

- ★ Black Mountain
- ★ Swannanoa
- ★ Montreat
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BLACK MOUNTAIN NEWS

DEVOTED 100% TO OUR COMMUNITY — THE GROWING SWANNANOVA VALLEY

Tractor deal investigation given to district attorney

Black Mountain Mayor Margaret Slagle has turned over to District Attorney Bob Fisher and the foreman of the current Grand Jury the results of an investigation by Black Mountain Police into possible fraud by former Black Mountain officials.

Mrs. Slagle said an investigation was held, and its results made public, because she could be found guilty of a misdemeanor if she were to overlook a felony.

The investigation came in the wake of an article by the News that revealed that the newly-appointed supervisor of law enforcement for Western North Carolina, Gene Ervin, had purchased a used tractor from the Town of Black Mountain without benefit of or public notice bid.

The investigation has revealed that no bill of sale or release to Ervin for the tractor is in town records, nor has Ervin received either from the town. It also revealed that the cashiers check paid for by Ervin for \$1,000—the cost of the tractor—did not specify what the money was for or who paid it, and it was not entered on the cash register in the town hall, as is customary.

Town records simply show that \$1,000 was entered into the streets fund during the month of October, 1974—the same month the town paid \$1,000 to the state Department of Transportation for the tractor.

The report given to the district attorney and foreman of the Grand Jury also suggests a further investigation could be made into other purchases made through town accounts by former town manager Charles Lindsey for friends in an effort to save them money.

Mrs. Slagle said that Fisher originally discounted reports of the tractor deal—saying few people are able to back up their allegations in such cases. At that time, the News had copies of a letter to a person named Dick in town government from Ervin directing how the tractor could be purchased, a check for \$1,000 for the purchase of the tractor signed by Lindsey and former Mayor Richard Stone, and a receipt from the Department of Transportation for the check.

The News also received a statement from Fire Chief Mack Kirkpatrick that he picked up the tractor at the request of Lindsey, supposedly to be used to mow grass at the golf course. An affidavit given Det. Bill Stafford by Kirkpatrick added that he delivered the tractor to an address on Craigmont Rd.

Lindsey told the News earlier that he had arranged for a number of persons to purchase property through the town, using a method he described as "Swapping checks" so that the town never suffered a deficit for the purchase.

Mrs. Slagle said she at first tried to have the deal investigated by the State Bureau of Investigation, but was told by the SBI in Raleigh that a mayor does not have the authority to call for an SBI investigation.

SBI Director Haywood Starling confirmed that policy to the News Monday, saying

that the proper procedure for Mrs. Slagle was to collect evidence and present it to the district attorney, who could call for an SBI investigation and a hearing before the Grand Jury.

In a public statement, Mrs. Slagle objected to a policy excluding the mayor from the list of persons authorized to inaugurate an SBI investigation, while the mayor is also legally responsible for reporting possible official wrongdoing.

State senator asks ABC inquiry over tractor

Sen. Donald Kincaid (R-Caldwell) has requested Phil Carlton, Secretary of the Department of Crime Control and Public Safety, to conduct an investigation to determine whether the newly-appointed supervisor of the Crime Control and Public Safety western district, Gene Ervin, should be fired for arranging the purchase of a tractor from the town of Black Mountain without bid.

Kincaid, who requested the investigation based on information given him by the former Crime Control and Public Safety western district supervisor, Bill Ingram, said that Carlton promised to check

out Ingram's allegations that Ervin falsified arrest records and took part in an unethical transaction with Black Mountain officials for the tractor. ABC agent James Simmons would also come under the investigation for falsifying records, Kincaid said.

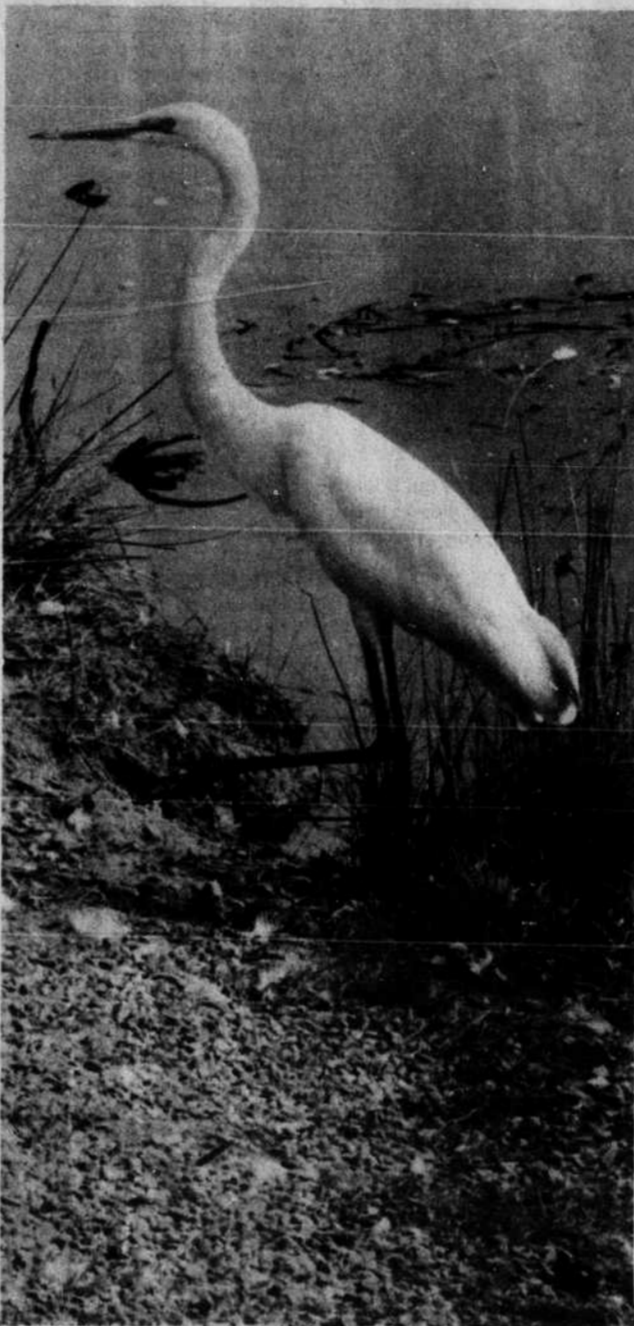
Carlton "told me on the phone last week that he would check these out," Kincaid said. "If Mr. Ingram's charges are warranted they will be dropped. If they are, these men will have to be replaced."

Kincaid said that the attorney general, when asked to investigate Ingram's charges, told Kincaid to have the investigation done through the department involved.

Med Center to hold election

The annual meeting of members of the Swannanoa Valley Medical Center will be

held Thursday night, July 28 at 8 p.m. at the chapel of the Blue Ridge Assembly. This meeting is in accordance with the charter and by-laws



An egret, native to the gulf coast, seemed to be lost as he enjoyed the sun at Lake Tomahawk last week. Or maybe he heard how pretty the mountains are... (Dan Ward) (See poem elsewhere in this issue)

"I-40 by-pass open spring '78" -- chief

If weather does not slow construction considerably this winter, the section of I-40 bypassing Black Mountain will be completed and open to traffic next spring, according to J.H., Medlin, Highway Department division engineer in a letter to the Black Mountain-Swannanoa Chamber of Commerce.

Medlin also provided contractors' deadlines for four segments of I-40 construction. In some cases, those dates conflict with actual completion dates--assuming construction progresses as expected.

The segments of I-40 from Swannanoa to NC 9 and from NC 9 to a point near McCoy Cove Rd. and U.S. 70 have contractor deadlines of September 1 and October 1, respectively. However, David Patton, resident engineer for the second segment, said that completion for that segment is expected around June, 1978. Ed Pascal, resident engineer for the first segment, said that construction to the bridge will be

completed, although not open to traffic, well before the second segment.

The contractors' deadlines for the segments from McCoy Cove Rd. to past Ridgecrest and another from there to Old Fort will also stand as the expected time of completion

at August 1, 1979 and the fall of 1981, respectively, Patton said.

Interstate traffic will not be routed onto NC 9. NC 9 will "Probably be opened to traffic sometime this fall," Medlin wrote.

Tests to be run on tilting bridge

David Patton, Highway Department division engineer for the I-40 bridge construction, said that numerous tests will be performed on the I-40 bridge before it is opened to traffic.

Confirming that controversy still exists over the safety of the bridge, Patton said tests will be made to determine skidding factors in winter conditions as well as other studies.

The News first noted in May that dissent existed among engineers on the safety of the bridge—including a lack of a

median wall to restrain skidding vehicles.

Secretary of the Department of Transportation Tom Bradshaw told Black Mountain Rotary Club members July 19 that the I-40 bridge is not unsafe and is simply visually misleading.

He said that the bridge is engineered so that centrifugal force will keep vehicles from skidding off of it. He added that he has received a number of letters concerning the bridge, according to Ed Weber, who attended the meeting on behalf of the Chamber of Commerce.

Board deeds Lake St.

The Black Mountain Town Board voted unanimously in a special meeting July 15 to sign a quick-claim deed to relinquish any claim the town may have to Lake Street.

Request for the town to remove the street from dedication and sign a quick-

claim deed came from Dr. and Mrs. John Wilson, the only residents with property facing the site of the street, which has never been developed. The Wilsons hope to build a house on the eastern half of the property were the street lies.

Mayor Margaret Slagle temporarily gave up her power as mayor so that she

would not be required to sign the deed. She said she was opposed to it because it may set a precedent for others who would like to build on property owned by the town.

Aid. A.F. Tyson said that this case will not establish a precedent because each case will have differing circumstances.

Mayor Slagle appointed to economic policy committee

Mayor Margaret Slagle of Black Mountain, who also serves as first vice-chairman of the Land-of-Sky Regional Council, has recently been appointed as a representative of Region B and Western

North Carolina governments on the Local Government Advisory Committee which will assist in preparation of a State Economic Development Policy. Mrs. Slagle was nominated by the North

Carolina League of Municipalities to serve on the Local Government Advisory Committee comprised of elected and appointed officials from local governments across the state.

In a letter asking Mayor Slagle to serve in this capacity, Arnold Zogry, Assistant Secretary of Administration for Policy and Management, stated that one of the most important objectives of the present state administration is developing a balanced policy for state development. The administration emphasizes that North Carolina's population should continue to be one that is dispersed rather than to allow a few large concentrations of population to develop. The letter of appointment noted that Mrs. Slagle's appointment would "broaden representation from the western end of the state."

The State's Economic Development Policy will be prepared over a period of several months.

Mrs. Slagle has previously served two terms of two years each as a member of the Town of Black Mountain Board of Aldermen and is in the final year of her first two-year term as Mayor of the Town. She has served as first vice-chairman of the Land-of-Sky Regional Council since her election in December, 1976. She also serves as a member of the Advisory Committee on Aging of the Council and is an active participant in the North Carolina League of Municipalities.

Clarence, Nick, and Larry Ogle Racing runs in the family

Such is the setting for a week-end get-together for the Ogles of Grovemon.

Clarence Ogle and his two sons, Larry, 20, and Nick, 23, can be seen most Saturdays

fighting the clock and the "track villains" at the Asheville Speedway in their self-built race cars--proving that racing blood runs in the family.

Clarence, who has been racing since '57 or '58, said he never tried to talk his sons out of racing.

"They'd be better off racing at the track, than doing it on the highway," he said. "As long as they got their cars fixed according to the (NASCAR) rules, the only thing that can hurt them, really, is a fire."

Although the requirements for stock car racing require that the cars remain very similar to their factory-model counterpart, racing rules require that a heavy-duty web of roll bars and reinforcing be installed.

Clarence, who races in the late model sportsman class, has been making a living of racing since he quit work as a Highway Patrol mechanic in 1973.

In order to make ends meet--it costs \$15,000 to \$20,000 just to build a car such as his--he figures he has to place in the top five in each race.

Nick was less than a lap away from winning his third first place--and \$75--last Saturday when he was clipped by Mike Pressley, son of the "track villain," Bob Pressley. After bouncing off a rail and spinning, Nick crept in for eighth place. Nick regards the event as the scariest in his two-year-old racing career.

Clarence said that although "I haven't had one torn up in a

long time," sabotage between racers used to be the main event at races. The rising costs of building--and repairing--cars has turned the emphasis on the part of the drivers and fans to driving a clean race, he said.

"I think people who go there know the cost of it and don't want to see that anymore," Clarence said.

"Back years ago, if there weren't a bunch of wrecks, people wouldn't think it was a race."

Clarence said he enjoys the race more now, because in past years "you'd just about have to build a car every week, a chore he describes as "a lot of hard work."

Larry, 20, has just built the first car of his own. He has been driving for a year in other people's cars, and participating in his father's.

He drives in the limited sportsman class, a category that differs from the others mainly in the size of the engine and customizing allowed.

He works as an automobile dealer in Asheville.

Nick, who works at RCA in Swannanoa, has been racing in the street division, a step before the serious professional level. Driving is more difficult in that division, Nick said, because a number of inexperienced racers get in the way. At \$75 for a first place, racing in the street division hardly pays for the six racing tires used in a 250-lap race.

But, "it's a good hobby if you've got the money," Nick said.

of the medical center, a non-profit corporation chartered under the laws of the State of North Carolina.

According to the charter of the medical center, any resident of the Black Mountain-Swannanoa community who has contributed in any way to the development of the Medical Center is automatically a member.

The purpose of the annual meeting is to elect members of the board of directors and officers for the year beginning on July 1, 1977. The annual meeting also provides the opportunity for the annual report of finances, service and plans for the further development of the Medical Center. Entertainment will be furnished by the Blue Ridge Assembly staff and others. The committee in charge is Otha L. Sherrill, chairman, Frank Washburn, executive director of the Blue Ridge Assembly and Clarence Frye. The public is invited and urged to attend this important meeting.

The Medical Center serves the communities of Black

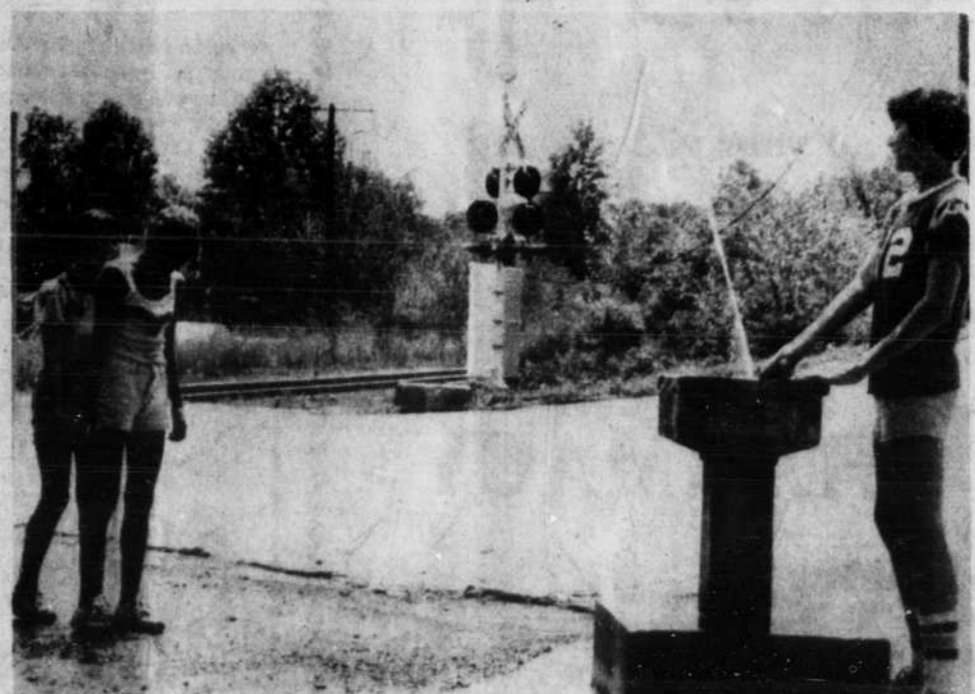
Mountain, Swannanoa, Montreat, Ridgecrest, and the eastern area of Asheville.

A \$500,000 facility was erected four years ago on U.S. 70 mid-way between Black Mountain and Swannanoa. Equipment consists of modern and well equipped doctors offices, emergency services facilities and an x-ray machine with operator. At present, services are offered to the public through two general practice doctors, a dentist, an oculist, a team of gynecologist and obstetrics doctors and an x-ray technician. Medical services have been given to thousands during the years of operation. Lives have actually been saved through emergency services and excellent health care has been offered to the many thousands of residents in the area.

The Medical Center is in process of calling a full time administrator and will give the public the opportunity to complete the cooperation with county, state and national health organizations.



NICK AND CLARENCE make up two-thirds of the Ogle family racing team. (Dan Ward)



Durenda Hayes and Tina Stafford found a way to beat the heat last week--with the help of a fountain and Rocky Hayes. (Dan Ward)

114 Scenic View Dr. Minor damage was reported.

Also on July 15, one truck and 10 men were called to put out a van on fire on Craigmont Rd. The truck was a total loss.

Buncombe County Ambulance

The ambulance service made five emergency runs, 12 routine and was not needed for three.

Police Report

The Black Mountain Police had a refreshingly uneventful two weeks so far in July, according to Asst. Chief Jim Wiseman.

They served eight traffic tickets, not including two for DUI, arrested two for resisting arrest and damage to property, six for public drunkenness, one for displaying an open alcoholic container, and two for trespassing at the lake.

They served four warrants and answered 185 calls from July 3 to 16.