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Thursday, August 24, 1978 Vol 24. No. 44

Four youths charged with slaying of JEC employee

by Dan Ward
Two youths have been charged with first degree murder, and another two were expected to be charged with murder Tuesday, in connection with the bludgeoning death of a cottage parent supervisor at the Juvenile Evaluation Center (JEC) in Swannanoa August 21.

Michael Tilley, 16, of King, and David Wooten, 17, of Dallas, both residents at the JEC, were both charged as adults shortly after Larry Buchanan, 37, of Rt. 1 Black Mountain, died of injuries he received when he was beaten with a metal bedpost.

Despite intensive surgery at Memorial Mission Hospital, Buchanan died 15 hours after he received skull fractures in the beating.

Two other youths, aged 14 and 15, also boys, were expected to be tried as adults in the case. As of Tuesday, they were charged as juveniles with assault with a deadly weapon with intent to kill.

Don Pagett, director of the JEC, said that it is possible only one of the youths may have attacked Buchanan. The youths gave conflicting stories of what occurred Monday morning, he said.

According to Pagett, "their plan apparently was to assault a staff member, steal his keys, and let other students out."

There are 210 juveniles detained at the JEC. When Buchanan entered Greenville Cottage around 1 a.m., one to four of the boys attacked him with a metal bedpost, Padgett said.

When they realized that they had hurt the supervisor worse than intended, the boys decided not to run, he said. One of them, Pagett said, called another cottage parent for help.

"It was a random and senseless attack," Pagett said. "Larry was well-liked here. I think it would have been anyone who was alone in the cottage at the time." Buchanan, who was

married and had one daughter, had worked at the JEC since 1970. He had been a supervisor for four years. Buncombe County Sheriff's Police, who are investigating

the incident with the SBI, said adult warrants were expected to be filed against the two younger boys. All are being held without bond at the county jail.

Good start seen for school year

by Dan Ward
If local school principals see the school year starting with less capital improvements budgeted than needed, they all agree that their operating budgets are as good as they had hoped.

Black Mountain Primary School Principal Jerry Green capsulized Principal's opinions by saying, "We feel like we kept pace with what we had going, but we weren't able to start anything new."

Green said 620 to 625 students were expected to be registered by Labor Day, a few more than last year.

Black Mountain Primary School fared well in new personnel, adding a physical education teacher, a Title I reading teacher and, for half a day, a gifted student teacher.

In addition, Green said, "every kid now should have a reading workbook, which in the past they haven't had."

Swannanoa School Principal Bill Williams said his school fared well, having been budgeted \$125,000 for equip-

ment to be used in the new building to be completed in May, 1979. That building, to be used for grades Kindergarten through 5, will accommodate 850 to 900 students.

Although the school will have about 100 less students this year, with about 1150, it has gained a teacher, Williams said. A career education teacher for the upper grades began duties this week.

"We got off to a smooth opening and look forward to a real good year," Williams said.

Gene Dellinger at Black Mountain Grammar School said that only minor improvements have been scheduled for the school building, in compliance with Grand Jury recommendations last year to remove fire hazards.

He said the school board has budgeted money for remodeling the stairwells, providing lighted exit signs, and installing an alternate lighting system in compliance

with recommendations. He added, however, that he will meet with school officials in September to discuss building needs.

Enrollment has held about even, at 578, at the Grammar School. One additional teacher, Carol Patton, has begun working half a day at the school as a resource teacher, Dellinger said.

Betty Budd, principal of Carver, appeared to be as happy about the current attitude toward Carver as with this year's budget.

"Because we are a success and no longer an experiment, we are getting a lot of support from the school board," she said.

Improvements include \$1000 worth of permanent playground equipment and the addition of a primary reading aide, Beverly Link. Ms. Budd said that 80 students are now registered at Carver, compared to 75 at the end of last year.

She said that plans for the year include workshops in life

skills for students, parents and the public and training sessions with parent volunteers.

Ms. Budd said that the schools owe a debt to a new School Superintendent Andrew Miller for his hard-nosed dealing with the County Commissioners in obtaining funding for this school year.

Although Owen High School has no additional teaching positions this year, funds have been appropriated for over \$6,000 worth of renovations of the health occupations facilities. The baseball field will also have lighting before spring, according to Principal Charles Lytle.

Lytile added that one of the more significant changes this year will be a result of state-required competence testing.

"We're going to expect students to attend school better than they ever had, and we expect parents to support the program," he said.

About 1015 students will be enrolled at Owen this year. Lytle said.



A full moon rises over the mountains. (Dan Ward)

Two arrested, car hits store

Two Black Mountain youths were arrested in unrelated incidents by Black Mountain Police August 17.

James Edward Becker, 17, was charged with carrying a concealed weapon, possession of marijuana and public drunk that evening, according to police.

Later, police arrested Thomas Goodman, 16, at his home and charged him with embezzlement of approximately \$240 from the Arcade on State Street over a period of weeks.

Police responded to three accidents last week, including

one involving a car and a motorcycle. Phillip Gordon Thantham, 24, and Colleen Reese, 19, both of Black Mountain, were injured in that accident.

In another accident, a car driven by Mae Bell Williams

crashed into the front of Burton's Store, causing \$10,000 damage to the building and \$300 damage to the car August 20.

Mrs. Phillips reportedly put the car into a forward gear rather than reverse, the

mistake. She was unharmed, and was charged with reckless driving, police said.

Police received 279 calls, issued six citations, and investigated thefts of two bicycles and a CB radio last week.



Burton's Package Store experienced extra ventilation last week when the car driven by a Black Mountain woman crashed through the door. (see related story) (Gary Sorrels)

Owen in '78—inexperience vs enthusiasm

by Dan Ward
When conference coaches pick a team made up mostly of sophomores to be number three in the football finals, it means that they see

something other than experience and size counting in winning games.

One of the factors they are considering is Owen coach Denny Hicks and his staff,

who pushed a relatively small team to a conference title last year. Hicks doesn't see his young team as underrated—in fact he sees an opportunity to buck for another first place.

"We know we've got good athletes—good size, good speed, good strength. If we don't play like sophomores or a bunch of seniors who have it made, we can beat anybody," he said.

With only nine seniors, eight juniors, and an overwhelming 19 sophomores playing varsity this year, it will be difficult to fill the gap created by the graduation of 18 players last year.

"I think we've got poten-

tially a better ball club," Hicks said. "We're gonna have enthusiasm, we've had constant improvement, and we've got a terrific (freshman) football program here," he said. Sophomore varsity players are veterans of an undefeated 1977 freshman team.

Beyond that, Hicks said, "we have the best overall speed in the backfield we've ever had since I came here."

Hicks is extremely reluctant to point fingers when talking about team strength and weak points. He cautiously prefers speaking in general terms.

"If we have an overall weakness, it would have to be

inexperience. If we have a single weakness, in the past it has been putting points on the board," he said.

Because of that, extra attention has been put on training for offense. He said the coaches have also shifted some players around to make for a more aggressive offense.

The new Owen varsity, which Hicks said has been doing great in practice, will get a test of its strength in the season opener against Enka, rated fourth in the Big MAC, at home September 1.

This year's starting team will include Brad Levine at quarterback, Donald Reese at fullback and L.A. Boyd and

Dino Griffith alternating at tailback. Bobby Wilson and Desmond Owens will start as receivers. Mike Longmire, Tim Wilson, Jeff Haney, Wayne Padgett and Jack Ramsey are prospects for backs or ends.

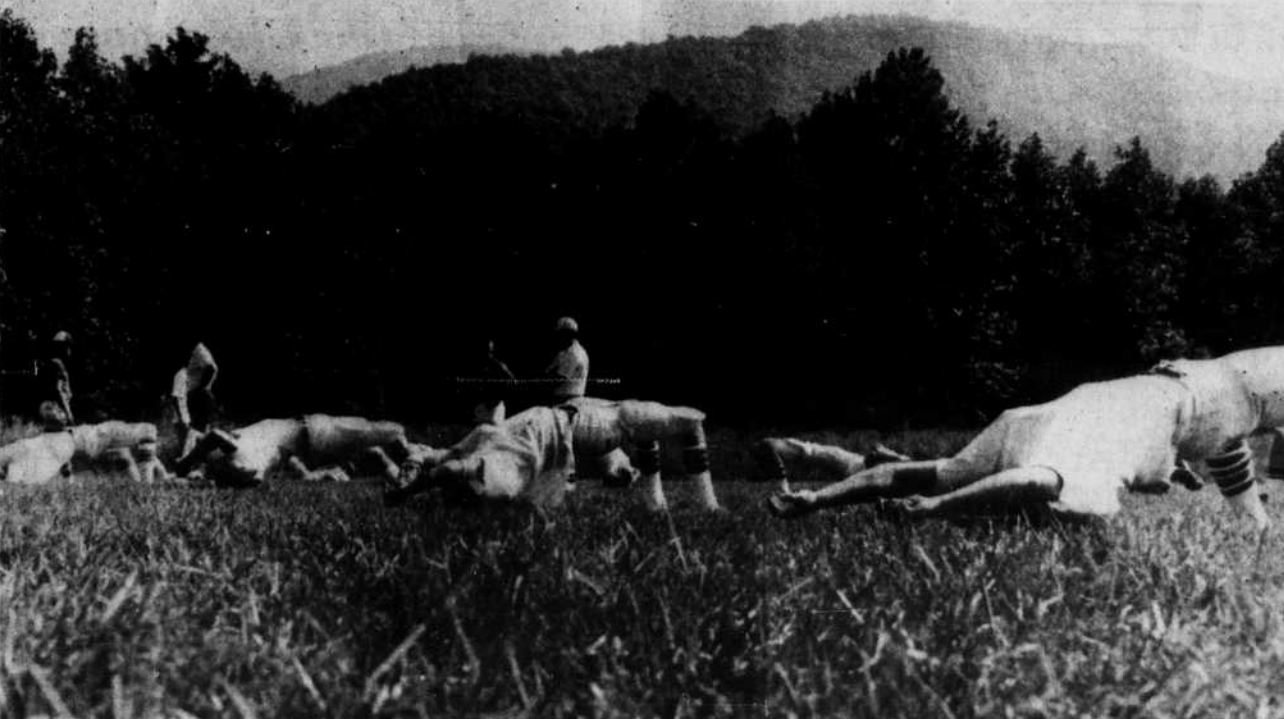
Starting on the line will be Tim Raines, George Blake, Gary Boyce, Greg Buckner, Keith Duncan and Wayne Reese. Dwayne Lynch is a prospect for tight end.

Even with a handful of good seniors in key positions, Hicks noted that the team is only as strong as its weakest link.

"We're looking for steady improvement with every game," he said. "That's where our salvation is."



Coach Denny Hicks—



"...steady improvement will be our salvation."

Chlorine poisoning injures Blue Ridge employee

An employee of Blue Ridge Assembly suffered poisoning from noxious chlorine gas August 17 when a valve on a tank used to chlorinate the assembly's pool broke.

According to Black Mountain Fire Chief Gary Bartlett, Scott Washburn was taken to Memorial Mission Hospital with minor injuries after the valve on a chlorine tank broke when Washburn was attempting to attach it to a chlorinating apparatus. Washburn kicked the tank into a pit and suffered poisoning shortly afterward. He was taken to the hospital in a private car while firemen wearing air tanks pumped the remaining chlorine into the pool.

"It was a wonder the tank didn't explode," Bartlett said. One engine, a rescue truck and 11 men were involved in that incident.

A grease fire at the Dennis Pressley residence at 377 Avena Road caused an estimated \$300 damage to a stove, cabinets and paint on August 19. One engine and 15 men responded.

Another grease fire at the Taylor Apartments caused \$25 damage the morning of August 18. Two engines and 10 men responded.

Black Mountain firemen also responded to two alarms caused by short circuits in the alarm system at Highland Farms on August 15.

The Fire Department ambulance made one emergency run last week. The Buncombe County ambulance made two emergency, 12 routine, and three unneeded runs last week.

Watch next week for the
1978 Owen football special
in the
Black Mountain News