

THE YANCEY RECORD  
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WE ARE THANKFUL



TO BE AMERICANS

## Take Stock Of Our Dependence On Land On This Last Day Of Farm City Week

Everyone can be a conservationist (the urban as well as the rural landowner) because regardless of where you live, in city, town or coun-

### Arsonist In Yancey Area

The U.S. Forest Service in Burnsville reported that 3 forest fires were set by an Arsonist in the South Toe River Section. According to District Ranger Johnny McLain one fire was set near Carolina Hemlocks Recreation Area and two other fires were set on White Oak Creek.

Ranger McLain said the fires were set in an area that would have made control very difficult if the conditions had been drier. There are several homes in the vicinity of the fires that could have been threatened had the fires not been quickly controlled by Forest Service Crews.

Forest Service investigators are now in the area working on the case. If anyone has information that might lead to the conviction of a person or persons setting these fires, please contact the District Ranger, P.O. Box 128 or call 682-2567 in Burnsville.

The Forest Service will make every effort to protect the names of persons contributing information.

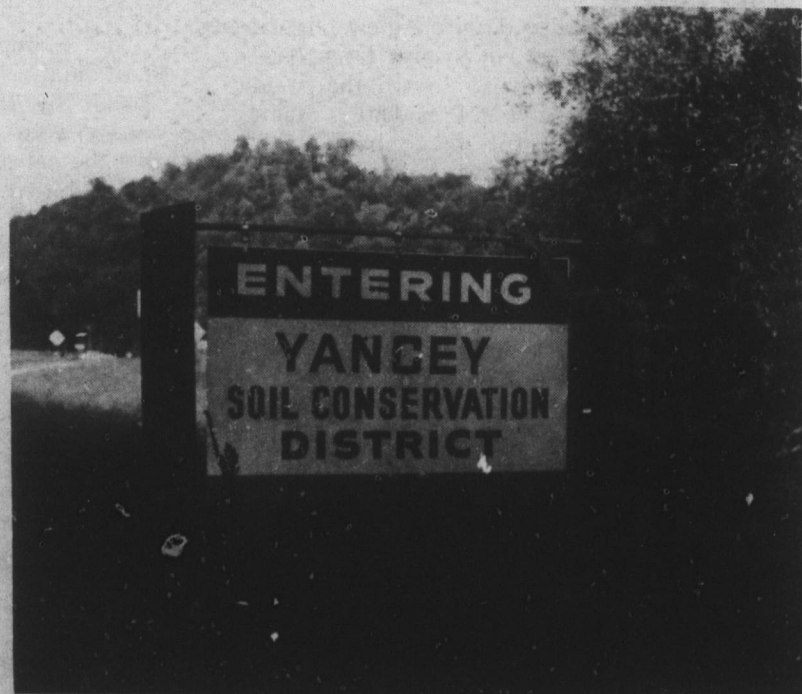
try -- you are a land user.

Farm and City Week is a good time to take stock of our dependence on the land. In town your house rests on it, your trees take root in it; so do your garden vegetables and flowering plants and your yard grass.

City people as well as the rural people need to become aware of how much they owe the land. The land and its related water supply grows plants from which come all the basic needs of food, fiber and shelter.

You may want to refresh your partnership with the farmers as stewards of the land by first caring for your own

plot of ground and then understanding the programs designed to conserve and improve all land and water resources and supporting them. A community land-use plan suggests how private and public land users should be related to each other. Just as a farmer needs a thorough inventory of land and water resources, a community land use plan is the inventory of community resources. Soil surveys, with interpreting information, provided by the Soil Conservation Service make us such an inventory. Your own soil and water conservation district can help put the plan into action.



Carlie Rice For Conservation

## Major Earthquake Here Is Unlikely Says Geologist

Last week, about 8 o'clock in the evening, an earth tremor was felt by many people in Burnsville and surrounding areas. The tremor apparently caused no damage, but it did cause some speculation about the possibility of an earthquake occurring in North Carolina. Well, we now have an authoritative answer. North Carolinians worried about major earthquakes can forget it!

The chances of a destructive, widespread earthquake in the Tar Heel State appear to be very, very remote, according to University of North Carolina geologist, Joel Watkins. He made the observation following the minor earthquake Wednesday night, which was centered in the mountains of Southwest Virginia.

Dr. Watkins noted that there are two earthquake zones that can affect North Carolina, one running along

the Southern Appalachian Mountains and the other centering around Charleston, S. C.

Damages due to earthquakes in the Southeastern Appalachians have been slight in historical times, he said. The Charleston earthquake of 1886 caused major damages in South Carolina and minor, widespread damage in North Carolina.

Dr. Watkins also said long-term predictions of earthquakes are impossible. "Predictions of this type are not feasible," he explained. "Accurate predicting of earthquakes and tremors, even a few days in advance, is not yet possible, and certainly not a year or several months in advance."

An earthquake is generally caused by slippage of rocks along zones of weaknesses resulting in vibrations of the surface of the ground. "But we just do not understand just what the initial forces or circumstances are, and therefore we cannot say when the breaking and sliding of rocks will happen," Dr. Watkins said.

There are possibilities, however, for very short term predictions.

A Japanese scientist measured an anomalous change in strain at the surface of the earth prior to a quake, Dr. Watkins said. In another case, a change in the magnetic field near a fault was noticed by a California scientist who reported it two hours before a tremor occurred.

"These short term notices would suffice to warn people to switch off gas or electricity, and leave unstable buildings," Dr. Watkins said. "The damage caused by earthquakes has often been due to fire blasts or collapsing of poor housing."

"The earth itself may not show many 'scars' after a quake. Man-made structures are much more affected. Only sometimes land slides and mud flows occur or parts of a coast line are lifted," he said.

The Wednesday night earthquake was recorded on the UNC seismograph in Mitchell Hall for about five minutes. The period of actual quaking apparent to residents here was a little more than 30 seconds.

## Prisoner Recaptured

Last Friday, November 21, at about 4:10 p.m., one of the prisoners in the Prison Camp just outside of Burnsville attempted an escape in broad daylight.

Leonard Lafond, imprisoned for murder 12 years ago, suddenly ran out of the prison office to make a break for freedom.

Lafond had no other escape attempts to his record, was an honor grade prisoner, and apparently acted on a wild impulse. He was immediately pursued by four guards who brought him back in short order.

The prisoner had just been to see the prison doctor, Dr. W. Sargent, for treatment of some minor self-inflicted wounds and was on his way back to the prison compound, according to a prison official.

Following a recommendation by the prison doctor, Leonard Lafond was transferred to Central Prison in Raleigh, N. C. for a psychiatric workup.

Lafond was from Milwaukee, Wisconsin prior to his imprisonment.