

He Sees Herds On Bleak Yancey Peak

Nick Stigailo Doesn't Suffer From Halluncinations

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BURNSVILLE — Nick Stigailo is a man who can look up at the bleak peak of a Yancey County mountain and see 10,000 people. He does not suffer from hallucinations, either.

He has looked up into the seats of Moscow Stadium and seen 20,000, and he knows people will come if there is something for them to see or do.

In Yancey, Stigailo and two affluent associates with the un-Yancey-like names of Henry Kotaska and Frank Sedlacek intend to see that they ski. They have decided that if crowds will choke places like Lake Placid, N. Y., Iron Mountain, Mch., and sundry New Hampshire resorts, where the descents are only medium, they will really descend on Mt. Celso, once the word gets out.

Prospecting around, Stigailo some time ago discovered a 1,000-foot vertical elevation drop off the southeast slope of Celso, and he knows of no other place in eastern American where this is true. He is sure that the professional and Olympic skiers will flock to it, and that will be the day that Yancey arrives.

Stigailo, better known by now as Nick in Burnsville and environs, is thoroughly stirred up by the prospects he envisions for Celso and its companion peak with an even more euphonious name—Winter Star.

"Boy!" he says, "Where else can you look off so far? So many lakes. All the people go to Mitchell, and you can't see anything from there like from here."

Stigailo's views on what people will like are a little different from most North Carolinians. He was once a professional soccer player in his native Romania, and that's how he came to see those 200,000 people in Moscow Stadium. He has also seen, he said, 10 and 15,000 people at the finals of a world table tennis championship. There is more to sports than the NCAA, he believes, and he is out to

prove it.

Skiing has worldwide appeal, and its followers will come great distances when good facilities are to be had. "Every ski place is jammed," he insists, and that means all kinds of accommodations, restaurants, snack bars, the snowpiece ski lodge, riding stables, lifts, tow ropes, motels, cottages for rent, summer homes, in short—the works. Nick has told Yancey leaders that he can see 150 jobs and a \$500,000-a-year payroll.

On the summer side (for the backers propose a year-round resort) there is a unique golf

course in the plans as well. Nick Stigailo has thought of just about everything.

Except snow.

Snow, it turns out, is no problem at a ski resort. If it doesn't snow enough into blanket the slopes, they turn to snow-making machinery that takes all the guesswork out of it. To do this, Celso needs a million-gallon reservoir of water, and just by chance (?) there is the old Cattail mine, halfway down the mountain. Prof- erty engineered with concrete, it's a natural reservoir. Just as pin- setting machines revolutionized

the bowling world, snow-making machinery is opening up a whole new industry.

The tab for all this enterprise in Yancey County runs in the neighborhood of \$7 million, and the biggest lick Nick hit was getting the backing from Sedlacek through Kotaska. Neither of them had ever heard of Yancey County before, but they are businessmen, and a few million dollars to get a good thing going is an OK investment. They formed a three-way partner- ship.

The business negotiations ran their course, and in the process something happened that should make North Carolinians look for more folks like the Chicago trio. They got a commitment from Gov. Terry Sanford to study a new highway to Celso, on which the whole project hinges. A new road in Western North Carolina, without federal money, is something to regard highly. In some places they can't even get old ones fixed.

The road is far from built, but there have been commitments made on both sides, to the extent that if there is a re there will be a road, and vice versa. Aerial surveys will be made when the leaves are off the trees.

Sedlacek and Co. already has put a good deal of money into its project, in the form of leases and

legal work. Celso Mountain be- longs largely to Percy Thread- gill, a retired Floridian from Texas who has developed the lower slope on the Pensacola side as a summer residence spot. There is a heavy traffic of Florida li- cense plates on the road going past his house.

The leases for the resort in- volve some 2,000 acres of Thread- gill's land and are long-term agreements. The architects are ski specialists from New Hampshire, with an Austrian associate who also has done design for World's Fair and Olympic layouts.

The only stones unturned are the ones in the "road" that you now have to use to get to the site. It's a caution. Stigailo and Kotaska hosted a group up there a few days ago, and they'll never forget it. Fortunately for the cause, one of the visitors was Chairman Merrill Evans of the State Highway Commission, who had never seen a road like the one up to Cattail Mine and on to Celso Mountain.

It was pretty brutal, a bouncing, lurching, jolting, rock-banging granny-gear climb over switch- back turns in four-wheel drive, a two-hour endurance contest that seemed like it would never end.

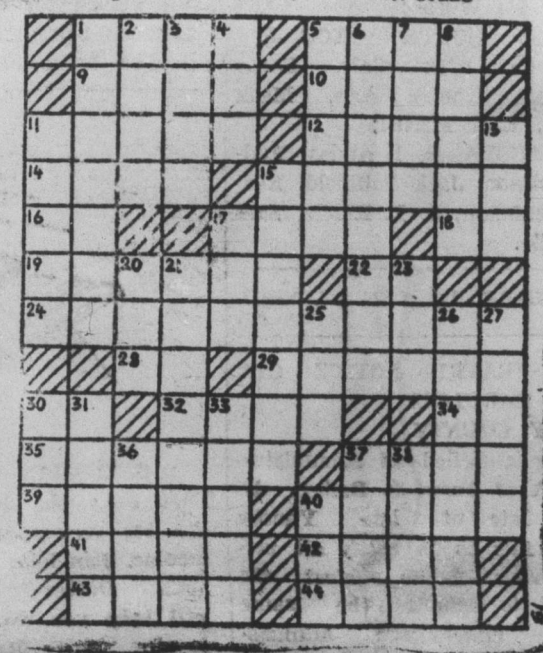
As the jeeps growled wearily upward, Evans surveyed the un- speakably difficult situation and sighed, "They'd never believe it in the First Division."

THE YANCEY RECORD

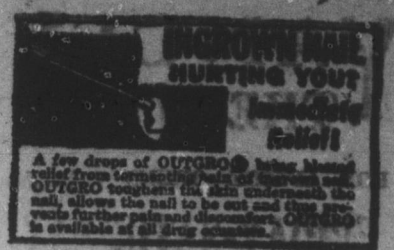
THURSDAY, SEPT. 5, 1963

CROSSWORD

- | | | |
|---|---------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1. Weaken | 3. Embarking area | 17. Agree (slang) |
| 5. Thickset | 4. Indian weight | 20. Male cat |
| 9. An Iroquoian | 5. Slop | 21. Out-break |
| 10. Abounding in conifers | 6. Kind of coated metal | 23. Scotch alder |
| 11. An airman | 7. Unfasten | 25. Hall! |
| 12. Great national god of Indo-Aryans (myth.) | 8. Polar explorer | 27. Stringed instruments |
| 14. At a distance | 11. Cloth, Lachesis and Atropos | 30. Make choice |
| 15. Two-legged stands | 13. Man's name | 31. Silk veil (eccl.) |
| 16. Music note | 15. Whoppers (colloq.) | 33. Sicilian volcano (var.) |
| 17. Aquatic bird | | 36. Tart |
| 18. Samaritan (abbr.) | | 37. Trick |
| 19. Regard | | 38. Soon |
| 22. Rough lava | | 40. Craze |
| 24. Naval military police | | |
| 28. Greek letter | | |
| 29. Uniformly | | |
| 30. Hawaiian bird | | |
| 32. Peel | | |
| 34. Conjunction | | |
| 35. Babbles | | |
| 37. Salary | | |
| 39. Silent | | |
| 40. End (L.) | | |
| 41. African mammal | | |
| 42. Genus of lily | | |
| 43. Miss Ferber | | |
| 44. Lairs | | |



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Methodists Set Training Session In Spruce Pine

A series of Christian training schools in September, sponsored by the Board of Education of the Western North Carolina Methodist Conference, will begin in Spruce Pine and Newland.

The Spruce Pine school, which Yancey Methodist will attend, is scheduled for Sept. 8-10, in Spruce Pine Methodist Church. The Newland school will follow Sept. 11-13 in Newland Methodist Church. All classes will start at 7:30 p. m.

These schools will launch three dozen similar schools, most of them five days in length, across the Conference, extending into March of 1964 and involving about 12,000 Methodists as "students" gaining credits for their studies from The Methodist Church.

Dr. Carl King of Statesville, executive secretary of the Conference Board of Education, announced these classes, instructors and school officials for these first two schools: Spruce Pine—"Use of the Bible with Children", Mrs. Senah Pulliam of Seven Mile Ford, Va.; "Understanding Ourselves", Mrs. E. H. Ould of Roanoke, Va.; and "Teachings of Jesus", the Rev. William Landiss, director of the Wesley Foundation at Georgia Tech in Atlanta, Ga.

School officials—The Rev. Joe Ervin, director; Dr. Fletcher Nelson, superintendent of the Marion District. Newland—Same courses and same instructors as at Spruce Pine.

School officials—The Rev. Ben Steele, director. Dr. Herman F. Duncan, superintendent of the North Wilkesboro District.

These Christian training schools are co-sponsored by the Conference Board of Education and local participating churches.

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