

# Owen graduation special inside



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## Budget, new wells approved

by Dan Ward

The Black Mountain Town Board passed its \$631,930 FY 1978-79 budget on the second and last readings June 12 with a great deal of discussion and some disagreement.

Ald. Ruth Brandon voted against the budget on the two readings, and Ald. A.F. Tyson opposed it on the second because of an amendment proposed by Ald. Mike Begley that the town purchase one new car, rather than two used ones, for the police department. The two opposed the amendment because Police Chief Creight Slagle was not present to confirm that the police department needed only three cars.

Begley allowed, in making the motion, that the board could reverse the action if Slagle requested. The same amount of money—\$2,000 plus a \$4,000 carryover from the present budget—would be available for either purchase. Begley's rationale was that the town would have less maintenance problems if it rotated purchases of new cars and kept less.

Another proposal by Ald. Brandon was that the town supply uniforms to active volunteer firemen. Town Manager Mack Kirkpatrick said that he had already negotiated a compromise with Fire Chief Sterling Poe whereby the firemen would supply their own uniforms and the town would pay for badges. Some money for

uniforms would come out of the existing fire department budget and fund-raisers.

### Water Improvements

The board voted unanimously to earmark \$28,000 in water department capital improvements funds from the present budget to install 2000 feet of six-inch line between Azalea Avenue and North Fork Road, and to drill two wells.

Ald. John Klutz said that based on engineer studies, connecting the two existing six-inch lines would increase water pressure in the Lakewood area. Estimated cost for the project is \$15,000.

Begley said that the town could solve short-term water problems and invest in future water needs by drilling two wells in a low-pressure area of town. He noted that building an emergency reservoir was costly, and that the possibility of being incorporated into a county-wide water system was far in the future.

The cost of drilling two 30 gallon-per-minute wells and installing chlorinators at the site is approximately \$5000 per well, Begley said. Approval from various agencies is needed before the town advertises for bids.

### Bids Taken

Based on advice by the Local Government Commission, the board voted to rescind acceptance of a bid to renovate the Golf Course Clubhouse, accepted a bid of

\$2400 to perform the 1978 audit, and chose to hold off a month on bids to repair sidewalks on Cherry Street.

Mayor Tom Sobol recommended that the town advertise for the third time for bids to renovate the Golf Clubhouse. The board had earlier accepted a bid by Neil Bartlett to do the needed work on a cost-plus basis and had rejected two other bids because the contractors were not licensed. Sobol noted that contractors were not required to be licensed to perform work valued under \$30,000. A dispute arose when Ald. Jim Norton suggested that Ald. Brandon had tried to influence bidding by calling Bruce King Construction in Asheville. Brandon denied even knowing King.

The board accepted a bid of \$2400—\$2300 below another bid submitted—from Crawley, Price and Sprinkle, Inc. to perform the town's audit again this year. The board also voted to put off until next year a required revenue sharing audit that must be done every three years.

Because only two bids were submitted, the board followed the recommendation of Town Manager Mack Kirkpatrick in tabling acceptance of bids to repair Cherry Street sidewalks until a later date. The board did agree to earmark approximately \$2000 left in downtown improvement funds from the current budget for the work.

The board also tabled ac-

ceptance of bids for town employee health insurance because a third bid had come in recently and was not yet analyzed by Kirkpatrick.

### Cemetery Legislation

Mayor Sobol told the board that State Rep. Gordon Greenwood has agreed to introduce legislation in the next session of the General Assembly, beginning in January, to give the town authority to maintain two overgrown cemeteries.

Sobol said that locating relatives to remove brush and trees from graves has proven impossible, and the town is open to lawsuits without legislative action. He asked that the board formally request action from Greenwood before the next session.

### Clean Community System

Kay Kruse and Richard Kendrick of Quality Forward in Asheville gave a presentation on the Clean Community System begun by the Keep America Beautiful Commission. The program included a film on how the system reduced litter in Macon, Ga., by 60 per cent, and photos taken of trash problems in the Swannanoa Valley.

Sobol asked that the organization supply a sample ordinance endorsing the Clean Community System and suggested that the board will endorse it.

### Appointments

The board made appointments to fill vacancies on the Zoning Board, the Zoning Board of Adjustments and the ABC Board, and appointed a committee to rewrite the town zoning ordinance.

The board voted to reappoint H.L. Lackey and Steven Roberts to the Zoning Board, and appointed Bob Miller to a remaining vacancy. They also appointed Donna Hughes to the Zoning Board of Adjustments.

A four-person committee has also been appointed to revise the town zoning ordinance. Money has been earmarked to print the revised ordinance in booklet form.

Stanley Garland was reappointed 4-1 by the board to

the ABC Board, a position that pays \$100 per month. A motion by Ald. Brandon to appoint Margaret Slagle to the board failed.

### Lawsuits

Town Attorney Bill Eubanks gave the board a rundown on lawsuits involving the town that are still active.

A court decision giving Vernon and Elsie Elliott possession of an undedicated street leading to property owned by Mountain Triangle Temple has been appealed by Margaret Slagle on behalf of the Temple. Eubanks suggested, and the board agreed, to take no action in the case unless a second hearing rules in favor of the Temple.

A second suit charging that the town was negligent in inspecting construction of the home owned by Buford Copeland was dismissed by the court because the town has governmental immunity under North Carolina law, Eubanks said. However, that \$62,000 suit has been appealed also, he added.

Eubanks suggested that the town "fight tooth and nail" a suit against the police department and four town employees by Charles Quinn for use of excessive force in arresting Quinn for public drunkenness—a charge he was later found not guilty of. The board agreed to defend the police department to some extent in the case, but also agreed to remain flexible on its policy involving actions of town employees.

### Taylor Retirement

Mayor Sobol pointed out, in response to comments from the public about board action prompting the resignation of Golf Pro Ross Taylor a few months before retirement, that the town does not pay retirement benefits other than social security to any town employees.

### Sewer Test Bill

The board agreed to pay \$2,010.89 for its share of smoke tests performed as part of a study by the Metropolitan Sewerage District. The cost to the town had earlier been estimated at \$2,000. (continued on page 10)



Although rainy days kept most construction workers indoors last week, it was prime work time for one meditative dam builder. (Dan Ward)

## Lawyer asks fire bound delay

Attorney Martin Nesbitt, representing the Swannanoa Volunteer Fire Department, appeared before the Buncombe County Board of Commissioners June 13 to ask for a six month deferment of any final decision on the current fire boundary dispute between the Swannanoa and Black Mountain fire departments.

Nesbitt said he asked for the deferment so that a compromise could be worked out between the two communities. "If they (the Commissioners) decide it, the issue still won't be settled in the minds of many people," Nesbitt said. Nesbitt said that the six months was needed so that the facts of the situation can be

definitely established and an "educational campaign" can be carried out. The Commissioners seemed agreeable to the deferment proposal and expressed a desire for a compromise to be worked out between the

communities instead of an arbitrary settlement dictated by the board, according to Nesbitt.

## Cleanup list grows

Three more groups have chosen projects for Swannanoa Valley Cleanup Day June 17.

The Highland Farms Council has elected to take part in the cleanup-fixup day by cleaning the ditch along

Tabernacle Road. In addition, the group plans to make the project an on-going one. Bill Perkowski is in charge of the project.

The Cherry Street Framery, scheduled to open soon in Black Mountain, has chosen to

plant flowers in planters in front of the store Saturday.

The employees and staff of Executive Plaza will clean up the parking lot and surrounding area at that office building Saturday.

Dan Ward at the News has reported that Quality Forward in Asheville has donated 200 trash bags to use for roadside litter on Valley Cleanup Day. Bags may be picked up at the News office. The News has also asked that groups participating in Valley Cleanup Day contact the News to arrange a time photos may be taken.



Some Black Mountain Pool patrons would rather soak up the sun than soak in the water (see related column inside). (Clint Williams)

## Black Mountain fire

The Black Mountain Fire Department made four runs last week.

On June 7, one truck and nine men responded to a car fire at Blue Ridge Road and US 70. Minor damage was reported.

Also that day, firemen assisted the Old Fort Fire

Department and the Highway Patrol at the scene of an accident on Old Fort Mountain in which three persons received injuries. One truck and 15 men responded.

On June 6, one truck and 11 men responded to a wreck on US 70 near Burger Hutt. No injuries were reported.

Minor damage resulted from a mattress fire at the Ed Harwood residence at 310 Flat Creek Rd. June 11. One truck and 11 men responded.

The Buncombe County Ambulance Service made four emergency, 10 routine, and three unneeded runs last week.

## Alice Bethell

by Dan Ward

Housed in a neat and nondescript shop on Broadway, as simple and orderly as a sunbleached conch shell, is a business that is a hobby and a hobby that has become a business.

Alice Bethell, with the help of her parents, began Shell Craft a month ago as a first business venture. Shells were an obvious choice for the Bahamas native who has collected them most of her life.

"It just started out as a hobby—I never guessed it would end up like this," she said.

Unlike its cluttered and garish coastal counterparts, the shop seems to appeal quietly more to the interior decorator than the souvenir seeking tourist. Alice makes many of the shell arrangements, including terrariums, tiny shell necklaces and shell animals

for children.

"It's mainly like gift items. We try to please everyone. We have a little of everything," she said.

Her mother explained that Shell Craft was begun to give Alice business experience after she graduated from an academy near Chicago recently. "My dad predicted we'd go out of business in two weeks—he was just joking, of course," Alice said. "It's doing pretty good, though."

While business may still be something of a hobby to Alice, shell collecting is something very serious. Although she has studied and collected shells for 10 years, including species unlisted in any books, she refuses the scientific title of conchologist. "To be one, you have to file the date, place and name for each shell you collect," she said, wincing at the idea of interrupting beach-combing with record-keeping.

"When people come in, I try to tell them as much as I can about the shell," she said.

Peter L. Roda, the public defender assigned to Terry Fisher Stanley, has withdrawn from the case citing a conflict of interest.

Stanley, who has received a grand jury indictment for the murder of Margaret Jenette Tarbert, was housed in the same cell-block as another client of Roda's, Conley Davis.

Davis is listed as a "key witness" against Stanley, and Roda said that to be forced to cross-examine one client in the defense of another client would constitute a conflict and subsequently withdrew from both cases.

Davis gave a statement to the Buncombe County Sheriff's investigators concerning a statement Stanley alledgedly

made to him while they were in the same cell-block.

When asked if the statement that Davis said Stanley made was a confession of guilt, Roda replied, "Something to that effect."

Bruce Elmore is Stanley's new counsel. The arraignment hearing is scheduled for June 19.

## Stanley indicted, defense attorney quits

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## Alice Bethell

## Unique sea creatures her specialty

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Most of the shells she sells are those she collects herself during the winter months in Bahamas. Others are imported from the Philippines.

Her specialty and first love, it seems, are those shells that defy what has been written about them by marine biologists.

She proudly displays her black moon shells—"I can't find them anywhere in any books"—her four- and six-legged starfish, and her Bahamian sand dollars.

"The Bahamian sand dollar has six holes, while those from Florida have only five. Everything written about sand dollars says that they have only five holes." A number of the six-holed sand dollars are on display in the shop.

Rows and rows of huge jars, like in an old-time candy store, house a multitude of shells for more serious collectors in a back room. Beside collectors, local students often browse through

the jars for craft materials, Alice said.

"There's a lot of things that

you can do with them. Just think—every shell is different. You can just play with them

until you come up with something," said the connoisseur of the unique.

