

Police search for clues in young mother's disappearance

Carolyn Riddle Simpson was last seen on August 1, 1980, walking away from the Monte Vista with a bag in her hand, leaving her husband and a two and a half month old baby behind. No one has heard from her since that August morning.

Jim Dolan, investigator on the case for the Black Mountain Police Department, said, "We're sort of at a dead end. If anyone has any information



whatsoever, the parents just want to know if she is dead or alive."

Carolyn Simpson is 5 feet 10 inches tall, weighs 165-180 pounds and has light brown hair. She will be 18 years old next month.

She and her husband moved to a farm in this area from South Carolina in May, 1980, with their baby daughter, Alisha.

From the farm, Carolyn sent letters home to her parents, describing her life here as happy, reporting on the progress of their granddaughter just a month before she disappeared.

The handwriting in the three letters police hold varies greatly from paragraph to paragraph. Inspector Dolan said that it may not be her writing at all, that the letters may have been written under duress, or that the uneven handwriting reflects a mental problem.

From the farm, the Simpsons moved to an apartment at the Monte Vista, where Carolyn was last seen. Her husband said that she left him a note saying that she was leaving and that she was giving him the baby.

The Simpsons had been married about a year and had had marital problems, Dolan said. He said that although it appeared to be a case of a runaway, there are reasons for suspicion of foul play. "The parents feel she's the victim of foul play," he said.

Even if she did leave her husband and baby voluntarily, her parents do not understand why they have not heard from her. Carolyn is the youngest of five sisters, with whom she was very close, her parents say. None of them has heard from her.

The remains of a body which might be Carolyn Simpson's were recently found in Florida, but without further evidence there is no way for police or her parents to be certain. Anyone with information about Carolyn Simpson is asked to call the Black Mountain Police, 669-8072.

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MOUNTAIN NEWS

Dedicated to the growing Swannanoa Valley

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Burglaries up in area -- detective gives advice

by Cynthia Reimer

'Tis the season for --robberies.

"Break-ins usually increase at this time of year," said Black Mountain Police Department's investigator, Jim Dolan. But, there are ways to reduce the chances of being robbed, Dolan believes, and there are ways to increase the likelihood of the burglars being caught and convicted.

Common sense is important, Dolan said. For example, if you are a businessman, don't count the cash register contents in front of a window, a practice Dolan observed while walking down State Street one evening last week.

If you must carry money from your business to your car and you see something suspicious, call the police, Dolan said. They will gladly send an officer to escort you to your car or to investigate the suspicious activity.



"Police work is 90 percent service," Dolan said. "It's not all catching bad guys."

Most home robberies occur during the day when both husband and wife are away for a predictable number of hours, Dolan said.

The best defense against home

robberies, he believes, is a neighborhood watch system, where neighbors co-operate in keeping an eye on each others' homes and reporting any strangers or unusual activity to the police immediately.

Some people are hesitant to call the police when they see something suspicious, Dolan said. He doesn't think it's a matter of not wanting to get involved. Instead, he believes people are afraid of making a mistake and either looking foolish or "bothering" the police.

"They are NOT bothering us," Dolan emphasized. "It doesn't hurt to call us. You don't even have to give your name."

Also, Dolan said, don't call out to suspicious persons and ask them what they are doing, alerting them to being seen. Call the police instead. And instruct children not to give strangers

directions to anyone's house.

What if your home or your business is burglarized? Do as little as possible until police arrive, Dolan advised.

Often people destroy clues, making it difficult or impossible for police to collect evidence. "The initial investigating officer will tell you what to safeguard. Otherwise we're losing valuable evidence and clues," Dolan said.

Glass or plastic surfaces, Dolan said, are the best for gathering fingerprints left by the burglars, so don't wipe them clean before the detective arrives. Also, don't smudge tracks the burglars may have left, indoors or outdoors.

Detective Dolan has been with the Black Mountain Police since Nov. 17, 1980. He is retired from the New York Police Department and has been in police work for 24 years.



Drs. Herman F. Allen (l) and Paul M. Limbert (r) review plans for the Great Decisions '81 program with Dr. Bahram Farzanegan, director of Community Services at UNC-A. The nationwide program is designed to increase understanding of eight of the principal foreign policy issues facing the U.S., and give participants a chance to express their views to the nation's decision-makers.

U.S. and Soviet Union subject for Great Decisions lecture

by Herman F. Allen

The 1981 Great Decisions program will open in Black Mountain on Tuesday, February 3, 7:30 p.m. Dr. Ted Uldrick of the department of history, UNC-A, will present the lecture. The subject for the evening will be "The U.S. and the Soviet Union: Dilemmas of Power and Peace." Dr. Uldrick's new book, "Diplomacy and Ideology: The Origins of Soviet Foreign Relations," has just been published.

Succeeding lectures will be: "From Cairo to Kabul: Oil, Islam, Israel and Instability" by Ambassador Abbas Farzanegan, former Iranian envoy on Tuesday, Feb. 10; "China after Normalization: How Good a Friend of the U.S.?" by Dr. James Linburg of the Mars Hill College history department, Tuesday, Feb. 17; "South Africa: Can

Race War be Avoided?" by Dr. Tom O'Toole of the WCU history department, Tuesday, Feb. 24; "Central America and the Caribbean: New Political Earthquake Zone," by Dr. Larry Stern of the Mars Hill College political science department, Tuesday, March 3; "Food: Humanity's Need, America's Interest," by Dr. H.F. Robinson, Chancellor of WCU, Tuesday, March 10; "Made in U.S.A.: Is U.S. Competitiveness Slipping?" by Dr. Shirley Browning of UNC-A economics department, Tuesday, March 17; "The World in 1981," by Dr. W.E. Highsmith, Chancellor of UNC-A, Tuesday, March 24.

All of the lectures will be held in the Black Mountain Library. There will be a \$5 fee for each person taking part to help pay travel expenses for the

lecturers. The reading books will cost \$5. These background books may be shared with another person.

In addition to the lecture-forum series there will be a discussion group lead by Dr. Hugh Thompson, for eight consecutive Wednesday mornings at 10 a.m. The same subjects will be covered. There will be no travel charge.

There will be a kick-off lecture and discussion at the library on Monday, January 19. The background reading books will be available at this meeting.

For further information, call Dorothy or Herman Allen at 669-8132.

The purpose of the Great Decisions program is to inform citizens of the vital issues and choices facing the U.S. in its foreign relations. It is based on the premise that each citizen has a part in making foreign relations decisions. In

the lecture forums on Tuesday evenings and in the Wednesday morning discussions each person will be given an opportunity to respond and to register his or her opinion. These opinions are collected and sent to our national decision making bodies.

You need not be a book-educated person to take part. It is important that persons without college backgrounds take part. All of the information that you will need to take part will be in the background reading book. This book covers all sides of the subjects to be discussed. The presentations are nonpartisan. You may agree or disagree. Great Decisions is our nation's oldest community-based educational program, begun in 1954.

Bee Tree dam subject for meeting

by Bert Livingston

Possible implications of restoring Bee Tree Lake to the Asheville water system will be discussed by two authorities at a

meeting of the Bee Tree Community Development Club in the Bee Tree Christian Church Thursday, January 8 at 7:30 p.m.

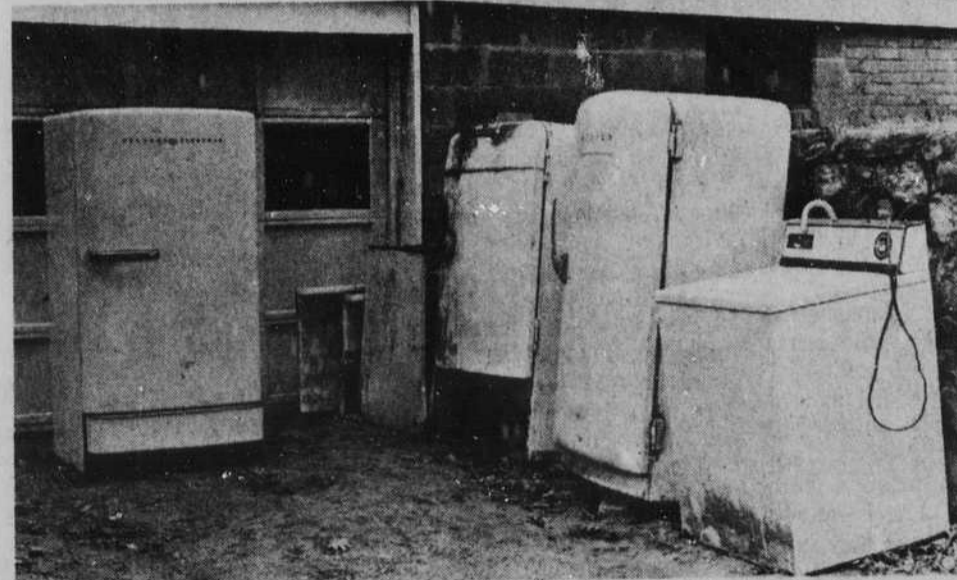


Bill Sites, president of the club, announced that Richard Phillips, North Carolina Department of Natural Resources and Community Land Development, Land Quality Section, and Dean Yancy, assistant director of the Asheville Water Department, will attend the Thursday night meeting. They will speak to dispel rumors related to what changes in the dam would be considered in connecting Bee Tree Lake again to the Asheville water system. What effects such considerations would have on the community adjoining Bee Tree Road and its extension into the area known as Summer Haven will be explained.

Swannanoa Post Office reports that it supplies mail service to more than 200 families in these community areas. The lake and dam are a vital factor in property uses, communications, transportation, power sources, and, in some instances, water supply, for these families.

All interested persons are invited and urged to attend the meeting, which is the first attempt to evaluate for involved communities what proposed changes in Asheville and county water sources could involve.

Bee Tree residents will have an opportunity Thursday to ask questions about a proposal to reconnect Bee Tree Lake to the Asheville water system.



Got an old clunker?

Old refrigerators to benefit Medical Ctr.

Old washers, old dryers, old stoves, old freezers and old refrigerators are not only unsightly around our communities, but they are a hazard to our children. Jim O'Neal has come up with a plan to do something about it, and at the same time to provide some funds for the Swannanoa Valley Medical Center.

"I'm concerned that some old appliance will be a death trap for a child, as these old junkers have been in other communities," O'Neal said. "I will pick up any of these and haul them away if folks will just call me." O'Neal has a source for selling junk and feels that getting full truck loads of appliances from around the town would justify his own gas expense to deliver them to a dealer. Whatever he is paid will go to the Medical Center.

"Whatever value the old appliance has on it is tax deductible," O'Neal said. "We feel this is a good opportunity for people to clean out that garage of old newspaper and junk, and at the same time benefit the community. Not only will we clean up the town, but we will make it safe this summer for our children," O'Neal related.

If you have things you want picked up at no charge to you, call Jim O'Neal at 669-7148, or Mrs. Teresa Gregory, 669-5692.

Good Refrigerator Needed

The Swannanoa Valley Medical Center is in need of a refrigerator in good working order. Your gift will be tax deductible. Please call one of the above numbers for pickup.

Unusual fire extinguishes itself

Chief Gary Bartlett called a fire that extinguished itself Monday morning a "once-in-a-lifetime thing."

The fire at Tiffanies Craft and Gift Shop in the WNC Shopping Center on U.S. 70 started in an imitation fireplace which had a light bulb in it, Chief Bartlett said. When firemen responded to a call from Mrs. Ruth Brandon on Jan. 5, the fire in the store was already out.

When all the oxygen in the airtight building was used up, the fire simply extinguished itself, probably Saturday night or early Sunday morning, Bartlett said.

"It's the kind of thing you've read about and you learn about in school," Bartlett said. "A fire needs three things to burn, and one of them is oxygen. At only 13 percent of the oxygen left, you can still have a fire." When the oxygen in an airtight building is depleted, the fire goes out.

Mrs. Brandon, owner of a nearby hardware store, noticed the smoke-blackened windows on her way to work. The windows felt warm to the touch, she said, but firemen said that the heat was due to the sun.

An estimate of damages is not yet available, but much of the store's merchandise was covered with soot.