

Valley water holding despite ongoing drought

by Dan Ward

Although the rain that fell Tuesday did virtually nothing to affect local water supplies, or an existing burning ban, water supplies remained stable in Black Mountain, Montreat and Ridgecrest.

Black Mountain's reservoir is holding somewhat steady at 8 feet, 6 inches from the top, according to Town Manager Mack Kirkpatrick. That is down three inches from last week.

"Judging from the consumption, people are consuming," Kirkpatrick said. He credited a new well on the Black Mountain Golf Course as keeping the town from entering a crisis situation.

"That well is evidently just taking up the slack. The spring (feeding the town's reservoir) is just dried up," he said. Kirkpatrick said that unless a heavy rain falls within the next two weeks, the town may have to buy water from Asheville.

Springs feeding Montreat's water system are at the same level they were two weeks ago when the Mountain Retreat Association asked water users to cut back, according to John Lewis, supervisor for the water system.

"People probably did cut back," Lewis said. "You don't see anybody washing cars any more. But we don't see any change one way or the other."

Lewis said there are no plans now to ration water in Montreat.

Primarily because of three new wells drilled last year, Ridgecrest has been faring better than most towns in the mountains, according to David Hall, maintenance supervisor for the Ridgecrest Conference Center.

"We've still got about half a lake full," Hall said. "We'd be dry without the wells, though." Hall said the reservoir level dropped 1½ feet in two weeks, but is still far from the cut-back stage in spite of large conferences.

Ridgecrest, which used to suffer early water shortages, drilled three wells last year and three the year before to supplement its stream-fed reservoir.

Charges dropped in Tarbert death

Charges of first degree murder against Terry Fisher Stanley, 25, of Black Mountain were dismissed voluntarily by District Attorney Robert Fisher November 7, in Superior Court "due to insufficient evidence to warrant prosecution."

Stanley had been charged in the death of Margaret Jenne Tarbert, 18, of Black Mountain, whose decomposed body was found in a garage at 107 Walker St., belonging to Stanley's mother on May 13.

The case was dismissed with leave by the prosecutor, which means the case can be brought up again and Stanley will go to trial should Fisher or his successor, Ronald Brown, gather enough additional evidence to warrant a trial.

Fisher would not say whether more evidence was expected, or whether any plan exists to re-open the case.

"I just couldn't comment on that—it wouldn't be proper," Fisher said.

Stanley was charged with the murder of Miss Tarbert, his fiancée, shortly after the body, which had been found by his mother, Ann F. Stanley of Philadelphia, Pa., had been identified. The girl had been reported missing on February 9.

At that time, Stanley told police that he had changed locks on the garage door, according to Sheriff Tom Morrissey.



"When the cows lay down, rain is on its way" goes an old country saying. Unfortunately, these cows didn't tell how little rain was going to fall Tuesday. (Sharon Suttles)

Hearings set for drug store holdup

Preliminary hearings for two persons in connection with the October 24 armed robbery of Ward's Drug Store were expected to be held November 8 and a series of hearings for a third have been set for November 10 and 15.

Although a fourth person suspected of taking part in the robbery remains at large, the district attorney's office set hearings for Wednesday for Lonnie Howard Fox, 27, of Black Mountain, on charges of robbery with a deadly weapon, breaking and entering, and larceny. Fox was in custody with bond set at \$50,000 as of Tuesday.

Debra Gragg Effler, 18, of Swannanoa, who had been released on a secured property bond, was expected to appear Wednesday on the charge of accessory after the fact in the robbery.

Carmie Hensley, 25, of Asheville, was expected to appear for preliminary hearings November 10 and again on November 15 on the charges of assault with a deadly weapon, assault with a deadly weapon with intent to do serious bodily injury, robbery with a deadly weapon, breaking and entering and larceny. Contrary to incorrect information given to, and printed in, the News last week, Hensley, as of Tuesday was still in custody, with bond raised to \$80,000.

A fourth suspect, Warren Lloyd Phillips, 21, of Swannanoa, was still at large Tuesday. Sheriff's police reported that no new evidence has been uncovered in the investigation of the robbery October 24 of Ward's Drug Store in Black Mountain, police reported.

According to police, "a large quantity of drugs and several hundred dollars in cash" were taken by two men wearing ski masks and carrying semi-automatic rifles.

According to a witness of the robbery, one of the men shot a box on the floor of the store to show employees the rifle was loaded, then took all the narcotics at the store. The spokesman said the store will no longer stock narcotics.

Chase driver sentenced

A Marion youth was sentenced November 6 to 18 to 36 active months in jail as a result of a movie-style chase in which two police cars were damaged and two police injured on October 16.

Eric Todd Foster, 16, was found guilty of assault with a deadly weapon, two counts of damage to property, eluding police officers, reckless driving and driving in excess of 15 miles per hour over the speed limit to evade police officers. A variety of other charges against the youth were dropped.

Foster led police on a chase that began in Black Mountain, went to Swannanoa, and ended up west of Marion. Police from Buncombe and McDowell County Sheriff's Departments, as well as Black Mountain Police, were involved in the chase, before the youth was stopped by a train in Marion and arrested by Black Mountain Police.

Parties more exciting than milestone

by Dan Ward

Monday morning, Margaret Roane was still recovering from a couple of birthday parties held for her Friday and Saturday. It still overwhelmed her that so many people should make such a to-do over her 100th birthday.

"Everybody has been so lovely to me," the resident of Dogwood Manor said. "I was just overwhelmed—I was just speechless."

Her uncertainty of emotions was evident at the nursing home Friday as staff members carried in cake after cake and a huge cooler of juice, and every resident turned out for the special occasion. But her happiness was evident also, as a familiar voice would occasionally whisper special congratulations in her ear.

"They've done everything to make it happy—nice gifts and food. But best of all is the good humor they've gotten everybody in," Mrs. Roane said of the affair at Dogwood Manor.

But the celebration did not end there. On Saturday, the centenarian went to a niece's home in Asheville, where friends she hadn't seen in years came to laud her.

"There were even people there I hadn't seen before," she said.

Special phone calls came in from friends and relatives across the country, and one nephew even called from London. "He sounded as though he was standing just outside the door," she said.

Mrs. Roane, who hails originally from Macon County, is hesitant to advise others on how to lead a better life based on her years of experience.

"I probably could, but people don't take advice," she said, demonstrating her knowledge of human nature. However, she did reveal what she believes has helped her reach a rare age.

"I know hard work won't hurt anybody, because I've worked hard all my life. I was born and raised on a farm. I think just hard work and a clean life is all there is to it."

"Most of all, you've got to have the Lord with you—that's what kept me going. Without the goodness of my Heavenly Father, I wouldn't be here now," she said. She was very active in affairs at the Asheville Central United Methodist Church until her health kept her from attending "six or seven years ago."

"My eyes failed me, that's been my worst trouble," she said.

Early in life, Mrs. Roane tried her hand at the boarding house and hotel business, then tried a variety of jobs, including housewife, before retiring at 77 from Belk's Department store when she had to have major surgery.

Until she moved to Dogwood Manor in 1974, she lived with her niece and her husband in Asheville for a number of years.

Mrs. Roane is casual in speaking about her age, and hardly has the awe her friends have for 100 years.

"I've lived a full and happy life. One hundred years is enough for anybody to live. Of course, I'll live as long as the Good Lord wants me to," she said matter-of-factly.



Margaret Roane blows out the candles on her centennial birthday cake. (Dan Ward)

SVFD fire calls up now

After three months of almost no activity, the Swannanoa Fire Department made up for quiet times with 11 runs by fire and rescue personnel in the last week and a half.

Two brush fires, thought to have been set by children, were reported on October 25 on New Salem Road. One truck and 15 men responded the first time. Four hours later, the fire was reset and two trucks and 17 men responded.

On October 28, the rescue squad responded to a report of a minor gunshot wound at 213 Richmond Ave. No charges were pressed in that domestic disturbance.

Also that day, 18 persons took part in a search for a teenage boy lost while squirrel hunting. The boy was found as mutual aid arrived from Riceville and Buncombe County.

Two engines and 15 men responded to a false alarm of a brush fire on Old Lytle Cove Road October 29. Also that day, two trucks and 16 men were called to put out a brush fire on Patton Cemetery Road.

One truck and seven men responded to an illegal burning on US 70 and Warren

Black Mountain fire

Wilson Road November 2. Also that day, one truck and six men were called to put out an ambulance on fire at I-40 and Lytle Cove Road. The ambulance belonged to Burke County. No damage was reported.

The Black Mountain Fire Department responded to a house trailer fire on Old N.C. 10, in Kerlee Heights, on November 5. The trailer was unoccupied, being used only for storage. Damage was estimated at \$5,000. The trailer was owned by Edley Hutchins. Two engines and 19 men responded. An investigation of the cause of the fire is in process.

An auto accident on N.C. 9 on November 2 resulted in Randy Morris of Broad River being trapped in a truck for approximately 35 minutes. Morris suffered a fractured hip. Paul Hamilton and Marion Godfrey, both in a truck owned by the Town of Black Mountain, received minor injuries. One engine, one rescue truck, two ambulances and 19 men responded.

Al Richardson of Black Mountain received a broken arm in an auto accident on U.S. 70 west on November 1. One engine and 17 men responded for the washdown.

On November 4, a car overturned on N.C. 9. No injuries were reported. One rescue truck, one engine and 21 men were on standby for gas leak.

A house fire on Lytle Cove Road November 4 was found to be in the Swannanoa District. One engine and 15 men responded, but returned when they found Swannanoa VFD had responded.

One engine and four men were called to Norton's Quick Shop on November 3 for wash down of a gas spill.

A brush fire on Lake Eden Road burned approximately three-tenths acre on November 5. Two engines and 15 men responded.

The Black Mountain Fire Department ambulance made one emergency run last week. The county ambulance made eleven routine, six emergency and three unneeded runs last week.

30 years ago.....

ed. note—This column ran for a few months last year until our files were sent off to be microfilmed. To tell the truth, a bad memory has kept us from renewing the series. Lately, however, requests have shown there are a number of persons interested in once again reading what was the news in the Swannanoa Valley, 30 years ago this week.

The front page editorial on the November 11 issue of the Black Mountain News took the opportunity to poke fun at predictions that Dewey would win the presidential election, held three days earlier. It noted that the now famous editions of the Chicago Tribune with headlines announcing "Dewey Wins" were already selling for \$25 per issue.

Jack Greenwood's column told of C.W. White's ad to sell a house for \$1800 coming out in the paper as \$800. Folks lined up to check out the bargain at the White residence.

Greenwood also noted that a new sort of electric throttle train engine was being introduced that allowed two or more engines to be coupled together, yet be driven by only one engineer.

A photo on page 4 showed the first women ever admitted to the U.S. Air Force. It noted that their hair had to be cut to conform to air force regulations.

In advertising, Black Mountain Hardware had a sale on the "Woman Saver Mixer," a device that would "save the cook's nerves and time." Black Mountain Lumber had a sale on Congowall, super valspar and Zonolite. Northwestern Bank ran an ad praising Armistice Day.

Porter's Foods in Swannanoa had specials on canned goods. Number 2 cans of tomato juice were 3 for 39 cents, cherries 3 cans for 89 cents, corn 3 cans for 53 cents. Coffee cost 40 cents per pound.

The Roxy Theater in Swannanoa was showing Key Largo, with Humphrey Bogart, Edward G. Robinson and Lauren Bacall. Other movies on the lineup were Marshal of Reno, Mickey in Cinecolor, Rose of Rio Grande and Northwest Stampede.

McMurry Chevrolet was featuring the Supercushion tire with the "stop notches." And that's the way it was.