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# BLACK MOUNTAIN NEWS

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Big trucks were spinning their wheels Monday when ice brought traffic to a standstill on the west side of Black Mountain. (Dan Ward)

## Grants okayed, committee grows

by Dan Ward

Approval of two grants and committee appointments highlighted the January 9 meeting of the Black Mountain Town Board. Mayor Tom Sobol announced that Department of Human Resources authorities have verbally approved an application by Black Mountain for \$23,075 to renovate the lower floor of the Black Mountain Clubhouse and supply crafts materials for senior citizens. Under terms of the Older Americans Act grant, the town will pay \$7,791 to help create the multipurpose senior citizens center. Town Manager Mack Kirkpatrick said that written confirmation of the grant was due early this week. Sobol also announced the

approval by a state review committee of a Bureau of Outdoor Recreation \$25,000 matching grant to create a Neighborhood Park below the Lake Tomahawk dam. Official approval must come from the Bureau of Outdoor Recreation, however. The town has already budgeted \$25,000 to pay its share for the project. Kirkpatrick said that a Black Mountain application for an LEAA grant for full-time police dispatchers was rejected and has been revised and resubmitted. Sobol said that the board must re-examine whether it wants to hire four dispatchers to work rotating shifts. Although the town pays only a portion of the cost for the first three years of operation, it must pick up the tab for approximately \$40,000

in three years, he said. Ald. Ruth Brandon said that the board is free to remove the dispatchers any time without obligation and that the grant is renewable. Sobol said he will investigate the town's liability under the grant program. The board confirmed 10 members to the Recreation Committee, raising the number on that committee under Ald. Jim Norton's recommendation from five. The committee is made up of Bill Eubanks, Ray Frizell, Theresa Tatham, Jack Milby, Peg Osteen, Louis Logan, Tom Culbert, Brad LeVine, Harry Hyder and Chuck Ray. The board tabled appointments to the Town Improvement Committee because no persons had ap-

plied at Town Hall. Current Chairwoman Betty Tyson said that the committee had made a list of good prospects to serve in the future, but that she did not have it at the meeting. Sobol repeated a request that persons who want to serve on the committee, also called the Town Beautification Committee, contact Kirkpatrick at Town Hall, 669-8732. The board also tabled a request from Naomi Brigann, Chairwoman of the Planning Board, to raise the number serving on that board from nine to 13, including four persons living within the extraterritorial mile for subdivision jurisdiction. Ald. Brandon said that the board must find out whether any of the extra persons must be appointed by the County Board of Commissioners. Norton reported that during an inspection of the pool, it was found that an estimated \$4000 to \$6000 would be needed to repair a valve and cracked cement, and that an additional unknown amount of damage may be done to pipes because the pool system was not properly drained.

Norton asked that the board outline a winterizing procedure for the future and consider that additional funds will be needed to repair the pool. Ald. Brandon, when she suggested Norton include the repairs in the Recreation budget, was told by Norton that she was inferring that he was responsible for damage to the pool, providing the only confrontation of the evening. Norton said he would tell who was responsible for the damage—presumably former Town Manager Jon Creighton—if she wanted a confrontation. Sobol also noted that some changes must be made at the corner of State Street and Montreat Road to prevent accidents involving pedestrians. He noted that two women were struck by cars in separate incidents last week while crossing at that corner. Kirkpatrick said he will meet with Department of Transportation officials this week to try to establish a four-way stop or extended red light for the corner. Sobol also said that it had been discovered by Paul Griffith that three lots on Daniel Lane may not be properly annexed to the town. Sobol said that the board will have a legal opinion on the lots by the February 9 meeting. The board voted to set a ceiling of \$2500 on all spending by the town manager with board approval. Sobol appointed Ald. Michael Begley to be secondary member for the town for Region B Planning with the Land of Sky Regional Council. Ald. Tyson asked that Sobol try to include former Mayor Margaret Slagle in dealings with the council, noting that she had never missed a meeting in two years and had established valuable contacts through the council.

## Two in jail for drug theft

Two young men remain in Buncombe County Jail on charges of kidnapping, armed robbery and possession of drugs in connection with the robbery of PSA Clinic Pharmacy in Swannanoa January 4.

According to Sheriff's police, Stephen Pender, 19, of Englewood, Fla. and Norman Grady Taylor, 23, of Powder Springs, Ga., forced the pharmacist at PSA with a .22 pistol and a hunting knife to give them an estimated \$1000 in drugs. According to the pharmacist, one of the men held a knife on him while they filled

two grocery bags with controlled drugs, described by police as cocaine and dilaudid. Because they forced the pharmacist from the front of the store to the back, the two were charged with kidnapping, police said. Taylor is also wanted for

five counts of armed robbery in Georgia, a police spokesman said Monday. All of the drugs were recovered when Pender and Taylor were apprehended by Deputy George Sprinkle on I-40 shortly after the robbery, police said.

Wade Martin

## Solar building here a first

by Dan Ward

A Black Mountain family next week will apply for federal funding to install heating in a building that will be the "System of the future," according to the project's program director. G. Wakefield Kirby, of Black Mountain, said that an application for \$24,000 in

Housing and Urban Development (HUD) grants must be filed by January 16 by his mother, Mary W. Kirby, to pay for installation of a solar heating system in an eight-apartment building for senior citizens that Mrs. Kirby intends to build on Kessler Avenue and Montreat Road in Black Mountain. The Kirbys are also ap-

plying for \$130,000 in Farmers Home Administration (FHA) funds to help pay the cost of constructing the building. Kirby said the project is the result of four years study begun by his father, V.W. Kirby, a manufacturer of heat pumps and an advisor on the project. Kirby said the project will be used as a model in solar heating, if HUD approves the grant. Unlike most solar heating systems, the one planned for the Black Mountain building utilizes a heat pump to take heat from water circulating in the solar units and transfers it to forced air. The process will supply up to 50 per cent of the heat for the building, Kirby said. The solar collectors will measure 1100 square feet and be located on the first floor of the two-story building, Kirby said. They will be made by John Chiles of the Hajoca Corporation in Asheville. If the project is a success, the Kirbys hope to build another building of eight 610 square foot apartments

nearby in the future. Rent for the apartments will be subsidized by the U.S. government for senior citizens. Kirby said that one of the greatest advantages of using heat pumps with the solar heating system is that heat pumps can heat the building alone on cloudy days and can provide air conditioning for the building in the summer.

## Police Report

Iced streets took their toll on area drivers last week, including a police cruiser driven by Officer Don Ramsey on January 9. Police reported that Ramsey was driving the 1975 Chevrolet west on US 70 when a 1976 Chevrolet pickup driven by Leon Payne of Marshall skidded head on into his lane and collided with the cruiser. An estimated \$400 damage was done. No injuries were reported. Black Mountain Police responded to seven other accidents last week. On January 7, approximately \$30 was taken when Riddle's Flower Shop was broken into via a back door, police reported. Police made four traffic arrests and assisted Black Mountain firemen once.

by Dan Ward

To Wade Martin, being a fine wood craftsman isn't so much a talent as an inherited gift, such as blue eyes or brown hair. "I figure that it comes kind of natural to me," said the soft-spoken Swannanoan. "I guess somewhere back, my forebears probably had something to do with that. I believe there are hand-me-down talents." Martin, whose hand-carved figurines of mountain people have won national acclaim, said that woodcarving talent runs in the family. "My daddy was a fiddle-maker. He made fiddles, banjos, dulcimers. I guess I just got off the track he made and did the figurines. I learned to use a knife in a real technical way," Martin said. Wade's brothers have also followed in Marcus Martin's footsteps. Wayne Martin, now dead, carved detailed human figures. A collection of 42 of his and Wade's figures to go on display to UNCA this spring was valued at \$10,000. Edsel Martin, of Old Fort, carves birds so perfect that the Smithsonian Institution in Washington has asked that he carve pairs of every North Carolina species for a permanent display. Fred Martin, of Swannanoa, builds authentic dulcimers since he has retired. Now an employee of Beacon Manufacturing, Wade has limited his carving to a hobby. "I carve for a hobby and to try to keep my son interested," Martin said of his 16-year-old son Bruce, who is becoming an accomplished woodcarver in his own right. At one time, Wade made a living carving the mountain musicians, moonshiners,

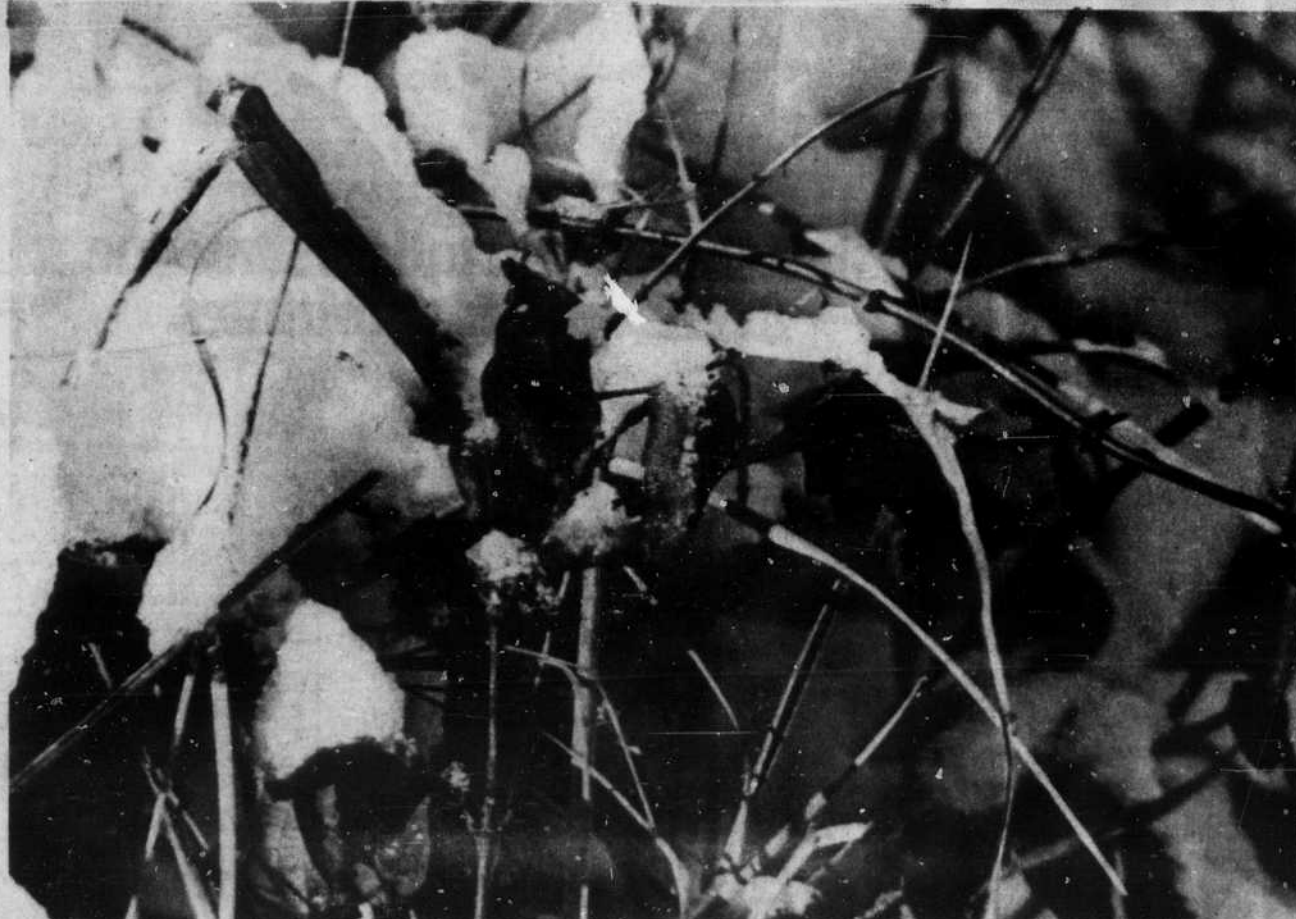
woodchoppers and hog-butchers. The carvings, which took "eight or nine hours" a piece to do, brought him from \$15 to \$50 each in the 1950s. "Several things I made I'd have liked to keep," he said. "At the time I liked the dough, but the enjoyment I got wasn't from the money, it was from the carving." "I think what I enjoyed more than anything was meeting people that enjoyed that sort of thing," he said. "You hope that someone might want to do it, too. That way you'll have something in common." Wade, who also made and sold dulcimers, has only a few of his carvings for himself. He no longer sells any. One he has kept is a statuette, about 15 inches tall, of his father. Marcus Martin, in addition to being a fiddle-maker, was world fiddle champion. The carving is of a tall, gaunt man playing a fiddle intensely. The expression, folds in the long coat and details on the fiddle are incredibly life-like. Two other carvings he has kept are his first, a hula girl made presentable with a grass skirt, and a hound dog that seems to defy the wood in its true-to-life rubbery musculature. Every wrinkle and tendon stands out on the flesh. "I didn't have any elaborate tools," Wade said of his craft. "In the beginning, all I had was a pocket knife, a handsaw and a hatchet." Even now, woodcarving tools are not part of his hobby. A \$3.50 Barlow knife is all Martin uses to bring out the detail in his mountain characters. "I guess I wore out several Barlows," he said. Owners of some of Wade's carving include Andy Griffith,

former Gov. Luther Hodges, and Fess Parker. Robert Mitchum, while making a movie in North Carolina, asked Wade to do a set of four carvings for his daughter. "I guess my carvings are scattered all over," he noted.

## Poe choice as new chief

The Black Mountain Fire Department was expected to recommend Assistant Chief Sterling Poe as replacement for Chief Mack Kirkpatrick, who recently began duties as town manager. Poe had earlier declined an offer to move up to the administrator position in the fire department, but decided to accept the position, Kirkpatrick said. The Town Board must confirm a new chief at a meeting, Kirkpatrick said, but they are likely to vote according to the recommendation of the firemen. The Black Mountain Fire Department made six runs last week. On January 2, one truck and 20 men were called to put out a chimney fire at the McGinnis residence on Avena Road. No damage was reported. On January 4, three trucks and 24 men stood by a controlled burning at 102 Goldmont St. and one truck and 19 men put out a car fire on Montreat Road resulting in \$50 damage. Also that day, 14 men took part in a search for two 10-year-old boys missing from Carver School. The boys were found. On January 5, 12 men stood by a car wreck on US 70 West. No injuries were reported. Also that morning, two trucks and 12 men responded to a report of an overheated furnace at the Hensley residence at 107 S.

Ridgeway. Minor damage was reported. The county ambulance service made 14 routine and six emergency runs last week, and were not needed on four others.



A more pleasant side of the cold weather lies in the beauty of a jumble of grass holding up a roof of snow. (Dan Ward)

## 'Woodcrafting in the blood'

