

Bill To Put Yancey Under Primary Election Laws Introduced In NC General Assembly

By Bob Helmle

Yancey County's long history of switching back and forth between the convention system and the primary system of selecting candidates for local office, is apparently due for another switch. A bill to put the county back under the State primary election laws was introduced in the General Assembly on Monday by the county's Representatives Liston Ramsey and Ernest Messer.

Introduction of the bill making the change was recommended by the Executive Committee of the Yancey County Democratic Party. With the sponsorship of the County's two representatives as well as the local Democratic party, the bill should not encounter serious opposition.

The bill would abolish the 1959 law which removed Yancey County from the general State primary election law, and thus permitted the selection of candidates by party convention. The new bill, reverting to primaries, would apply to the selection of candidates by both political parties.

Over a period of years stretching back to the 1930's, Yancey County has apparently found full satisfaction in neither system. In 1941, the primary system which had previously

prevailed, was abolished by special act of the legislature, and the switch made to the convention system. This system was in effect until 1955, when the legislature, at the

request of the County's Representative re-established the primary system. This lasted only four years until 1959, when again at the request of the County's Representative,

the legislature again changed the law, abolishing the primary system and reverting to the convention system. No further change was made during the 1960's.

Observers of the working of politics in Yancey County freely admit that both systems have advantages and disadvantages. The shortcoming of the convention system lies in the failure of citizens at the grass-roots level to participate in precinct meetings of their party. This failure results in leaving the selection of candidates in the hands of a very small minority of voters who are active at the precinct level.

The primary system which gives each voter a direct voice in the selection of candidates seems on its face to be the more democratic process. But it, too, has faults according to those who have observed its workings in the past.

The primary system is more expensive to the county, since holding the primaries is not cheap. In case none of the candidates receives a majori-

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Although the big snowstorm that hit Western North Carolina last week was the cause of accidents, incidents and general inconvenience, it also left in its wake some breathtakingly beautiful sights in and around Yancey County. Pictured here is a cabin at Cattail Creek owned by Captain George Downing of Burnsville.

Teachers And Programs Saluted During Vocational Education Week

By Larry Howell

This week has been officially designated as Vocational Education Week by President Nixon. We would like to take this opportunity to salute the vocational education teachers and their programs in the Yancey County schools with special emphasis on two new programs.

At Cane River High School

Mr. Jack Buckner teaches Carpentry and Cabinetmaking; Mr. Flay Hensley teaches Construction Industries and Bricklaying. Mr. Buckner and Mr. Hensley are currently engaged in the construction of a model home.

The vocational programs at East Yancey High School include Agriculture, taught by Mr. Herb Allen and Office Occupations taught by Mrs. Wil-

helmina Hensley.

At the present there are 3 teachers who teach students from both high schools. One of these is Mr. Larry Howell who teaches Distributive Education. This is a cooperative program between the schools and local businesses.

The two new programs for students from both Cane River and East Yancey are Health Occupations and Auto Mechanics. Health Occupations is taught by Mrs. Nellie Lewis, R.N. Like all other classes, Health Occupations has its objectives: to introduce a new field, to prepare students for job opportunities, and to stimulate students' interest in the medical field. These objectives are fulfilled to some extent with experience in the clinic, but more often with work in the class itself.

Mr. Terrell Ray is the instructor in Auto Mechanics. Mr.

Ray is a professional mechanic with many years experience in his field. The auto mechanics shop is at the Micaville School with students being bussed in from the high schools. There are 14 boys enrolled from East Yancey and 11 from Cane River. The objectives of Auto Mechanics are to introduce students to the occupation, to teach them the fundamentals of

mechanics and to prepare them for job opportunities. Along with auto mechanics these students learn how to repair small engines.

We salute Yancey County Schools during Vocational Education Week; proud that they are keeping pace with the growing trend of providing better and more varied vocational programs for the students.



Health Occupations - Mrs. Nellie Lewis, Instructor



Auto Mechanics - Mr. Terrell Ray, Instructor