

School bells to ring

Your Hometown
Newspaper
•Since 1889•

Kings Mountain Herald

Catching drunk drivers.....
Hospital gets new equipment

VOL. 103 NO. 31

Thursday, August 8, 1991

Kings Mountain, N.C. 28086 •35¢

Odor being checked out

Castlewood Drive residents are upset about "definite" gas odors and dying trees at the closed Petroleum World Station on Highway 74 just west of the city limits but officials of the company say they have "nothing to be alarmed about."

Adjoining property owners Al Grigg and Rev. Dale Thornburg are concerned, they said, about "possible ground contamination" and are planning to take soil samples and are encouraging their neighbors and nearby businesses to do the same.

John Thornton, an official of Petroleum World, acknowledged the station is closed and a "closure report sampling" is being filed with the Mooresville office of the Department of Environmental Management, a preliminary step before taking the pumps down.

City officials, after complaints from the neighbors of the area, will ask the Petroleum World officials to clean up, not

only the West King site where the gas company moved out last week, but the 600 block of East King Street where monitoring wells are in place and which Petroleum vacated over a year ago leaving a huge excavation now high with grass and weeds.

Jesse Wells, of the state office of Environmental Health and Natural Resources, said the company has 15 days to submit soil samples and assessment of tank basin where the pump islands now are in order to determine if soil or ground water contamination exists. He said Thornton talked with him Wednesday. The pumps are to be removed by August 26.

City planner Gene White said Petroleum failed a tank tightness test and removed their product last week from the West King location, beside of Wade Ford. Petroleum officials acknowledged that the "tank tightness test" involved a kerosene tank and said the station was closed because it

"wasn't paying for itself in that location." White said the site is poorly protected and the city is working closely with Petroleum and the Division of Environmental Management to move ahead with the clean up work. White said the average time the state gives to clear a site is 1 1/2 to 2 years, unless it is a high priority.

Rev. Thornburg, a close neighbor of the East King Street station, said he is concerned about safety and hopes the city will push for a speedy clean-up of the property.

"The safety factor is what bothers me," said Grigg, a close neighbor of the gas station. "The whole parking lot is dug up and a safety hazard, dirt is piled up and boundaries around the station are completely destroyed. We've been trying to get some answers but no one seems to know what's going on. I hope that company never gets a permit to operate in Kings Mountain again."



CLOSED DOWN
Leak being checked out

Their fights will always be in court

Joni Smith and Chuck Wilson are Mr. and Mrs. and a unique couple. In court he is the prosecutor and she is the defense counsel.

On a recent day Smith's defense motion to dismiss a client on a charge of assault was accepted by the judge and she won the case.

Good cross examination was key to the defense win, said Smith, who says training with the professionals at Corry, Cerwin and Coleman, has been invaluable. The Kings Mountain law firm employs Smith as a law clerk. City Attorney Mickey Corry has asked her to come back to the firm next summer after she takes the state bar exam.

Wilson said he was proud that his wife could gain some practical courtroom experience this summer before she returns to Campbell University, where she is a third year law student.

Smith says she's grateful to Corry for allowing her to, not only

do research, but interview clients "and do a lot of what attorneys do every day."

"It's been a real learning experience and, of course, I wanted to win that particular case but you can imagine how glad I was to win when my husband was prosecuting for the state," she said.

Smith kept her maiden name when she became the wife of Chuck Wilson Jan. 5. "After all I've been a Smith all my life and my name is my identity," said the lady of the house, who maintains that marriage doesn't create possession.

Smith will live in the dormitory this fall at Campbell University but breaks from school will find her here with lawyer husband and parents, Mr. and Mrs. Joseph R. Smith.

Wilson, son of Mrs. Mary Wilson and the late Charles E. Wilson of Atlanta, Ga., joined the District Attorney Bill Young's of-



CHUCK WILSON AND JONI SMITH

ice as an assistant district attorney in September 1990 after graduating law school. He met the love of his life his third year. A first year law student in November 1989, Smith took an exam writing seminar led by Wilson but it wasn't until the next semester that she invited him to have lunch at McDonald's. "He put pepper on his French fries and I

knew I liked him," she laughed.

Before entering Campbell, Smith had completed two years at Pfeiffer College, one year at ASU and received her degree in criminal justice from UNC at Charlotte. She was also a banker, working as a senior corporate training officer for

See Smith, 14-A

A new look for council

After four years with six council members in the city's first city manager/council form of government, change is coming at the upcoming election.

For the first time, the city could seat its first black with seven members on council. For the first time, six of the eight-member board, including the mayor, could be new faces. Voters could determine the majority of the board, four, at the polls in October.

A new mayor will also be seated, since Mayor Kyle Smith, completing his first term, has said he won't seek reelection.

The first new member to be seated, a successor in Ward 4 to mayoral candidate Scott Neisler, could be named as early as August 27 by council which has the prerogative to name the new member now or wait until the new board is sworn in mid-December. "I think it would behoove the current board to name the Ward 4 commissioner. Hopefully they will come up with a good choice at the next council meeting," said Mayor Kyle Smith. Under state law, the board can appoint any registered voter 21 years of age and living in Ward 4 created by redistricting with approval of the U. S. Justice Department in July.

There has been speculation that the board could draw from front runners two years ago. Neisler defeated the late Harold Phillips for the District 6 position in a runoff. Neisler received 584 votes to Phillips' 328. Others in the original race were Jerry White, who received 175; Will Sanders, 127, and Willard Boyles, 120. White and Boyles currently live in Ward 4 in the new redistricting but Sanders is now a resident of Ward 5. Cook said the Phillips residence is also now in Ward 5. "One side of Landing street comes into Ward 4



BARRETT



BRIDGES



HAMRICK

PEARSON

3 running in Ward 2

A race developed Thursday for the Ward 2 council seat when incumbent Jackie Barrett filed for reelection and a three-way contest was assured Wednesday morning when former Recreation Director Roy Pearson filed.

Norma Bridges, incumbent, also filed for one of the two at-large seats open on the seven-member board and Gilbert Hamrick made it a three-way race for the mayor's job.

Jeff Gregory was first candidate to file in Ward 2. Bridges and incumbent Al Moretz are challenged by Luther Bennett and Joe King for the at-large positions created by recent redistricting.

Former commissioners James A. Childers and Scott Neisler are also seeking the mayoral post. Neisler resigned last week after two years on the board to run for mayor.

See Council, 14-A

Two file for School Board

Two more candidates entered the school board race last week before the filing period passed.

Mark George, of 710 Sandhurst Drive, and David S. Lynn, of 1729 Shelby Rd., seek the two seats open on the Kings Mountain board of education. Board Chairman Billy King formally filed Friday. Announcing previously were B.S.

Peeler and Shearra Miller.

George, a 1973 graduate of Kings Mountain High School and son of Mr. and Mrs. John George Jr., is a supervisor at Commercial Intertech. He is married to Debbie Bolin George and they have two daughters: Katie, 12, a 7th grader at Kings Mountain Middle School, and Anna, 9, a fourth grader at

West School. They are active in First Baptist Church and West School PTA.

"As a concerned parent with children in the school system I feel that the job of a board of education member is important. I would like to see basic education the top priority in the schools. Let parents be

See School, 14-A



GEORGE



LYNN



DAY



WILLIS

See Board, 13-A

Three more announce in Grover

Three more people filed for Grover town board as the filing deadline passed Friday.

The filing brings the number to six who seek two seats open in the fall election. Three people seek the office of mayor.

Dr. Philip M. Day, Evelyn Willis, and Sam N. Stevenson seek seats held by incumbents Sandra S.

Ellis and Ronald Queen. Filing last week were Ellis, Jack Herndon and Don Rich.

In the mayor's race, incumbent Bill McCarter is challenged by Queen and former commissioner Norman King, who resigned his seat on the board to run for mayor. The board will name a successor to serve out King's two-year unex-

pired term.

Day owns and operates the newly constructed Grover Family Practice at 217 North Main Street. He is a graduate of St. Elizabeth High School, Wayne State University and earned his M. D. from Michigan State University in 1982. He completed post graduate

See Grover, 14-A

McRae not candidate for county school job

Rumors have been flying around Kings Mountain for several days that Superintendent of Schools Dr. Bob McRae will be named Superintendent of Cleveland County Schools.

The Cleveland County Board of Education has scheduled a press conference for this morning to name a successor to Dr. Ellen Powell, who retired June 1.

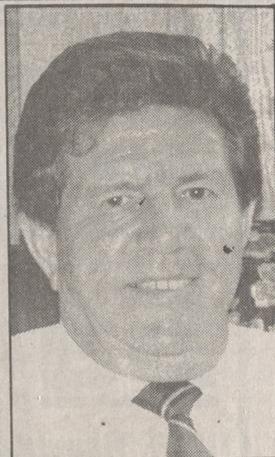
After it was reported earlier this week that the county board had narrowed its choices to one candidate--and that the candidate was not employed by Cleveland County Schools--rumors had it that McRae was the man.

But, McRae says he never even applied for the job and isn't looking to go anywhere.

"I have a good job," he said. "I've heard the rumors, too, and several people have asked me about it. But I'm not an applicant for anything. I'm happy where I am."

McRae said he has been invited to this morning's press conference. "I will attend it but only to show our support for their school system and the selection of their superintendent, who will not be me."

KINGS MOUNTAIN PEOPLE



REV. GENE LAND

Second Baptist 'Gene's Land'

The dean of Kings Mountain ministers, Rev. Gene Land, came to Second Baptist Church from Greensboro 21 years ago.

His love of the people he serves and their affection for him is well known. The church has grown to 125 in Sunday School every Sunday and 160-170 in Sunday worship with 102 tithers. Land says it has the highest percent of income per attendee of any church in the area.

Their record of benevolence gives Second Baptist a well-earned reputation as a caring and giving congregation.

Land started a popular Christian Singles group which probably has served as many as 2,000 people during the ministry with 60 attending the first Saturday night event. Every third Saturday night singles are invited to come to the church for a covered dish supper and various outings are planned throughout the year.

Another new ministry is Keenagers, a group of 25-30 senior citizens, who according to their leader "meets every chance we can" for trips and picnics. Recently the group went to the Columbia, S.C. zoo.

An active youth group is headed by music director/secretary Evelyn Bridges and volunteers like Land lead Children's Church on Sunday mornings for students in grades 1-6 and Preschool in the educational building constructed during Land's ministry.

Land, who preaches on Sunday at 11 a.m., Sunday night at 7 p.m. and for mid-week services on Wednesday at 7:15 p.m., brings a good turnout to hear him. His favorite book is Paul's letter to the Philippians. Often he conducts youth Bible studies on Wednesday night before a good crowd.

The key to progress in the church is that people are willing to work together and Land says Second

See Land, 13-A