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## Warren rehired at ABC store, gets back pay

Melvin Spencer Warren, who was recently exonerated from the theft of 72 pints of liquor from the Black Mountain ABC store in December of last year, has been reinstated as an employee of that store. In addition, according to Stan Garland, a member of the ABC Board, a settlement has been made with Warren for the period he was suspended while awaiting trial. Garland would not disclose the amount of the back pay Warren received. Warren was the last of three

## Swannanoa Fire

On September 16, the Swannanoa Volunteer Fire Department was given a 9AA rating by the North Carolina Department of Insurance. The department now has a four-mile insurance rating. It formerly had a 9AAA rating. Various factors, according to a department spokesman, resulted in the upgrading. Four men are attending a fire school in Brevard. Classes were held September 12, 13, 19 and 20. The department answered a report of brush fire on Jim's Branch Road September 14. Four trucks and 22 men responded, only to find it was a controlled burning. It was incorrectly reported in the September 15 issue of the News that the Ladies Auxiliary had donated \$99 for a hose scrubber. They donated \$900 for construction of the scrubber.



Fixup

CARVER SCHOOL held their first playground work project of this year Saturday, with both parents and children helping out. Equipment was repaired and the grounds cleaned up. The Carver parents and teachers extend an invitation to everyone in the community to come by any time for a visit.



This view of the Monte Vista Hotel, also submitted by Ida Taylor, was taken in the early 30s, as indicated by the shiny new cars.

Bird's Eye View of Black Mountain, N. C.



This postcard photo, submitted by Ida Taylor, shows Black Mountain around the turn of the century.

Notice that the town was much more developed on the south side of the Southern Railway tracks.

## Anatomy of a suicide

by Dan Ward

Nancy Sue Bodenhamer, 29, killed herself September 10. It seems obvious she would have succeeded at suicide eventually, but her experience has left two valley Samaritans upset—and has raised a great deal of questions concerning the legalities of suicide. On Saturday, September 10, Bob Wright was stopped while riding his motorcycle to Tom Hawkins' house in Alpine Meadows by a blood-covered woman standing next to her wrecked car. Neither the Buncombe County Sheriff's Police or the State Patrol have a record of the wreck, or a determination of whether Miss Bodenhamer cut her wrists before or after the crash.

"She was trying to lock her car," Hawkins said of Wright's account. "It was obvious she had cut her wrists." Wright, upset, went to Hawkins' house and asked him to help.

"She didn't want to go to the hospital," Hawkins said. "She said, 'Take me to my friends' house, so we took her there.'"

At the girlfriend's house, in Mountain Crest, Miss Bodenhamer was met with a cool reception. "The friend wouldn't help," Hawkins said. "She said, 'You do this all the time,' referring to attempting suicide."

Against Miss Bodenhamer's wishes, the two men took her

to Memorial Mission Hospital. "I was afraid shed try to jump out of the door," Hawkins said. "She was dying. She was slurring her words—I couldn't understand what she said her name was," Hawkins said. He did find out that her boyfriend ran a wrecker and that she attended either Grace Methodist or Groce Methodist Church in Asheville.

At the emergency room entrance at Memorial Mission, the two men tried to enlist the aid of LaFayette Worley, a security guard. Worley told Hawkins and Wright that a person cannot be committed to a hospital against her will unless she is comatose. Miss Bodenhamer refused to be admitted.

"I begged her to get treatment," Worley said. "I told her we couldn't make her, though. She didn't seem to be talking out of her head."

On the urging of Hawkins and Wright, Worley called the Asheville Police dispatcher on his walkie-talkie.

The Asheville Police Department dispatcher echoed Worley's judgement—the girl could not be admitted involuntarily.

The three men watched the bleeding girl walk away. She had told them she was going to see her psychiatrist at St. Joseph Hospital—one-fourth of a mile away.

Sunday, September 11, Nancy Sue Bodenhamer was brought into Memorial Mission Hospital without her consent—she was dead from hanging.

Asheville Police Chief H. Joe Truelove explained later that a person can be arrested and admitted for treatment if a police officer thinks that the person is mentally incompetent and is backed up by a psychologist's diagnosis. The procedure requires filling out a number of forms, as well as a spot judgement by the police officer.

Truelove said that attempted suicide is not illegal. He did concede that he believed that anyone attempting suicide was mentally imbalanced.

"This is a tough judgement to make, whether they are competent or not," he said. "You can't just let someone

bleed to death, but if she seemed to know what she was talking about, I wouldn't force her," he said. When asked if his dispatcher and the security guard acted correct in letting Miss Bodenhamer walk away, he said "What else can you do?"

After they left the girl, Hawkins and Wright called the ministers of Grace and Groce Methodist Churches. Neither recognized Miss Bodenhamer's description.

She never checked in to St. Joseph Hospital. She haged herself at home that night on Gertrude Street in Asheville.

Dr. H. E. Hinman, who examined Miss Bodenhamer's body, said he could not give out details of her condition, although he did not deny that her wrists were slashed. "I doubt that at any time, she

was covered with blood," he said, contrary to reports given by Worley, Hawkins and Wright.

Nancy Bodenhamer's death is a tragic, if unexceptional one. A fellow social worker speculated that she felt guilt over the suicide of her mother years earlier. Although she was "composed, organized and happy-go-lucky," the

woman had apparently talked about killing herself a number of times with her friends.

For at least one friend, her suicide was an inevitability. For the police, it was a fine line of the law that wasn't crossed.

For Tom Hawkins and Bob Wright, it was a nightmare they couldn't stop.

## Local man shoots self

In another suicide in the valley, James Lee Walker, 21, of Black Mountain, apparently shot himself September 16 at home.

According to Sheriff's police,

Walker was despondent because he could not find work. Although foul play is not suspected, Walker's death will be under investigation until an autopsy report is obtained.

## Police Report

Two motorcycles were stolen from the front lawn of the James Baker residence, 824 Hiwassee Ave., on September 12, according to Black Mountain Assistant Police Chief Jim Wiseman.

The bikes, both blue Yamaha 750s, were apparently pushed down the street to a waiting truck,

invited.

The Neighborhood Watch Program is basically an agreement between neighbors to watch each others property for suspicious behavior. The program has shown to be effective in curbing burglaries. Black Mountain is one of the few towns in the area that have not established the program.

Wiseman said. There are no suspects at this time.

Black Mountain Police issued eight traffic citations last week and arrested two for public drunkenness. They also assisted Sheriff's Police in an investigation of the apparent suicide of James Walker in Black Mountain.

## Don McKenzie--Big Daddy to 50

by Dan Ward

Don McKenzie has an office not very much different from the head of any other institution.

Big desk, framed photographs, shelves and filing cabinets. The different touch is a shelf full of trophies won by 'his' kids and two huge old-timey jars of candy canes and lollipops.

You see, Don McKenzie has been the Big Daddy for 50 kids at a time at the Presbyterian Home for Children in Swannanoa for more than 19 years.

The home, sponsored solely by the Asheville Presbytery, an association of 33 churches, houses 50 children who are wholly or partially orphaned or from broken homes. The children go to local schools, and some go on to college—their tuition paid by the Presbytery.

"Nineteen years ago I was told that the home wouldn't last another 10 years," McKenzie said. "I was told there was no more place for a home like this with the rise of state centers.

The success of the home is due to the acceptance the

community has given it and the personal touch the staff provides. That touch is apparent in McKenzie's use of "our" when talking about the children.

"We give our children just as much freedom as any parents would in Black Mountain or Swannanoa," McKenzie said. "That goes for dating and driving automobiles."

"I raised these children the same as I raised my two," he added. "Mine had no more privileges than those who were here."

When he first came to the home from a job as a coach and teacher at a nearby high school, McKenzie's two children were toddlers. Now in college, the Home is just as much home to them as for the other hundreds of children who have lived there.

"Even when I was coaching, I was very fond of young people," McKenzie said. Here, it is even more so. You get so involved in their lives."

Do the children consider this home after the apron strings are cut?

"I just got a letter from my young boy at Lees-McRae," McKenzie said, pointing to a stack of hand-addressed

letters. "It is a second home to them—they let us know how they are doing."

"I tell new staff members when they come here, 'It's like being a mother for the

children. Think of it as home—only there are 30 or 40,' he said.

