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James Garrett...Unaka's only new first-grader

Unaka Losing Pupils; Now Down To Only 62

At Unaka Tuesday morning James Roosevelt Garrett handed his big orange drink to his sister for a moment and posed beside the sign with scaling paint which reads "Unaka Elementary School."

And that's how the photograph of the first grade at Unaka was made - because little James Garrett is the first grade, all by himself.

"The school is losing ground all along," says Principal Neil Marcus. "The best thing I can see is consolidation with Murphy."

"The community hates to lose it," he added, "because the school is the number 2 social activity, right behind the church. I can see why they wouldn't want to lose it but the kids would be better off in Murphy."

James Garrett will enter the first grade at Unaka next week without benefit of Headstart or any other kindergarten program, Marcus said, simply because Unaka doesn't have enough youngsters to have a program.

The school, with 62 students to begin classes next week, also doesn't qualify for more than two teachers, he added, but a third teacher is provided through a special allotment by the state Board of Education.

The Garrett boy will be in Mrs. Lucile Morrow's room and she'll also be teaching second and third graders in the same room.

"The kids get less than full time from their teachers," Marcus says. "A teacher can only do so much in the day and with three grades in the same room, the kids in each grade are actually getting about three months of school rather than the nine months they could get in a room with only one grade."

At Unaka, the fourth and fifth grades will be in one room and the sixth, seventh and eighth will be in another room. In addition to Mrs. Morrow, Marcus teaches a class and so does John Verner.

But Marcus says the three may be cut

to two next year, leaving little choice for the eight-grade Unaka school. The 62 students this year is a drop of six or seven from last year and will be noted by the state board when the first attendance reports are made.

"They wouldn't take the extra third teacher away from us in the middle of the school year," he said. "But with only 62 and a drop again for next year, they might not continue to give us three teachers."

Families are cutting back on the number of children they rear, Marcus says, and also Unaka is losing many families which move to Atlanta or to Murphy, to be closer to the plants and the steady paycheck. He sees more losses in the next two or three years. "We'll be graduating eight or nine eighth graders to the high school at Murphy and bringing in only two or three first-graders each year."

Statistics kept in the Courthouse office of School Superintendent John Jordan show that Unaka's present school building, still in good condition, was erected in 1952. That year there were a total of 152 students enrolled there, 23 of them first-grade pupils.

Jordan said consolidation of Unaka with Murphy schools won't be forced. But he indicated that the county Board of Education is well aware of the problem and said no trouble is foreseen in consolidating, when Unaka parents are ready for it.

From Unaka to the Murphy Schools is 15 miles each way and Jordan said state education officials are just as aware of the distance involved as the Unaka parents.

Jordan noted that Unaka is probably in worse shape than any other school as far as losing students, but the school is certainly not alone.

White Church School had 228 students the year Unaka was built and now has only 100. Martin's Creek had 281 students back in 1952, today has 152.

Dedications Planned For Water Systems

Texana and Marble are now planning dedication ceremonies for their new community water systems, completed and placed in operation earlier this month. More than a quarter-million dollars in federal money made construction of the community systems possible, financed by grants from the Economic Development Administration and loans through the Farmers Home Administration.

Giles Bryson, who heads the community water system at Marble, said Tuesday that dedication ceremonies for the system are planned for Saturday, Sept. 19 at the Marble Community Center.

Representatives of both the EDA and the FHA will speak at the 3 p.m. ceremony, Bryson said. The Marble system was built with a \$100,000 grant from EDA and a \$100,000 loan from the FHA, he explained, the loan to be eventually paid off through the fees charged users.

Frank Sudderth, who heads the Texana Community Non-Profit Water Corp., said ceremonies at Texana will be on Sept. 11 at the Texana Community Building, with EDA and FHA officials to speak. The Texana system was built with a grant from the

EDA of \$45,800 and a loan from the FHA of \$20,800.

Texana has always had trouble getting water and many residents hauled it from springs. Community leader saw a solution when the all-Negro Texana school, which had a good well, was closed and its students assigned to Murphy schools.

Two other wells were drilled but the flow from them was so small that for all practical purposes the Texana system depends on the well at the school. A new 10,000 gallon tank was erected for the system by Wells & West, general contractor on both projects, which serves in addition to the old tank at the school building.

At Marble, wells were shallow, easily polluted by septic tanks and the water tasted of iron or lime. The new system brings good water, with no bad taste, to Marble from four wells drilled on U.S. Forest Service land on Almond Creek. A huge 250,000 gallon tank welded together on the spot by the construction crews holds the water for Marble, which is supplied by gravity force from the higher Almond Creek Section.

Republicans Protest Registration Policy

Two Republican voices were lifted this week in loud protest at the decision of the Cherokee County Board of Elections last week that the county voter registration books will not go back to the precincts.

The county is now under a loose-leaf registration system whereby voters can register on Tuesday, Thursdays or Saturdays until noon at the Courthouse in Murphy. Glenn Stalcup, chairman of the county Board of Elections, announced last week that despite requests by some candidates that the books be returned to the precincts for registration, his board had decided not to do it.

Stalcup said the three-man elections board decided not to send the books to the precincts, as was done before the loose leaf system as started, because it would strain the board's budget.

Stalcup and Fred McDonald are the Democrats on the elections board. The lone Republican, Robert Hartness, said he did not go along with the decision but was out-voted by the two Democrats.

"The voter registration

books should be taken back to the precincts for the convenience of the people," Hartness said. He said a trip to the Courthouse to register, "is a great inconvenience to the elderly people in the outlying areas of the county. Some of these people would be forced to travel 50 to 75 miles round trip to register."

Jack Simonds, Republican county commissioner from Wolf Creek, said the budget for the elections board was an increase over last year's, with \$2,000 in it for registrars' pay.

"I only went along with the increase because I thought he was going to send the books back to the precincts," Simonds said Tuesday night. "Stalcup said that was the reason for part of the increase, that they were going to send the books back out."

Simonds said the registrars, one for each of the 17 precincts, are paid \$20 a day and pointed out that their usual two days of work for the general election would cost only about \$700. The rest of the \$2,000, he said, was to pay for registering voters at the precincts.



Budget Group On Tour

The state Advisory Budget Commission visited Tri-County Tech briefly Monday morning before going to Cullowhee to tour Western Carolina University. Shown left to right are State Senator Lindsay Warren of Goldsboro; W. Kenneth Anderson

of Newland, who replaced the late Frank Forsyth of Murphy on the group; Tri-Tech President Holland McSwain; former State Senator Tom White of Kinston, who heads the budget group; Representative Thorne Gregory of Scotland Neck. (Staff Photo)

Clay Timber Sale Blocked

A Florida Girl Scout group Tuesday went to court to stop sale of timber in eastern Clay County by the U.S. Forest Service.

The action brought by the Girl Scout officials Tuesday in federal court in Asheville is aimed at stopping actual cutting of timber, the standing trees having already been sold by the Forest Service.

District Ranger Harold Fisher of the Nantahala National Forest said Tuesday that the Bradley Brothers operation of Franklin has purchased the timber stand, located on the headwaters of the Tallulah River.

Ranger Fisher said the decision of the court will "probably have a great bearing" on how the Forest Service will conduct sales in the future and whether or not private groups will be able to successfully block sales.

The timber is located on National Forest land near private property operated as a Girl Scout camp by the Suncoast Girl Scout Council of Tampa, Fla.

The Girl Scout officials objected to the sale of timber on 1,291 acres near its camp, saying that cutting of trees and building of logging trails would mar the area for their hiking and nature studies.

The Forest Service argued that the area needs to be logged over, that red and white oak trees there are over-mature and retarding the growth of younger trees. The Forest Service also pointed out that

there are a number of other forest areas near the camp, in both North Carolina and

Georgia, that are maintained as nature or scenic areas and kept reserved from commercial

timber production.

Regional Forester T.A. Schlapfer made the decision to sell the timber after delaying the sale for two weeks to allow a study group of both foresters and Girl Scout officials to survey the situation.

After the study team had looked at the situation, it advised that the sale be held as scheduled.

The Forest Service agreed to reduce the area from the original 1,291 acres to 474 in order to leave as much of a buffer zone as possible between the sale and the Girl Scout camping area.

The Forest Service also agreed to other steps so that the logging operations would "have no harmful effect" on the Girl Scout property. These include locating logging roads away from the camp and seeding them with grass after the timber is removed.

Tri-County Tech Slates Graduation

Tri-County Technical Institute will hold its graduation exercises on Thursday night of next week at 8 o'clock at the Peachtree Elementary School.

The speaker will be Dr. W. Amos Abrams, editor emeritus of the N.C. Education magazine in Raleigh, a position he has held for about 25 years.

Tri-Tech President Holland

McSwain said about 70 diplomas and certificates will be given, some for completion of courses at the school in masonry, welding, auto body repair, mechanical repair, business and cosmetology.

Others, he added, will be for those having passed the GED tests and therefore winning what amounts to a high school diploma.

Forestry Headquarters Is Shown At Peachtree

The Advisory Budget Commission on its visit Monday to Tri-County Tech also took a quick tour of the new forestry headquarters building at Peachtree.

The building, located behind Tri-Tech, was

completed recently and got a fresh coat of paint in preparation for the budget group's tour.

It contains offices for Cherokee County Forest Ranger Harold Hatchett and for Clay Ranger John Payne, a

firefighting equipment locker, kitchen facilities, a storage area and a garage and grease rack for servicing vehicles.

The building also contains a communications room used by the U.S. Forest Service as an aerial dispatch headquarters. Payne and Hatchett are happy to have federal firefighters and don't charge them any rent for use of the state-owned building.

The reason, they explain, is that the federal Forest Service airplanes are looking for fires on federal lands but also are quite willing to report any fires they may spot on private lands, which are the responsibility of the local county forest rangers.

North Carolina District Ranger Jack Farmer of Sylva noted that the state of North Carolina cannot afford to pay the full price of construction for forestry headquarters and therefore purchased only the material.

Hatchett said the \$10,000 appropriation for building materials for the Peachtree headquarters building was secured by Rep. Wiley McGlamery of Clay County and Sen. Mary Faye Brumby of Cherokee.

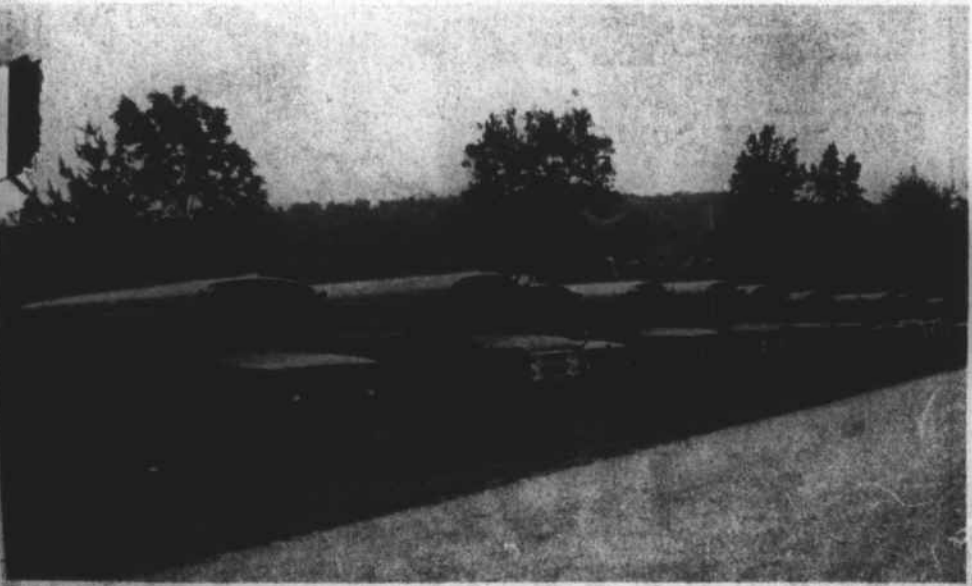
Hatchett and Palmer said the building, worth about \$30,000, was constructed by state forestry personnel. "The state can't afford to pay the labor so we did it all," he said. "We even did the labor part, not the design part."



Communications Control

District N.C. Forest Ranger Jack Palmer of Sylva, left, and Cherokee County Ranger Harold Hatchett display the multiple radios and telephones in the fire control communications room

at the new forestry headquarters building at Peachtree. State and federal firefighting efforts are controlled from this room, offering protection for more than a million acres. (Staff Photo)



Ready For School

At the county garage, Cherokee County schoolbuses are ready for another year's work, cleaned and repaired for distribution to student drivers. Their daily grind begins next

week, with registration on Tuesday for all schools in the county and the first full day set for Wednesday (Staff Photo)

Funeral Is Held For Crash Victim

Funeral services were held Sunday afternoon at First Baptist Church for Alan Godfrey, 17, killed on Sunday of last week in an airplane crash in Peru.

The Rev. Woodrow Flynn officiated and burial was in Sunset Cemetery.

Pallbearers were Mitch Myers, Chris Schuyler, Bill Dyer, Grover Smith, Tommy Townson, Sammy Odell, Carlton Van Horn and Tommy Fisher.

Godfrey was a member of the Murphy High School Beta Club, the Aviation Club and the Spanish Club. He was a Junior Marshal and had a perfect attendance record for three years of high school.

He had gone to Peru on a student exchange program and was visited there earlier this month by his parents, Mr. and Mrs. Kenneth Godfrey of Murphy.

Together, the Godfreys had toured parts of Peru and then split up the day before the fatal crash, the parents flying on to see some Inca ruins and the son to fly back to the capital of Lima. The airliner crashed near Cuzco, taking all on board to their deaths, including about 45 American exchange students.

In addition to his parents, Godfrey is survived by two brothers, Tony and Mike Godfrey, both of the home in Murphy; the paternal grandmother, Mrs. Pearl Machen of Etowah, Tenn., and the maternal grandparents, Mr. and Mrs. Loe Violants of Carrollton, Ga.; the foster grandmother, Mrs. Berta Tanner of Atlanta, Ga.; the great-grandfather, Harley Marrow of Etowah, Tenn.

Townson Funeral Home of Murphy was in charge of arrangements.