

MARY ELLEN VISITS - Judy Norton Taylor, who is widely known as Mary Ellen Walton of WBTV's, "The Waltons," paid a visit to Charlotte last week to chat with news people, radio and TV interviewers about the series.

## Mary Ellen Walton

### Pays Area A Visit

by TOM McINTYRE  
Editor, Mirror-Herald

One of CBS-TV's most successful series of this and past seasons is "The Waltons." And the way the ratings have been going "The Waltons" may be the only hit on the Big Eye network.

But even a hit series needs a shot in the arm now and then and for that the network arranges for a member of the series cast to hop about the country for personal appearances.

Last Wednesday it was Judy Norton Taylor's turn to round-robin. Mrs. Taylor is widely known as Mary Ellen, the oldest daughter in the Walton clan. This season the character, Mary Ellen, became a bride, so even though she is still a Walton by birth, she is less a member of the home scene now.

Where this will lead only the producers and writers can guess. Will there be children coming along? The actress doesn't know. She does say, however, that older brother John-Boy will be very absent from the show in the future.

"Richard (Thomas) said he felt once he decided to leave the show he shouldn't come back even for special guest spots," Judy told a group of news people during an interview dinner sponsored by WBTV last Wednesday. "So John-Boy will be gone for good. I suppose we will mention him from time to time and will probably receive a letter from him occasionally, but no appearances."

Judy said no one knows the fate of Grandma Walton as far as the show is concerned because Ellen Corby, the actress portraying the role, is still recuperating from a stroke suffered a few months ago.

"On the shows we're doing now to mention that Grandma is still in the hospital, but doing fine," Judy said. "We never say what is wrong with her. However, if Ellen Corby is not able to return to the show I don't think they will replace her in the cast."

What is the future of the Waltons?  
"I think next season we might have a 13-week commitment to see how the ratings are," Judy said.

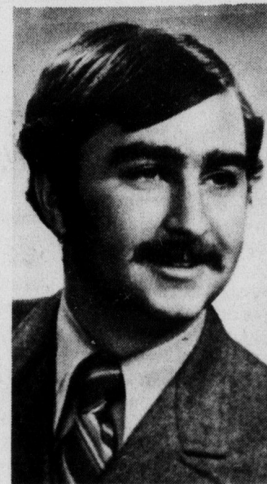
As far as Judy Norton Taylor, the actress, is concerned she has ambitions to broaden her talents. She said she has not had an opportunity to do theatrical work during the summer, but she is working with serious drama groups to gain experience.

"I am interested in singing," she said, "but I

think it will be more beneficial to wait until after The Waltons has gone before attempting to present myself as a singer.

"I think people have the tendency to think, because they have seen you doing one thing for a period of time, that you will be no good trying something else," she continued. "Now I am an actress. So how can I be a good singer. You know, that sort of thing."

Judy's junket took her first to Miami, Fla., then to Norfolk, Va., Charlotte and on Thursday to Nashville, Tenn. "We have to catch a plane out early Thursday night," she said, "so there won't be an opportunity to see the Grand Ole Opry. In fact you don't get a chance to see much of any place you visit during one of these tours. That's the only thing I don't like about them. If we could spend a bit more time in each place I would like these trips a lot more."



DR. JAMES R. MASON

**Optometrist  
Opens Office  
In City Soon**

Dr. James R. Mason of Gastonia is opening offices tomorrow in the Blazer Building for the general practice of optometry with a special interest in contact lenses.

His Kings Mountain office will be open on Wednesdays and Thursdays initially from 9 a.m. until 5 p.m.

A native of Cambridge, Ohio, Dr. Mason is a 1966 graduate of Cambridge High School. He completed undergraduate work at Ohio State University and received his Doctor of Optometry degree in 1972 from Ohio State. He served four years in the USAF, with duty at Barksdale AFB Hospital in Bossier City, La. He and his wife, Donna Kay, reside at 1543 Hudson Blvd. in Gastonia.

# Broyhill Seeking More Medicare Laws

Congressman James T. Broyhill announced today that Monday, Jan. 31, he will re-introduce with co-sponsors legislation allowing reimbursement of physician extenders under the Medicare Program. Broyhill, who had originally introduced the bill on January 4, said he was delighted with the initial signs of support his bill was receiving.

In discussing his bill, Broyhill said, "The effective use of physician ex-

tenders (nurse practitioners, and physician's assistants) can dramatically reduce total medical costs. These highly skilled medical professionals where properly used, allow physicians more time to help with more severe cases requiring a physician's more comprehensive training. In rural areas where there are actual doctors shortages, physician extenders can provide a high percentage of the

needed primary medical assistance."

"The use of physician extenders especially in rural and urban primary health care clinics underserved by physicians is essential for adequate health care for our people," Broyhill continued. "Present Medicare laws which require a physician to be on the premise before services rendered by a physician extender can be reimbursed, fail to recognize

the skills of and need for physician extenders. The regulations also prevent tens of thousands of Americans from receiving adequate primary medical care because of a lack of financial resources when Medicare should be providing coverage," Broyhill said.

"Physician extenders when used effectively can help keep people well and out of hospitals. The Congress should be doing everything possible to en-

courage the expanded use of this valuable medical resource, both for improvement of health care for our Nation's people as well as for the financial savings which can be realized as a result of reducing the need for hospitalization," Broyhill elaborated. "This legislation can be of the most benefit to our Nation's rural and intercity areas which have difficulty attracting licensed physicians."

"For over a decade physician extenders have been an essential part of our Nation's health care delivery system. It is time present Medicare laws take this into account by reimbursing physician extenders for services rendered just as physicians are reimbursed," Broyhill further stated. "I am hopeful that the House will take prompt action on this important piece of health care legislation."

# SAMPLE

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