

LOCAL

KM State Park joins others in 'going Green'

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Green is the "in thing;" the popular thing businesses, municipalities, people and organizations are doing to save energy costs and the planet. But now it is also the thing local parks are doing to become even more "green," according to Van O'Cain, Director of Membership of Public Relations for the Electric Cooperatives of South Carolina.

SC State Park Service received a donation of 4,300 Cfl (Compact Fluorescent Light) bulbs from ECSC which are to be given to the state's 47 parks.

"Do the Light Switch" kicked off July 10, 2008 beside the mess hall of Camp Cherokee at the Kings Mountain State Park.

"The lights are brighter and they last longer. We will see a dramatic drop in bills," Park Ranger Shea Jordan stated.

"Our program was designed first to save money in the home. If we're not careful, we'll lose electricity means," O'Cain said.

The great outdoors seem to have salespeople taking home ideas endorsed by O'Cain - campers!

"Kids get excited and are able to retain information so they go

home telling their parents how they can save \$30 a month. Parents listen to their kids," O'Cain added.

All attention efforts of Ipods and cell phone text messages seemed to lose the wow-curiosity battle to ECSC's cfl bright lights. O'Cain showed campers an electronic comparison display demonstrating the amount of energy cfls save. A screen shows that an everyday light bulb burns 58 watts of energy. When pressing the button (on the display) it exhibits four cfl bulbs using 53 watts all together.

"There is a cfl for whatever you need. It can go on the outside or be used for reading," O'Cain said. "Older people have a problem with the regular (lower lit) cfl light. A 2,700kW light is so high that it's easier to read by!"

According to O'Cain, everyday "25 cent" bulbs burn out in six months to one year. Cfls take eight to ten years. Each light costs two or three dollars, but O'Cain insists the longer lasting and lower energy saves in the home bill department.

KMSP is the first of the South Carolina state parks to switch to cfls.

Brian Reburn, administrator

of all staff members, says that in the highly spirited Camp Cherokee, at the park, one of the four values is Respect for nature. "The compact of the light bulbs are better. Campers bring back a positive experience," Reburn added.

Myrtle Beach native and 14-year-old "Cherokee" returnee William Hewitt feels that he doesn't get close to nature in his growing city. Along with the changing of bulbs, he enjoys the sight of mountains, goes creek crawling, and snake catching.

"Here the trees are skyscrapers," Hewitt stated.

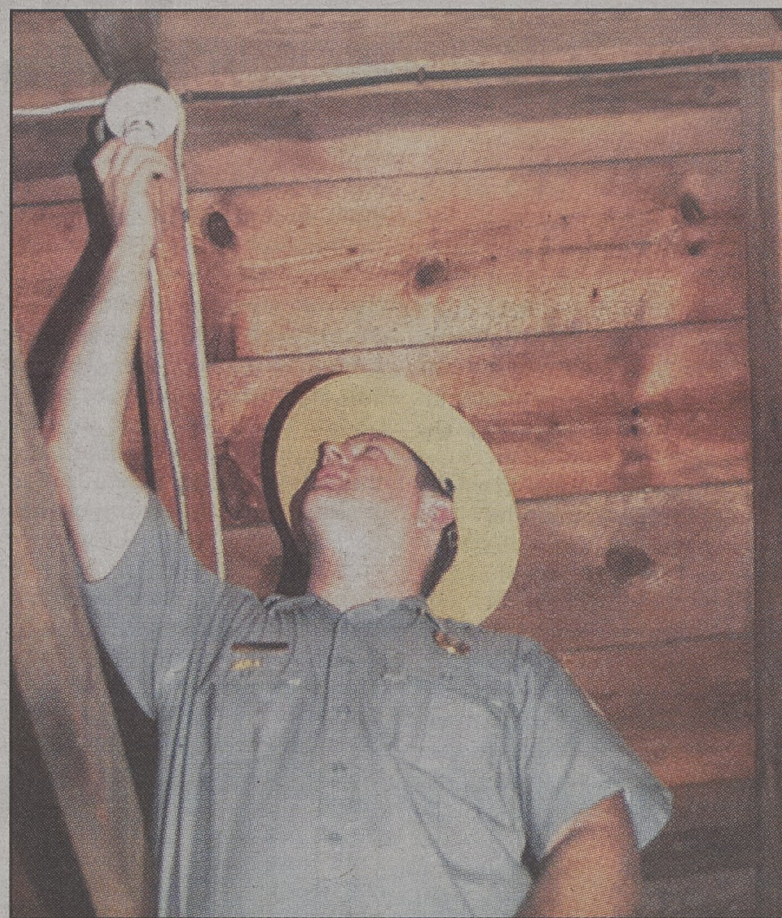
"The one (environmental) problem with the cfls is that there is a little mercury in the bulb," O'Cain said.

However the ECSC is constantly working to better the bulb. Results from Wal-mart and other stores have proven to O'Cain their future.

"Wal-mart set a goal (last year) to sale 100 million. They exceeded their goal," O'Cain said.

As for a few miles across the border into North Carolina O'Cain stated, "I imagine NC cooperatives are doing the same."

But the goal, of O'Cain and Electric Cooperatives of S.C., of



REBECCA PISCOPO/HERALD

Kings Mountain State Park Ranger Shea Jordan changes a bulb in one of the park's camp houses to a more energy efficient bulb.

plugging cfls into homes may child's mind. start by simply lighting up a

School plans show KM has most potential for future growth New schools could be on the horizon

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Line, bar graphs, charts with algebraic formulas in a presentation by Jeffrey Tsai and Tom Cook was translated in plain English as "school needs" for the Cleveland County Board of Education at its meeting Monday night.

The needs for a possible new high school and elementary schools in Kings Mountain was addressed. Instead of looking at school populations year by year, the "Operations Research/Education Laboratory" study shows expected growth up until the year 2012.

Chairman Tommy Greene stated, "We need to start looking as funds become available

for population growth. Land will be gone so we need to prepare."

But concocting plans aren't meant for 2008 or even '09. The study charts show the elementary and middle school attendance rates are flat or decreasing. The only one at its peak according to Tsai is high school.

Kings Mountain is expected to see the most growth. Cook and Tsai are looking to Charlotte. "The I-85 South Corridor is the last to experience growth from Charlotte. Its now affecting Gaston County," Cook stated. "Will some of the impact be delayed because of gas prices?"

Growth means more families which, in turn, is equivalent to higher numbers of students. Currently, KM looks to

have more residential growth in the short term than most areas. Gas prices, however, weren't taken into the account of the study.

Still, East and West Elementary Schools are over capacitated, according to the study.

"Kings Mountain has difficulty handling growth especially in East and West. The first thing is to start looking at a potential site for new elementary schools in KM," stated Program Director Jeff Tsai of the Institute for Transportation Research and Education at North Carolina State University.

On average Cleveland County as a whole is expected to see 100-200 students in growth. Kings Mountain Intermediate, as shown by the

study, is one exception because of a localized increase.

"Allocation is one of those things I keep in my top drawer," Greene said. "This gives

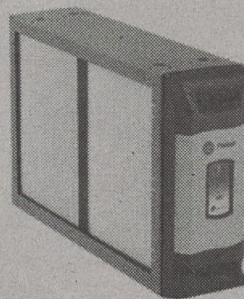
us a long term view. (This is) a lot of good planning information! We need to look in those circles and clusters where

development can take place."

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