



POLICE CHIEF FOR A DAY-Senior Girl Scout Sabra Gaffney of Troop 200 was "Police Chief For A Day" during Girl Scout in Government Day Monday and she and nine other Scouts assisted in various city departments. Sabra is pictured with KMPD Captain Bob Hayes. Others participating were Fire Chief Genora Taylor, City Manager Jackie Houston, Personnel Manager Elizabeth Dilling, Recreation Director Heather McDowell, Finance Director Stephanie Huffstetter, Public Works Director Debbie Dalton, City Engineer Sarah Dilling and Water Plant Director Katie Subler.

Scouts as good as gold

Midas had the touch, but most people have to work hard to acquire gold. Girl Scouts certainly do when they go for the Girl Scout Gold Award, the highest award that they can earn.

This year, the Gold Review Board has approved 30 Gold Award projects - three times the usual number. This is even more remarkable when one realizes the commitment of time, energy and intelligence these Senior Girl Scouts make when they go for the gold.

There are five major requirements for the Girl Scout Gold Award, and they must all be earned as a Senior Girl Scout. Requirements 1-4 must be completed before a girl begins work on the Gold Award project. The requirements are: 1. Earn 4 interest project patches. 2. Earn the Career

Senior Girl Scout pin. 3. Earn the Senior Girl Scout Leadership Award. 4. Earn the Senior Girl Scout Challenge. 5. Do a Girl Scout Gold Award project.

The Girl Scout Gold Award project is an extension and a combination of all that has been learned during a girl's years as a Girl Scout. The first 4 requirements help to develop skills, practice leadership, explore career possibilities and self-understanding.

Six weeks before a girl expects to start her requirements for her Gold Award project, the initial application for the Girl Scout Gold Award must be sent by the Gold Award Review Board. If approved, the Senior Girl Scout then begins with the charge that it bring special contributions to others and that she personally feels the project is important.

Pioneer's Council's "Golden Girls" will have the opportunity to share the projects that helped them reach the Girl Scout Gold Award at a special event which is a part of the Older Girls Weekend, May 24-26 at UNC Charlotte. Before their parents, peers and proud Girl Scout leaders, the girls will describe how it felt to teach a handicapped child to swim, develop a fire safety program for all ages in the community and to have reading programs in a child care center.

Girls in Gaston County whose service applications have been approved are: Michelle Camp, Shannon Cloninger, Emily Punch, Susan Arthur and Meredith Troutman. Debbie Glaze of Belmont has earned the award and will receive it at the special Gold Award event at UNC-Charlotte.

Girl Scouts are givers

Last year the Pioneer Girl Scout Council had its first ever Annual Giving Campaign. Connie Gibbons of Gastonia was the chair for the campaign which exceeded its \$10,000 goal. The Pioneer Girl Scout Council receives approximately 50% of its funding from United Way agencies in Gaston, Cleveland, Rutherford and Lincoln counties. Other monies come from the Girl Scout Cookie Sale and special event/program fees.

Gibbons, past president of the Pioneer Girls Scout Council and a

long time member of the board of directors, is serving as chair of this year's "Friends for the Future" campaign which runs February 15 - March 31. She has enlisted area co-ordinators to help in the campaign. Midge Yelton, Pat Hardin and Mary Jane Daily in Rutherford; Becky Causby and Claudia Rose in Cleveland; Dee Land and Margaret Upchurch in Gaston.

Lincoln County will have a letter campaign, potential donors and

friends of Girl Scouting having been identified by a special Lincoln County task force.

In asking for a contribution for the "Friends for the Future" campaign Gibbons says, "As individuals there is little we can do to change the course of our society, but we can invest in those programs that we can see make a positive difference. Girl Scouting is one of these. A contribution to Girl Scouting is an investment... an investment in the future of girls and the future of our world."

Does it still pay to own a home?

During the 1980s many people found that buying a home, waiting a year or so and then selling it was the best "get rich quick" strategy around due to skyrocketing home prices. At the very least, real estate has always been a good, safe investment. But with the slowing economy and sluggish markets in many areas of the country, some potential homebuyers are asking if it still pays to own a home.

A recent article in *Fortune* magazine, however, states that the economic advantages of home ownership remain "hard to beat." "Real estate is still a respectable shelter for savings," concurs Charlene Ellis, president of the Kings Mountain Board of Realtors. Add the rent you would pay if you didn't own--plus the generous tax breaks still allowed under federal and some state laws for mortgage interest payments and property taxes--and the family home looks pretty good."

The monetary value of home ownership is measured by both the equity built over the years and the tax benefits. "These are tangible benefits realized from the time you buy until the time you close on a sale," says Ellis. "In addition, prospective home owners should consider the less tangible benefits such as privacy, independence and establishing roots in the community."

many economists predict that in the 1990s home prices will stabilize and rise slightly faster than inflation, continuing to make home ownership a good investment. Further, the forecast is that incomes will rise faster than home prices. "This is good news for renters," says Ellis. "Buying and selling homes in the 1990s will probably not make you rich, but the purchase of a home will pro-

vide a strong base from which your net worth can grow."

"Prospective home owners view paying off a mortgage as a forced savings plan," Ellis says. "You equity then gives you extra borrowing power--important to consider if you're planning on sending children to college. In addition, you'll probably own a paid-up home when retirement rolls around which will greatly lower your

housing costs. When you trade down to a smaller home, you may walk away with a sizeable amount of cash besides."

And what about those who predict an unstable housing market in the 90s? "The best way to hedge the uncertainty of future housing costs is to pay them in advance--become a homeowner now," says Ellis.

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Educational issues discussed

The Charlotte-Mecklenburg Board of Education and the Wake County Board of Education hosted representatives of area school systems, governmental agencies, and chambers of commerce on February 26, for a discussion session aimed at building consensus among the groups regarding educational issues which should be given priority in the current General Assembly session. The meeting was held at the Education Center of the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools.

The program featured representatives of boards of education, county commissions, and chambers of commerce who shared ideas for building effective coalitions among the various segments of communities towards the end result of providing better schools for children. Ronald Aycock, Executive Director of the North Carolina Commissioners Association, and Gene Causby, Executive Director of the North Carolina School Boards Association, provided perspectives on coalition building from their organizations.

Kings Mountain district Board Chairman Billy King and Superintendent Bob McRae represented the Kings Mountain District Schools at the meeting.

KM employees participate in course

Three City of Kings Mountain employees participated in a municipal basic electric meter school Feb. 20 and 21 in Gastonia.

Meter Readers Charles Bullard and Terry Bullock and Finance Director Jeff Rosencrans attended the workshop.

Linemen and service technicians new to the metering profession had two days of instruction in the mechanics of meters and meter testing. Students also learned some basic formulas, equations and terminology associated with electricity and its metering.

The school, sponsored by Electricities of North Carolina Inc. and the N.C. Association of Municipal Electric Systems, was an opportunity for the linemen and technicians to supplement their working knowledge of meters with a textbook understandings of the basic principles and theories involved in metering.

Course instructor Don Stanley is an electrical engineer with the City of Wilson. He is responsible for the engineering division of the city's electrical utility department.

Wilson and Kings Mountain are public power communities and are responsible for the operation and maintenance of their electric distribution systems. Both cities are members of Electricities, a non-profit organization that provides technical, administrative and professional assistance to its 65 member cities.

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