

Folk-Ways and Folk-Speech

of SOUTHERN APPALACHIA
with Rogers Whitener

As promised in last week's column, Curtis Duckworth's letter reflecting his experiences with and observations about snakes is continued in the Folk-Ways column.

"I believe that no extensive research has been undertaken to study the behavior of snakes. There is no set pattern as to how snakes behave. They are so

stupid that sometimes they forget to hibernate, and freeze to death.

"A Rattler for instance has strong instincts towards his common enemy the King snake. Yet in many cases will disregard man completely and crawl right past him as will the King snake and Copperhead. Other snakes show marked fears of man, and will get lost quick. A Black

Racer will chase a man if he runs; and run from him if he's chased. Snakes have strange habits, because they're so stupid, they just exist from day to day.

"As for all the different tales about snakes, some of them are figments of peoples imagination; some are true. A snake is psychic in that he will respond according to your response. I have been bitten by a Copperhead and once by a Timber Rattler. The bite of the Copperhead is very painful and highly toxic, whereas the Timber Rattler only caused some swelling, fever and I vomited once. Though I am now immune to their poison, I'd venture to say that the Copperhead and Cottonmouth Water Moccasin are the most venomous of the three type pit vipers; though a large Diamondback has more poison, he's less dangerous. Cottonmouths have been known to attack in droves when their territory is encroached upon. A Timber Rattler won't run from nothing, but won't bite you till you mess with him. Same is true with the Diamondback, though they coil up only as a defensive measure when confronted with man.

"Copperheads will conceal themselves and if you tread near



his perch he'll then bite; but most often he'll try to get away from you until he's in a corner. Copperheads are psychic in that they sense any fear or threat. Children, being naive, have handled them without being bitten.

"I had a big black and white Newfoundland dog, and they make perfect snake dogs. They love to seek out snakes and sling them. They're intelligent dogs, also, and will find a snake for you and hold him at bay till you can get him.

"One thing I do know about Black Snakes for sure, they hibernate late: than other snakes, either out of stupidity or they absorb more heat to last them longer!

"Do you by chance know of any books I could purchase on the habits of snakes, the various sub-species and so forth? Though I'm familiar with snakes, they always hold my interest. From my own observation and from others it will be concluded that snakes are strange because they are very dumb. If we were made to crawl on our bellies all the time we wouldn't know where we was at half the time either. After all they can only see a small portion above ground level, plus they are deaf, have poor circulation, and the only usable extremity is their mouth.

"Occasionally they'll use their tails to whip at something (as the Rattler uses as a defensive measure against the King snake). This is of little use. Snakes are not adaptable to extremes in climate, and are poorly equipped in every way. They're stupid, and they are despised by everything and everybody. Their survival is a miracle in itself compared to some mammals their size. They live a long time. Biologists and etc. claim the snake is the oldest of all land animals. I can't figure out how he has managed to survive through all of this!

"I've killed many snakes myself, though I have lost no sleep over them. People always tend to kill snakes on sight, more especially the poisonous ones. Still I doubt that there is much fear of immediate extinction, yet as man is encroaching more and more on the wilderness these dumb pit-vipers will undoubtedly upset the balance of Nature. People who are bitten by these snakes usually have themselves to blame by carelessness, or by deliberately provoking these snakes. Snakes are of little danger to human life, so if people would let them be, the snakes won't bother them except in a few instances of the Cottonmouth. And then only when one is wading through his creek bed and threatening his territory.

"I myself consider all snakes in this country harmless, with the exception of the Coral snake, and I've never seen one except in a book and wouldn't be able to distinguish him from a scarlet King snake if I saw him.

"Snakes were a useful livelihood for me in my youth, and I still hold them in high regard."

Please address all material to Rogers Whitener, Folk-Ways and Folk Speech, Box 36, University Station, Boone, N.C. 28608.



Hensley Recieves Nursing Certificate

Army Nurse [Captain] Nellie L. Hensley [right], daughter of Mrs. Mark A. Hensley of Route 4, Burnsville completed a Clinical Nurse Course at Martin Army Hospital, Ft. Benning, Georgia. Presenting the Certificate and congratulating her is Col. Cesar Lopez, Acting Commander, Medical Department Activity. Capt. Hensley completed an intensive training period of lectures and practical work in health care teachings. Then she worked in various wards within the hospital and outpatient clinic. The training is designed to prepare clinical nurses to relieve doctors of selected tasks and to provide continuing nursing care and health counseling.

Playhouse Crew Gets Ovation

[Cont'd from page 1] occasional run to the hospital because of a head gash suffered by someone who failed to hear the familiar call "Heads up!" when a pipe or drop was lowered or when a wrench or screw driver slipped from the hands of someone working above the stage. Now all are only memories.

The dormitory across the street is strangely quiet, just as the Playhouse is. The thirty-six students from thirteen states and representing fourteen different colleges and universities and the thirteen staff members have packed their luggage and returned to their Fall and Winter activities. The students are academically seven semester hours closer to graduation because of their work at

Parkway Playhouse. For six weeks they attended classes in Problems in Directing, Problems in Scenic Design, two courses in Acting in Summer Theatre, Stagecraft and Stage Makeup, as well as Applied Summer Theatre where the grade is determined by the quality of the work done by the student on the six productions during the season.

Parkway Playhouse has ended its twenty-eighth season and, as the students and the staff would say, "It was golden!" Yes, it was great, but without the staunch support of the people of Burnsville, it might not have been. So to the residents of Burnsville, Parkway Playhouse says thank you--thank you for having us as a part of your lovely community this

summer--thank you for supporting the Playhouse and its productions--thank you for your kindnesses and generousities. Thank you for everything.

In ten months the curtains will open and the lights will go up on a new season. Some faces will be familiar and others will be new, but the patrons of Parkway Playhouse can be certain of one thing--the new shows will be fine and exciting shows, even better than before. Until that time, C.F. "Pete" Raby and Lauren K. "Woody" Woods, Managing Directors, and the staff and company of Parkway Playhouse again say, "Thank you, Burnsville! We have enjoyed our two months here. So, until next year and our twenty-ninth season....."

Mayland Tech Holds Graduation

[Cont'd from page 1] graduates. These degrees and graduates are:

Business Administration (Associate in Applied Science Degree): Herman Guy Buchanan, Leroy E. Bishop, Larry D. Carpenter, Billy Ray Goforth, Donald Hensley, Frank Lee Johnson, David Lee Moore, Harold Glenn Penland, Sherrill Pittman and Sharon Watson.

Executive Secretarial (Associate in Applied Science Degree): Miranda Whitson Honeycutt, Anna Lou Robinson, and Deborah Jean Robinson.

Automotive Mechanics (Diploma): Donald Gene Blevins, Stephen A. Bretan, Tony Michael Crowder, David Leroy Fisher, Richard Edwin Jenkins, James C. Miller, Dale Lanter Osborne, William T. Pauley, and Danny Joe Silver.

Diesel Mechanics (Diploma): James C. Miller.

Child Care Worker (Diploma): Betsy Foulk, Shirley Irene Franklin and Cathy Marguerite McKinney.

Electrical Installation and Maintenance (Diploma): Robert Ray Bennett, Billy Aaron Buchanan, Clyde D. Dellinger, David D. Greene, Harold E. Hughes, Allen E. Ingwersen, Nathan Hugh Mottern, Donald Reeves, Cecil Rice, Archie Lee Wright, Garrett B. Yelton and Robert F. Young.

Light Construction (Diploma): Charles Wayne Brewer, Jimmy Lee Byrd, Raymond R. Cantrell, Bob Freeman, Joe Freeman, Daniel W. Fox, Randal H. Hall, Robert Stanley Hollifield, George Ingram, Roy A. Laughrun, Guy Edward Miller, Terry Michael Miller, Vernon J. Presnell, David Ray Queen, Keith Rathbone, Jerry Thomas, Ray Wilson and Edd J. Young, Jr.

Practical Nurse Education (Diploma): Carolyn Louise Cantrell, Patricia Green Brock, Starlet Lee Differender, Nancy Johnson Harpold, Annie J. Hicks, Pamela Winters Keener, Sandra J. Keith, Annie Borwn Ledlow, Jane Ann McKinney, Wanda J. McKinney, Jana Kay Patc and Dee Brock Wright.

In addition to the regular curriculum graduates, approximately 100 people will be recognized who have completed the GED or High School Equivalency Diploma.

A reception will be held in the Church Fellowship Hall following the Commencement Exercises. The public is invited to attend.

Yancey Has RR Manager

[Cont'd from page 1] believe caboose cars have feelings.

So, an abandoned caboose has a new home and its wheels will clatter over switch points again, rock along the crooked, riverside track of the Yancey Railroad as it runs on the "South Toe Rambler", named after the river which the track follows. The car will be used again on the freight trains of the Yancey Railroad.

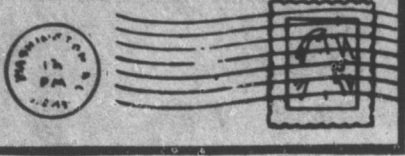
This mountain shortline serving the Western North Carolina communities of Micaville, Bowditch and Burnsville is featured in two national publications issued for the month of August 1974.

TRAINS Magazine, of Milwaukee, Wisconsin, has an article in its August issue giving a detailed history of the line as well as operational practices. This magazine appeals to the rail historian as well as the serious "rail-fan", that fraternity of people who study railroads and their operations.

MODEL RAILROADER, of Milwaukee, Wisconsin also, features the Yancey Railroad in terms of using it as a prototype from which to build a model railroad layout, probably to the popular HO gauge. This article has constructional details so that the intent modeler can build a layout that closely resembles the real Yancey Railroad.

Copies of both magazines may be obtained by writing to Kalmbach Publishing Company, 1027 North 7th Street, Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53233.

Letter To The Editor



Dear Editor:

On behalf of the officers, directors and members of the Yancey County Chamber of Commerce I wish to take this means of expressing deep appreciation for the fine spirit of cooperation which prevailed throughout the weeks of preparation and during the Youth Jamboree and the Craft Festival. It was because of this that these events were a success even in spite of the rainy weather.

Many people devoted much time and effort to making the Jamboree and Festival successful, and while it is impossible to name each separately, attention is called to the diligent work done by James Byrd, who coordinated both events. Others whose assistance was outstanding include Radio Station WKYK, The Yancey Journal, the Town officials and employees, the men who worked at the barbecue pit, the ladies who served the food and worked at concession stands, Grace Banks, Secretary, the Burnsville Police Department, and others. Thank you one and all.

J. O. Shepard, President
YANCEY COUNTY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

BACK-TO-SCHOOL SAVINGS

LISTERINE Antiseptic
14 Oz.
Reg. \$1.39
88¢

SCOPE
24 Oz.
Reg. \$1.19
\$1.19

SURE Regular or Unscented
9 Oz.
Reg. \$1.75
\$1.29

ALBERTO CULVER CONDITIONER
8 OZ. BALSAM CONDITIONER
REG. SUPER CONDITIONING,
EXTRA BODY FORMULAS.
Reg. \$1.49
99¢

NEW from Old Spice
AEROSOL DEODORANT
7 OZ. SIZE
NOW
Reg. \$1.69
99¢
50¢ Cash Refund

YUCCA DEW SHAMPOO
Normal Dry Oily
7.5 Oz.
Reg. 79¢
69¢

FREE LOVE-KNOT RING with Purchase of Johnson's Baby Oil
10 Oz.
Reg. \$1.59
\$1.19

JOHNSON'S BABY POWDER
14 Oz.
Reg. \$1.29
88¢

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Yancey Youths In Dairy Show

Three Yancey County youths participated in the 4-H Junior Dairy Show Tuesday, August 6. Those showing a calf were Janet Ray, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Johnny Ray; Tammy Higgins, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Estel Higgins; and Sammy Thomas, son of Mr. and Mrs. S. F. Thomas. Each of the contestants received a ribbon and a check for \$15.00. Janet Ray also received a Blue Ribbon for showmanship and an additional \$5.00 prize. The prize money for the show was provided by Spartan Grain and Mills Company and by Deyton Farm Supply. Mr. Morris McAllister, Assistant Agricultural Extension Agent for Madison County, judged the calves.

* NOTICE * * * * *

AT THE CLOSE OF BUSINESS SATURDAY, SEPT. 14, 1974. WE WILL DISCONTINUE TOP VALUE STAMPS IN OUR BURNSVILLE STORE. WE URGE YOU TO FILL YOUR SAVER BOOKS BY THIS DATE.

Thank you * * * * *

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