

Rural Areas Experiencing Big City Problem: Youth Using Drugs

By The Associated Press
 On a single day in Hillsville, 27 students at Carroll County High School are called out of classes individually and arrested, most on drug related charges.
 In Wythe County, sheriff's deputies take a drug from an elementary school pupil. Wythe County Sheriff Wayne Pike, whose department has arrested 70 drug dealers in two years, says finding drugs in schools — even primary grades — is not unusual.
 In Smyth County, parents and other interested citizens work together to seek ways of preventing drug abuse among young people.
 Dr. Charles Swanson, regional drug abuse prevention coordinator with the Mount Rogers Community Health and Mental Retardation Services Board, told the Smyth County group that youngsters and their drug use are a primary concern.
 Government agencies, such as the Mount Rogers program, have some of the expertise needed to operate drug abuse programs. But

budget cuts mean that citizens also must help to carry out the programs.
 Citizens must take steps to see what is needed "and then to implement that program ourselves, not to depend on some agency to do it for us..." said Jim Pugh, a member of the Smyth County task force that called its first citizens' meeting Oct. 27.
 The meeting was scheduled for a meeting room in the Smyth County Courthouse, but had to be moved to the courtroom because of the large number of people who attended.
 "It's a very significant problem, and it's something we're going to have to deal with at one level or another," Pugh said.
 A look at court dockets generally will show people charged each court term with drug offenses. The largest mass arrests recently in southwest Virginia occurred Nov. 4 at Carroll County High School.
 Those arrests stemmed from a six-week investigation. Darrell Alley, an investigator with

the Carroll County Sheriff's Department, said he expects the probe to last until May.
 Parents, school administrators and others brought the problem to the attention of the Carroll County School Board, which went to Sheriff Hassell Vass. The sheriff assigned Alley and Investigator Joe Spencer to the case.
 Alley and Spencer said they observed the drug dealings from a hidden position at the school. In financial terms, the investigation was a bargain — it cost \$160.
 Five of the 27 students in Hillsville were disciplined within the school system. The rest are scheduled for trial next month in the county's Juvenile and Domestic Relations Court.
 Charges range from possession of marijuana or other drugs to selling amphetamines, but Alley said a small percentage of the school's 1,000-plus students were involved in drugs.
 In Wythe County, Sheriff Pike has been concerned about the drug problem since he took office in 1980.

Often, local authorities are inclined to leave drug investigations to state police but Pike said he doesn't take that view because drugs are related to other crimes such as larceny, burglary and prostitution.
 "We have a drug problem here in Wythe County," the sheriff said. "We have any kind of drug here you can get in New York City. There's a common bond between drug abuse and other crimes...and here in Wythe County we've seen every drug there is..."
 Pike's department has a room full of confiscated drug paraphernalia, as do many other rural Virginia sheriffs.
 "It's unbelievable the number of things that they have," he said of drug dealers and users. "We've got boxes and boxes of paraphernalia — I mean hundreds of things."
 Pike, who grew up in Wythe County, said he doesn't recall ever hearing about marijuana when he was a boy. His first contact with drug users came in Vietnam.

After he became sheriff, Pike and his deputies spent several months researching who might be involved with drugs in his county. Each community seems to have its major dealer, he said.
 In less than two years, Pike's department has arrested 70 to 75 drug dealers. It also has confiscated four vehicles.
 Pike said weapons taken in the arrests range from automatic pistols to shotguns and rifles, "so we're dealing with dangerous people."
 Many people think that drugs are a smaller problem in rural areas, but Pike said studies show there is only a 3 percent difference in use of drugs in cities and use on rural areas.
 It's hard to convince youngsters to stay away from drugs, the sheriff added.
 But his drive against drugs has occasional rewards, like when he listens to a taped conversation between an undercover agent and a drug dealer and hears the dealer curse his department and complain about how tough authorities in Wythe County are on drug dealers.
 "That makes me feel good," the sheriff said.

Robb To Keep Controversial Contributions

RICHMOND (AP) — Gov.-elect Charles S. Robb and attorney general-elect Gerald L. Baliles say they will keep about \$71,000 from political contributors who are at legal odds with the state, although they returned similar contributions during the campaign.
 Before winning the Nov. 3 election, they returned \$4,000 in contributions from a company being sued by the state and from a group of electric utility employees whose firm

has filed frequent applications for rate hikes.
 Robb and Baliles cited political common sense and the need to avoid controversy in returning those funds.
 The \$71,000 came from a hospital development group, a coal operator and a group of beer wholesalers.
 Coal operator Earl Pilkenton of Wise has been sued by the state for allegedly running an illegal strip mine. He contributed \$1,000 to Baliles' campaign on Oct. 15.

Old Dominion Briefs

Shooting Death
 RICHMOND (AP) — A 24-year-old Henrico County woman has been found shot to death in her apartment, police say.
 The body of Olivia Thorndike was found at the foot of the stairs in her suburban Richmond apartment about 10:25 p.m. Wednesday night, a police spokesman said.
 Ms. Thorndike had been shot twice. Police said they had no suspects in the shooting and no arrests had been made.

Diesel Leak
 PULASKI, Va. (AP) — A 4,400-gallon diesel fuel spill that seeped into a tributary of Big Walker Creek in Pulaski County will take another 10 days to clean up, but the creek and surrounding wells probably will be unaffected, a member of the cleanup crew says.
 Maintenance Specialists of Virginia, a Roanoke-based company that handles a variety of spills, was called in after an oil tanker went out of control Tuesday on icy Va. Route 100 and fell about 100 feet down an embankment on Cloyds Mountain.
 About 4,400 gallons of No. 2 diesel fuel leaked out of the 7,000-gallon capacity tanker before another cleanup crew reached the wrecked tanker and pumped out the remaining fuel, said Karen Jones of the state Water Control Board.
 Dave Katenkamp, owner of Maintenance Specialists, said fuel probably will continue to bubble up from a small

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underground stream below the site of the wreck.
 The small stream that eventually reaches Big Walker Creek is mostly an underground stream that surfaces in spots at the base of Cloyds Mountain. Katenkamp believes most of the fuel has been contained at one of those spots where his workers have built a dam to slow the flow of water.
 Specially made booms that soak up oil but allow water to pass through them have been placed at the base of the dam. Three more dams have been built at intervals downstream.
 Just before the second dam, a chemical compound that also absorbs oil but lets water pass has been blackened by fuel, but there is no sign of fuel surfacing at points beyond.
 The rig, which belongs to Buchanan Oil Co. of Grundy, was driven by Roger C. Schaeffer, 24, who suffered internal chest injuries. He was listed in satisfactory condition at Pulaski Community Hospital.

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