

MADISON COUNTY LIBRARY
GENERAL DELIVERY
MARSHALL NC 28753

Madison And Buncombe Counties

Vol. 88 No. 33

Thursday, August 18, 1988

25¢

Residents Organize For School

Spring Creek To Be Closed

By H.D. KOONTZ III
The News Record Editor

Some Spring Creek residents would like to operate their own school.

A group of parents has organized the Spring Creek Community School, Inc., to help develop education, day care and adult activities in the area where the elementary school is threatened with extinction at the end of this school year.

About 20 persons attended the first meeting Monday night and elected six corporation officers: John Kirkpatrick, president; Brenda Kirkpatrick, secretary; Randy Price, treasurer; and Rick Price, Kenneth Hunter and Rita Phillips, vice presidents.

Brenda Kirkpatrick said the purpose of the group is to provide for the general educational needs for the Spring Creek Community, including the development of an elementary school, day care facilities, adult activities and vocational education.

Bylaws approved Monday night state, "If the educational needs of the community are not met by the public school system, the group shall establish and develop of an elementary school, day care facilities, adult activities and vocational education."

Bylaws approved Monday night state, "If the educational needs of the community are not met by the public school system, the group shall establish and carry out a move some parents say will increase bus riding time for the children to an hour or more."

Kirkpatrick said the community wants to save its school. A hearing on the issue will be held Aug. 23 at Madison County High School.

About 80 children now attend Spring Creek.

Parents have petitioned the board of education and offered to help pay for repairs to the old school building.

Earlier this month the board turned the offer down.

Bill Barutio, spokesman for a portion of the community that wants to keep the school open, said he had almost \$5,000 in pledges to repair the building.

The Spring Creek closing is part of the Madison County Board of Education's countywide consolidation plan.

Mayor Says No \$5 Can Hush Him

Mars Hill Mayor Joseph Godwin reports he has been catching heck from some town residents.

Last week's edition of The News Record carried a photograph of the mayor accepting a \$5 bill from Planning Board Member Dr. Larry Frost in return for Godwin's pledge to remain silent during the joint aldermen-planners meeting Tuesday.

Godwin remained silent for 92 minutes while the aldermen and planners discussed several zoning and related issues.

"I've been getting a good bit of backfire for that five dollars," the mayor said this week.

For the record, Godwin returned the money to Dr. Frost following the meeting, adding: "If I had something to say, a million dollars wouldn't keep me silent."

County Deputies Confiscate 71 Pot Plants

Madison County law enforcement officers seized 77 marijuana plants at three separate locations during the weekend.

Two persons have been arrested.

More than 11,000 of the illegal plants have been seized in various portions of the county this summer, according to Sheriff Dedrick Brown.

Brown said deputies discovered 31 plants at the end of the pavement at East Park in a corn field after receiving an anonymous tip there was marijuana growing in the area.

No one has been charged yet for that crop, he added.

Harvey Moore, 28, of the location has been charged in connection with the plants.

At another location, 17 plants were seized. The county's largest 17,000



The tribe of Jacob Weaver once again reunites

RANDY COX PHOTO

Reunion

Tribe Of Jacob Weaver Gathers

By H.D. KOONTZ III
The News Record Editor

Weavers of all ages gathered Saturday under the shade of gently swaying oak trees, but none of them made any cloth.

These Weavers, about 150 strong, had come from as far away as California this year for the 129th reunion of the Tribe of Jacob Weaver, one of the sons of Weaverville's founder, John Weaver.

Prior to a picnic lunch on the front lawn of Carl and Wanda Teague's home just outside the town limits, the clan held a business meeting in which births and deaths were recorded, memorials read and committees named for the upkeep of the family cemetery.

Also, this year the clan agreed to study the possibility of establishing a special family memorial -- a plaque placed on a large rock on the town's Main Street triangle -- commemorating the founding of the town in 1787.

The descendants of Jacob Weaver, who settled in the Reems Creek Valley in 1783, have met now for 129 times, missing only those years during wars and 1948, the "polio year," according to Josephine Osborne.

Teague, who along with the Peeke family, acted as co-hosts, a job he has gladly taken on "about four or five times."

"One year I went into the house, thinking the business session of the reunion was over," Teague recalled with a smile "When I came out I found out they had selected me as host for the next year too."

Osborne reported on the Dry Ridge Museum at Weaverville, which now has just 80 copies of the town history book on hand, and showed the crowd the broad axe and foot edge used more than a century ago by town founder John Weaver.

One of the highlights of this year's event was the reading of a letter from President Reagan and his wife, Nancy, to the members of the clan.

"As you relive the past experiences

and give thanks for the bonds of love and kinship that unite your family," the president wrote, "you can look to the future with the special strength that comes from knowing you will always have each other."

"Family life is both an expression of and a guarantor of the freedoms we cherish in America," the president's letter read, "and your reunion is therefore a tribute to all that is best in our national character and traditions."

The youngest Weaver at this year's gathering was Brandon Lee Rayfield, the 3-and-a-half month old son of Thomas Lee and Joan Weaver Rayfield of Weaverville.

The oldest of the clan attending was 97-year-old Ernest Weaver, looking elegant with a bright red rose and a intricately carved walking stick.

The first reunion of the tribe was held in 1859 when Jacob Weaver called all his children and grandchildren home to spend some time together.

The clan met for three years at

-Continued on Page 11



The eldest Weaver and the youngest.



Shady Lawn fills with family.

Case Hinges On Traces Of 3 Gases

By H.D. KOONTZ III
The News Record Editor

Whether the jury accepts the premise presented in a State Bureau of Investigation agent's testimony Tuesday is the key to the prosecution's case against Jon C. Thorsen, accused of shooting his wife to death more than a year ago in their South Bear Creek trailer.

Agent M.L. Creasey, who testified Tuesday afternoon before the jury of nine men and three women, identified the .32 caliber handgun found at the feet of Claudia Thorsen March 15, 1987, as the weapon that killed her and said the weapon was the type which leaves a residue on the hands of the person who fired it.

Creasey testified the weapon, when fired, blows back gases containing the elements barium, lead and antimony. Traces of those elements were found on the accused man's hand, he said.

Creasey testified hand wipings were taken with cotton swabs from the Jon Thorsen's and Claudia Thorsen's hands following the incident.

The agent said no traces of the elements were found on the victim's hands. The defense contends Mrs. Thorsen, a waitress at Mary's Restaurant in Marshall, shot herself.

Creasey testified he could not say the evidence "conclusively" proved

the accused fired the gun. He said the traces of the gases on the accused hand were "random" and showed "no specific pattern."

But Assistant District Attorney James L. Baker said the key to the prosecution's case rests on its ability to convince the jury the evidence is indeed conclusive.

Testimony during the trial lasted all day Tuesday, and Superior Court Judge Robert W. Kirby recessed court shortly before 5 p.m. Monday was spent selecting the jury.

Tuesday's testimony also included remarks from former N.C. Highway Patrolman R.L. Terry, the first law enforcement officer to arrive at the scene the night of the shooting.

Terry testified he found Thorsen inside the trailer "quite upset" and "with an odor of alcohol about him." Madison County EMS technicians had already arrived at the scene.

Terry testified the accused mumbled "why did she do it?" at one point and then asked, "Do you have a warrant? Then get the hell out of here."

Thorsen, dressed in an open-collar white pinstriped shirt, dark trousers and boots, was stoic throughout the day's testimony.

Occasionally, Thorsen would lean over to answer his lawyer's questions.

-Continued on Page 11

Jury Indicts Marshall Man

A Madison County grand jury Monday indicted a Marshall man on a charge of murder in connection with the death of the man's in an auto crash last summer.

Richard Kingston's wife, Diana Kingston, died more than one year ago from what was believed to be injuries she received in a car crash off Roberts Hill Road.

Richard Kingston allegedly was driving at the time the car plunged 42 feet off the road and landed on its top on U.S. 25-70.

The accident occurred around 8:50 a.m. July 10, 1987.

Kingston was released in lieu of \$10,000 bond.

Police reports last year stated Mrs. Kingston, a Marshall real estate agent, was a passenger in the 1976 Chevrolet allegedly driven by her husband.

Sheriff Dedrick Brown reported that Kingston was taken to Memorial Mission Hospital at Asheville for treatment. Richard Kingston did not appear to be seriously injured, police

said at the time. He had jumped from their car just prior to its going off the road.



Richard Kingston

WNC Legislators Proud Of 'Pork Barrel' Funds

By H.D. KOONTZ III
The News Record Editor

Western North Carolina's legislators caught some flak for voting in favor of what some critics called "pork barrel" projects in their home districts, but there were no apologies from the delegation at a special breakfast meeting Monday.

Thousands of dollars worth of projects and support funds were approved during the last session of the legislature for the western part of the state, including money to begin construction of a \$12 million satellite campus of Asheville-Buncombe Technical College in Madison County.

Work on the site for that branch campus has already begun, and construction should begin within the next week. The building, about 30,000 square feet, should be finished by next year.

House Speaker Lister Ramsey of Marshall, addressing a crowd of more than 200 legislators and public servants at the University of North Carolina at Asheville campus Monday, said he expected that the bulk of the state funding went for projects in Madison County. "I'd probably have the county's large 17,000

plaining," the Speaker said.

Ramsey appeared with state Sens. Robert S. Swain and Dennis J. Winger and state Reps. Marie W. Colton, Narvel Jim Crawford Jr., Gordon Greenwood and Martin L. Nesbitt Jr. at the appreciation breakfast.

"The question is: Are you going to keep them and get them re-elected?" Ramsey said of the delegation.

"If you want to thank them properly, do it on the first Tuesday in November."

Agencies dealing with drug and alcohol abuse treatment, aid for the elderly, youth rehabilitation programs, educational institutions and programs, health issues and agricultural problems were represented at the event.

Each, in turn, rose to briefly tell the WNC delegation what impact their funding has had on the area.

Colton said state funding for on-going education programs and programs that help people who cannot help themselves were the targets of some county North Carolina officials.

Nesbitt said the western delegation, all of whom came up for reelection this year, "is willing to go back and try and work these" to continue funding the regional programs.

called "pork barrel" funding for WNC agencies.

Nesbitt said "everything west of Morganton is referred to as pork barrel, including our technical school."

Nesbitt said the WNC delegation is not ashamed of getting funding for their home districts.

"In fact, we bragged about them," he said.

"You can bet we'll hold the line," Nesbitt said. "When it comes to the election, some of you will have to stand and tell them what it is. We are

-Continued on Page 11