In addition to relatives and friends from Marshall, Mars Hill, Hot Springs and other sections of the county, relatives and friends from Hendersonville, Hickory, Winston-Salem, South Carolina, Florida and Michigan also attended.

She was presented 95 pink rosebuds and, by coincidence, 95 guests signed the guest register.

Rellie and her sister, Mrs. Clara Fagan, are residents of the Bull Creek community.

Rellie neither looks nor acts her 95 years. She attends church services regularly, participates in community activities and keeps busy at home cooking and doing needlework.

Congratulations and best wishes, Rellie. Sorry I was unable to attend your party.

LOOKING BACK

When thumbing through past issues of The News-Record, I often come up with a file issue which contains many interesting items. One of the issues was dated Jan. 4, 1968.

Among the articles which caught my eye read that Walter Harrell, of Route 6, Marshall, was sworn in as coroner for Madison County by C.N. Willis, clerk of Superior Court here Tuesday morning. Harrell succeeded Fred McDevitt, who had recently resigned. He is married to the former Miss Katy Edmonds and they have three children.

Dr. W.A. Sams, prominent Marshall physician, was honored last Friday evening at his home. A buffet dinner was enjoyed and a huge birthday cake was sliced by the honoree. He received many useful gifts.

Mr. and Mrs. Harry Silver returned Wednesday from Florida where Mr. Silver and several other farm agents attended business sessions and also attended the Orange Bowl game New Year's between Tennessee and Oklahoma.

Paul Whitman, "King of Jazz," was put to rest Wednesday in New Jersey.

Members of the Madison County Jury Commission, composed of Bobby Chandler, Raymond Stines and W.B. Zink, were busy preparing a new system for selecting jurors.

The Constitution

Slavery An Issue At 1787 Convention

By EMERSON THOMPSON

When the Constitutional Convention convened in May 1787, James Madison stated that the United States would not be divided between the larger states and smaller states rather those with slaves and those without them.

Two hundred years ago this week, the political debate on slavery began. There was a division between the delegates to the Constitutional Convention. Some thought the constitution should speak out against slavery. Others thought it should remain silent.

At the time of the convention, South Carolina and Georgia were the only two states to actively import slaves. Maryland and Virginia expressly prohibited the importation and North Carolina implied the same.

Although the importation of slaves was ending, the concept of slavery was very much alive. Out of 250,000 blacks in the United States, only 50,000 were free.

The Constitutional Convention delegates, however, had not come to Philadelphia to end slavery. They wanted to create a Constitution for the country as it existed.

The question they had to answer, then, was not whether slavery should be abolished but whether the national government or the states should retain control over the institution. After some debate, the national government was entrusted with the power to decide the issue of slavery.

Slavery was not debated by the delegates for humanitarian reasons. It was debated because of its influence on trade and commerce. Virginia's George Mason argued that slavery discouraged arts and manufacturing. The poor despise labor when it is performed by slaves.

The idea was to stop the import of slaves. By allowing the national government to control slavery, a tax could be levied on the incoming slaves. Therefore, as Gouverneur Morris suggested, those states which benefited from ownership of slaves in their representation in the House of Representatives, also suffered by the direct taxation.

By the end of the summer of 1787, 10 of the 11 states represented on the Convention floor had spoken on the issue of slavery.

The delegates then turned their ideas over to a committee of five delegates who were drafting the constitution. The end result was a clause on the slave trade incorporated into the Constitution. The compromise allowed the slave trade for 20 more years, but it also levied a tax on every imported slave.

Slavery was indeed an important topic at the Constitutional Convention. But it took 20 years after the Convention to end the slave trade by law, and more than 70 years after the Convention to end slavery through the Civil War.

Editorial

Make Good Use Of New School

The folks in North Buncombe County are feeling mighty proud these days -- and with good reason. After all, it's not every year that a community opens the doors on a new \$12.2 million high school.

The new North Buncombe High School, located off Salem Road, is a much-needed improvement over the building previously called home nine months out of the year by students in the Weaverville-Flat Creek area. It's not so much that the old North Buncombe High School became too dilapidated or too outdated to be used. If that were the case, the building would not have been converted into the new North Buncombe Middle School; it would have gone under the wrecking ball.

A new high school was a necessity because of the steady growth of the student population in the north end of Buncombe County. In recent years, Black Hawk students have found themselves trying to learn in cramped quarters, battling herds of fellow students in narrow hallways at class changes, and traipsing through the elements to trailers serving as temporary classrooms. Those kinds of conditions don't exactly enhance the learning process. That's why it is important that

our children have the best possible facilities during their dozen years of readin', writin' and 'rithmetic.

In North Buncombe County, high school students now have a school that ranks among the best in Western North Carolina. The new building not only solves the chronic over-crowding problems that plagued the old facilities, but it also features modern classrooms full of state-of-the-art education supplies and learning equipment, ranging from items as simple as new-fangled chalkboards and specially designed desks to things as high-tech as computers and work processors.

But simply putting up a brand new building won't do it. There's more to education than just fancy facilities and new equipment. The Buncombe County Board of Education has done its part by providing students in the north end of the county with a school building any community would be proud to call its own.

Now it's up to North Buncombe students to keep their end of the deal -- by putting their new \$12.2 million school to good use. We congratulate the North Buncombe community on its new high school, and challenge North Buncombe students to utilize the valuable learning resources now available.

Reagan Didn't Say Enough About Scandal

Just wait, said President Reagan a month ago, until the congressional hearings into the Iran-contra affair are finished. Then he would have so much to say about it that "you won't be able to shut me up." When the time came for the president to report to the American people, however, he spent less than 7 minutes on the scandal that has rocked his administration.

The essence of what Reagan said -- that the buck stops with him and that he's taken measures to repair the damage -- is fine, as far as it goes. But Reagan didn't go very far. While he acknowledges mistakes in general terms, this once-over-lightly approach failed to grapple with the fundamental governmental, legal and constitutional issues at the root of the Iran-contra affair.

For instance, Reagan said nothing about his relationship with William J. Casey, the former director of central intelligence, now dead, whom witnesses placed at the center of administration decision-making. Nor did he offer thoughts about the role of Lt. Col. Oliver North, acting as an agent of the White House, in orchestrating a covert-action operation outside of government channels.

The president admonished Rear Adm. John M. Poindexter for not telling him about the diversion of money to the

Nicaraguan contras. But Reagan did not say what he would have done had he been informed. Still, Reagan said he "wholeheartedly" endorsed efforts to finance the contras through third countries and private parties. That leaves the inescapable conclusion that the Reagan administration, from the very top, treated the law prohibiting U.S. aid to the contras as a hurdle to jump, not a barrier to be respected.

Perhaps the president is correct in saying that "there is nothing I can say that will make the situation right." The dirty deeds -- selling arms to the terrorist ayatollah's regime in Iran, diverting profits from the sale of U.S. property to the contras in Nicaragua -- have been done, and nothing can change those facts.

But the president could have said much more to communicate a sense of outrage and an understanding of the constitutional principles that had been put at a risk by his administration. It is not surprising that Reagan wants to move on to another agenda, one more to his liking, but his speech to the nation contained too little for it to be the last word on the Iran-contra scandal.

THE NEWS AND OBSERVER

Letters To The Editor

'Jail Break' A Success

To The Editor:

Thanks to you and the kind and generous "criminals" of Marshall and Madison County, the March of Dimes "Jail Break" was tremendously successful. "Prisoners" received pledges totalling more than \$4,300 for the March of Dimes' fight against birth defects. Who says that crime does not pay?

Without the community's support, our "Jail Break" would not have been such a success -- or so much fun!!! It was a real pleasure for us to have

the opportunity to meet and work with each "prisoner" and the many volunteers who helped with this event.

Thanks again to each of you who contributed time, effort, caring and dollars in the hopes of making real the vision of a healthy birth for all future generations.

Sincerely yours,
Margaret B. Boyd
Cathy E. May
March of Dimes
Ashtville

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