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Video promotes Kings Mountain

Ruby Alexander's main goal during her year as president of the Kings Mountain Chamber of Commerce has been to sell Kings Mountain as a great place "to live, work and play."

The results of the Chamber's hard work may not be seen immediately, but Alexander feels that two commercials now airing on cable TV will someday pay off for the city.

One 30-second video airing in the metrolina area promotes Kings Mountain as a good place to live. It features the city's recreation possibilities, a good educational system and good, affordable housing as drawing cards. Already the Chamber has received inquiries.

A new 60-second video which began airing this week in large metrolina cities promotes Kings Mountain as an excellent choice for new business and industry. It's easy access to Interstate 85 and a spirit of cooperation between the city, industry and Cleveland Community College, and an excellent utility system make Kings Mountain a perfect choice.

"The video presents an image that Kings Mountain welcomes high-tech industry, and that Cleveland Community College will work with industry in training employees," Mrs. Alexander says. "It tells industry that location, with easy access to 85, and with a trainable work force and cooperation between the county and city will make their move more pleasant and efficient."

Alexander said the video, produced by Video Concepts, will air for the remainder of the year.

"We may not hear from this for a long time," she said. "We don't expect immediate results. But someone might be in a motel and see the commercial and make notes, and maybe in six months to a year decide that Kings Mountain is the place to locate his industry."

"This has been one of our big projects for the year," she added. "We started out with a goal of promoting Kings Mountain, to raise its image. Everything we've done has led to making Kings Mountain a better place to work, live and play."

Grant to pay for water and sewer lines

Gaston gives KM \$1 million

The City of Kings Mountain will receive a grant not to exceed \$1,025,680 from Gaston County to construct water and sewer lines for the new Bridgestone/Firestone plant in Kings Mountain Business Park.

The line will connect with Kings Mountain's existing line on Canterbury Road and will open the Business Park for industrial development.

City Manager George Wood said he plans to go before the Cleveland County Economic Development

Commission Thursday to present a proposal for Cleveland County to fund lines to the park on the Cleveland County side. If that idea is approved by Cleveland County Commissioners, the city will be able to construct a complete loop of water and sewer lines around the park and open a significant area of Cleveland County for industrial development.

Wood said the city hopes to have the water and sewer lines in place and operable by next May. Firestone is shooting for a June or

July opening.

"This will be a major improvement," Wood told the Kings Mountain Council at its Tuesday night meeting at City Hall. "It should open a very large area to industrial growth. For us to get over \$1 million was very generous on Gaston County's part."

Wood said he anticipates the frontage road along I-85 will eventually be extended all the way from Highway 161 to Canterbury Road. Firestone will be located entirely in Gaston County.

Wood said he foresees the city having no problems in construction of a utility loop around the area.

"Both counties have policies that when we get an industrial prospect that they will run water and sewer lines," Wood said. "They look at the tax revenue they're going to get off it as paying them back for that investment. They not only get the tax revenue, but jobs and sales tax from people being employed."

Although tax revenues from the park will go to Cleveland and Gaston counties, all industries that

locate there will be utility customers of the city of Kings Mountain, Wood said.

Councilman Fred Finger praised Wood and his staff for landing the grants from Gaston County.

"Somebody's done a terrific job," he told Wood. "Gaston County really gave us a push with a million dollars. I'd like to have you for a fund raiser."

Wood appreciated the compliment, but praised Gaston County

See Grant, 3-A

Joni Smith takes oath as first woman lawyer

Joni Smith remembers watching a television program about juvenile delinquency when she was 12 years old and making the decision right then to become a lawyer.

It took her ten years after graduating college to get to law school, but she never lost her dream. A lot of things in her life came first, she said. However, Wednesday morning, she was sworn in as the first ("As far as I know," she says.) woman lawyer in Kings Mountain.

"It's certainly a milestone for me," said Smith Tuesday, in between talking with clients where she works at Corry and Cerwin Law Offices in downtown Kings Mountain.

Smith clerked at the law firm during summers between semesters

at Campbell University Law School. She said she gained invaluable experience in the courtroom as well as behind the desk, experience most clerks don't get.

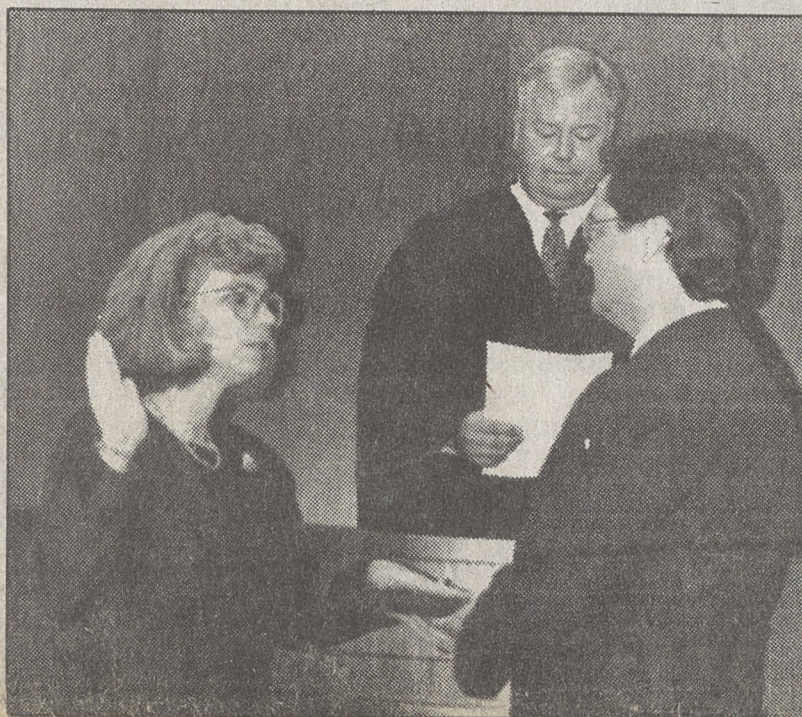
Smith said she will be doing a lot of courtroom work.

"It's a major thrill," she said. "You just feel good about it. It's not like you see on television. You're there doing the very best you can do for that person."

Corry and Cerwin is a general practice law firm, so Smith will also fill her time doing just about every kind of law there is from estates to drafting wills.

The law is in the family, as Chuck Wilson, her husband, is an

See Joni, 3-A



Judge James W. Morgan, behind, administers oath to Joni Smith, left, as her husband Chuck Wilson looks on.

Mountaineer Day date changed

Obviously, the City Recreation Committee struck a nerve with some members of City Council when they planned the date of the upcoming Mountaineer Day celebration without first getting Council's approval.

The Recreation Department announced last week that the celebration would be held September 26, but at Tuesday night's council meeting the board voted 5-2 to hold it on October 3.

Councilman Jim Guyton said the celebration is a tradition and has always been held the Saturday closest to October 7, the date of the Battle of Kings Mountain. Guyton was especially upset that recreation officials stated that the reason for the change of date was because of a conflict with the Cleveland County Fair.

"I don't think it's a conflict with the fair," he said, "and if they're going to change the date they should come to Council first rather than putting it in the paper and then coming to us."

Guyton also objected to the annual July 4 celebration this year being held on July 3.

Al Moretz, who made the motion to hold the celebration on October 3, said both the fair and the celebration had been going on for years, and that the fair was not a good enough reason to change the date of Mountaineer Day. "They know when the fair is going to be seven years in advance," he said.

Phil Hager said Mountaineer Day is "a historical event, and a lot of people look forward to it. This was done without Council's input. I don't want people to think that a committee can do these things and

See Date, 2-A

KM approves communicable disease policy

City Council Tuesday night approved a communicable disease policy for the city, the police department and the fire department.

The detailed plan submitted by Personnel Director Charles Webber is in compliance with Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) standards and is designed to protect employees who may be exposed to bloodborne pathogens such as hepatitis B and the human immunodeficiency (HIV) virus.

Webber consulted with a Safety Committee comprised of personnel from the police department, fire department, sanitation department and water and sewer department.

City Manager George Wood said many departments, including the police, have already been taking safety precautions such as using gloves, but now it will be a requirement.

Wood said all police, fire and sanitation vehicles will be

equipped with safety kits, which cost about \$9 apiece. "We plan to talk with Shelby and Cleveland County, because they will have to pass policies too. Maybe we can go in together and buy in bulk and save some money."

Councilman Fred Finger praised Webber and others who worked on the detailed policy.

"Somebody's done a terrific job," he said. "This puts the responsibility on the employees and

department heads to see that it's carried out. It gives the every opportunity to protect themselves."

In other matters Tuesday night, the council:

■ Amended its manufactured home parks zoning ordinance to comply with state amortization guidelines.

■ Approved trade-in and payment for a police vehicle.

See Policy, 3-A

Public taking advantage of low interest rates

With interest rates on mortgages hitting the lowest points in years in Kings Mountain, banks report steady to heavy applications for loans, especially in refinancing lending.

Head of mortgage lending for BB&T Allison Gilbert said their 15 year fixed rate hit the lowest in 15 years last week at 7.5 percent. Rates were up the last two days at the bank with 7.75 for 15 year fixed, 8.25 for 30 year fixed and

5.625 for one year adjustable loans.

"It's hard to predict," said Gilbert. "It's been up an down for almost two months. There's not a lot of home buying -- no more than normal. But there's tremendous refinancing. About four to six applications a day."

Gilbert said that keeps her busy with applications taking one to one and a half hours each to process.

City Executive and Assistant Vice President for First Citizens

Eric Dixon said refinancing loans had increased 90 percent within the last month. He was seeing switches from adjustables to fixed and 30 year to 15 year refinancing.

First Citizen's 15 year fixed decreased to 7.5 percent on the 21st of August, said Dixon. It was up Tuesday at 7.625. Thirty year fixed sat at 8.125 and one year adjustable rate was at 6.0 percent.

"I don't think it's a permanent move upward," said Dixon. "But

they may increase tomorrow and stay there. We don't know for sure. I don't think they've hit a bottom."

Jay Rhodes, senior vice president at Carolina State Bank, said he had a steady flow of loan applications.

"We did a greater volume in February of last year," he said. "We're getting about three or four each week. To us, that's good."

See Rates, 3-A

Kings Mountain People



Harold Dean Farris gets ready for another call for Bethlehem Volunteer Fire Department.

When fire alarm sounds Farris hits floor running

By ELIZABETH STEWART
of The Herald Staff

When the fire alarm sounds Bethlehem fireman Harold Dean Farris is usually first on the scene.

Chaplain and treasurer and nearly 20-year veteran of the all-volunteer squad, he also drives the pumper and has responded to over 1400 calls during his career. He clocks the response time at one minute. Living across from the fire station has contributed to this enviable record.

"Daddy puts on his gear in seconds and he's off and running with the other firemen behind him," says son, Timothy, 14, who wants to be a fireman when he is older.

Debbie Farris said she used to pace the floor until her husband returned home from a call. Her biggest scare was when she answered the door bell in June 1986 and then-Chief Larry McDaniel

told her that Harold had been hurt. Farris was struck in the stomach by 300 pounds of water pressure when a 2 1/2 inch line blew, knocking him through a drop tank and onto the ground. "I felt like my insides had been blown out," said Farris, who was hospitalized for two days with bruised kidneys. The accident earned him the nickname from his co-firefighters as "2 1/2."

The firemen at Bethlehem share a special comradeship. They work hard, said Farris, but rib each other about nicknames they have received while doing a job where their lives are on the line. Chief Jeff Dixon is Bo Dean. Kim Stinchcomb is Mango. Jeff Cloninger is Fat Baby. Larry McDaniel is Stub. John Boy Caldwell is Shamoo. Greg Carpenter is Orka and Trent Hullender is Touchdown, to name a few.

Firemen carry clip-on pagers.

Farris' home is equipped with activator receivers, one at his bedside table and one in the den, where he can readily get the calls transmitted from emergency 911.

When the Farris family moved to the Bethlehem Community in September 1972 it was only natural that Farris, a Kings Mountain native, join the fire department which had been organized in 1964 by a half dozen men who saw the need for a fire department in the rural community. Charlie Blalock was the first chief of the department which started off with a Kings Mountain fire truck.

The most tragic fire Farris recalls was in an old barn on Phifer Road. When fireman got to the scene the barn had burned to the ground. Cleaning up, Farris and Tim Echols found the bodies of three teenagers who had apparently spent the night in the abandoned

See Farris, 2-A