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## Board hears school plea, advises bond campaign

by Dan Ward  
Most of the 80 persons who attended the October 19 meeting of the Buncombe County School Board to witness reaction to a presentation of serious structural problems at Black Mountain Primary School came away with a feeling that the board turned a deaf ear and intends to use them to promote a school bond issue, according to Fred Myers, chairman of a subcommittee studying defects in Owen District Schools.

support for a county-wide bond issue. "We got the impression from Dr. Miller's remarks that the people pulling the strings are going to deny the money without passage of a bond issue," Myers said. Myers said he places little faith not only in the passage of a county bond issue, but in Black Mountain Primary

School getting much of the money if it should. Myers said that the school board, by not seeing safety hazards at Black Mountain Primary School as needing immediate attention, shows a bias toward this area. "You look around the county and see the lavish frills others have gotten," he said, giving saunas and lounges at

Erwin Middle School as examples, "and here we have kids who are going to fall out of the damn windows." Myers said he will support an effort by the Owen District Schools to continue appearing at the School Board meetings in support of a more concrete and immediate remedy to problems at Black Mountain Primary School.



Gov. Jim Hunt arrives at the Lakeview Multi-service Center, where he spoke for U.S. Rep. Lamar Gudger (behind right), who is running for reelection to the 11th District. (Dan Ward)

## Water cuts asked in Montreat

The Mountain Retreat Association, owner of Montreat's water system, has asked residents to cut back on use of water in view of the recent dry spell. Included in requests by the association are that citizens do not wash cars or water lawns, use half as much water in washing clothes, taking baths, or washing dishes; that they repair all household leaks; and report leaks in the supply lines to the association at 669-2914, according to Monroe Ashley, executive director of the association. The Association is seeking

cooperation from the entire community to conserve the water presently available and to assure that this amount is fairly distributed, Ashley said. Two of the major water users in Montreat are the Montreat Conference Center, operated by the association itself, and Montreat-Anderson College. Both institutions have been asked to involve its conferees and students in a sensible use of water. The Montreat water supply is ground surface water, primarily from Flat Creek. The system has an upper reservoir that furnishes pressure for needs at higher elevation as well as storage. The lower reservoir is the primary storage facility and provides almost all the water going into the system. Presently, the upper reservoir cannot meet the demand and recover during each 24-hour period. It is almost entirely inoperative, Ashley said. The lower reservoir is presently meeting the needs of the town, but is not able to recover completely each day. That means there is a net loss of water on a continuing basis. For the past few weeks, the Mountain Retreat Association has been pumping water from Flat Creek into the lower reservoir for 16 hours a day. This pumping operation takes place below the intake. This week they are installing an electric pump that can operate 24 hours a day. As long as the creek is flowing there should be no interruption of water service even though only a limited amount will be available for consumption. "On and off rationing" is not an option with this system, Ashley said.

## 'Elementary Watson'-- with best evidence

Montreat Police Captain Robbie Yates would like to be able to say it was super sleuth police work that led to the arrest of an Asheville man for the burglary of the Robert Brinkley home October 16 on Assembly Drive -- but it wasn't. You see, he apparently had a lot of help from the burglar. Police were searching the home for evidence as to who broke five windows and kicked in a door when Yates came across the sort of evidence that comes up once in a

million break-ins -- a wallet filled with identification cards, driver's license and vehicle registration. Yates immediately obtained a warrant on Robert Hudgins, 31, of Asheville, owner of the wallet. Montreat Officer Randy Halford, spotting Hudgins' car, arrested the man at McDibb's on Cherry Street later. "Every break-in is a house we had, they left a calling card like that, it would make our work a whole lot easier," Yates said.

"We found the wallet laying on the floor when we were looking for evidence. It looked like it fell out of his pocket when he kicked down a door," he said. Halford said Hudgins apparently cut his hand on a broken window when gaining entry to the house. Blood was found throughout the house. A trial date for felonious breaking and entering has been set for October 26 for Hudgins. He is now out on \$300 bond.

An older man, probably disguising his voice with a handkerchief, called in what was probably his second bomb threat in 10 days to the Black Mountain Grammar School October 19. Black Mountain Police and firemen responded to a call

## Older man sought for bomb threat

made to the school Thursday at 12:45 p.m. that a bomb was set to go off at 1:30 p.m. Children, told they were having a fire drill, were evacuated immediately and told to sit down in the athletic field, far from the school building. According to police, the caller is probably the same person who called Norton's Qwik shop the evening of October 9 with a report that a bomb would go off there at 10:30 p.m. No bombs were found in either instance. According to Black Mountain Det. Don Ramsey, police have a suspect in the calls, and are gathering evidence to warrant an arrest. He pointed out that the penalty for issuing a bomb threat is not less than 10 years in prison. Contrary to reports that children were hurt in

evacuating the school building, Librarian Wanda Davis, who answered the bomb call, said children left the building in an orderly manner. One child reinjured a broken leg while waiting on the athletic field for police and firemen to finish searching for a bomb, and another suffered a nosebleed from the excitement--otherwise, all went like any other fire drill, she said. Children were not fooled by reports that the evacuation was only a fire drill. "We all knew they were looking for a bomb because they (police and firemen) were all wearing these funny suits and we had to sit way out in the field," said Tommy Fair, a Grammar School student. Like the call to Norton's two weeks ago, the caller Thursday gave only a short message that a bomb would go

off shortly, according to Ms. Davis. "I thought he had a handkerchief or something over the phone because I could hardly understand him," she said. Brian Roberts, an employee of Norton's, said that the caller he talked to "just sounded like a middle-aged man talking under his breath." Unlike the earlier episode at the Qwik shop, the caller made a second call to the Black Mountain News-Thursday. According to News receptionist Mary Mauldin, the caller--an older man with a disguised, gravelly voice--said simply, "There is a bomb scare at Black Mountain Grammar School. There are police cars, fire trucks and an ambulance there. I just thought you'd like to know," and hung up.

and one by the mayor of Asheville, for being an outstanding handicapped employee. He said he admires his bosses for nominating him, but he thinks the awards should have gone to someone who would get more good out of them. "I don't really go for that, y'know. I don't consider myself handicapped. That's not for me, it's good for some people, though. I guess it just showed some that they can work, too," he said. Oates takes pride in being

## Arson investigated in woodworking fire

Arson is suspected as the cause of a fire at Black Mountain Woodworking early the morning of October 20. Black Mountain police and firemen investigated the fire,

and called in the SBI when no cause for the fire was found. Damage, caused mainly by water when the sprinkler system was set off, has been estimated at \$10,000 to \$12,000.

Two engines and 15 men responded. Another fire that is still under investigation caused \$18,000 damage to the Danny Carver residence on Taber-

nacle Road October 19. The fire, thought to have begun in or near a chair in the living room, totally engulfed the house. Nobody was injured. Three engines and 16 men responded. Black Mountain firemen responded to nine other alarms last week, five of them in a 24 hour period. One engine and 10 men responded to an alarm caused by a malfunction in the alarm system at WNC Hospital on October 16. A grease fire at the Sanders residence on Mississippi Road in Montreat caused \$25 damage that day, also. Two engines and 18 men responded. Later that day, one engine and 15 men responded to a chimney fire at the Bartlett residence on Rainbow Lane. No damage was reported. Damage estimated at \$500 resulted from a fire caused by a faulty fireplace at the home of R.S. Eckles on West State Street October 17. Two engines and 17 men responded. On October 19, one engine and 12 men responded to a

bomb threat at Black Mountain Grammar School (see related story). On October 19, one engine and 15 men were called to wash down after an accident involving three cars and a school bus on Old US 70 west. One person was injured in the accident. Also that evening, one engine and 14 men responded to a report of an overheated stove at the Jack Lee residence on Hiwassee Avenue. No damage was reported. Two engines and 18 men responded to a woods fire that started from a controlled burning on Old Walkertown Road October 21. On October 22, one engine and 16 men were called to put out a car fire at Highland Farms that caused \$100 damage. The Fire Department ambulance made one emergency and one routine run last week. The county ambulance made four emergency, 10 routine and one unneeded run last week.



Assistant Black Mountain Fire Chief Sterling Poe inspects damage at scene of a house fire on Tabernacle Road. (Dan Ward)

## Voting bounds changed

A boundary change has been made between Black Mountain precincts numbers 1 and 4 to include in the number 4 precinct those voters living on the South of North Fork Road completely surrounded by the corporate limits of the Town of Black Mountain. These voters will be notified by card of the change. If there are any questions, the Board of Elections has offered to help. The polls will open at 6:30 a.m. and close at 7:30 p.m. on November 6, with the November 7 general election. These hours are set

by statute and are the same for every election. Absentee applications for the November General Election must be in the hands of the Board of Elections no later than November 1. That is the last day to also vote one-stop in the board's office. Any applications received after that date will not be honored, the board has announced. Absentee ballots, however, may be returned to the Board up until 5 p.m. on November 6, whether by mail, in person, or by a near relative of the voter.

Absentee ballots will be counted at 2 p.m. Election Day in the Board's office in the Courthouse Annex. Any interested voter may be present, but the results are not announced until after the close of the polls. Absentees may be applied for either in person or by a near relative in the board's office. If the voter can not come to the office and does not have a near relative, a written request may be sent or brought to the office for an application. Carpenters and mechanics get used to seeing tools walk away, never to be heard from again -- it's an unpleasant aspect of the job. That's why Neal Bartlett was a little surprised last week to get a check from Gwendolyn Sachtleban in Traverse City, Mich. for a brush he never expected to hear from again. Mrs. Sachtleban sent the check in care of a Black Mountain Service station where Bartlett had been working. "Sir," she wrote, "By mistake a steel brush was taken from your station while we were getting gas. It was being used by your carpenters who were doing your rest rooms. My apologies to them, and the check is to buy another brush." Restores some faith in human nature, doesn't it?

## No brush-off here

and one by the mayor of Asheville, for being an outstanding handicapped employee. He said he admires his bosses for nominating him, but he thinks the awards should have gone to someone who would get more good out of them. "I don't really go for that, y'know. I don't consider myself handicapped. That's not for me, it's good for some people, though. I guess it just showed some that they can work, too," he said. Oates takes pride in being

what he calls "half compassion and half copperhead." As he was interviewed during his last day on the job, none of the copperhead was apparent as co-workers offered beafy handshakes and tearful kisses. "I've always been a maverick--I won't join nothing," he said. "I don't want to lose my power to think for myself. Never did get married. I just don't get involved in the games people play. 'Make love to life' is my philosophy," he said. Oates said he plans to use the time between now and January to visit old friends. "Come 7 o'clock Monday morning, me and my brother will be heading down the road to Texas," he said. And when January rolls around and he can get his old job back? "I'll loaf around a couple months and if I want to, I'll come back. I'm not the one to sit around and twiddle thumbs, though."

## Work on wheels his life

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