

Over 2,000 people see KM Christmas parade

BY ABIGAIL WOLFORD
Staff Writer

The Kings Mountain Christmas parade Saturday went smoothly, despite what could have been a difficult situation.

The night before the parade was to take place, Kings Mountain special events director Ellis Noell entered the hospital for stomach problems, said Mayor Rick Murphrey. The parade could have been a disaster without him leading the way. However, Murphrey and Tripp Hord, who got enlisted to help at the last minute, were able to keep things running smoothly behind the scenes.

Despite the weather of the last week, people came to the parade in droves. People began lining up along the street an hour before the parade began. Vendors walked the streets and sold balloons, inflatable toys, and stuffed animals to the waiting crowd.

Kids wiggled around on the sidewalk, many of them holding bags to catch the candy that would be thrown. Friends and relatives enjoyed the time to visit with each other in a relaxed atmosphere.

"We were very pleased with the attendance. We had a real good crowd. People were lined up from start to finish on both sides of the street," said Murphrey.

He estimated that at least a couple of thousand people attended the parade this year. The parade is usually second largest event in Kings Mountain during the year. The largest, of course, is the fourth of July celebration.

Many new faces got involved in the parade this year, said Murphrey. Several area businesses who had never had a float before participated in the parade this year, including a couple of area banks.

"We had roughly 100 entries in the parade this year," said Murphrey. "We had several new additions to the parade."

This year the parade included the Kings Mountain High School band, the Johnson C. Smith University band, the Greenville Community Youth Organization drum and dance corp, several dance students from area studios, and area businesses, including many banks.

Several commissioners participated in the parade as well, along with Mayor Murphrey. Also many area pageant winners, like Miss Kings Mountain, Ashley Hamrick, who served as the Grand Marshall of the parade. Also several churches had floats with their youth groups, children, or interested church members. Many held signs that said, "Jesus is the reason for the season." Several preschools also participated.



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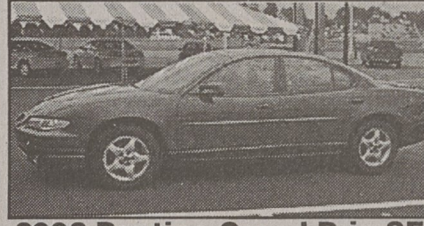
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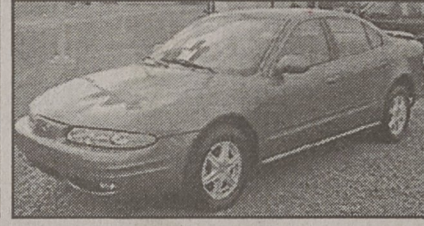
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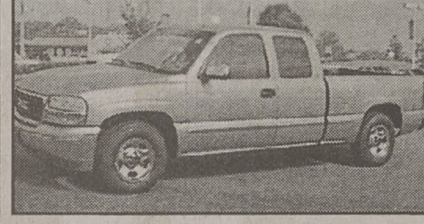
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