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Crowds brave rain for fest



Runners wait in the morning fog for the starters signal at the marathon beginning in Swannanoa. (Dan Ward)

by Dan Ward
Despite drizzle and down-pour, spirits refused to be dampened for the Swannanoa Valley's first Sourwood Festival August 9-12. Although the weather obviously kept some at home during intervals Friday and Saturday, the Jaycee's Open Market at the Primary School experienced a large turnout. Alice Turner, a member of High Country Crafters, said that many craftspeople exhibiting at the market said that sales were good during the two-day event. Food concessions also reported heavy sales. Proceeds from rental of the booths went toward the Muscular Dystrophy Foundation.

A parade Wednesday, featuring professional floats, a marching band, rifle corps, wagon train, beauty queens, and emergency vehicles was called by Chamber of Commerce Manager Ed Weber, "the best ever." The parade began at the Primary School

and ended at WNC Shopping Center. Based on registration, those events drawing the most persons from outside the Valley were various athletic tournaments held during the four-day festival. One of the more novel contests was a 4.6 mile marathon from Swannanoa to Black Mountain Saturday morning. Black Mountain Police, who sponsored the event, reported that 75 persons up to age 70 took part in the run. Winners in the various age categories were Tim Epley, Asheville, 26-35 year-olds, 25½ minutes; Stan Lou, Montreat, 36-50 year-olds, 26 minutes; Bob Strunk, Ridgecrest, 16-25 year-olds, 27 minutes; Kevin Logan, Black Mountain, 10-15 year-olds, 31 minutes; and Kenneth St. Clair, Missouri, 50 and older, 40½ minutes. St. Clair was the oldest contestant, at 70.

Avery Allen of Black Mountain emerged the winner from a field of 72 in the Sourwood Golf Tournament held Wednesday. Allen scored 67, followed by Harry Jeeter of Asheville with a 69. Paul Vernarsky had the lowest net score with 72. (See related story in sports section.) For the younger set, turnout was heavy for skateboard competition held at the Primary School Saturday. In the freestyle competition, winners were Jennifer Williams, 15 and older; Martin Culbreth, 10 and under; and Steve Bowden, 11 to 14. Despite threatening clouds, swimming and diving competition was held at the Black Mountain Pool Friday. Winners in a number of divisions and classes received silver dollars for their performances. Those winners who did not receive their awards may pick up the

dollars at Northwestern Bank in Black Mountain, according to Carl Bartlett. (See list of winners in sports section.) One of the busiest sites in Black Mountain was the Old Depot, where business greatly surpassed expectations, according to a Depot spokesperson. Craft demonstrations continued all day during each of the festival days at the Depot. Carl Bartlett, who coordinated various events for the Chamber of Commerce, said he was pleased with the response to the first of what the Chamber plans to make an annual event. "There are a few things we should have done differently, but it came off real well considering this is the first time around," Bartlett said. He said the chamber will begin planning for the Second Annual Sourwood Festival in January.

Friday, according to Keith Osteen. A fourth dance set for Saturday was the only event cancelled because of rain. One of the busiest sites in Black Mountain was the Old Depot, where business greatly surpassed expectations, according to a Depot spokesperson. Craft demonstrations continued all day during each of the festival days at the Depot. Carl Bartlett, who coordinated various events for the Chamber of Commerce, said he was pleased with the response to the first of what the Chamber plans to make an annual event. "There are a few things we should have done differently, but it came off real well considering this is the first time around," Bartlett said. He said the chamber will begin planning for the Second Annual Sourwood Festival in January.

Sidewalks, free parking approved

by Dan Ward
Downtown improvements were highlighted August 14 as the Black Mountain Town Board thawed frozen funds earmarked for new sidewalks on Cherry Street, voted to spend up to \$10,000 for other sidewalk improvements, and institute free parking for shoppers.

Jim Lauer of the antique store and Ron Thompson of the Music Shop on Cherry Street told the board that its decision to freeze funding for brick sidewalks on Cherry Street, because of fears of revenue loss if the ABC Store is closed, was unfair since the money had been appropriated 18 months earlier.

The board agreed to release \$3600 in revenue sharing money to create as many feet of brick sidewalk as money will allow on Cherry Street.

On the suggestion of Ald. A.F. Tyson, the board approved, then retracted, a motion to accept low bid of \$5,610 from paving Enterprises to pour cement sidewalks on Montreat Road.

On the suggestion of Town Manager, Mack Kirkpatrick, the board withdrew approval in hope that a better price could be obtained by including sidewalks on Church and State Street in the package.

Also on the recommendation of Tyson, the board voted to put hoods on all downtown parking meters and institute free two-hour parking to encourage shopping downtown. They chose to retain the meters in case the time limit proves unenforceable.

Also, on the subject of streets, Kirkpatrick said the Department of Transportation will make a study of Black Mountain street signs and that new name signs could be installed within two months. He also recommended that the town purchase a 90-second traffic light at Montreat Road and State Street to allow for a longer pedestrian crossing signal.

Lentz and Ball, attorneys for three Black Mountain Police and one fireman in a case of alleged assault against Charles Quinn of Black Mountain over a year ago, the board voted to reimburse the three policemen \$100 each for retainer fees paid the attorneys. The town will also pay an additional \$775 legal fee due Lentz and Ball.

Officer Myron Fineberg and Chief Craig Slagle were found guilty by a jury June 29 of assaulting Quinn, but no fines were imposed. Officer Gary Sorrells and current Fire Chief Gary Bartlett were absolved of wrongdoing in the case.

The board agreed that payment of legal fees for town employees would be handled on a case-by-case basis.

Library Board, the board elected Marie Kaplan to fill a vacancy created when a member of the Library Board moved.

Also regarding appointments, Ald. Ruth Brandon read a letter from Howard Rogers asking that the board establish a policy of accepting new appointments to various boards and committees, rather than rubber-stamping recommendations for reappointment from the committees.

Ald. Mike Begley said that he preferred that the board does not set a binding policy, but deal with appointments on a case-by-case basis, a

statement that seemed to be accepted by the board. Sobol noted that Rogers' recommendation will be kept in mind for future appointments.

OTHER BUSINESS
Sobol, following a declaration by Gov. Jim Hunt, proclaimed October 9 - 15 French Broad River Awareness Week. He also commended the Black Mountain Fire Department for consideration they showed a Black Mountain couple after a town fire truck destroyed their house, noting that firemen maintained a watch at the house to prevent looting or vandalism.

BURNETTE COMPLAINT
Following the meeting, the board met in executive session with William Burnette, who had been pushing for disciplinary action against police officer Myron Fineberg for what Burnette called favoritism in releasing the father of another Black Mountain policeman without charges, when the man had appeared to be driving under the influence.

According to Town Manager Mack Kirkpatrick and Mayor Tom Sobol, the board, Burnette, Fineberg and two others involved in the incident came to an agreement in the closed session and no further action will be taken.

Anti-liquor forces in Black Mountain, like the mostly pro-liquor town board, are watching the September 12 liquor-by-the-drink referendum results before implementing new strategy.

John Mundy, who has been working with Black Mountain's Free Will Baptist Churches in passing a petition for a referendum to close the town's ABC Store, said that although the anti-liquor coalition now has enough signatures to call for a referendum, pastors here want to be sure of their odds before pressing for a vote.

"We're not sure we want to force a vote on something we're not sure we can win,"

Mundy said. "What the churches are really worried about is liquor-by-the-drink," Mundy added. "Most of them can live with the ABC Store — they just don't go by there — but they can't tolerate liquor-by-the-drink. If it takes closing ABC Store, they'll do it."

Mundy said that he felt that if the mixed drink referendum fails, the issue of closing the ABC Store will probably be dropped unless the vote is so lopsided as to make closing the store easy.

The Rev. Edgar Farrell of the First Baptist Church said he takes a different view. "The ABC Store was voted in some years ago by a very narrow margin. There have been so many asking for a vote to close the store, I think the time might be right to take another vote — whether liquor-by-the-drink passes or not.

Mundy also differed somewhat from Farrell in explaining the motivation for fighting liquor-by-the-drink. Although most persons signing the petition have been opposed to liquor on moral grounds, the approach of the

coalition has been based on government statistics relating mixed drink laws and alcoholism, Mundy said. He said some social drinkers have signed the petition because guide lines will probably not be established for mixed drink sales before the referendum. "When you look at statistics, even an atheist would vote against it," Mundy said. Farrell said most have spoken out against mixed drinks on moral grounds because it makes the liquor all the more available. He added, however, that the lack of guidelines will make voting for mixed drinks a "shot in the dark" for drinkers.

Mundy, a former town alderman, conceded that closing the Black Mountain ABC Store would result in a

large loss of revenues, but disputed the amount the town stands to lose. Mundy said Mayor Tom Sobol overestimated the loss to the town by about at least \$35,000, saying that closing the ABC Store would have little or no effect on beer and wine taxes returned to the town. The town is estimated to lose \$80,000 to \$90,000 in ABC Store revenues if the store is closed. Sobol had said that beer and wine tax losses could push that amount to \$125,000.

"I'm not saying there won't be a tax increase, but like one fellow said to me, 'They've heard of Proposition 13, haven't they?'" Mundy said. He said anti-liquor groups will meet soon to map strategy for the upcoming referendum.

ABC vote—a waiting game

Neville Day, new chiefs in Montreat

HUD MEETING
Mayor Tom Sobol announced that another meeting between area representatives and U.S. Rep. Lamar Gudger would take place in "three to four weeks" concerning rejection by the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) of all but two grant applications from the western part of the state.

One of those rejected was Black Mountain's application for up to \$700,000 to install water mains and fire hydrants in the Craigmont section.

by John Abernethy
Sunday, August 20, has been proclaimed by Montreat's Board of Commissioners as Susan Neville Appreciation Day. For 10 years she has been Montreat's Tax Collector and Municipal Accountant. Her resignation has been accepted by the Board and becomes effective the end of this month. Sunday afternoon from 3-5 p.m. there will be a tea and reception honoring Miss Neville at the home of Mayor John Abernethy on Quillan Lane in Montreat. All residents and friends are invited.

In other action by the Commissioners Thursday night, all Montreat property owners and tenants were reminded of that section of the town's general ordinances that requires them to keep ditches and culverts cleaned for proper drainage of the streets. "Occupants or tenants of improved property and owners of all vacant property" are "to do such clearing, scraping or cleaning as will keep ditches and culverts free from trash and debris and insure the free flow of water therein or thereby." This reminder is particularly important as leaves begin to fall and during the season of heavy rains.

Because of Miss Neville's resignation, the board has employed James A. Lee, C.P.A., of Asheville as municipal accountant and has named Police Chief O.R. Post as tax collector and supervisor for the town. Both began their responsibilities August 1. Chief Post will devote half of his time to his work as head of

the police force and the other half to his expanded responsibilities for Montreat. It was announced that Montreat was awarded an

Honorable Mention in the Western North Carolina Beautification Contest inspection that took place August 8. The committee,

headed by former mayor Betty Maxwell and Ed Berg, were commended for their work and planning.

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Buchanan, who works for the Department of Transportation, takes his beekeeping sideline seriously — so much so that he was awarded a third place for dark chunk honey at the N.C. Beekeepers Association Fall Festival in Cullowee August 3-5. His wife, Paula, won a second place for chocolate fudge candy cooked with honey.

True sourwood honey, Buchanan said, is much rarer than jars with sourwood honey labels.

"It's doubtful you ever get pure sourwood honey," he said. "Once in awhile you can, but it's difficult to prove. Now, they can test it to see if it's been altered — if corn syrup has been added to it or whatever."

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Sourwood honey—the labor of thousands

CEMETERY STUDY
Most of the meeting was devoted to a review by a special committee studying the old Black Mountain Cemetery. The committee, made up of Charlie Lindsey, Bertha Jones and Bob Miller, was able to track down most, but not all, of the owners of lots in the cemetery, and found conflicting evidence as to whether the town was responsible for providing perpetual care for graves it sold. Other complications resulted from the sale by the town to the late Ray Harrison in 1947 of all remaining graves in the cemetery, according to Lindsey.

Lindsey said the committee recommends that the town get a legal opinion on the status of the cemetery, that it try to locate remaining grave site owners by advertisement, and that a survey be done. Sobol directed Kirkpatrick to examine the cost of implementing the committee's suggestions, and to look into the alternative of getting the right, through a local bill at the state level, to maintain the cemetery.

WATER
Kirkpatrick also told the board that clarity of water being pumped from the new well at the golf course is "perfect," but that the need for a bigger pump there will put full operation of the well off for two weeks. He also noted that the water level at the reservoir is now down 48 inches, but that three pumps are now pumping water back up to the reservoir from the lower overflowing collection pond.

ASSAULT CASE
On a request by letter from

APPOINTMENTS
On recommendation of the

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