What's Up

Filing deadline

The deadline to file for elected office in Mooresville and Troutman is Friday, Aug. 10. Interested citizens can register at the Iredell County Elections Board, 200 S. Center St., Statesville. The filing period for the Mooresville Graded School District Board of Education ended last week.

Planning ahead

The Mooresville-South Iredell Chamber of Commerce will hold its annual in-town work session at the Mooresville Citizens Center on Thursday, Aug. 9 from 7:30 to 10 a.m. The session will help set the program of work for the next year and is a prelude to the chamber's annual retreat at Myrtle Beach in September. There is no cost to attend for chamber members.

Casting call

The Mooresville Community Theatre will hold auditions for the musical "Godspell" on Monday, Aug. 20 and Wednesday, Aug. 22 from 7 to 9 p.m. in the Mooresville Citizens Center. Roles are available for men and women ages 15 and older. Auditions will be based on a cold reading from the script, a prepared song, and a dance combination. The show's performances will be held Oct. 19-20 and Oct. 25-27. For more information, call (704) 662-9107.

Health fair

EdenGardens of Mooresville will host a health fair on Saturday, Aug. 25 from 9 a.m. to 12 p.m. at 128 Brawley School Road. Free blood pressure checks, cholesterol checks, nutritional counseling, and children's activities will be offered. For more information, call (704) 799-2712.

New waste fees

The Mooresville Town Board on Monday approved an increase in the cost to dispose of commercial solid waste. The higher fees, which stem from an increase the county charges the town to dispose of waste at its solid waste facility, will become effective Oct. 1.

Siren test

Sirens located around the McGuire Nuclear Station on Lake Norman will be tested Tuesday, Aug. 14 between 10 a.m. and 2 p.m.

School fundraiser

Boosters of Lake Norman High School, which is scheduled to open a year from now, are planning an Oct. 16 celebrity softball game to raise money for the new school. An organizational meeting for the game will be held on Aug. 7 at 7 p.m. at Brawley Middle School. Volunteers are needed. For more information, call Jeff Lavoie at 704-663-3060.

Business Expo 2001

The Mooresville-South Iredell Chamber of Commerce will present Business Expo 2001 on Oct. 11 from 11 a.m. to 7 p.m. at the Mooresville Citizens Center. The expo will give local businesses an opportunity to display their service and products, as well as network with other business people in the area. Exhibit booths cost $175 for members and $250 for non-members. Caterers, restaurants, and food vendors are also needed to participate in the "Taste of the Town" event that will be held from 5 to 7 p.m. For reservations or more information, call 704-664-3898.

Money woes shouldn't slow high school

By MICHAEL ROESSLER

The Iredell-Statesville Schools' financial woes will not delay the opening of the new Lake Norman High School next year, say district officials.

Dr. Julia Williams, Assistant Superintendent of Planning, Program Devel-opment, and Administra-tion, said last week that the $1.8 million deficit incurred by the school system last year, as well as the $3 million in budget cuts necessary this year, will not hinder the system's ability to open the new high school for the 2002-2003 school year.

Williams said the money used to build new schools is separate from the operating funds that are at the center of the school district's current financial crisis. "Those are separate pots of money," she said. "The construction money is separate."

She said that the construction funds will be used to build the school's facility, purchase furniture, and provide for some other equipment. Other items for the interior of the school — such as books, science equipment, and art supplies — will be purchased from the operating budget.

Despite the current shortfall in that budget, Williams said the money needed to purchase the necessary items for the new school is still budgeted and has not been removed.

Lake Norman High School — the county's sixth high school — will be located on Doolie Road near N.C. 150, west of Mooresville.

It was revealed last week that the Iredell-Statesville Schools ran up a $1.8 million deficit for the 2000-2001 fiscal year. Additionally, the school board is currently in the process of cutting $3 million in expenditures from the 2001-2002 budget. Both shortfalls are being blamed by system officials on poor record keeping and inaccurate projections of revenue and expenses.

Coleman to be suspended

Continued from page 1A

He also said at that time that he hoped the school district's response to the current financial crisis would reassure the public. "I want the public to have confidence in this administration," he said.

Included in the items the board has tentatively agreed to cut from the 2001-2002 budget are increases in the local teacher pay supplement, new school buses, and two full-time substitute teachers. The board also tentatively agreed to postpone the implementation of the academically rigorous International Baccalaureate program at South Iredell High School and Statesville High School.

Although the school system's new finance officer, Terry Haas, recommended the elimination of several other jobs — including two school nurses, media assistants, general assistants, custodial staff, and an assistant principal — the board reached a rough consensus that those positions would be spared.

Haas replaced Harold McManus, who resigned in June as Associate Superintendent of Administration and Finance after allegations surfaced that he was improperly reimbursed for moving and living expenses. Those allegations are currently under investigation by the school system.

Tuesday, State Sen. Frank Mitchell told the Statesville Record & Landmark that he has asked State Auditor Ralph Campbell to intervene and assist the school system in resolving its financial trouble.

The current financial crisis is not the first to strain Coleman's relationship with the Iredell-Statesville Schools and the school board since he became superintendent in August 1999.

In February 2000, the State Bureau of Investigation launched an investigation into the possible theft of up to $200,000 from the school system. The results of that probe were turned over to Iredell County District Attorney Gary Frank in January 2001. No action has yet been taken by Frank.

In October 2000, it was rumored that Coleman was considering taking the superintendent position in Randolph County, where he previously served as deputy superintendent. He later said he was not considering leaving the Iredell-Statesville Schools and that the rumors of his potential departure were false. The school board subsequently awarded him a four-year contract extension, bringing his yearly salary to $137,196.

The district's McManus resigned this June after allegations arose that he inappropriately billed the school district nearly $28,000 for moving and living expenses. McManus worked with Coleman in Randolph County for six years prior to coming here in June 2000.

And just two weeks ago, the school board issued a letter to Coleman affirming that the board was the highest authority in the district. The letter came after Coleman instituted a policy requiring the school district's staff to channel all information requests from school board members through either Deputy Supt. Steve Lane or Director of Public Information Catherine Davidson. Several board members said they found school system staff hesitant to talk to them directly because of the policy.

The school board will meet today at 7 p.m. in the upstairs meeting room of the Iredell County Government Center, located at 200 S. Center St. in Statesville. The meeting is open to the public.

Water

Continued from page 1A

has increased.

As a result of the additional connections and more use per household, DeBruhl said as early as 2004 the town's system could reach its capacity. Currently, the system averages 3.5 million gallons per day, he said, with maximum use days at roughly 5.2 million gallons.

There are two paths the town could follow to expand its water filtration capacity, DeBruhl told commissioners.

It could make improvements on the current plant, which would cost $19 million to expand the system's capacity to 12 million gallons per day and an additional $39 million to eventually expand it to 24 million gallons per day, totaling $58 million.

Or it could build a new plant, costing the town $30 million to reach a capacity of 12 million gallons per day and an additional $18 million to eventually reach a capacity of $24 million gallons per day, totaling $48 million.

The town board has yet to decide which option it will pursue.

DeBruhl estimated that expanding the water filtration system's capacity to 12 million gallons per day would adequately serve the town for 10 to 12 years. Eventual expansion to 24 million gallons per day would adequately serve the entire town at build-out, as limited by the urban growth boundary.

Town Manager Rick McLean later said that because the town's current system could reach capacity as early as 2004, the town board is under some pressure to act soon.

In addition to building a new plant, McLean said the town can explore other options for supplying more water to the town, such as connecting with adjacent utilities — like the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Utilities Department — for use during peak use periods.

Also, he said the town may have to explore the enactment of involuntary water restrictions to conserve the water already at the town's disposal.

Although commissioners did not reach a decision about whether to expand the current facility or build a new one, it directed the town staff and Willis Engineers to proceed with several preliminary steps, such as acquiring the necessary regulatory approvals for expansion, proceeding with the preliminary design of the new facilities, and developing a program to educate the public about water use and conservation.

Commissioners

Continued from page 1A

sion Chair Sara Haire Tice and comes in the wake of the revelation last week that the school system ran a $1.8 million deficit for the 2000-2001 fiscal year. The school board is also facing roughly $3 million in cuts for the 2001-2002 fiscal year. District officials are attributing the shortfalls to inaccurate revenue and expense projections, as well as poor record keeping.

The new administrative offices were expected to cost $1.3 million.

In abandoning the request for new administrative offices, commissioners were sending the Iredell-Statesville Schools a clear message about the district's current financial crisis: Clean it up — and take steps to prevent it from happening again — before your next request for county funds.

Tice said she is deeply disappointed by the school system's administrators. "As an advocate for the schools, I feel betrayed," she said. "It's really disappointing when folks that you trust let you down."

"I've said for years this is going to happen," said Commissioner Steve Johnson. "It puts doubt in my mind about their ability to handle the money we give them."

Johnson added that he is disappointed that the cuts necessary to balance the 2001-2002 budget will hurt the students of the system even though the mistakes were made by personnel in the system's administrative office.

Commissioner Tommy Bowles echoed Johnson's concerns, saying that steps need to be taken in the school system's administrative office to prevent future financial troubles. "Something needs to be straightened out," he said.

Bowles also said that he expects to see several school district employees lose their jobs over the matter. "I think you're going to see a lot of vacant positions," he said.

The Tribune has learned that the school board intends to suspend Supt. Howard "Buddy" Coleman at a specially-called meeting tonight. It is unclear if other employees will also be reprimanded by the board this evening.

Commissioner Karen Ray said she shares the disappointment of others in the community. "Like every taxpayer and citizen in this county, I'm extremely disturbed," she said.

Johnson added that the school system needs to take definite steps towards preventing similar problems from arising in the future, especially before the schools ask the county for more money. "I'm not going to give them any more money until they get it fixed ... If they can't demonstrate that they have accounting principles and methods in place, certainly it will affect me (when considering future contributions to the schools)," he said.

Bowles agreed, saying that any future requests by the schools for money will be "highly scrutinized" by commissioners, while Ray said future requests from the school system will "raise an eyebrow."

Tice said she is confident the problems in the school system's administrative offices will be corrected. "I'm convinced the situation will be dealt with," she said.

The commissioners also uniformly expressed the desire to not damage the quality of education offered by the school system because of skepticism they may have about monetary requests from the administrative offices.

Commissioner Godfrey Williams could not be reached for comment.

County officials have also cleared up a misconception school officials had regarding the awarding of additional funds to the Iredell-Statesville Schools from Iredell County during the 2001-2002 fiscal year.

At last Thursday's early-morning school board meeting, Terry Haas, the district's new finance officer, distributed to board members a document stating that school district officials did not know if the county would award any more money to the district this year.

County Manager Joel Mashburn said the school system should not receive any funds from the county this fiscal year other than those included in the 2001-2002 budget. "I'm not aware of anything else they should be getting from the county," he said.

At the school board meeting, no board members or staffers professed to know whether the county had yet passed its budget for the 2001-2002 fiscal year. Commissioners approved the budget in June, giving the Iredell-Statesville Schools $25.3 million.

School parking

Continued from page 1A

heard opening-of-school reports. Supt. Bruce Boyles told board members that the district again has a record number of students enrolled — more than 4,100. He said he expects that number to climb until Labor Day.

One of the school board's goals for transportation was also met this year, Boyles added. Instead of buses transporting all K-6 students together, the groups have been split: K-3 and 4-6. "Park View (Elementary) has it's own transportation, South (Elementary) has its own and the intermediate school has its own," he said.

"It's a more appropriate grouping of children. It's a goal we've been working toward, and we feel it's the right thing to do."

Two new yellow buses will be added to the district's fleet this year to help alleviate any busing woes. Right now, a loaner from the Iredell-Statesville Schools is being used while the district waits on the first new yellow bus to arrive. Another loaner will be sent to Mooresville within the next few weeks until the second new yellow bus arrives.

Japanese

Continued from page 1A

attend Brawley Middle School. They are able to practice English in conversation with their host family.

English classes for the Japanese students — taught by UNCC instructors Peter MacMonagle and Lara Christie — were held at Brawley Middle School. And this week, the students are spending much of their time in classrooms, learning alongside American students at Brawley.

Among other events, the students from Japan have enjoyed a social gathering on Lake Norman — complete with American folk music — and shopped at Concord Mills and Southpark malls.

The students will leave Mooresville this weekend and after spending a few days in Washington, D.C. will head back home to Japan.

Want to subscribe to The Tribune? Just call us at 704-664-5554

MOORESVILLE TRIBUNE
(USPS 362 - 380)
Published every Wednesday and Friday at 147 E. Center Avenue
MOORESVILLE, NC 28115-0300
Periodicals Postage Paid at Mooresville, NC
MAIL SUBSCRIPTION RATES
(Payable in Advance)
Iredell County (includes Tax)
One Year 52.00
6 Months 26.00
Per Copy ..... 50 cents
Postmaster please send address corrections to: Mooresville Tribune, P.O. Box 300, Mooresville, N.C. 28115

Copyright 2001 Media General Newspapers, Inc. All rights reserved.

This newspaper is printed in part on recycled paper and is recyclable.

Police probing 2nd bank heist in 3 days

Investigators are still pursuing leads in a pair of Mooresville bank robberies last week.

On Thursday, two days after downtown's Mooresville Savings Bank was robbed, a white male entered First Charter Bank at the Port Village shopping center shortly after 2:30 p.m. The man handed the teller a note saying he had a gun and he wanted money.

However, he left out the side door of the branch and fled on foot, without getting any money.

Descriptions of the hold-up man differ. According to Mooresville Police Chief John Crone, the teller who received the note described the suspect as a white male in his early 20s. He stood an estimated 5 feet, 5 inches and wore a light-colored shirt with stripes. He reportedly had blond shoulder-length hair with dark highlights in it.

"However, a bank customer who was standing behind the suspect believed the suspect may have been older, in his early to mid-30's," said Crone.

"The bank customer also noted that the suspect was grubby-looking and unshaven, and that he was wearing a red baseball cap turned inside out, as if he was trying to hide a team logo or business name on the cap which could be used to identify the suspect," Crone said.

Mooresville investigators are also searching for a suspect in the July 31 robbery at Mooresville Savings Bank. Around 1 p.m., a white male in his early 20s walked into the Main Street bank and demanded money from the teller. He fled with an undisclosed amount of money, and witnesses last saw the man running north on Broad Street.

He was described as a blond-haired, blue-eyed white male in his early 20s. The suspect was wearing a long-sleeve gray T-shirt with a white shirt underneath, blue jeans and a red baseball cap.

Anyone with information on either Mooresville bank robberies is asked to contact the Mooresville Police Department at 704-664-3311.

Mooresville men charged in interstate drug ring

Three Mooresville men have been indicted in connection with a multi-state drug ring that was busted up last month.

Iredell County Sheriff's deputies and federal Drug Enforcement Agency investigators brought down a multi-state OxyContin ring with the federal indictments of 10 people authorities say were conspiring to illegally distribute the prescription drug.

A grand jury in U.S. District Court in Charlotte indicted the suspects on July 11 with conspiracy to possess with intent to distribute OxyContin, according to indictments released late last week.

Arrested were: Ernest Robinette Jr., 38, of Mooresville; Brian Keith Jones, 36, of Mooresville; Wayne Arnold Brown, 39, of Mooresville; Gary Allen Bost, 48, of Statesville; Alan Keith Ashley, 37, of Statesville; Robert James Asbury, 45, of Statesville; Jonathan Scott Davis, 30, of Statesville; Johnny Mack Brown, 54, of Statesville; Melissa Witherspoon Britt, 33, of Statesville; and Marty Shane Atwell, 27, of Salisbury.

OxyContin is a pain medication prescribed to those with muscular skeletal pain or cancer. But the drug is also being abused here and nationwide because of its heroin-like high. OxyContin is easier to obtain than heroin.

The indictment is the result of a seven-month investigation launched after deputies received tips from sources about illegal OxyContin sales.

Along the way, Iredell narcotics agents worked with the Greensboro Police Department, the Durham County Sheriff's Office and the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Police Department.

During weeks of surveillance and hundreds of hours spent on the case, detectives learned that many of the sales originated in Iredell County, then moved into Virginia, South Carolina and West Virginia, according to Iredell Sheriff Phil Redmond.

There were more than 50,000 tablets sold during that time, and many of the drugs were obtained by forged prescriptions, Redmond said.

"I think this (indictment) will decrease the amount of OxyContin in this county quite a bit," said Iredell Sheriff's Deputy Chris Shuskey.

OxyContin is prescribed regularly by pain management doctors and orthopedic physicians. Its time-release coating and low risk of side effects make it an attractive pain relief medication.

But the abuse of the drug has also been linked to at least 120 deaths. Addicts begin by chewing the pills, Shuskey said. They move to crushing the medication into powder and snorting it. In the most serious cases, the drug is injected.

The pills sell for about $1 a milligram here in Iredell County, officials said.

The maximum sentence for the federal drug charges is 30 years in prison. Once a sentence is handed down, there is no chance for parole.

The investigation is continuing, and more arrests are possible, Redmond said.

Upswing in crime possible

Media General News Service

RALEIGH — The weakening economy could result in an upswing in crime, North Carolina's attorney general warns.

Roy Cooper said this week that the rate of reported crimes in North Carolina fell in 2000, but warned that a weakening economy could change all that.

The declining crime rates in the state's Uniform Crime Report reflect a continuing trend that began in the early 1990s.

Cooper attributed the continuing drop in crime to the good economy, the state's tough sentencing laws and effective law enforcement agencies.

"The storm clouds are gathering in the form of a weakening economy," Cooper said. "Even with the tougher sentencing and longer prison terms for the most violent offenses, a slowing economy can change a life on the edge to a life of crime."

The report shows that both violent and overall crime reported to law enforcement agencies declined as a percentage of the population.

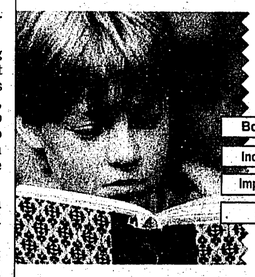
Some categories of crime, including rape and murder, actually increased in the number reported. But with the state's rising population, the rates per 100,000 people declined.

The numbers show that murders increased from 535 in 1999 to 552 in 2000. But examined as a percentage of the population, the rate of murders declined from 7.2 per 100,000 people to 6.9 per 100,000.

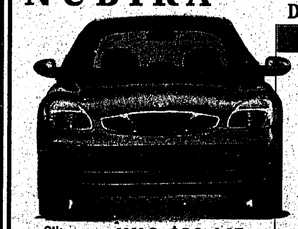
Need A Temporary Living Location?
Room Rates
As low as.....$35 day*
or starting at $175 week*
SUPER 8 MOTEL
CALL 704-873-5236
Sullivan Rd/Exit 151 off I-40
Statesville, NC
*Ask for RL rate

Read Tribune classifieds!

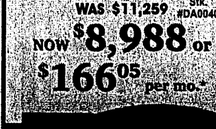
Kezlah's SALON 360
• Advanced Hair Cutting for the Entire Family
• Specializing in Custom & Corrective Coloring
• JUST HAIR DONE RIGHT!
NEW SALON CONCEPTS by WINK KEZIAH
14230 Reese Blvd. • Suite C
I-77 • Exit 23
Huntersville, NC 28078
(704) 992-1000

Your Child Can Learn

The sooner Huntington steps in, the faster grades step up.
Our certified teachers help children of all ages overcome frustration and failure and realize their potential. A few hours a week can help your child improve weak study skills and gain the Educational Edge.
Boost confidence
Increase Motivation
Improve Basic Skills
SAT/ACT prep
Our testing pinpoints problems and we tutor in reading, phonics, study skills, math and SAT/ACT prep to help students in all grades do better in school.
Sooner is better than later.
542-5421 Hwy 51 at Carmel Rd.
896-9699 Huntersville (Exit 25)
Huntington LEARNING CENTER
Your child can learn.
Independently Owned And Operated

HOME EQUITY LINE OF CREDIT
NO CLOSING COST
($10,000 MINIMUM)
Apply Today For Our
HOMEOWNER'S ADVANTAGE ACCOUNT
7.25% ANNUAL PERCENTAGE RATE
Consult your tax advisor regarding the deductibility of interest and charges.
Mooresville Savings Bank
Variable Rate - ½% above Wall Street Journal Prime Rate. Maximum APR 18%. Finance charges accrue immediately. A Daily Periodic Rate of Finance Charge is applied to the principal balance each day. Daily Periodic Rate of Finance Charge is .0199% - Annual Percentage Rate 7.25% as of 06/29/01. Late charge 4% of payment after 15 days. Advertised rate subject to change without notice.
MSB
EQUAL HOUSING OPPORTUNITY
Visit Your Nearest Office
347 North Main St. Mooresville, NC (704) 664-4888
401 Gilead Rd. Huntersville, NC (704) 875-1642
20209 West Catawba Ave Cornelius, NC (704) 892-8535

RANDY MARION
ANNOUNCES THE LATEST IN LUXURY, POWER AND AFFORDABILITY
DAEWOO®
Take a look!
NUBIRA

Stk. #DA0021 WAS $13,645
Daewoo Nubira vs. You Know Who

Nubira vs. Civic/Corolla/Sentra	Daewoo Nubira SE 4dr	Honda Civic LX 4dr	Toyota Corolla CE 4dr	Nissan Sentra GXE 4dr
MSRP (Major Features/Equipment)*	$11,790	$15,730	$13,908	$14,299
Engine	2.0L 16V DOHC	1.6 16V SOHC	1.8L 16V DOHC	1.8L 16V DOHC
HP/Torque	128/135	106/103	125/122	126/129
AM/FM Stereo w/Cassette	Yes	No Cassette	Yes	No Cassette(1)
Power Windows/Door Locks	Yes(p)	Yes	Yes(p)	Yes
Power Heated Outside Mirror	Yes(p)	No	No	No
Anti-Theft Alarm/Remote Entry	Yes(p)	Accessory	$439	Remote Entry only
4-Wheel Disc Brakes	Yes	Front Disc only	Front Disc only	Front Disc only
Fog Lamps	Yes(p)	Accessory	No	Accessory
Splash Guards	Yes	Accessory	$60	Accessory
Air Conditioning	$700	Yes	Yes(p)	Yes
Convenience Pkg. (or Value Pkg.)	$560	–	$1,090	$150
Destination Charge	$430	$440	$455	$520
Comparably-Equipped Price	$13,545	$16,259	$16,028	$15,048
Difference Over Daewoo	–	$2,714	$2,483	$1,503

NOW $10,788 or $199.31 per mo.* LEGANZA
LANOS

WAS $11,259 Stk. #DA0040
NOW $8,988 or $166.05 per mo.*
Satisfied
Daewoo ranked fourth in a J.D. Power survey on dealership customer satisfaction:
➤ Lexus
➤ Saturn
➤ BMW
➤ Daewoo
➤ Volvo
➤ Cadillac
➤ Infiniti
➤ Acura
➤ Jaguar
➤ Mercedes-Benz

Stk. #DA0017
WAS $15,625
NOW $12,288 or $227.02 per mo.*
704-664-3303