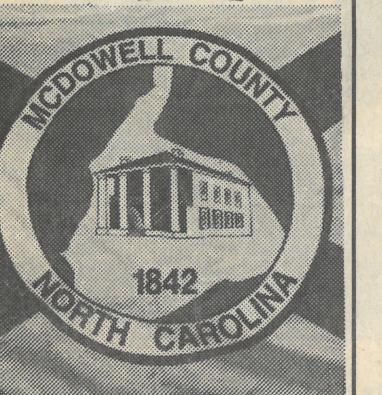


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BRIEFLY NOTED

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Sierra Club Meeting

The South Mountains Group of the Sierra Club will hold its regular bi-monthly meeting today at 7 p.m. in Room 18 of the Phifer Learning Resources Center on the Western Piedmont Community College campus in Morganton. David Blanchard-Reid will speak and show slides of "Unprotected Wild Areas in The Pisgah National Forest." The meeting is free.

Open House

East McDowell Junior High School will have an open house today at 7 p.m.

Public Hearing

A public hearing will be held Wednesday at 2 p.m. The hearing will be on the addition of 20 nursing care beds and space for outpatient therapy. The hearing will be held at Mayland Community College, Room 129, U.S. 19 east of Spruce Pine. For more information contact Ray M. Cullough at (919) 733-6360.

McDowell News

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Professor: Lake James In Borderline Situation

Oxygen Levels Tested Monday

By MIA ANDERSON
 Staff Writer

College environmental science students moved the halls of academia to the shore of Lake James for class Monday.

Nine juniors and seniors from the University of North Carolina at Asheville and their professor Rick Maas boarded Bill Bell's pontoon boat and traveled onto the lake to take water samples.

Each year Mass brings his class to the lake to test the oxygen level and the nutrient content of the water. The students also measure changes in pH, phosphorous and carbon dioxide according to depth.

All these factors influence the aquatic life in the lake.

Bell, who has been honored by the state for his efforts to keep Lake James clean, is more concerned with the oxygen levels in the lake than pollution there.

"On a scale of one to six, with one being so pristine you can drink out of it, Lake James is about a two," said Bell. "We are the envy of the Catawba River chain. We are very pristine compared to the others."

However, the oxygen level in the lake only goes down to 31 ft. "Many fish cannot live below that," said Bell.

Once water enters the lake from surrounding rivers, it takes 200 days for it to leave through the spillways or over the dam, said Bell.

"A lot can happen determining the oxygen levels during that time," (See LAKE, Page 2)



Water studies — UNCA professor Rick Maas (center) and his environmental science students prepare to take water samples to determine the water quality at Lake James. (Photo by Bonnie Byrd)



Water temps — This UNCA student takes a surface water temperature reading at Lake James. The surface temperature at the lake at about 3:30 p.m. Monday was 82 degrees. (Photo by Bonnie Byrd)