

Black Mountain Library  
105 W. Dougherty Street  
Black Mountain, N.C. 28711

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# MOUNTAIN NEWS

Dedicated to the growing Swannanoa Valley

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## Lady of leisure has new role

by Cynthia Reimer

Henrietta has been a lady of leisure all her life, 30-some years. But things have changed for the 7,000 pound lady since Jim Paintiff came into the picture.

Jim is an exotic animal trainer. Henrietta (affectionately known to intimates as Henry) is an Asian elephant.

The puckered pachyderm has resided at the WNC Nature Center since about 1957--no one remembers for sure, except possibly Henry--in a small yard. Her days were filled with such exciting events as eating (125 pounds a day), drinking (50 gallons a day), and watching the humans watching her. Until Jim came to the Nature Center, Henry's carefree life style did not include elephant training.

Last Wednesday, after a year of polishing her technique and a quick bath, Henry strolled through the gates of her cage for her first public performance before television cameras, newspaper reporters and photographers.

"Elephants are extremely intelligent animals," Jim explained proudly. "She's a real smart girl."

To the command of "Move up," Henrietta uses her trunk to sniff the ground ahead, lifts one bucket-sized foot and puts it down. Another "Move up," and another step. And another "Move up," another step. It takes a long time to walk an elephant.

The stones bothered Henry's tender feet, and hills, after 20 years of standing on level ground, stopped her cold at first.

Because of Henry's age it has taken extra time and patience to train her. And, "elephants being as smart as they are," said Jim, "they really like to test you." Henry would push Jim or stop dead and refuse to budge at first, but the two worked out their problems with patience, diversionary tactics and a pocketful of carrots.

"She has had her way for years," said Nature Center Director Mel Thomason. "What a transformation has occurred."

The commands Jim uses are "universal," the same used by all animal trainers. Jim learned to train exotic animals by working for eight or nine years in zoos and safari parks, and by watching other trainers.

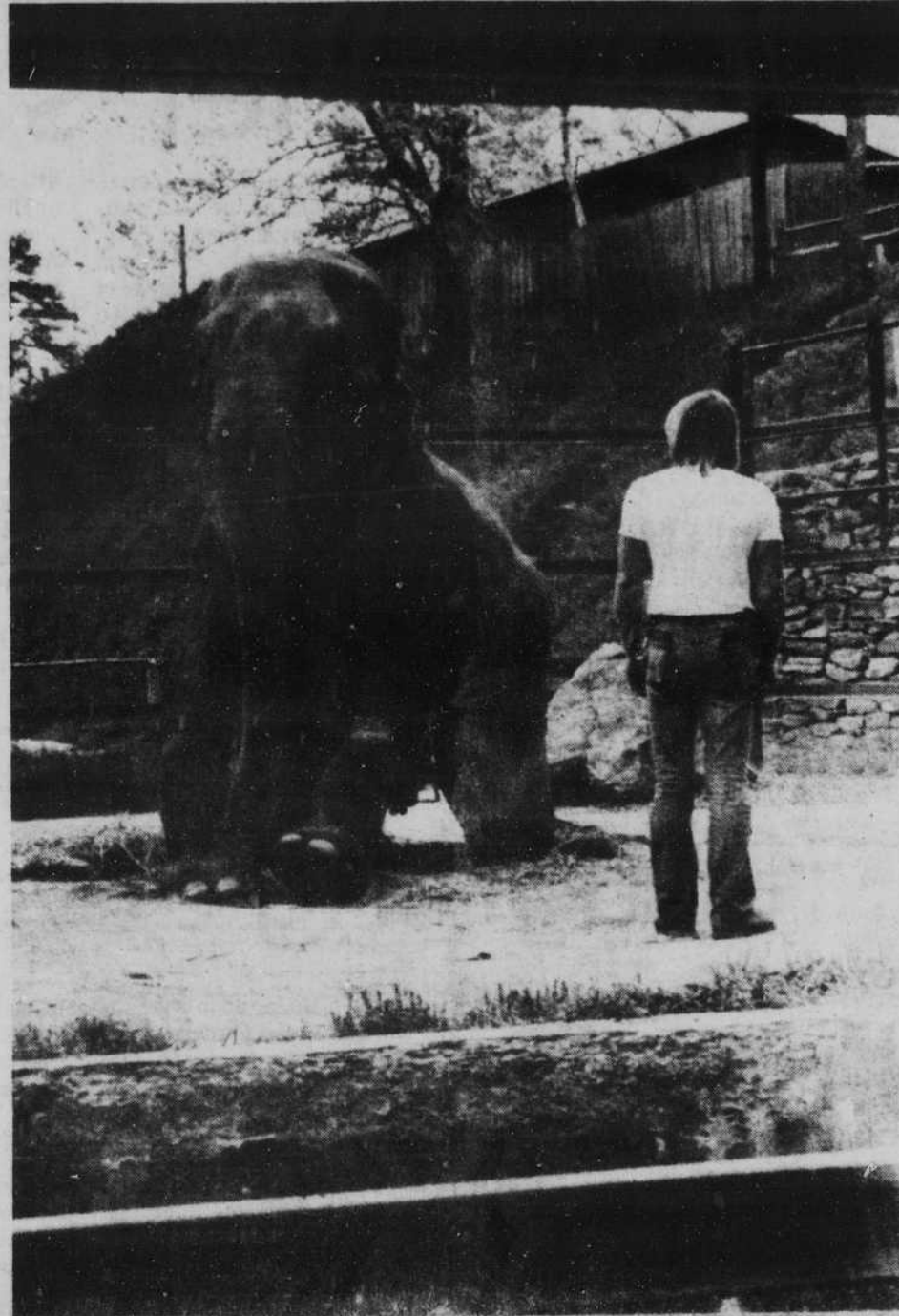
Anyone could put Henry through her paces now that she has learned the commands, Thomason said, but each new person would be tested by Henry.

"She's basically a good natured elephant," Jim said, "but at times she has her irritating moods."

Besides relief from boredom and the benefits of physical exercise, Henry's new skills allow veterinary examination and enable a keeper to work safely around the elephant.

Jim also plans to teach Henry to lift and pull--obviously tasks at which an elephant would excel.

Henry knows several tricks now and will star every Saturday at 10 a.m. and 2 p.m. in a program about elephants at the Nature Center on Gashes Creek Road in East Asheville.



Henrietta is up to new tricks, taught her by exotic animal trainer Jim Paintiff at the WNC Nature Center.

## New vet likes the mountains

The Blue Ridge Animal Hospital has a new vet, Glenn D. Graves, D.V.M.

"I think I'm going to be real happy in the area," said Dr. Graves, who came here from Wilmington. "The mountains make me feel right at home. And the people are as friendly as any in the world."

Dr. Graves started out to be a "human doctor." "I was always interested in the challenge of medicine," he said. Then, during his third year of college he took off a semester to work in a large hospital.

"I found that in some cases I could have more compassion for animals than

some of the human patients," and so he changed his direction from people to animals and, after eight years, graduated from Louisiana State University Veterinary School.

Since a vet must be licensed separately in each state where he wishes to practice, Dr. Graves thought carefully about where he wanted to live. He has lived in seven states, Indonesia and the Philippines, but he chose Winston-Salem, North Carolina to begin his career.

"North Carolina just seemed to have everything. It's probably the most appealing place I could find," he said.

Dr. Graves brought his two pets with him to Black Mountain, boa constrictors named Pete and Mildred, both nine years old.

"I really enjoy working with birds and reptiles. I like to work with wild animals, too," he said. His areas of special interest in veterinary medicine include ophthalmology and radiology.

When he is not working, Dr. Graves enjoys camping, canoeing and raquetball.

Dr. Graves' arrival allows the hospital to expand its hours. "The practice is growing," he said. "That's the reason I'm here." The office will be open now from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. weekdays, 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. Saturday and 1-6 p.m. Sunday.



Dr. Glenn Graves has only been here a few days but has already made one friend, Penny, the Blue Ridge Animal Hospital's resident cat. Penny has saved other cats' lives by giving blood for transfusions, Dr. Graves said.

## Fire follows explosion in Swannanoa Home

The back of a house on Old U.S. 70 in Swannanoa was destroyed by fire April 30. The fire started about 7 p.m. after a gasoline can is believed to have exploded on the back porch of the

Shelton residence.

No one was injured in the blaze. Mrs. Shelton and her son Matthew were at home, but were in the front part of the house. Mrs. Shelton heard the ex-

plosion, discovered the fire and called the Swannanoa Volunteer Fire Department. Mr. Shelton and another son were not at home when the fire occurred.

## Town Council Budget on Monday agenda

A raise in taxes or a cut in services faces Town Council as they consider next year's budget.

The present tax of 73 cents per \$100 property value was established in 1974-75 and has not been raised since.

Since then, according to Town Manager Earnest Hudgins, inflation has raised the cost of materials and services 70 percent.

Hudgins' budget proposal for 1981-82 is \$892,432.07, about \$170,000 over last year's budget.

People have indicated, Hudgins said, that they want increased police protection, more recreational programs, an improved golf course, a full-time dog warden, an adequately manned and equipped fire department, a full-time building inspector and more programs for senior citizens.

"These are not services we can give them at the present tax rate," Hudgins said.

His proposed tax raise is from 73 cents to \$1. If the town receives a projected \$22,000 for the East Buncombe Fire District, if the town can sell some property, and with stricter enforcement and a raise in cost of privilege licenses, "we might be able to balance the budget," Hudgins said.

Aldermen are also looking at areas where costs could be cut, hoping to balance the budget without a tax increase.

Two or three more workshops for the budget are scheduled for the Board, but Monday's meeting is an opportunity for the public to respond, Hudgins said.

Other items on Monday's agenda include a report on the status of the East Buncombe Fire District by Ron Sneed, recreation proposals for Lake Tomahawk, a presentation by Jerry VeHaun on the Lukas power tool, updating the privilege license ordinance and many other items.

## New library opens for WCC residents

This week, as part of their Spring Fling celebration, the Western Carolina Center, Black Mountain Facility, plans to open its brand new residents' library.

The room, which housed a medical library when the facility was a hospital for tuberculosis patients, has been repainted a soft yellow and carpeted. On the shelves are bright picture books for both children and adults, as well as magazines, records and filmstrips. Audio visual equipment and a puppet theatre are waiting for the library's first patrons.

In keeping with the Center's philosophy of intermediate care for the mentally retarded, the library will be used to teach residents how to use a community library.

"The whole idea," explained Becky Arndt, director of volunteers, "is to make this library like one you'd find in the community." Residents will learn how to use the materials in the library, how to check out the books and how to be responsible for materials as well as a library card.

Jeanne Rowe, an educational specialist, has worked for two years with about \$7,000 in LSCA money, a federal grant program to augment state and local support of libraries. "The staff people are really excited because we've been waiting two years," Jeanne said.

The Center has a critical need for volunteers to run the library. "We are unable to get a librarian position," Becky explained. "We will have to rely on volunteers. If you would like to volunteer, we don't open."

She said it will take about 15 volunteers to check out books, show films, set up the listening center, tell stories, do seasonal decorations and programs and order films. The library gets free films from the state library in Raleigh and talking books from the



Jeanne Rowe

Blind-Multi-Handicapped Library of Congress.

"What we need," Becky said, "is some volunteers who are willing to work with the residents in the library."

Volunteers are needed from 9-11 a.m. and 1-5 p.m., and also evenings and weekends. If you would like to volunteer, call Becky Arndt or Jeanne Rowe at 689-3152.

The library also has an on-going need for donations of books and magazine subscriptions. A Friends of the Library group is being organized to help with this need, made up of people from the community and staff.

## State facing critical water shortages

North Carolina has experienced one of the driest springs on record and is facing one of the worst water shortages in many years.

According to North Carolina Commissioner of Agriculture Jim Graham, soil moisture in the state is rated 27 percent very short, 46 percent short and only 27 percent rated adequate in the April 27 weekly report of crop-weather correspondents across the state.

"Right now we are 7-10 inches below normal in rainfall since September 1," Graham said. "Since last April nearly every month has been below normal in precipitation."

The National Weather Service's current 30-day outlook for May shows continued above normal temperatures and below average rainfall across all of North Carolina, indicating little or no improvement in present water deficits for the next four weeks, at least.

"The entire 1981 crop is in jeopardy but the most immediate concern is small grain," Graham continued. "We have 440,000 acres of wheat planted, the largest acreage in the state since 1961. It has already been stunted and the

straw is very short. Right now most of the small grain is heading out and unless it gets sufficient rain soon, the yield will be reduced.

"Every crop and garden grown in North Carolina faces real problems if the weather service's prediction for May proves any where near correct," Graham concluded.

## Kindergarten registration May 13

Children who will be five years old by October 16, or six by the same date and not presently in school, will enroll for school on May 13 from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. Registration will be held at Swannanoa Elementary School and Black Mountain Primary School and other Buncombe County Schools.

Parents should bring their child's birth certificate and immunization records. It is not necessary that the child attend the registration.

## Weather review

April 28--high 82, low 44 degrees.  
April 29--high 72, low 44 degrees;  
.03 inches precipitation.  
April 30--high 78, low 45 degrees.  
May 1--high 64, low 53 degrees.  
May 2--high 58, low 42 degrees.  
May 3--high 72, low 29 degrees;  
frost.  
May 4--high 80, low 34 degrees.



Weather courtesy of  
WFGW Radio,  
Black Mountain.