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Sheriff, County Continue Budget Talks

By BILL STUDENC Editor

Madison County Sheriff Dedrick Brown says he can reduce his department's spending by about \$2,000 a month without laying off deputies.

But Ralph Rice, Madison County finance officer, says that's not enough to prevent the sheriff's department from spending more money than the county has in its bank account.

The Madison County Board of Commissioners last week agreed to give the sheriff's department an additional allocation of \$46,000 to allow the

department to continue operations through June 30.

But that amount will not enable the sheriff's department to continue at its current levels, and commissioners told Brown that he may need to lay off two deputies. Before last week's additional allocation, Brown had only \$11,000 left in the sheriff's department budget for the remainder of the fiscal year.

Commissioners also told Brown last week to meet with Rice to figure out how the sheriff's department can operate on its new budget of \$57,000. Rice and Brown haven't had much

'I'm going to save at least \$2,000 a month with steps I'm taking to cut down in the kitchen and car expenses without laying off any deputies.'

Sheriff Dedrick Brown

month with steps I'm taking to cut down in the kitchen and car expenses without laying off any deputies," he said. "I don't know what will happen with that (the deputies)."

Rice, however, said that Brown must cut his expenses even more, or the county will be completely broke.

The county has only \$2,000 left in its contingency fund.

'That's just not enough," Rice said. "If he doesn't come out with some more cuts by Wednesday, then I have no choice but to recommend that the commissioners call a special meeting so they can make those cuts.'

Brown said that's just fine with him.

"I'm not meeting with Rice again, and I told the commissioners I would not talk with that son of a b---,' Brown said. "I will not have any discussions with Rice whatsoever. If

they (commissioners) want to talk about the budget, they can come and talk to me.'

Several residents have contacted Brown and told him they would donate money to the department to prevent deputies from being laid off, he said.

"If the commissioners elect to cut a man, I have been told by the public that they will make up the difference, if that becomes necessary," he said. Brown and other county officials have been at odds before over funding for the sheriff's department.



Divers for the Greensboro Police Depart- Alexander Bridge for the gun used in a ment underwater search team prepare to 1986 murder.

luck reaching an agreement.

for the rest of the fiscal year.

Brown said Tuesday that he has

laid off the cook and closed the kit-

chen at Madison County Jail and has

decreased patrol car expenses -

measures that will save about \$8,000

"I'm going to save at least \$2,000 a

Schools To Begin **Removal Of Asbestos**

By BILL STUDENC

The Madison County Board of Education last week approved the hiring of the Buncombe County school system's resident engineer to conduct search of Madison school facilities for asbestos

The board agreed to hire Jack vichols at a rate of \$50 an hour to inact all school buildings for asbestos nd develop a plan for the removal of e substance.

The U.S. Environmental Protection ency has handed down a set of ules calling for all school districts to inspect all school facilities by Oct. 30. EPA is calling for the removal of

because of federal studies linking the mineral, often used for fireproofing and insulation, to cancer.

School officials must also haved adopted a plan for the removal of all asbestos from school buildings - including classrooms, bus garages and administrative offices - by Oct. 30, Nichols said.

Materials containing asbestos must be out of all school facilities by Oct. 12, 1988, he said.

EPA will fine school systems up to .00 & day for failing to comply with its asbetos-removal order.

Bills are currently under consideration in the U.S. Senate and House to extend the program by one say they cannot count on one of those bills passing in Congress.

Nichols estimated that it would take him between two to three weeks to conduct the asbestos survey and draw up a plan for removal of the fibrous, fireproof material. That would set the cost of meeting federal asbestos requirements at between \$4,000 and \$6,000.

Nichols told the board that other contractors would charge between 4 cents and 10 cents per square foot. With 370,000 square feet in Madi County school buildings, that could cost the school system from \$14,000 to

asbestos from school buildings year or 18 months, but school officials \$37,000. **Delinquent Water Accounts**

Editor

search the French Broad River at the

Divers Search River For Murder Weapon

From Staff Reports Divers began searching in the French Broad River at Alexander on Monday for a handgun allegedly used in the 1986 murder of an Ohio couple.

Members of the Greensboro Police Department's underwater search team are looking for the weapon that Buncombe County Sheriff Buck Lyda believes was used to kill Wesley and Bonnie Mehaffy at Buzzard Rock on May

Lyda said he believes the Mehaffeys' killer threw the gun off the Alexander Bridge, into the French Broad River

Divers on Tuesday found several unused bullets in the water beneath the bridge - bullets that Lyda says may have been thrown into the river along with the murder weapon. The bullets are of the same caliber as those removed from the bodies of the Mehaffeys.

Lyda last year brought murder charges against Roy Lee Fox, a convicted murder now in prison for the 1986 slaying of Morris Sams - a shooting that occurred at the same bridge.

Buncombe County District Attorney Robert Fisher dismissed those charges against Fox because of insufficient evidence. Lyda said he the gun should provide the additional evidence he -Continued on back page

Top \$20,000 In Marshall

By BILL STUDENC Editor

Sixty-two Marshall residents and businesses owe more than \$100 each to the town for municipal water service, with some delinquent bills as high as \$4,000.

That was the word given Monday to the Marshall Board of Aldermen by town clerk Linda Dodson.

The total amount owed to the town by water customers whose delinquent bills are higher than \$100 is a whopping \$20,751.83, according to Dodson's figures. That does not include overdue water bills less than \$100.

Delinquent water bills have been a frequently discussed topic at meetings of the Marshall Board of Aldermen. The board has, several times in the past, threatened to "get

with overdue water accounts, but has water department, Dodson said. never initiated a sustained effort to collect money owed the town.

lengthy list of overdue accounts of more than \$100.

"There's no sense in bills going four or five years without being paid," said Alderman Ed "Doc" Niles.

Niles suggested that the town stamp the delinquent bills with a notice that immediate payment be made.

the water," he said.

The town, so far in the 1987-88 fiscal year, has had to transfer \$6,981.84 but it's not for what they do," Davis from its general fund to the water and said.

tough" on residents and businesses sewer fund to meet payments in the

"The best way to approach it is to get a list first and see who owes what The board again took no action and try to do something to keep them Monday night, although board from getting mad," said Alderman members seemed upset at the Jackie Davis. "If we just approach most of these people, they'll take care of it."

In other action at Monday's meeting, the board agreed to give the Marshall police officers a raise from \$5 an hour to \$6 an hour, and other town employees a 10 percent raise. "I'll tell you what I think - \$6 an hour for the policemen and you all "We're not even breaking even on can do what you want. Five dollars an hour is not a lot of money. That (the raise) may sound like a lot at one lick,

Raid On Cockfight Nets 19 Arrests

From Staff Reports The Buncombe County Sheriff's Department arrested 19 Western North Carolina residents Saturday after raiding an illegal cockfight near Barnardsvi

Officers with the U.S. Forest Ser-vice and the N.C. Wildlife Service discovered the cockfight at about 11 a.m. at a recreation site off Dill-ingham Road in the Coleman Boun-

dary of the Pingah National Forest. Forest Service officers, who notified the Buncombe County Sheriff's Department, hid and watch-ed the cocklight, taking pictures for evidence, said Li, Johany Lloyd of the mbe County Shoriff's Office.

hort time later and were on the trige of raiding the coeldight at bout 3 part, when the participants

ing the forest. Authorities say that a few people taking part in the cockfight may have escaped on foot through the woods.

Deputies will step up surveillance in the area as a "preventive measure" to make future cockfights less likely there, Lloyd said. The 19 people arrested – all from Buncombe, Madison and Burke coun-

ties - were charged with cockfighting, a misdemeanor offense punishable by up to a \$500 fine, six months in Jail, or both.

All 19 were released on their own recognizance Saturday after deputies served them with citations. The defendants will appear in Buncor County District Court on April 6.

ports annexation.

Lasher Responds To Criticism

By BILL STUDENC

Editor Weaverville Mayor Reese Lasher says allegations that he and town administrators are trying to force the Reems Creek Golf Club down the

town's throat are "ridiculous." "That is absolutely false," Lasher said recently. "The people of Weaver-ville want this. They have stated it atedly to me, in petitions and in lie hearings."

The majority of speakers at a bille hearing supported annexation, a more than 300 Weaverville ents signed a petition circulated If course developers.

o ignore that, to me, is to say the

people of Weaverville don't know evident Feb. 25 when the Weaverville what they want or what they're sign-ing. And I don't belive that," Lasher said.

Lasher was responding to charges from some opponents of the proposed satellite annexation of Reems Creek Golf Club that certain town officials

Golf Club that certain town officials have tried to win approval of annexa-tion without sufficient study. A few vocal opponents of the volun-tary annexation of 189 homesites have accused Lasher, Town Manager Charles Horne and town attorney Bill Barnes with working privately with golf course developers to win ap-proval of annexation.

That criticism became especially

Town Council called a special meeting to vote on the Reems Creek Golf Club annexation request (see related story). The council had originally tabled the request, on a motion by Councilman Ronnie "Butch" Davis and by a 4-1 vote, until March 21 to give council members ad-ditional time to study the issue.

But three council members signed a memo calling for the special meeting -- and raising the eyebrows of some town residents. "The developers met with us on a number of occasions, they met with the commissioners individually on a

Weaverville Councilwoman Will Resign