

# BLACK MOUNTAIN NEWS

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Black Mountain, N.C. 28711

Thursday, February 9, 1978, Vol. 24, No. 17

## Suspension ruled out in police dispute

by Dan Ward

An investigation into a dispute between two Black Mountain policemen has shown that neither has shown behavior warranting suspension from the department, according to Town Manager Mack Kirkpatrick. Patrolman Burt Stone was suspended two days early this week while Police Chief Craig Slagle and Town Manager Mack Kirkpatrick investigated a report that he allegedly threatened and tried to hit Officer Gary Sorrels after Sorrels arrested a friend of his, Frank Dewitt Williams of Black Mountain, for driving under the influence of alcohol on February 5.

According to Kirkpatrick, the dispute was not based solely upon the arrest of Williams, but on a number of past disputes and "personality conflicts."

According to Kirkpatrick, a report received earlier by the

News that Stone threatened to have Sorrels fired is "probably correct." He asked Sorrels to remove his gun and fight, Kirkpatrick said. Stone would not comment on any allegations and referred questions to Kirkpatrick.

Kirkpatrick affirmed that Stone tried to hit Sorrels, but that Assistant Chief Jim Wiseman came between the two men.

Kirkpatrick said that reports that Stone wanted Sorrels to forget the arrest and let him take Williams home were untrue, saying that Williams had already been given a Breatherizer test and gone home before Stone arrived at the station.

Kirkpatrick noted that the two-day suspension was only during the investigation, and did not imply guilt on the part of Stone.

Sorrels and Slagle, like Stone, referred all questions to Kirkpatrick.



A Black Mountain employee digs out one of six broken water pipes cracked by cold weather in Black Mountain last week. Town Manager Mack Kirkpatrick is investigating the possibility of obtaining disaster funds to repair breaks that may have started during November flooding. (Dan Ward)

## Hearing draws 18

by Dan Ward

Response at the last of three Community Development Grant hearings in Black Mountain was so good that a special Citizen Participation Committee plans to hold another hearing at Carver School Friday, February 10, at 7:30 p.m.

The last meeting, held at Carver School, drew 18 persons—primarily Blacks from the Craigmont Community.

Suggestions echoed by many there were that the town provide larger water lines and fire hydrants to the Craigmont area, that streets in that area be repaired and sidewalks made, and that street lights be installed.

One man voiced a concern for children who must walk home from school on Craigmont Road, which has no sidewalks. He also noted that the road is too narrow for the amount of traffic on it.

Creola Austin said that grant money should be spent on playground areas and a better drainage system in Craigmont, as well as an improved water system.

Horace Wells said that street lights, sewer improvements and low income housing are also needed for the area.

Lib Harper suggested that the town could use grant money to build a community center on the site of the small community center that burned down in Craigmont. Jim Allman of the Land-of-Sky Regional Council responded that a HUD grant could be used for such a center, but that it would have to be geared toward the elderly and handicapped.

Ald. John Klutz voiced three suggestions that he said had been passed on to him from others. One, a more specific version of what had been proposed by others, was that grant money be used to install a 10-inch water line, with fire hydrants, as far up Craigmont Road as funds allow. Another was that additional tools and machinery be bought for the senior citizens' activity room at the Clubhouse. A third recommendation, he said, was that Craigmont Road be widened and that sidewalks be installed.

limits, but Ald. Ruth Brandon said at the meeting that the town may have accepted responsibility for its upkeep when Asheville water lines were installed there. Mayor Sobol said he would see whose responsibility the road is.

Horace Wells said that Craigmont Road had not been plowed after recent blizzards. "They never scrape this way, never clean the ditch out or cut the grass," he said.

Kirkpatrick said that he was not aware that the road was not getting town services. He said he would make sure that it got plowed in the future.

Mrs. Austin also asked Sobol when the ditch near Craigmont and Byrd Road would get filled in. The ditch had been dug months ago to install sewer pipe and is now littered with broken pipe, she said. She noted that one car had already swerved into the ditch when it snowed.

Sobol responded that he also thought it was taking a long time to complete work there and promised the ditch would be filled within three months. He also noted that railings will have to be installed on the Craigmont Road bridge soon.

One person noted at the meeting that more persons would have turned out for the meeting, but didn't learn of the meeting through newspapers and radio. Another noted that many persons go to evening church services on Thursday evenings.

Two adults and one child attended the hearing held February 1 at the Black Mountain Grammar School. One voiced a complaint that storekeepers in Black Mountain are not polite. No other comments were offered.

## Vanderbeck resigns post

James Vanderbeck, Black Mountain building inspector, has resigned, according to Town Manager Mack Kirkpatrick.

Vanderbeck cited his outside business interests and time needed for other in-

terests as reasons for resigning, Kirkpatrick said. The town will advertise for a new building inspector to take over the 15-hour per week duties. Vanderbeck will serve until a replacement is hired, Kirkpatrick said.

## Phone directory corrections due

The telephone directory for Asheville and Buncombe County will close on March 10, a Bell spokesman said. Each customer is encouraged to verify his listings in the

directory to be sure that they are correct. If additional listings or corrections are needed, customers are urged to contact the local Southern Bell business office before March 10.

Bob Haley

## A whole lotta shakin' here

by Dan Ward

At Inn on the Plaza in Asheville on any evening this week you can see the wiggle, hear the crooning and feel the showmanship that was Elvis Presley. While he may sound, look and give off an aura remarkably like Elvis, the performer sees himself only as himself—Bob Haley.

Bob Haley the frustrated performer. Bob Haley the electrician. Bob Haley the Mississippi country boy shoveling sawdust for 50 cents an hour. Bob Haley the would-be truck driver.

Haley, who is performing in the ballroom at Inn on the Plaza in Asheville Wednesday through Saturday evenings this week, has been introduced to the influential and monied in North Carolina by Johnny Fore of Black Mountain, who befriended the entertainer years before Presley's death.

Fore is now acting as a go-between to assist Haley's promoter, Don Boss, in getting engagements for the singer.

"Man, I paid the price for 20 years of imitating Elvis Presley," Haley said in a between-show interview. "I've been accused of imitating him all that time - I've seen him only one time."

"I kept going to recording companies and they said, 'Man, you sound too much like Elvis - we can't use you.'"

"Now I have the opportunity to do what I've always done. I'm laughing in a way because everyone thinks I'm imitating Elvis - but it's always been my style."

"The identity crisis comes when I would sacrifice my own identity totally and go to

study Elvis and imitate him totally. I couldn't help the fact that I look like Elvis - hell, why can't people realize that? But when I go down there and people say 'I remember when Elvis would sing like that - when he'd hit the high notes. Man, he was the king of the world and I'm doing exactly the same thing. How many thousands have jumped up in the last two, three months and haven't been able to do the same?'"

Haley said he began a Presleyish act 2½ years ago, but quit two months before the performer's death to sing strictly country and western. The day Presley died, a promoter called begging him to return to the Presley act. He promised it would be a tribute to Elvis, not an impersonation.

"I thought, 'Okay, what is the most I can ask?'" Haley said. He got what he asked for - a backup quartet, horns, jumpsuits and a six-piece band.

While Haley said he likes the stardom - his roots, like Elvis' include a poor Mississippi boyhood, a broken home, gospel singing as a teenager - he says the temptation sometimes arises to throw it all out the window and drive a long-nosed Peterbilt truck with the bicentennial cab and a color TV in the dash.

Returning to country and western singing now seems out of the question.

"Now I'm so integrated into Elvis' personality that it's impossible for me to do anything else," he said. "I think of it as *emulating* him. I'm trying to use the best qualities of my own while I'm adopting the physical characteristics he used on

stage."

While he seems a little bitter about being held back for years because of his similarity to Elvis, Haley expressed a great deal of admiration for the performer.

"That man gave so much of himself that he wore himself out - that's why he died," Haley said. "Like, since he died I've learned he wasn't just a dude - he was an institution. I don't want to inherit that institution. 'Yeah, hey... I did it my-y way,'" he crooned.



Bob Haley does an Elvis shimmy at Inn on the Plaza. (Dan Ward)

## Fire - Best response from right number

by Dan Ward

Although an agreement has been made between area fire departments and Southern Bell Telephone that all emergency calls for this area be transferred to a central exchange, the best way to insure a good fire response is to memorize or post by the phone the number of the local fire department, according to Black Mountain Fire Chief Sterling Poe.

Poe said that valuable time is lost by having a call go from an operator to the Buncombe County transmitter back to the Black Mountain Fire Department.

Another problem lies in the number of street names that are duplicated in different towns, he said.

"Some of the streets here in Black Mountain will have the same names as somewhere else," he said. There is always the possibility that a dispatcher could mistake an address on Broadway or Ninth Street for one in a number of other towns in Buncombe County.

For that reason, Poe said he also advises keeping the fire department number handy over the use of an emergency "911" number, which he said is

"still two or three years away."

The agreement between Bell and the fire departments arose from an incident recently when a person reported a fire to an operator located in Greensboro.

The delay caused by the necessity for the operator to look up the number of the needed fire department led in part to one death and the total loss of the house. Now, all emergency fire calls will be transferred to the county dispatcher and the Asheville Fire Department, who will call the proper fire department.

Poe said that he knew of one incident when it cost the department extra trouble because a person reported the fire to an operator. He said the operator called giving an address and a report of a fire, but did not say what type of fire it was.

Poe said the department responded with three units capable of fighting any sort of fire, only to discover it was a small leaf fire.

By talking directly to the person reporting the fire, "we know exactly what sort of equipment to send," Poe said.

The number for the Black Mountain Fire Department is

669-9075. Montreat residents use that number also. Swannanoa residents should

call the Swannanoa Fire Department at 254-7007 and Riceville residents call 258-

2636. All emergency numbers are listed in the front of the phone directory.

## CP&L sees rate increase

Carolina Power & Light Co. customers are being advised to practice intensified conservation efforts during February and March to hold their bills down because of expected increases in the monthly fuel charge to customers in North Carolina.

The fuel charge approved by the North Carolina Utilities Commission for February will be \$3.48 per 1000 kilowatt-hours and in March the charge is expected to be \$4.72 per 1000 kilowatt-hours, according to James M. Davis, CP & L manager of rates and service practices.

"Wise use of electricity especially during this time when cold weather normally causes higher usage will help hold down February and March bills and the effect of the higher fuel charge," Davis said.

Conservation methods CP & L suggests include keeping

thermostat settings for heating at 68 degrees or lower and cutting back on usage of hot water by reducing consumption or lowering thermostats on water heaters and dishwashers.

The charges in February and March represent expenses CP & L incurred in the September - December 1977 period. The level of the charges reflects increased fuel costs during the period because of refueling of nuclear plants, maintenance, and

unscheduled outages caused reduced usage of the Company's most efficient generating units.

Consequently, older, less efficient generating units and more expensive fuels had to be used for an extended period.

Another effect on the February and March fuel charges for the September - December period was the somewhat increased cost of coal in the time prior to the national coal miners' strike which began in December.

## Social security meeting scheduled

A Social Security Citizen participation meeting will be held on Friday, February 10 at

10 a.m. in the Conference Room of the Asheville Social Security office located at 400 Executive Park, according to A. Glenn Moore, district manager. The forum will last about 1½ to 2 hours.

Hopefully, this will be the first of several such meetings, Moore said. The purpose of these meetings will be to increase public understanding of programs administered by Social Security, and afford individuals an opportunity to state what they want and expect in the administration of these programs.

"These meetings should better inform the community relative to what we can and cannot do from a financial and administrative viewpoint," Moore stated. "In addition we will learn what the community wants from us."

All interested persons are invited to attend and participate.



This old postcard scene, submitted by Clyde Watkins, shows the train that once took visitors from

Black Mountain to Mt. Mitchell.



Happy Valentine's day