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Christmas baby



Baby born Dec. 25 receives special gift

Black Mountain's Christmas baby, Derek Dewayne Reed, received a special gift last week from Mrs. Katherine Rice, a handmade Christmas quilt. Derek was born at 3:02 a.m. Dec. 25, at Memorial Mission Hospital. Proud parents of the seven pound, 12 ounce boy are Sherry and Dennis Reed of Flat Creek Road, Black Mountain. Mrs. Rice made several quilts for sale

during the holiday season at The Old Depot. When one remained unsold, she decided to give it to a baby born on Christmas. The Black Mountain News tracked down the baby.

Mrs. Reed is on maternity leave from her job at Ingles. Derek is the Reeds' first child. He was expected to arrive in January, but his early appearance was just fine with the Reeds.

Planning Board to meet Monday

The Black Mountain Planning Board will meet Monday, Jan. 13 at 7 p.m. at City Hall. The public is welcome.

Major league pitcher

Owen honors Stewart

Former Owen High School student Sammy Stewart, now pitcher for the Baltimore Orioles, was honored here last week when Owen proclaimed Jan. 5 "Sammy Stewart Night."

Stewart, the first Owen athlete to win the Athlete of the Year Award twice, received a plaque at the Tuesday night basketball game for his work with the young athletes of Buncombe County. Stewart has arranged camps and workshops for aspiring young baseball players, led by professional athletes including Stewart himself.

Also announced was Owen's intention to name the newly-renovated baseball field behind the school the Sammy Stewart Field.

The field is being renovated by the "Big O" Club. A concession stand and restroom facilities are being built, landscaping being done and an old foundation removed.

Because Stewart will leave in February for spring training with the Orioles and will not be here for the opening of the field, the club, the Owen baseball team and coaches decided to honor him at the basketball game Tuesday.

For the Orioles, Stewart has set a Big League strike-out record for rookies and received an earned run average award for rookies. He has also pitched in the

World Series.

Stewart is not new to setting records. He attended Buncombe County Schools with 12 years of perfect attendance, according to Owen Principal Charles Lytle. He graduated in 1973 and attended Montreat-Anderson College in Montreat before joining the Orioles.

Fred Ivey, assistant principal and

athletic director at Owen, headed the committee which arranged to honor Stewart.

Keith Duncan is the only other Owen student to be named Athlete of the Year twice. He now attends Western Carolina University on a basketball scholarship.



Sammy Stewart accepts honors last week at "Sammy Stewart Night." With him is his family. (Photo by Charlie Taylor)

Town Board meeting

Town clerk resigns

by Bill Anthony

The resignation of Black Mountain Town Clerk Vinson Miller was accepted by the Town Board of Aldermen following an executive session after the Board's public meeting Monday evening.

This action was accomplished with the same apparent equanimity with which the Board heard out a protest against "another highrise sign" along Interstate 40, that of the relocating Alcoholic Beverage Control store, plus scheduled agenda items.

And the Board decided to buy for the firemen a Lucas rescue tool, although

agreeing to date the purchase order following a meeting next week of the County Commissioners should that group agree to contribute toward the purchase. Alderman Steve King, representative of the Lucas tool distributors, abstained from the vote in the face of "innuendos" of conflict of interest.

Water Fund

Of potentially greatest concern to the Board was the following excerpt from a letter from the state's Department of State Treasurer read by Mayor Tom Sobol, referring to a review of the Town's 1981 audit report:

"The amount of the Water and Sewer Fund balance available for appropria-

tion has been decreased to the point where it is now less than 4 percent of the total expenditures in this fund. If this situation continues, a severe cash flow problem could be experienced. It has been our observation that tax-levying governmental units have cash flow problems when the available but unappropriated fund balance drops below 8 percent of the next year's total expenditure budget."

The State Treasurer urged the Town "to determine what expenses can be reduced or to what extent additional revenues are to be achieved."

The Board authorized Mayor Sobol to reply that the Town is seeking more consistency in water billing procedures and installation of a computer system.

In an unrelated water matter, the Board agreed to a \$1.50 charge to be added to all monthly water bills, continuing for as long as 40 years, to pay back the \$500,000 borrowed from the Farmers Home Administration. This bond, approved by the community last year, plus funds from the Appalachian Regional Commission and the state's Clean Water Fund, will provide for a reservoir, water storage tank, well drillings, and new and renovated water lines.

Sign protested

The protest against the proposed ABC sign was led by Joe Tyson who requested the Board's "encouragement to ABC" to conform with the Town's new sign ordinance, now in drafting stages.

He was joined by Bill and Sara-Marcia Rafter who questioned if a sign designed to attract motorists off the highway "was the image the communi-

ty wanted." Mrs. Rafter linked the intended ABC sign with the disputed McDonald's "100-foot" sign and said, "This is different. This is something the Town is sponsoring."

The present moratorium on new signs permits is hurting local businessmen, according to Bill Ricketts, owner of a number of Cherry Street properties.

Herman Allen described the present ABC store as "A dignified place with a dignified sign," and warned that "a high profile would lead to possible loss of an ABC store in Black Mountain."

Wendell Begley, who sits on both the Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors and the Town Planning Board, reported the Chamber in a letter to ABC Board Chairman Al Richardson urged that it not erect "a permanent sign until the new sign ordinance is approved, and that the sign be in conformity" with the ordinance's stipulations.

Begley also said the Planning Board "hopefully" will have a new ordinance draft for study at its scheduled Jan. 18 meeting.

Mayor Sobol observed that the Town does not own the ABC store or its sign, and also noted that the Town receives \$75,000 annually in proceeds from the ABC, "without which property taxes would be increased 30 percent." Both sides, he said, "have to negotiate." He urged Planning Board members to complete drafting a new ordinance for Town Board consideration at its February meeting.

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Two homes damaged by fire

Two house fires caused extensive damage within a few hours of each other over the weekend, Black Mountain firemen reported.

A fire started around a stove pipe at a Blue Ridge Road residence at 2:18 p.m. Sunday. Four rooms received extensive damage, with heat and smoke damage reported throughout the rest of the home. Firemen remained on the scene about two hours as material between the walls continued to smolder. No one was home at the time of the fire.

Another fire occurred in a three-story home on North Carolina Terrace in Montreat at 3:21 a.m. Monday. The wall behind a fireplace caught fire, causing "quite a bit of damage" to the room in which it occurred, according to a fire department spokesman. The owners were awakened by smoke which at first was thought to be blown back down the chimney by the strong gust of wind. The house also received considerable smoke damage.

Weather review

Jan. 5--high 50, low 26 degrees.
Jan. 6--high 59, low 25 degrees.
Jan. 7--high 62, low 38 degrees.
Jan. 8--high 37, low 23 degrees.
Jan. 9--high 40, low 11 degrees; trace precipitation.
Jan. 10--high 2, low -1 degrees.
Jan. 11--high 21, low -4 degrees; trace snow.

Weather courtesy of WFGW radio, Black Mountain.



Everett Stephenson (right) is congratulated by Black Mountain Postmaster Keith Nelson.

Stephenson retired from post office

Everett Stephenson began his career with the United States Postal Service on Dec. 14, 1951, as a substitute rural carrier. He ended it on Dec. 29, 1981, as superintendent of postal operations.

Stephenson retired last month after 30 years of service at the Black Mountain Post Office. His co-workers there honored him with a party and presented him with a watch. From the U.S. Government he will receive a retirement certificate.

Stephenson, a Black Mountain native, has made no plans yet for filling the days of his retirement. "I'm not going to make definite plans until spring," he said. He does look forward to spending time at his hobbies, gardening and woodworking.

Stephenson and his wife Josie have three children, Jimmy of Raleigh, Joy of Black Mountain and Jerry of Weaverville.

When Stephenson began in 1951, the post office was located on Broadway Street in a building which is now part of Tyson's Furniture Company. The new building on Richardson Boulevard was dedicated in 1960.

Although Black Mountain Post Office has added city delivery since 1951, the number of employees has remained about the same because mail is now sorted in Asheville. Because it is no longer sorted by hand in Black Mountain, the mail gets out earlier, Stephenson said.

When Stephenson left the Navy and came to work at the Black Mountain Post Office, first class stamps cost three cents. Today, at 20 cents, U.S. postage is still the least expensive in the world, Stephenson said.