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THE CHEROKEE SCOUT

and Clay County Progress

Volume 79 — Number 40 — Murphy, North Carolina, 28906 — Second Class Postage Paid At Murphy, North Carolina — Thursday, May 20, 1971



School Issue Burns In Clay

By Wally Avett
Staff Writer

The school board controversy in Clay County continued to burn high this week, with more fuel added to the flame and no real relief in sight.

However, there were indications Monday night that the fire may burn itself out this time. There are also fears that it may re-ignite in a political struggle sometime in the future.

The Clay County Board of Education, supposedly a non-partisan outfit, is made up of two Democrats, James Price and Jack Groves, and three new Republican members, Chairman Jerald (Todd) Phillips, Haig Davenport and Edgar Moore.

In meetings on May 4 and May 6, the three Republicans voted not to renew the contracts for another year for two teachers and also the county truant officer, maintenance man and school lunchroom supervisor. Another teacher, hearing the results of the May 4 meeting, resigned before the second meeting of the county school board.

The cries of protest were raised, that partisan politics had entered the GOP-dominated school board's decision. The protest also had an extra added ingredient in that the three Republican

school board members had expressed themselves as in favor of hiring local people rather than "outsiders" and two of the teachers involved are the wives of Methodist ministers.

The three Republicans released a lengthy statement to the Scout on Monday morning but did not attend a meeting that night at the Hayesville PTA. The PTA officials said they invited all five of the school board members to come to the public meeting and discuss the matter but only Price and Groves, the Democrats, showed up.

Perry Gribble, president of the PTA, told the 150 people attending the meeting that "politics has no place in this school." He said the board's action was detrimental to teachers' morale and therefore hurt the children.

Gribble hit hard at what he called "the archaic thinking of certain individuals." He said if the "outsider" theory was followed by places outside Clay County which hire Clay County workers, then they could be fired.

He ended by warning against "retaliation...I trust each one of us realizes mistakes have been made in the past...We should not look for revenge."

The statement by the three Republicans also mentioned

politics and the past. It reads, in part:

"There has been several school terms during the past 40 years when there was not a single Republican teacher on the faculty of any school in Clay County. And some of the best teachers that have ever taught in this system have been relieved of their duties strictly because they were affiliated with the Republican party.

"Now that the majority of the school board are Republicans, for the first time in the history of the county, it would seem naive for them not to fill at least a part of the vacancies with Republican teachers.

"We might point out here, for the benefit of anybody who really does not know: school board members, in the past have been named by the County Chairman of the Democrat party. For the most part, these nominations have not even had the blessings of a vote in the Democratic primary; which has placed the Chairman pretty much in the category of a dictator. The new members of your board were elected by a majority of the voters of Clay County and we feel that the majority of the people of the county are in accord with the recent actions taken by the board."

The Republican statement also ended with a plea for unity: "Our school system has been harmed, our community divided and even our churches have suffered irreparable damage...For the good of all concerned, let us plead with you to give us your cooperation in building a school system here in Clay County that will be second to none."

The teachers involved can request a full hearing before the county school board on the reason for their dismissals but so far none of them has requested a hearing.

And a representative of the North Carolina Association of Educators, the teachers' group, was in Hayesville Monday and Tuesday looking into the situation. He said there are several possible courses of action for the teachers involved, including lawsuits, but said no decisions have been made yet and added if nothing more is done, the matter will probably die in its present state.



Fiddlin' Howard Cunningham . . . leading the band at Hiawassee.

Music Festival Slated

The Spring Country Music Festival, with picking and singing, clogging and a big gospel show, will be held this weekend at Hiawassee, Ga.

The Georgia Mountain Fair and the Towns County Lions Club will be together more than 100 country musicians and singers, led by Fiddlin' Howard Cunningham, from 8 until midnight.

The gospel concert will be held on Sunday afternoon, from 2 until 5 o'clock, featuring the

Speer Family, the Sammy Hall Singers and the Singing Hemphills.

The Georgia Mountain Fair campground on Lake Chatuge will be open for both tent and trailer campers during the weekend event.

Proceeds from the festival are used by the Towns County Lions for a number of causes, including the new \$2 million hospital at Hiawassee.

Town Board Accepts Official Boundary

The Murphy Town Board Monday night established the official town limits and ordered a study on annexing an area on the northeast side of town.

Town Clerk Charlie Johnson told Mayor Clo Moore and the four board members attending, W.A. (Dub) Singleton, Joe Fowler, Henry Simmons and W.T. (Bud) Brown, that the Murphy town limits have never been officially recognized by the North Carolina Legislature.

A survey was made back in the 1920's, Johnson said, and all the paperwork was done, but somehow it never got to the Legislature. Surveyors Felix Palmer and Sam Harding have

been working on the project in their spare time for about the past two years, he said, and have tried to duplicate the town limits survey done in the 1920's.

The only change, Johnson, said, is that one property line in the vicinity of the Fain Mountain reservoir is in dispute so the town limit in that was changed, leaving the reservoir outside the limits.

The town fathers voted to accept the survey and send a copy to Representative Erwin Patton in the Legislature, now in session, for official state approval by that body before it adjourns.

Board members requested that the town Planning Board make a study on extending the town limits along US-19-129 in the area near Murphy High School. Town water lines already serve that area, going out as far as the Levi's plant.

Johnson informed the Town Board that someone has recently marked a line with paint inside the watershed of the Fain Mountain reservoir and inside what the town considers its boundary.

He said this indicates that the adjoining landowner, identified during the meeting as Kenneth Davis, is laying claim to a strip of land inside the watershed. Davis has disputed the boundary and discussed the matter at great length with the board last year.

On motion by Singleton, the board voted to have the line surveyed and to mark the

results of that survey with concrete corner posts and metal stakes.

In a zoning hearing held Monday night, the board heard no opposition to rezoning in the Ft. Butler section and approved a change in zoning from R-1 to R-2 for Elbert Totherow's land.

The zoning change, requested by Totherow, would allow construction of multi-family dwellings, duplexes or installation of house trailers on the land, located between Ft. Butler Street and Old US-84. The R-1 zoning allows only single-family dwellings.

Anderson Home Burns

The W.P. Anderson home in the Moccasin Creek section near the Georgia state line was destroyed by fire Sunday evening.

The Murphy volunteers got the fire call about 6:30 but by the time they drove to the scene, the wooden house was consumed by the flames. Cause of the fire was not known.

The Andersons lost most of their belongings in the fire and bad luck struck them a double blow.

According to the firemen, Mrs. Anderson was tripped by a family dog, fell and broke her leg just minutes before the fire occurred.

Golf Course Now Cherokee Hills

The golf course on Harshaw Road has a brand-new name — Cherokee Hills.

A contest was held recently to pick a name for the course and the winner was Mrs. Jane Sneed Colvard of Chattanooga, Tenn.

Mrs. Colvard, originally from Murphy,



Chatuge Turbine

Workers at the Chatuge Dam powerhouse were busy last week putting the turbine back together, hoping to be making electricity again by the end of this month. The 10-ton water wheel at the bottom of the structure was returned from the factory, where it was sent for repairs, the powerhouse being out of operation since last November. Rigger Lynn

Ensley of Copperhill, Tenn., standing on the wheel, says the upright shaft weights in at another 20,000 pounds. When installed back in place, the turbine spins 180 times a minute, producing 13,800 horsepower, which in turn powers a generator cranking out 6,900 volts of Tennessee Valley Authority current. (Carringer Photo)

Hayesville To Play For Crown

The Yellow Jacket baseball team crunched over another opponent at Hayesville Tuesday afternoon, blotting out a wood by a lopsided score of

The Jackets will play other McDowell County team, Pleasant Gardens, for the district 8 championships on Friday afternoon at the Hayesville field. The winner of that game will advance to the western N.C. Division Single A playoffs.

Sporting an overall 17-1 record, the Jackets simply giving up 10 hits.

Seniors Nearing Graduation

The school year is drawing to a close and the Seniors of 1971 will be getting their diplomas soon.

At Hiawassee Dam, the annual baccalaureate service was held last Sunday and the Seniors will graduate in ceremonies this Friday night at 8 at the school gym.

At Murphy High, the combination baccalaureate and graduation will be on Sunday afternoon at 2:30 at the school gym.

Andrews High will hold its baccalaureate on Sunday night at 8 at First Baptist Church in Andrews, with graduation ceremonies set for 8 o'clock next Tuesday night at the school gym.

In Hayesville, the Seniors will attend the baccalaureate service on Sunday night, May 30, at the school auditorium and graduate the following night, May 31, in the both events beginning at 8 o'clock.

The final day of school for Cherokee County students will be May 27 and in Clay County it will be June 3. Teachers in both systems will work two days after classes are dismissed.

Major Chamber Projects Noted

By Gene Farmer
President
Chamber of Commerce.

The four major projects for the Chamber of Commerce this year are as follows:

ROADS: To improve existing roads and also to strive for new better roads in our county.

INDUSTRY: To help improve and strengthen existing industry, to help bring about a better employment ratio in the county between male and female employees and to seek new industry to locate here.

BEAUTIFICATION: To help the towns of Murphy and Andrews along with Cherokee County to find a solution to the garbage disposal problem, to help keep the air we breathe cleaner and to encourage local beautification projects.

TOURISM: To publish a tourism brochure and to encourage visitors to make longer visits in our area and to promote Cherokee County as the Southern Scenic Gateway to the Great Smoky Mountain National Park.

We feel that these projects will help to make Cherokee County a better place to live and will also help to make it a more desirable place in attracting new industry and the doctors, dentists and other professional people which our area needs.

Your help through your local Chamber of Commerce is needed to carry out these projects is needed.

An active Chamber of Commerce is vital to the progress of any town. The first step toward maintaining that active Chamber is the financial investment of businessmen, industrialists and professional people.

play the lucky

A \$200 automatic washer for \$20....a \$70 reclining chair for only \$1....a \$60 watch for \$5....a \$60 tent for \$4.44.

These are some of the bargains awaiting lucky shoppers this week in the Murphy Retail Merchants Association's Lucky Number Game.

Each issue of the Scout this week carries a hand-stamped serial number, located on the front page of the second section. Participating merchants have picked numbers at random and posted them on selected merchandise inside their stores.

Take your Scout downtown on Thursday, Friday or Saturday, find your number and buy a bargain.

number game

United States 8c



United States 8c



Postmark: Changing Times, U.S.A.

There was a time, in recent memory, when the quarter was known as a silver coin and would purchase eight first-class mail stamps, which then sold for 3 cents apiece, with a penny in change returned to the customer. The quarter, however, has lost its silver and the stamps have jumped in

cost. And the penny change, which would once buy a postcard, is now fit only for the gum machine or the parking meter. As of this week, postal rates have been increased: the "penny" postcard now costs 6 cents, first-class stamps sell for 8 cents and air-mail is 11 cents. (Staff Photo)

