

**City trimming Tree Limbs**

# An Ounce Of Prevention

It's tree trimming time in Kings Mountain. It doesn't involve Christmas trees, mistletoe or other Yuletide festivities, but it's the city's answer to a problem that is costing the city treasury between \$100,000. to \$200,000. each year.

The city has started a trimming project to clear limbs and trees away from power lines and poles, and also to eliminate the cost of losing electricity caused by limbs rubbing through wire insulation and the expense of down time when fallen limbs break power lines.

However, officials admit their new program will only put a dent in the problem that faces the city, and a dent in the annual loss.

"We have budgeted \$20,000. this year to get the program started," said Kings Mountain Engineer Tom Howard. "That will provide about 10-12 weeks of tree trimming, which is a start." However, Howard estimates it would take eight to ten months of continual trimming to clear the over-growth so that it doesn't interfere with the power lines.

"We just can't afford to do all of that right now," Howard explains, "so we are taking the worst areas first." Currently crews are working on the main electrical feeder lines running through Crescent Hills and they will next concentrate in the Southwoods area.

Neff Tree Service of Shelby has been contracted to do the work. Neff does tree trimming for the cities of Shelby, Gastonia and Cherryville. "We feel they are doing an excellent job," Howard said.

Howard hopes the program will guard against a potential critical situation.

"What if a large tree fell on a main line during 99 degree plus days we had last summer?" Howard asks. "It might be a couple of days before it could be repaired. If that main line serviced an industry, it would be out of power."

Another frightening case would be if a main line knocked out power in a residential area. "The elderly

and sick often are not mobile so they may be confined to their homes. If we have another hot period like last summer, the extreme heat and lack of electricity to emergency equipment could be fatal to some of those folks," he explained.

Why has the city not had an on-going tree trimming program in the past? City Utilities Director Jimmy Meaney explains:

"Before we would trim trees if there was a problem with a down line. Our city crews would go and cut out the limbs before the repair was made, so we really reacted from breakdown to breakdown with no real maintenance."

Maney says he is occasionally asked why the city's five man electrical line crew has stopped cutting trees, and why the city has gone to an outside service.

"The answer is that we have not stopped cutting trees," he explains. When they are not working on the lines they are cutting tree, but the problem is so big that they can't really have an impact," he says. "If they never cut a limb, they have more than enough work to do to work on the existing problems that happen every day with the power lines."

Maney says he estimates that it has been 30 years since many of the trees now engulfing the lines have been trimmed. Most municipalities have on-going programs that keep trees trimmed back from power lines. "We are just playing catch-up," Maney said.

"It is usually a job that cities contract out to professionals and that is what we are doing," Howard add.

Under the current program, Maney says that if a tree is in the power lines on private property a homeowner is offered the option of the city trimming the tree back or cutting the tree down. If the homeowner wants the wood, then it is cut and left on the property. If they do not want it, it is taken to the City Depot for senior citizens. Wood chips are taken to Jake Early Park and are available to the public on a first come basis.

Benefits which Howard expects from the program include:

- Eventually eliminating down power lines due to storms;
- Help maintain wire insulation and help on overall maintenance of the lines;
- Help cut down the tripping of breakers at the substations when limbs down wires;
- Provide general safety against falling limbs.

Howard expects it will take about five years to catch up. "We will just take it one step at a time and work on the most critical areas first," he says. "That's really about all we can do."

## Midpines Community Is 'Little McAdenville'

Mrs. Charlotte Batchler, 70, started decorating her yard at 1230 Ada Street in the Midpines Community 20 years ago and a tradition was born.

This weekend the lights will go on again in the small community near Kings Mountain and just about every porch, yard and fence will glow with Christmas lights.

"It's really a 'Little McAdenville', according to Mrs. Batchler who says she may need some help next year to continue the tradition at her house. This week Mrs. Batchler climbed on the roof to install Santa and his reindeer and she has installed a manger scene and carolers on the lawn. Her three children, Clarence Batchler, Tom Dewey Batchler, and Jewel Bumgardner will help her put the finishing touches on the decorations this weekend. Mrs. Batchler's seven grandchildren, Debbie, Teresa, Sandi, Roxanne and Tommy Batchler, Tammy and Lane Bumgardner and her great-granddaughter Brittany Danielle Buchanan will share in the major yard decorating project. Nothing in the yard will escape the magic of Christmas lights and nearby fences will also glow with glittering lights.

"I always look forward to the holiday season and this is my way of saying 'Merry Christmas'," says Mrs. Batchler, whose neighbors caught the holiday spirit and have joined in the decorating fun about this time of the year.

Not only does Mrs. Batchler decorate with lights but she also uses music and sounds of familiar carols and songs can be heard over a loudspeaker. Candles burn in each window of her house and she says that visitors come from near and far to see the decorations, not only at her house but at other residences in the community.

Mrs. Batchler said that most residents of the community are lighting their homes and yards this weekend for the holiday season.



TREE TRIMMING - Jim Maney oversees tree trimming project.



ELECTRICAL WIRES - Crew began cutting out limbs from the worst areas first.

## Company To Expand In Shelby

On November 17, Cleveland Vocational Industries Inc. broke ground on a 17,600 square foot addition to its facility. This addition will add two and one half times more space to the existing 7200 square foot facility. For the past two years more space has been needed to adequately serve the growing number of clients served and businesses the workshop subcontracts work with. The new facility will offer additional work space as well as needed offices and bathrooms. The targeted completion date will be six months.

After a welcome by CVII Board Chairperson, Mrs. Jo Boggs, Representative Edith Lutz spoke about her involvement in the program and wishes for continued success. Dr. Dwight Hord gave the invocation and CVII Executive Director, Ken Bagby, spoke about what the building expansion means for Cleveland County. Cleveland Vocational Industries Inc. Board Chairperson, Mrs. Jo Boggs and First Union National Bank Vice President, Joe Henderson had the honor of breaking ground.



The first macaroni factory in the U.S. was established in 1848.

## ★ Parade

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Mountain Mayor Kyle Smith and City Council members.

Co-chairmen of the holiday event are David Hancock, Recreation Director, and Fire Chief Gene Tignor.

Pretty girls, beauty queens from various KMSHS campus activities, KMSHS Marching Band, dancers, clowns, and units representing various civic, church, scout and school activities will be featured in the line-

up. Units will begin lining up about 1:15 p.m. and parade co-chairmen said the parade will start promptly at 2 p.m.

Rounding out the parade will be Santa Claus followed by horsemen from the area.

"We invite the entire community to come out for this holiday event," said Hancock who estimated that large crowds will be in Kings Mountain on Sunday afternoon for the parade.

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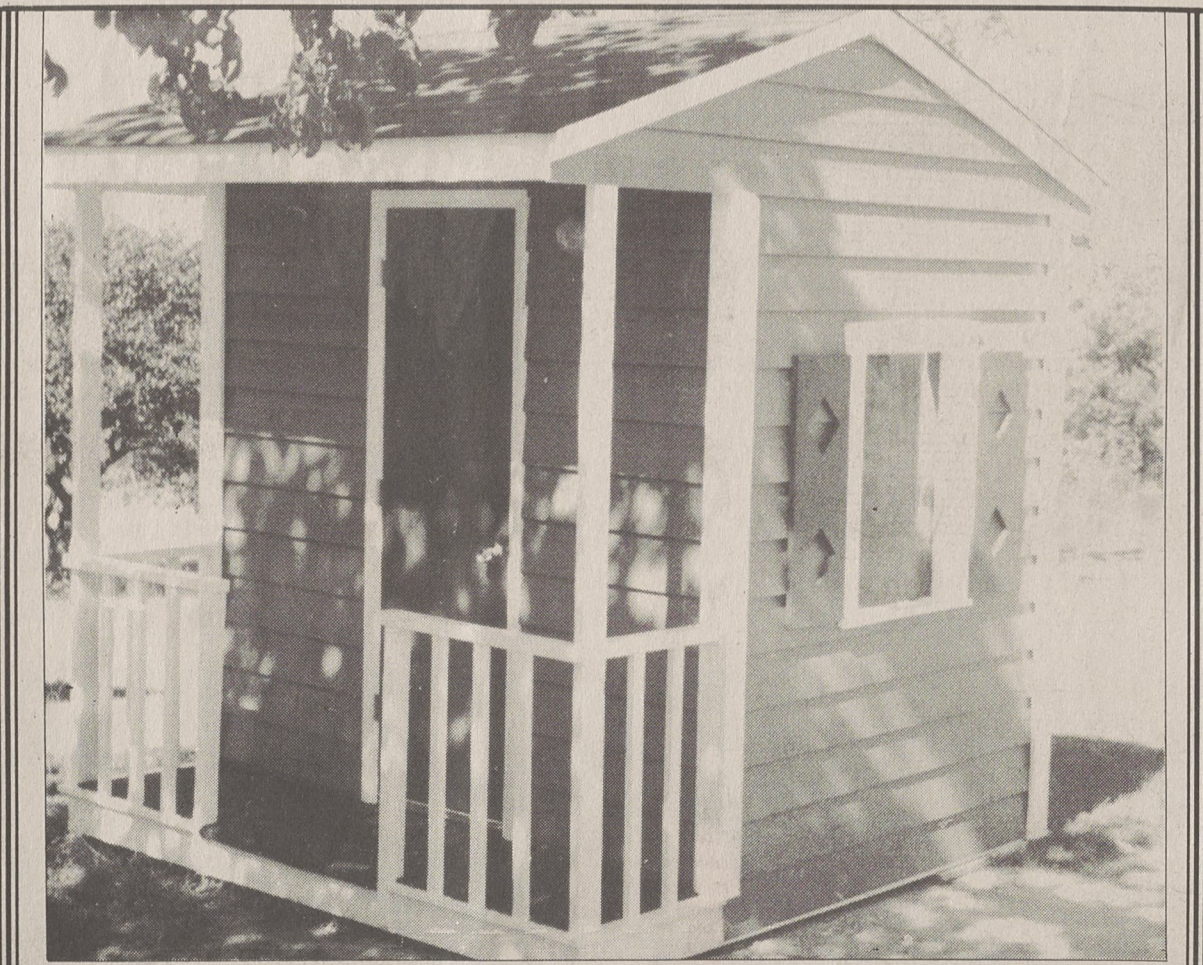
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## — WIN THIS PLAYHOUSE —

Sponsored by the Kings Mountain Rotary Club. Tickets are \$1.00 donation to help eliminate polio worldwide. Tickets will be available and playhouse on display at Sandra Wilson Realty immediately following Christmas Parade, December 11.

Tickets will be available at BB&T beginning December 12.