

Second class postage paid
Black Mountain, NC 28711

- ★ Black Mountain
- ★ Swannanoa
- ★ Montreat
- ★ Ridgecrest

Happy Thanksgiving



Modern day Pilgrims and Indian from a special Thanksgiving program at Swannanoa School.

BLACK MOUNTAIN NEWS

DEVOTED 100% TO OUR COMMUNITY — THE GROWING SWANNANOVA VALLEY

Thursday, November 23, 1978, Vol. 25, No. 5

15 cents per copy

Bee Tree fish kill studied

by Dan Ward
Laboratory testing continues into the source of contamination that killed an estimated 6000 fish in Bee Tree Creek and the Swannanoa River November 18 and 19.

According to Mike Parker, who investigated the kill for the Environmental Management Division of the Department of Natural Resources, the results of an investigation completed by him and of testing to be done in Raleigh will be presented to the Environmental Management Commission soon to determine whether any fines will be imposed for the contamination.

Parker said his testing has determined the cause of death and source of the pollution, but that results cannot be released except by the commission after it has met on the incident. That meeting may be more than a month from now because of a backlog of analyses in Raleigh.

A possible source of the contamination is Chemtronics, Inc., which, along with Winston Mills and Owen Manufacturing, is located

upstream of the kill - near Warren Wilson College.

In a statement released by Tom Hildebrand, president of Chemtronics, it was noted that an accidental spill of a portion of 360 gallons of sulfuric acid occurred at the plant November 18, and was discovered later that day. According to Hildebrand, settling in a holding tank for the acid indicated that a capacity for an additional 1000 gallons existed, when it did not. Some acid transferred to the tank Saturday overflowed from the top, and leached into canal, where employees noticed some fish had been killed. An emergency dam was built to contain the runoff and state and local authorities were contacted that day, he said. Tests of the water in Bee Tree Creek Sunday indicated that toxic levels of sulfuric acid did not exist in the creek then, the statement read.

According to Parker, 95 per cent of the fish killed were rough fish, while 5 per cent were brim and bass. He said reports that many catfish were killed were incorrect.

The kill is the second in the Swannanoa River in four

months. A spill of industrial cleaner killed approximately 225 brown trout, most of them stocked only the day before, in the Swannanoa River in Black Mountain August 14.

Max Haner, a chemist with the Environmental Management Division, said

that the kill was apparently caused by a detergent washed into the Black Mountain storm sewers by Black Mountain firemen and rain after a drum of the chemical spilled in a truck on Richardson Boulevard. No fines were imposed in that incident because the source could not

be verified, nor blame established in the incident, he said.

Fines by the commission consist only of the cost of restoring the river and restocking fish killed, if the incident is determined to be accidental, Haner said.



Lake Susan was once again a crater last week when it was drained to replace fill that had washed out at the base of the dam. The contractor who repaired the dam last year replaced dirt fill with clay at no cost to the Mountain Retreat Association. (Dan Ward)

Volunteers—good outweighs problems

by Dan Ward
If the drawbacks to using parent volunteers in public schools came close at all to outweighing the advantages, it is doubtful that volunteerism would be so heavily pushed by the governor's office. Governor Jim Hunt, himself, works for a few hours each week as a volunteer reading aid in Raleigh Public Schools - and uses every opportunity to encourage others to do the same.

The disadvantages, however, do exist. The greatest quail about parent volunteers, as seen by principals and volunteers in valley schools, comes from the teachers. Teachers, especially those who have been the sole authority in a classroom for years, sometimes worry that volunteer parents are evaluating their performance - placing them on a stage. According to valley principals, such fears have little effect in schools here.

"In all the classes where we have volunteers working with teachers, I've never heard of a problem," said Gene Dellinger of Black Mountain Grammar School. Jerry Green of Black Mountain Primary School said the feeling of being evaluated has been voiced, but that a realization by parents that teachers are human, too, has lessened the discomfort and opened communications.

Swannanoa School Principal Bill Williams said he has only once had to move a parent volunteer to a non-classroom

position because of conflicts with a teacher.

"Before we start a new person, I'll talk to the volunteers as I would substitute teachers and tell them to treat their own children and neighbors professionally," Williams said. "A lot of principals would consider parents coming in as meddling - not so here."

Carver School takes an unusual approach in that parents are encouraged to work in their own children's classes, and criticism of the teachers is expected.

"It's encouraged," said one volunteer. "It's constructive criticism. You've got to remember, also, that the evaluation works both ways. The teacher gets a better idea of what sort of family life this child comes from."

Volunteers at Carver pointed out suggestions and criticism, when offered on a daily basis, do not amount to the crisis situation that might develop when a parent only learns how the child is doing at report card time.

"You become friends with the teachers - you're communicating. It's not a one-day judgement," one said.

Another problem, but one that all principals said did not exist in schools here, is a reluctance on the part of administrators and teachers to have "outsiders" viewing procedures at their schools. Williams summed up the general attitude by saying, "If we're doing something wrong, we'd change it - but we're not going to hide it."

Bossy or overprotective parents have never existed in volunteer programs in the schools here, all said.

The advantages of volunteerism go beyond supplying helpers to teachers, although that is the primary purpose.

"Volunteers can work with individual reading groups or slow learners. They get a lot of individual attention that way - especially children who need it," said Marie Kaplan, a volunteer at Carver.

Most volunteers in the valley work with small reading groups, working on specific reading deficiencies. While individualized teaching is an obvious advantage, the volunteers provide a bonus in morale.

"I feel one of the greatest contributions a volunteer makes is his or her attitude. It's usually optimistic and encouraging. Their presence brings a really uplifted appreciation to staff as well as students," said Betty Budd, principal and teacher at Carver.

"The student being tutored is eager to please the volunteers and makes an extra effort as a result," she added. The morale boost works both ways.

"It's an exciting thing, seeing a child improve as a result of your help," said Landy Qualls, a Carver volunteer and former teacher. "They are always doing a lot of fun things here. I always feel I don't want to miss being here."

Parents, too, learn by teaching.

"By getting mothers to come and work with the children, they can better understand the program," according to Dellinger.

A more unique case of a parent learning by teaching occurred at Black Mountain Primary School, where Green said one mother once taught reading and improved her own reading ability in the process.

Green said the morale aspect is very important in volunteer help. "The kids eat up hearing someone say, 'You

read that good,'" he said.

The role of volunteer itself makes volunteers a whole different aspect of education. All principals agreed that volunteers do not represent authority as much as a "grown-up helper" to the children.

"We are more like buddies," said one Carver volunteer.

She explained that volunteers work under the instructions of the teacher, who diplomatically guides volunteers and students into a

relationship that is not quite teacher-student nor parent-child.

Both parent and teacher qualities are called for.

"Sometimes all you have to do is pat them on the hand or sit down beside them to relieve their frustrations," said one Carver volunteer of her rapport with the children.

At Carver, where volunteerism is integral to the teaching system used, another

Cont. on page 6



A volunteer from Owen High School reads to youngsters at Black Mountain Primary School. (Dan Ward)

Water holding even here

by Dan Ward

Black Mountain and Montreat water supplies remain critically short, but appear to be at almost the same level as last week, following moderate rains Friday.

According to Black Mountain Town Manager Mack Kirkpatrick, the water level at the reservoir is down

12 feet, almost a foot below last week. He said the level may drop as low as 18 feet before it could no longer be used.

Progress on a new well at the golf course was set back when the drill struck rock early this week, he said. However, as of Tuesday, the drill was past rock and down to 200 feet. Although Black

Mountain has not begun using Asheville water, that possibility may not be far off, he said.

"If we don't hit water over there (at the new well) soon, or get more rain, we'll have to," Kirkpatrick said. "The rain Friday helped us a little, but not as much as a person might think."

John Lewis, superintendent for the Mountain Retreat Association water system, said streams feeding the water system remain at the same level as last week.

"The rain helped over the weekend when we had a crowd up here, but we're back to where we were now."

"Folks seem to be cooperating, but we've still got a few carwashers," Lewis said. He said some people have been individually asked to cut back on water use.

Despite little rainfall over the past four months, Ridgecrest, supplied by wells at the Ridgecrest Assembly, has not suffered critical water shortages.

ABC profits down 13%

Following an unexplainable slump in sales for October, the Black Mountain ABC board once again discussed the possibility of converting to a self-service operation.

W.L. Wheelon, manager of the store, told the board that sales for last month were down 12 to 13 per cent from the year before. Since the opening of I-40, and previous to last month, sales averaged 5 to 7 per cent below last year, he said.

Wheelon said that there is a possibility that he will obtain estimates at the beginning of next year to find the cost of converting the existing store to self-service. He said

reports from existing self-service stores in North Carolina indicate sales could increase by 15 to 20 per cent.

Wheelon said he could not explain the October slump, but said that business for November has been back at the previous norm.

The board will meet next on December 20 at 4 p.m. at the store.

Sorry—we're closed

The office for the Black Mountain News will be closed all day Thursday for Thanksgiving. News and advertising only will be taken Friday, November 24, from 9 a.m. until noon. Normal office hours of 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. will resume on Monday.