

Book controversy draws crowd

An orderly crowd of well over 1,000 packed the auditorium at Biltmore School last Thursday evening to hear spokesmen for both sides of a controversy over book selection in the schools at a meeting of the County School Board.

Any action by the school board could take up to two months to determine, Dr. Roger James, chairman, said.

Each side was given 30 minutes to make a presentation.

Those speaking for the group of Owen School District residents protesting current book selection policy were a parent, Joyce Ammons, and three ministers including Wendell Runion, Asheville minister and leader of the group, Byron Boyle of the Swannanoa Heights Missionary Baptist Church and Randy Stone, Calvary Free Will Baptist Church.

Mrs. Ammons said her daughter brought home a copy of Salinger's "Catcher in the Rye," assigned in an

English class. "I don't believe I've ever read a book any dirtier," she said. "I couldn't believe this sort of book was in the school."

She suggested that books "like 'Catcher in the Rye'" be confined to the library and asked for a "new policy restricting such materials from the classroom."

The Rev. Wendell Runion stated,



Joyce Ammons

"We feel we are in legal bounds in asking for a stronger policy" that would "eliminate loopholes which promote immorality."

The community, Runion said, has the

right to set standards for moral decency according to a 1973 court decision (Miller vs. California).

Displaying a paperback copy of "A Star is Born," Runion asked the crowd, "Please tell me what literary value it



Wendell Runion

has. It was an R-rated movie; a 13-year old can read it in the school library."

Randy Stone said that the group did not seek to control the reading of adults. "We're not talking about the general public," he explained, "we're talking about children in the school system."

Stone said that teachers are "employees of the public," and that the final

responsibility for their children lies with the parents. "We urge the board to protect students and the educational quality of our school system," he concluded.

Wearing tags saying, "Right to Read," eight people representing several groups spoke against changing the current policy for book selection.

Christine Miller, supervisor of educational media in the Buncombe County Schools, said that any parent who disagrees with a book choice can



Ruthann Albright

register a complaint, which is then "studied with respect" by a committee

at the school involved.

Calling the schools "the only institution that seeks to free minds," Loretta



Toby Ives

Martin, president of the North Carolina Association of Educators, represented the teaching profession.

A father of two Owen students, also religion teacher and pastor of the Warren Wilson College United Presbyterian Church, Fred Ohler received the loudest applause of the evening. If the Bible was read as "The Grapes of Wrath" is being read, he said, with its "murder, incest, sin, the Song of

Solomon," the Bible would be expurgated.

Ruthann Albright, an Owen student, told the crowd, "I am quite capable of closing a book that offends me."

Toby Ives, head of a group called "Books," and member of the Owen School District Advisory Council, presented the school board with 850 signatures on a petition opposing book censorship in the schools.

A resolution from the Western North Carolina Library Association in support of present book selection policy was read.

Those opposed to changing current policy appeared to outnumber those wishing to change the policy at the meeting, although applause was enthusiastic from both sides.

BLACK MOUNTAIN NEWS

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Friendship exchange announced

Wanted 254 citizen ambassadors from Western North Carolina willing to fly anywhere in the world and stay in family homes for eight days in an effort to make friends for the United States.

An announcement of the second Friendship Force trip, to be held Oct. 10-23, was made last week by Dr. William E. Highsmith, chancellor of UNC-Asheville. Lynn Winkel, executive director of the Pisgah Girl Scout Council, has been appointed exchange director for this year's trip.

The destination for the trip will not be announced until June 6, Miss Winkel said. "This is a cultural exchange," she explained. "We don't want folks signing up just to go to a particular city or country." It has been announced, however, that the destination is a Western European city.

Ambassadors will be selected to make the trip through interviews to be held March 6-April 14. The October trip will include two days of travel, a four-day home visit with a host family, and a second home visit with another family or four days of independent travel.

Cost of the trip is approximately \$635 per person, exclusive of any independent travel. A \$2 application fee will be charged at the interview.

The plane carrying Western North Carolina ambassadors to a foreign city will return here with ambassadors from that city. Each ambassador who is

selected to travel will be expected to recruit two host families here to take care of their foreign counterparts for the visit.

Counties included in the exchange are Buncombe, Jackson, Haywood, Transylvania, Madison and McDowell. Miss Winkel said that any person from any WNC county would be welcome. The ambassadors will include a cross-section of citizens, reflective of the

demographics of this area.

Last year, Friendship Force ambassadors from this area travelled to West Berlin, Germany, and citizens of West Berlin visited this area.

Miss Winkel said, Friendship Force has available a program explaining the purpose and specifics, which includes slides from last year's exchange. Clubs or groups wishing a Friendship Force volunteer to present a program can call 255-8021.

Interviews will be conducted at the Black Mountain Library on March 19 from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. and at Warren Wilson College, Room 205 Jensen Building, March 22 from 2-4:30 p.m. For more information, contact the Friendship Force office from 10 a.m. - 4 p.m. Monday through Friday by calling 255-8021.

February is a disgrace to the calendar

by Cynthia Reimer

Over the years, a valiant effort has been made to take the endless gray out of February. We celebrate two Presidential birthdays, Valentine's Day and of course, Groundhog Day.

It hasn't helped. February is still the pits.

Take Groundhog Day. If I were going to get vital information about the weather from one of God's creatures, I would not choose a ridiculous waddling woodchuck in Podunk, Pennsylvania. I would at least choose a local critter.

It's all a hoax anyway. Who ever heard of winter ending early?

Washington's birthday means that the Post Office gets a day off . . . and I don't get any mail. I have eloquent correspondents all over the world and one of the highlights of my day is reading my mail.

No, Washington's birthday—with all respect to a fine President—doesn't do a thing for February.

When I lived on the Illinois-Wisconsin border, Lincoln's birthday was a real pain. All my over-the-border friends got the day off while I trudged to work through the slush and mush of a Wisconsin February 12th.

Valentine's Day deserves a little credit for sprucing up February with chocolates, lots of red and pink and those little candy hearts with sayings stamped on them.

When I was a kid it was the one time a year we got something from everybody in the class in our little shoebox-mailboxes, the one time of year the teacher demanded absolute equality for all. The rest of the year Runny-nose Rhoda could be ignored by the entire class, but let anyone neglect to give her a Valentine and Ms. Teacher became livid.

Cabin fever, second notice for Christmas bills, overdue county taxes, rain, mud, gloom, aching sinuses, car trouble, endless license tag lines,

teasing days when you think maybe spring really will come this year—that's February.

In fact, the only good thing I can say

about those short-sighted folks who brought us February is that they had the good sense to allow it only 28 days. Usually.



Someone at the Country Food Store on Montreat Road has a sense of humor. After a hole left by a hit-and-run driver was repaired, this red and yellow target appeared on the new cement blocks.



Weather Review

Feb. 13—high 44, low 10 degrees.
Feb. 14—high 57, low 20 degrees.
Feb. 15—high 58, low 22 degrees.
Feb. 16—high 58, low 31 degrees; trace of precipitation.
Feb. 17—high 54, low 44 degrees; .15 inches precipitation.
Feb. 18—high 52, low 47 degrees; .89 inches precipitation.
Feb. 19—high 55, low 47 degrees; .42 inches precipitation.
Thunder storms were reported on

Clingman's Peak.
Courtesy of WFGW Radio National Weather Service Station, Black Mountain.

Inside . . .

Scout fashion show, page 6



Louise Price Robinson pauses on State Street.

State Street, 1945

by Cynthia Reimer

A reader, Mrs. Edith Jackson, brought us a photo of State Street taken about 1945. It sent us to the dusty depths of our closet to dig out the oldest issues of the News to find out what was happening here at the time the photograph was taken.

It was the year the war ended, World War II, 1945.

It was also the year that the Black Mountain News came into being, leaving a weekly record of events in Black Mountain, in the Valley and in the world. J.C. Cornelius was editor; L.J. Barrel, assistant editor. Carl Smith was chief of police.

Gains Dog Meal was 46 cents for five pounds. A broom cost \$1.05, wool fabric \$1.19 to \$3.79 a yard, and a subscription to the Black Mountain News was \$2.50, "strictly in advance."

War events were reported with headlines such as, "Japs agree to all terms of Potsdam Declaration; MacArthur gets high post." Evelyn Cordell, Black Mountain, secretary to Assistant Attorney General T. Lamar Caudle, was scheduled to leave on Dec. 2 for the trial of Japanese war criminals.

Perhaps the most important national news to Valley residents was the return of servicemen, and the News reported reunions of hundreds separated by the war.

A chicken dinner at the Friendly Cafe in Swannanoa, with dessert, cost 45 cents. The 1946 Chevy and Ford models were unveiled at Staffords and McMurrays.

Mr. Nichols' flying service opened at the Black Mountain airport and made the front page of nearly every issue with such exhortations as, "You don't have to be a superman to fly one of his light ships, they can be flown by any person in average good health."

Features included "The Wartime Homemaker," a serial entitled "Overnight Guest" by Ben Ames Williams

and a story about Pal the performing dog. The dog, it seems, "takes requisitions from one place to another and waits for a reply at Moore General Hospital." He also turned off the light before retiring for the evening.

In local news, \$3,000 damage was caused by a fire at the Black Mountain Laundry.

The Black Mountain Schools reported record attendance with 880 elementary school students and 150 high school students. A P.T.A. met for the first time on Sept. 20.

Lee A. Hiltz, owner of the New Theatre, died on Sept. 9, 1945. Sgt. William F. Hope, 22, disappeared on the eve of his wedding to Miss Melba Cole two hours before the ceremony. He was last seen at an Asheville service station, filling his gas tank. Friends reported he was very excited about the wedding.

Miss I.A.R. Wiley, well-known serial writer for the "Saturday Evening Post," visited Black Mountain College. Beacon Manufacturing had all of the "village houses" painted gray and white and it was reported that they looked "quite well."

Grovestone company added \$100,000 of new equipment. The police department installed an "up-to-date Identification and Finger Print System in our city. It is said to be one of the best in W.N.C."

The Baptist Church purchased Cragmont Sanatorium.

Want ads listed positions for a paper delivery boy, a Linotype operator and pressman—and little else. The housing shortage in the Valley was deemed critical.

In the last issue of that year, a bank ad read: "Welcome 1946. 'Around the corner of the street, who can say what waits for us'—James Whitcomb Riley."

State Street, Black Mountain, 1945.

Warhorses play for championship

Owen High Warhorses continued their red hot winning streak Friday night with a win over third-seeded Madison in the championship round of the conference tournament at Roberson High. The unbeaten Warhorses downed Madison 70-55.

Junior center Brad Daugherty scored 25 points for a 17-12 first-quarter lead and a 32-21 halftime advantage for the Warhorses. The score was 53-35 going into the final quarter.

Mike Rich contributed 15 points.

On Tuesday night Owen will play Erwin High School at Owen. The winner of that game will play the winner of a game between Madison and Pisgah High Schools on Feb. 27. The District AAA championship game will be played March 3 at T.C. Roberson High School.