

BLACK MOUNTAIN NEWS

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Booze bombs out

Petition, parking head board action

by Dan Ward
A packed house and a television news crew were disappointed when the liquor-by-the-drink referendum surfaced for only a few seconds during the shortest regular town Board meeting in Black Mountain in months September 11.

Mayor Tom Sobol made the only comments on Tuesday's referendum, repeating that the board had never officially taken a stand on liquor-by-the-drink, but only gave the people a chance to decide on the issue. All comments made to media were personal, not official views on the subject, he said. There was no response from the audience.

The most controversial aspect of the referendum was the peaceful meeting was the announcement of a petition signed by nine downtown merchants complaining of disruptive behavior by youths at the Arcade on State Street.

The merchants complained that youths at the arcade were

drinking in public, littering, shouting obscenities at passing drivers, and urinating on nearby buildings.

Bill Ricketts, owner of the arcade, called the complaints unjustified. He did not deny that such behavior took place, but said that the incidence of it had been blown out of proportion. He added that the youths behave well while in the business, and that some have been permanently kicked out.

Ricketts cited lack of law enforcement and a lack of "things to do here for younger people" as the cause of problems there.

Ald. A.F. Tyson countered, saying the young people should be home reading or using recreational facilities at Lake Tomahawk. "When I was growing up, there was too much to do here," Tyson said.

The rest of the board seemed to agree with a statement by Mayor Tom Sobol that police will have to provide "better control" on State Street.

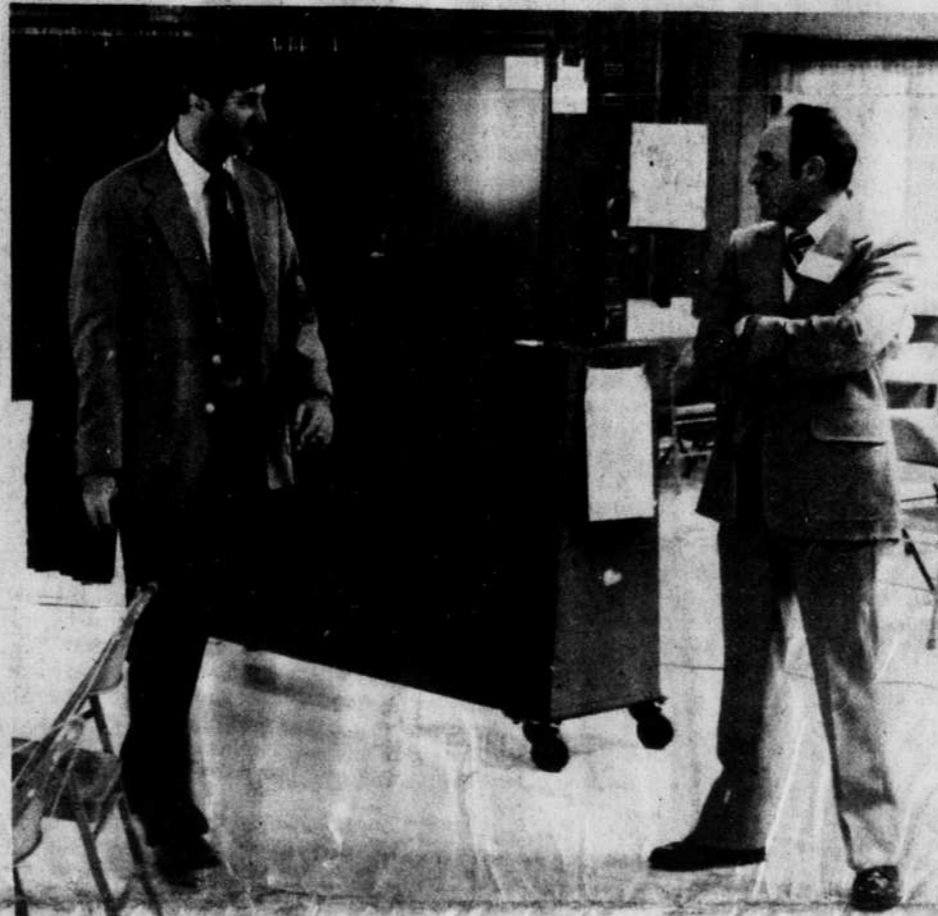
Two Hour Parking

Following a report by Town Manager Mack Kirkpatrick that free two-hour parking downtown "began as a headache" but shows promise as encouraging downtown shopping, the board chose to install two-hour free parking signs and permanently bag meter heads. The board chose, however, not to remove the meters until the two-hour parking system proves itself.

Kirkpatrick noted that many merchants have refrained from parking in front of stores, but are now taking prime spaces in free off-street parking lots. Most are parking in out of the way places to accommodate customers, he added.

Term Limitation

The board decided not to act on a suggestion by Howard Rogers, through Ald. Ruth Brandon, to re-evaluate a proposal to set the number of terms a person may be re-appointed to a board, the ABC continued on page 8



Early turnout was heavy at the Lake Tomahawk poll. (Dan Ward)

2 to 1 in Precinct 2, passes in Precinct 3

By Dan Ward

Mixed drink proponents stood outside the Lake Tomahawk Clubhouse and complained among themselves how so many could be taken in by false advertising by Black Mountain Concerned Citizens, an anti-mixed drink group, but none seemed too surprised that mixed drinks were voted down by a fairly large margin September 12.

Mayor Tom Sobol, who has favored mixed drinks here, listened as the others commented on hypocritical ministers and scare tactics. He didn't appear too upset over the outcome.

"The people decided this one, so there isn't much to say about it. I guess a 60 per cent turnout is pretty respectable," he said.

Sobol was at the clubhouse, the poll for Precinct 3, when the voting results were checked on the machines. A 15 vote majority, 329 - 314 for mixed drinks, caused little elation for pro-drink poll-watchers there.

"We'd guessed a long time ago that we'd have to win here by 150 votes to pass," he said, suggesting that pro-drink forecasters expected the referendum to fail in the second precinct, with polls at the Primary School.

The vote at the Primary School was a decisive 2 to 1 against mixed drinks, 335 - 148.

While 643 out of 1175

registered voters turned out in the third precinct, or about 55 per cent, 484, or 53 per cent voted in Precinct 2.

Some observers attributed the outcome to a lower than expected turnout and to a high number of elderly voters, considered to be primarily anti-drink. Approximately half of Black Mountain voters are over 50 years old. Four-fifths of the votes were in before 5 p.m. Tuesday, the time working persons traditionally rush to the polls.

Sobol was unwilling to say why he thought the referendum was defeated. Although he noted that the anti-mixed drink campaign had a good deal to do with it, he would not say that a pro-drink coalition would have helped the referendum to pass.

"Well, that's water under the dam now, I just don't know," he said.

Sobol did note that if a petition for a referendum to close the ABC Store is revived, it would meet with much stiffer opposition.

The Rev. Edgar Ferrell, chairman of Black Mountain Concerned Citizens, did not seem very surprised at the outcome, either.

"I think it shows sound judgement on the part of the majority," he said. "I don't think it indicates we are against progress, or that we are against good restaurants. It just shows we are going to evaluate what real progress is."

Ferrell said the the committee campaigned evenly throughout town, and could not explain why voting was so lopsided in one precinct and not the other.

Early morning voting was heavy in both precincts, with approximately 10 per cent of all registered voters casting their votes. By 2 p.m., voting at both precincts was still about even, with 29 per cent of the voters reporting at Precinct 2 and 31 per cent at Precinct 3.

At that stage, election judges at Lake Tomahawk said they had no way of knowing whether the vote was mainly pro or con mixed drinks.

"They just aren't saying," one judge said. "I know how four voted, but that's because they are my neighbors."

Meanwhile, voters at Precinct 2 were apparently less secretive about their ballots.

"It seems to be running about even, from what they are saying," one judge commented.

In a state-wide referendum on mixed drinks in 1973, Black Mountain voters defeated the proposal 619-355. However, the town voted in its ABC Store three years later by a narrow margin.

By Tuesday morning, no organized efforts on the part of proponents was yet apparent.

Horse, horseman, promoter equal winning team

by Dan Ward
As Johnny Fore of Swannanoa will tell you, it takes more than a great horse to win a world title in racking horse competition.

It takes promotion. And a good rider of course.

Those who watched Fore's horse, Sam Spade, a sleek stallion black as midnight, win the N.C. championship for four-year-olds at Monte Vista Farms two weeks ago realized that Fore has worked hard to make Sam Spade a familiar name in the stables. Banners, shirts and applause of the crowd showed the horse was a top contender.

When Sam Spade took the reserve, or second place, World Title for three-year-olds last year, an old-timer in the show told Fore that the horse would have taken a first if the judges had recognized him.

"They are all saying to

themselves that this could just be a good day for the horse — he may be terrible tomorrow," Fore said.

After that, Fore set out to get the best, and best-known, rider-trainer in the business and to get the word out that Sam Spade is champion material.

"I read all the magazine articles about racking horses and learned about Larry Thomas. To my knowledge, he's the only person who has won a world title and a grand world title — and he did them both last year. I said, 'well, if I could get this fellow to ride my horse, I'll stand a fair chance.'"

After Sam Spade proved himself to be champion material to Thomas, the 24-year-old Alabama rider-trainer agreed to see what he could do. Since then, Sam Spade this year has won 14 blue ribbons and three red in state championships and large

charity shows. His closest competitor has won only three blues.

Included in this year's trophies are first places in Missouri, Kentucky, Illinois, Georgia, South Carolina, and most recently here in Black Mountain, the North Carolina title. September 27 to 30, Fore, Thomas and Sam Spade go to Decatur, Ala., to compete for the coveted World Title of Racking Horses.

Racking horses, in general are being promoted by Fore even more than his own horse in particular. He was given a plaque by the N.C. Racking Horse Breeders Association for promoting the relatively new breed.

Racking horses first started competing only seven years ago, Fore said. The rack is an unusual gait that is part natural and part taught. Any breed of horse that shows a natural racking ability can be registered now, though Fore

predicts that the breeders' books will be closed soon.

"When we get enough registered racking horses we'll close the books," Fore said. "Then, the only way you'll be able to get a registered racking horse is to breed a registered stud to a registered mare. That's when the stud fees will get high."

Most racking horses now are bred from Tennessee Walking Horses, and Sam Spade is no exception. His grandfather was a grand world champion Tennessee Walker.

Fore, who has ridden since he was 13, has had a number of show horses, but is new to the calibre of competition Sam Spade faces. He said the decision to get a professional trainer and rider for the horse was a difficult one.

"Since I've got this good of a horse, I wouldn't want to do him an injustice by riding him myself. Me being in business,

I can't show my horse and condition him. This horse has to be worked every day," he said.

The hardest part is leaving the stallion in Alabama — though Fore said he has been down to watch the horse work out a number of times this summer.

Fore said he first saw Sam Spade when the horse was a colt. Even at that time, he said he saw what he calls "bloom", the stature and spirit of a winner, in the youngster.

After watching the horse compete for months, and its price tag go up \$1000 at each win, Fore bought the horse.

"I decided that if I was going to buy the horse, I'd better do it right away or I wouldn't be able to afford him," Fore said.

Fore made up for his hesitation in buying Sam Spade with some sharp horse dealing for his full younger brother. Fore traced the two-

year old by offering rewards, through auctioneers and private sales to a huge pasture in Missouri where the stallion was running wild with a herd.

"I didn't lie, but I didn't let the fellow who owned him know what he had, either," Fore said. He won't say how much he paid for the untrimmed, burr-covered horse, but "it wasn't very much."

"My trainer had that colt 60 days, and now he says 'I think we've got another world champion on our hands,'" Fore said.

Now that championship competition is in his blood, Fore, owner of Burger Hutt in Black Mountain, said he plans to begin breeding racking horses for a whole line of world champions.

"It's a lot more fun when your hobby turns into something that pays," he said. "It's always more fun when you're winning, of course."

Three youths charged

Two juveniles have been arrested and one is being sought in connection with a series of burglaries shortly after the three ran away from the Juvenile Evaluation Center in Swannanoa last week.

Two boys who were later picked up in Morganton have been charged with two counts of breaking and entering and two counts of larceny each in connection with break-ins at the Dairy King and at Leisure World on State Street in Black Mountain September 7.

According to police, the two boys, plus one who is still at large, entered Dairy King

through a window in the back and took cartons of cigarettes and about \$100 in change. The three also broke into the apparel store and took a change of clothes each and jewelry valued at \$172, beside causing \$200 damage to the back door in gaining entry, police said. The three are also suspected of stealing cars in Ridgecrest and Swannanoa. Two were aged 15 and the third is 14. Some of the property was recovered, police said.

Det. Don Ramsey said two 15-year-old Black Mountain youths were charged September 7 with larceny of a

bicycle. He said they were caught stripping the bike for parts. Ramsey said he is investigating the possibility that the youths were involved in some of the other 20-odd bicycle thefts reported this year.

Black Mountain Primary School experienced vandalism September 10 when persons broke the glass door to the cafeteria and scattered food about the floor, police reported. There are no suspects yet.

Police responded to one accident involving a minor injury and received 235 calls last week.

Black Mountain fire

Black Mountain firemen made four runs last week.

Approximately \$600 damage resulted from a fire in a car driven by Mary Pezant on Sutton Avenue in Black Mountain September 9. One engine and 15 men responded.

A fire caused by a welder caused \$250 damage to rolls of baling twine at Garland Landscaping on September 17. One engine and 15 men responded.

A second car was a total loss after a fire on US70 near Ridgecrest the morning of September 9. Two engines and 12 men responded to that fire.

An overheated stove was reported at 136 S. Ridgeway Ave., September 10. One engine and three men

responded. That incident is under investigation.

The Buncombe County

Ambulance Service made five routine and one emergency run last week.

Swannanoa fire

The Swannanoa Fire Department made two runs last week.

On September 4, 14 men responded to a call for assistance at the Abby Scott residence on Rockdale Avenue.

On September 6, seven men assisted the county ambulance in an emergency call on Wilson Avenue.

Fireman of the Month for July is Gene Garrison, who resides with his wife and family on Bee Tree Road and is employed at Swannanoa Flower Shop. For the month of August, Roger Patton is fireman of the Month. Patton is employed by Daniels Graphics and lives with his parents, Mr. and Mrs. Woodrow Patton, on Wilson Avenue.



Groome Donnie Thomas, Rider-Trainer Larry Thomas and Johnny Fore with the now-famous Sam Spade. At right, Thomas rides Sam Spade to a blue ribbon at Monte Vista last month.

