



ENJOY LUNCH - Bethware principal Hugh Holland, assistant principal Greg Payseur and kindergarten teacher Mary Ann Gibson enjoy a relaxed lunch served by PTO members prior to the Christmas break.

KMG to protest county zoning

The County Planning Board's preliminary proposal for zoning 6,500 acres along a 6.4 mile stretch of U. S. 29 and Interstate 85 between Kings Mountain and Grover got the ire of one Kings Mountain mining industry this week which termed the proposal "ill conceived, without foundation in fact and demonstratively arbitrary, capricious and unreasonable."

KMG Minerals Inc., in a letter from legal counsel Herbert B. Bierman to County Planner Bill McCarter, Economic Development Director Joe Hendrick, Kings Mountain City Council, and editors of The Kings Mountain Herald and Shelby Star, said the firm had been denied an opportunity to be heard. Bill McCarter told The Herald that the proposal is in the preliminary stages only and that public hearing is required by state law and could be held as early as March but community hearings in Kings Mountain and Grover would be scheduled by the Planning Board to get input from the mining community and other industries.

"Before initiating any zoning the county must hold a public hearing but our board always goes into the communities to gather data before making a recommendation to the county commissioners," said McCarter.

McCarter said the Planning Board wants to insure both mining and industrial growth occur in harmony. "Mining is a very valuable resource in Cleveland County and we want to protect their interests and also the interests of future industry that might want to locate in the area and benefit from transportation and utility services available."

McCarter says it's premature at this point to get the public involved because only data is being collected and put on paper. "This all could change," he said.

Currently, a small area of residential zoning around Moss Lake is the only zoning in Cleveland County outside of what zoning exists in municipalities, he said.

McCarter said any proposed zoning would likely undergo some changes as it is reviewed by the county commission and the county's Economic Development Commission. It will be placed under public scrutiny during public hearing.

KMG Minerals called attention in their letter to a story in the Shelby Star December 17, 1991 that indicated that the proposed zoning "is an outgrowth of recent failed efforts to block development of a controversial mica mine."

Said Bierman: "Several weeks ago when the Rednour application for a mica mining permit was under discussion, KMG Minerals expressed its concern over unsupported representation of the Economic Development Council, the real estate interests and others concerning mining activities in the area. At that time, we requested an opportunity to be heard concerning this issue whenever it was to be considered by the Planning and Zoning authorities. We have not had any contact with any public body or official since that time. The account of the Planning Board proposals which appeared in the local press on December 17, 1991 was our first indication that further consideration of the issue was under discussion.

"KMG Minerals Inc. or its predecessors have mined mica and associated minerals in the Kings Mountain area since the World War II era. Mica has from time to time, been listed as a strategic mineral and is presently being widely used in such industries as paints, ceramics, rubber, wall board and wall board cement. KMG is one of the largest suppliers of fine mica products in the world and has brought worldwide recognition to Kings Mountain. KMG or its predecessors have been a steady and respected employer in the local work force and currently employs upwards of 200 people in its mining

production activities. It injects a payroll of several million dollars yearly into the local economy and approximately 90% of its work force live, work and shop in Cleveland County.

"When the Planning Board and its consultants examine land use proposals, it is imperative that they remember that mining a particular mineral is vastly different than locating an industrial facility. The mining must take place where the mineral was deposited by mother nature. The miner does not have a choice of locations. The area under discussion along Highway 29 and I-85 contains some of the richest mica deposits ever located. The recovery of these deposits is essential to the health of the mining industry in North Carolina. The Planning Board must keep that fact in mind as they develop their land use plans."

Bierman said that FMC Lithium, Foote Mineral, Martin Marietta and KMG Minerals have been mining various strategic and non-strategic minerals in this area for many years and any attempt to limit or restrict these operations will seriously injure one of the basic and sustaining industries of Western Carolina.

Bierman asked the board to deal fairly and equitably with the needs and requirements of the mining community and requested a meeting with the county planners prior to the formal action of the zoning board.

The mining industry is strictly controlled by the N. C. Mining Commission regulating environmental concerns, actual mining activities, as well as reclamation plans when mining activities cease.

"Keep in mind we have always been a good and productive citizen of Cleveland County," said Bierman.

HAMRICK

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there could be an elderly lady inside the house and we wanted to wait it out," said Goforth.

As officers tried to coax the suspect out of the house, television cameras recorded some of the tenseness of the evening. The suspect, in a taped telephone conversation on WBTB 3, admitted responsibility for two of four murders in Alexander County over the weekend in the Bethlehem Community of Hickory. A multi-state manhunt began on Monday for Hamrick, charged on murder warrants in the slaying of his former girlfriend, Karen Hayworth Pilius, 33; Frank Mark Grasso III, 48, his wife, Clara Elizabeth Grasso, 47, and their nephew Nathan Gray Grasso, 20. The four, whom police say were killed apparently following a domestic dispute, had been dead for about 10 hours when their bodies were found about 7:30 p.m. Sunday on the floor of the Grasso house five miles north of Hickory.

As they waited about a block away from the scene in Kings Mountain Monday, members of Hamrick's family talked about Hamrick's love for Karen Pilius and how he wanted to marry her.

According to Hamrick's brother, Buren, Hamrick had gone to the Grasso home in Alexander County on several occasions to try to persuade Ms. Pilius to get back together.

"This thing just didn't happen yesterday," his brother claimed. "They had threatened him, and the last time he was there had hit him in the face with the butt of a gun. He had been there a couple of times to talk to her and they would-

n't let him see her."

Mrs. Carpenter said her son told her by phone late Monday afternoon that he was the first person shot in Sunday's killing spree. "He said the guy shot him first and the rest jumped up and started running around," she said. "He said he was shot in the right shoulder and it about took his arm off."

Members of the family also said Hamrick had indicated to them by phone that another man, whom he would not identify, killed two of the people and he killed the other two.

Mrs. Carpenter said she was convinced she could talk her son into surrendering if the police would let her go into the house.

"He called me and told me to come up here, that he wanted to talk to me," Mrs. Carpenter said, "but the law won't let me go out there. If he comes for anybody it will be me."

Mrs. Carpenter said she did not

fear her son harming anyone but himself at the scene Monday night.

Moments later, a Kings Mountain policeman took Mrs. Carpenter and Buren Hamrick by patrol car to the scene where Mrs. Carpenter talked to her son by a car telephone and tried to persuade him to surrender. He reportedly told his mother that he loved her and his children but he would have to end his own life.

Hamrick's van was found abandoned at a residence in the Grover area Monday and the manhunt spread to Kings Mountain where the suspect holed up and maintained he would not be taken alive.

Kings Mountain Police were on the scene of the suicide until midnight. The murder investigation is continuing.

"We all did everything in our power to talk him out of the house to lay his weapons down but he had made up his mind to kill himself," said Goforth.

Mounties fourth in tournament

Kings Mountain's Mountaineers finished fourth out of eight teams in the Shelby Star Holiday Basketball Tournament last week at Gardner-Webb College.

The Mountaineers extended their winning streak to four games in Thursday afternoon's opener, defeating 4-A East Gaston 69-50. The Mountaineers fell into the loser's bracket with a 53-52 loss to Burns Friday night, then fell to Shelby 73-62 in a battle for third place Saturday.

Hunter Huss of Gastonia won the event and Burns was second.

The Mountaineers, who are now 4-5, took advantage of 34 East Gaston turnovers to win Thursday's contest. KM had some problems of its own with turnovers but managed to lead most of the contest.

Marquiz Williamson, who was voted to the all-tournament team, led the KM scoring with 24 points and Jerry Black added 10 points and 10 rebounds.

Kings Mountain led 19-11 at the quarter break, 33-19 at the half and 47-34 going into the fourth quarter.

Burns' Travis Lockhart hit a three-pointer at the buzzer to give the Bulldogs a 53-52 win over the Mountaineers Friday night. KM had led 12-8 after the first quarter and 20-17 at the half but the Bulldogs came back to grab a 39-33 lead going into the fourth quarter.

Williamson led the Mountaineers with 12 points and six rebounds and Rekae Clark topped the Bulldogs with 20 points.

KM Boosters elect officers

The Kings Mountain High Booster's Club has elected officers for 1992.

Dale Hollifield will serve as president; Don Smith, first vice president; Gail and Eddie Herndon, second vice president; Lucille Williams and Vickie Hicks, co-treasurers; Ken Bridges, secretary; and Cathy Bridges and Kim Peeler, publicity chairpersons.

The next meeting will be January 6 at 7 p.m. All persons interested in becoming a member are urged to attend.

Kings Mountain's shooters turned cold in the first and third quarters, allowing Shelby to build big leads that KM couldn't overcome in Saturday's consolation battle.

The Lions, pre-season favorites in the Southwestern 3-A Conference, built a 23-6 lead after the first quarter. KM trimmed it to 35-27 at intermission but Shelby out-scored the Mountaineers 23-9 in the third quarter to take a 48-36 advantage into the final eight minutes.

Jock Degree scored 22 points and Derek Singleton 14 to lead the Lions. Justin Jones scored 20 and Williamson 14 for the Mountaineers.

The Mountaineers host Concord Thursday with JV action beginning at 4:30 and varsity girls at 6:30. King Mountain opens SWC play next Tuesday at East Rutherford.

THURSDAY GAME

KM (69) - Williamson 24, Black 10, Bell 4, Thompson 4, Sellers 4, Jones 14, Washington 3, Hopper 6.
E. Gaston (50) - Stackson 14, Hall 3, Tate 6, Case 12, Keener 1, Hope 6, Adams 8.

FRIDAY GAME

KM (52) - Williamson 12, Bell 4, Thompson 2, Sellers 8, Jones 3, Grier 2, Washington 4, Hopper 4.
Burns (53) - Lockhart 7, Pruet 7, Beam 3, Clark 20, Cook 3, Lovelace 7, Phillips 6.

SATURDAY GAME

KM (62) - Ross 5, Black 5, Leftwich 6, Williamson 14, Thompson 2, Sellers 4, Jones 20, McDowell 2, Hopper 4.
Shelby (73) - Williams 2, Webber 9, Degree 22, Maddox 4, Thompson 10, Singletary 14, Starnes 12.

KMHS wrestlers win Crest tournament

Kings Mountain High's wrestlers won their second straight tournament Saturday in the Crest Invitational.

The Mountaineers, 6-0 in dual meets with two championships and one runner-up finish in tournament action, compiled 168 points to out-distance a strong Sun Valley team with 138 points. Crest was third with 114 1/2, followed by R-S Central with 92, West Henderson 76 1/2, and Hunter Huss 47 1/2.

Four Mountaineers won their weight division and three others finished second.

Champions for KM were Kenny Bridges at 103 pounds, Bo Phongsas at 130, Robbie Ruff at 135, and Shawn Byers at heavy-weight.

Finishing second were Derrick Houser at 119, Sheldon Smith at 140, and Matt Reynolds at 160.

Third were Michael Bell at 112, Thong Chanthaphang at 125, Antwan Brown at 145, and Jermaine Grier at 189.

The Mountaineers travel to West Mecklenburg Friday and open SWC action on Fri., Jan. 10 at home against North Gaston.

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