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Kings Mountain Herald

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Kings Mountain, N.C.

Big turnout expected for election

Kings Mountain citizens will join their neighbors and those from across the country at the polls Tuesday to vote in what may be one of the largest turnouts -- an estimated 75 to 80 percent of registered voters -- in a general election in recent history.

In Kings Mountain, a total of 11,533 voters were registered to vote as of August 5 and since that time county election officials say that more have registered. In Cleveland County, as of August 5, nearly 42,000 people had registered to vote, according to Debra Blanton, county elections supervisor. She predicts a heavy turnout for election day.

No. 4 Township voters will make 41 choices from 86 candidates for jobs that range from the White House and Governor's Mansion to the county commission.

The polls open at 6:30 a.m. and close at 7:30 p.m. In Kings Mountain registered voters include: Bethware, 2,214; East Kings Mountain, 3,034; West Kings Mountain, 3,037; Grover, 1,324; and Waco, 1,924.

Voting precincts in the Greater Kings Mountain area are East Kings Mountain, Community Center; West Kings Mountain, National Guard Armory;

Grover, Rescue Squad Building; Bethware, David Baptist Church fellowship building, and Waco, Town Hall.

This year's redistricting divided precincts between two Congressional districts and two N.C. Senate districts. Kings Mountain and all of No. 4 Township is part of the 9th Congressional District and the 37th Senate District.

No. 4 Township voters will receive only one large ballot printed on both sides. Mulls, Rippy, Shanghai, Casar and Boiling Springs precincts get the same ballot as No. 4 Township voters due to redistricting.

Of particular interest here is the 37th District Senate race between J. Ollie Harris, Kings Mountain mortician, and Dennis Davis, Republican, Latimore school teacher; the 48th House District where Republican John Weatherly is running in a field of three incumbent Democrats and two Republicans; in the 9th Congressional District where incumbent Alex McMillan, Republican, is challenged by Rory Blake, Democrat, a Cherryville pharmacist; and in the hotly contested six-man county commission race where

See Election, 6-A

Council again delays pay vote

Water, sewer rates increase

Kings Mountain City Council Tuesday night voted 6-1 to increase water and sewer rates 5 percent effective with the December bills to customers.

The good news is that the increase is not as high as originally planned. In March, city officials decided to raise water and sewer rates 15 percent this year, nine percent which they did, in July, and six percent in January. The expected increase comes a month early.

A 5 percent increase will mean that a typical residential customer using 7,000 gallons of water will pay an additional 77 cents a month for water and sewer. A typical senior citizen using 3,000 gallons will see their bills increased 33 cents per month. The increase represents a 20 cents per 1,000 gallon increase across-the-board.

"I fully realize that there is no good time for a rate increase, and frankly, we had hoped in March 1992 the economy would be fully recovered by this November," said City Manager George Wood. He said the city can manage with a smaller second increase if the increase is put into effect with the bills going out to customers November 30. "If we wait until January, it cuts two months of revenues, about \$29,000."

The rate increase offsets the loss of Bessemer City as a Kings Mountain water customer and also pays for the added cost of wastewater treatment after the city began treating water at the Crowders Creek Wastewater Treatment Plant full time. The increase was to be split into two increases, the board had said at the spring planning meeting.

"This is less than \$1 a month for customers," said Councilman Jim Guyton.

Councilman Al Moretz, chairman of the utility committee recommending the increase, said the increase is much less than originally predicted and future rate increases should be minor.

Councilwoman Norma Bridges called attention to the city's lower rates in comparison with neighboring cities.

Wood said that the city's rates

See Rates, 6-A

After going behind closed doors for an hour Tuesday night City Council tabled for the second time a decision that could have changed the way city employees are paid.

City officials want to pay city employees every two weeks instead of each week to reduce workload for payroll clerks and by cutting the number of checks required to pay employees. Mayor Scott Neisler estimated the savings could be as high as \$5,000 a year.

But City Council is apparently divided on the issue--caught between management and the 171 employees surveyed by the city who voted overwhelmingly not to change the way they are paid.

Tuesday night, the board went into executive session to discuss personnel and a legal matter at 8:15 and recessed the executive session at 9:30 p.m. to vote in open session on whether or not to make the payroll change.

The item did not appear on the regular monthly agenda, as it did last month, but was taken up in executive session. Last month Council hedged on making a decision after Councilman Jerry White suggested surveying employees after four employees called about him about the proposed payroll change.

"I'm not against the city saving money," White said at the time. "I'm all for that. But I've had calls from some employees who feel it should stay the way it is. We owe it to the employees to let them be heard."

Council member Phil Hager said at the time that he agreed that city council must protect city employees. But he said council members must also protect the interest of taxpayers. "We're here governing the whole city of Kings Mountain," Hager said. "Sure, we have to look out for the city's work force but we also have to look out for the whole city."

Again Tuesday night Hager's substitute motion to table the issue for more study, and seconded by Councilwoman Norma Bridges, passed 5-2 over the objections of Councilmen Jim Guyton and White. The first motion was by White, seconded by Councilman Elvin Greene, to keep the same payroll schedule.

There was no discussion in open session. The Mayor called for the vote as soon as he reopened the meeting.

See Pay, 6-A



GENE AUSTIN
On the President's train

KM's Gene Austin rides train with President Bush

Although he didn't get any closer to the President of the United States than those of us who watched as he rode by in "The Spirit of America" last Wednesday, Gene Austin said he would not have missed the excitement of joining the eight cars of press corps covering George Bush's whistlestop tour.

"I felt Radio Station WKMT owed it to the shut-ins who couldn't see him wave from the train to give them some coverage of the day's activities," said Austin, local radio announcer.

Every 15 minutes starting at 8 a.m. Wednesday when Austin boarded one of the eight press cars, he called by cellular telephone to WKMT to report to manager Jonas Bridges and co-workers.

Austin said he decided on a whim to call The White House and ask for press credentials. After getting the go-ahead, he had to buy a camera and his wife, Phyllis Ware Austin, gave him an early Christmas present. Austin made pictures along the route and he hopes they will remain in the family scrapbooks forever.

Austin said he didn't see President Bush until the train arrived at Ranlo where everyone got off the train, the President accompanied by his son and by Senator Strom Thurmond and by scores of secret service men.

"I was really impressed with the security and the press corps," said Austin, who said he chatted with them about the importance of the Battle of Kings Mountain, which several admitted they had never heard about.

When the train slowed in Grover, reporters on the train assumed the train was slowing in Kings Mountain. Austin said he rushed to tell them that the train was in Grover and asked several times if the train would slow for the President to make a speech

in Kings Mountain. Advance crews, and others on the train, indicated that if there were sufficient numbers along the tracks that the President's train would pause momentarily in Kings Mountain.

"Strom Thurmond was very cordial to us," said Austin, who said Thurmond came through the press car as the group ate breakfast. Austin was in Spartanburg early Tuesday morning to check-in with secret service at 6 a.m.

Crowds in Spartanburg, Gaffney, Blacksburg and Grover didn't compare with the thousands that greeted the Bush train in Kings Mountain, said Austin.

Security was heavy in Spartanburg when Austin boarded the train. He said his camera equipment and tape recorders were inspected by dogs sniffing the bags.

Local and county police were on duty at all the crossings. "It was touching to see the police with hands over their hearts and the flags flying," said Austin.

Austin said the only time he heard politics mentioned was by the President in Ranlo.

People on the train saw the band uniforms in Kings Mountain and the crowds and thought they were in Ranlo, said Austin.

"I had to give the reporters a history lesson about the Battle of Kings Mountain and our National Military Park," he said.

Austin said he was interviewed by a reporter from National Public Radio who was impressed at the small town turnout and the attention local media was giving to the train trip.

"I guess I'm just hooked on radio and I love what I'm doing," said Austin, who taped his impressions of his trip to share with listeners in radio land. "The response has been great."

You can win \$ in President Photo Contest

Did you capture the thrill of the President's visit on film last week? Maybe you snapped your camera right at the moment when the President waved and smiled to the crowd. Or, you got the thrill on a youngster's face. Or the sign that really got across the message of this election.

If so, share that picture!

Mayor Scott Neisler and the Herald are sponsoring a photo contest on the President's visit, and we want everyone to enter their prize photos. Three cash awards will be given. First prize will be \$50; second place \$30; and third place \$20. The winners will be published in the Herald and then displayed at City Hall.

Color and black and white photos will be accepted. The pictures must have been made in Kings Mountain or Grover; and only amateur photographers may enter.

Mail your photos to Photo Contest, P.O. Box 769, Kings Mountain 28086; or bring them (any size) to the Herald on East King Street before Friday, Nov. 20 at 5 p.m. They will be judged over the weekend and published in the Thanksgiving paper. Photos can be picked up at the Herald after November 27, or you may supply a self-addressed and stamped envelope and we will mail them to you.

Kings Mountain People



FAIN HAMBRIGHT

Fain Hambright a born leader

By ELIZABETH STEWART
of The Herald Staff

Former Grover Postmaster Fain Hambright testified for benefits for postmasters and federal employees 21 times before the U.S. Congress during his tenure as President of the National League of Postmasters.

Hambright, who retired recently after 31 years with Grover Post Office, says he is enjoying not punching the clock for the first time in his life.

Postal mementos he picked up

on his travels in 35 states as representative of 23,000 postmasters line the walls of his workshop in the basement of his Grover home. A map is pinpointed to mark the places that he spoke. His speeches before Congress are enclosed in Congressional Records and the copies of bills he lobbied for over four years on behalf of 75,000 federal employees are numerous.

Pictures on the walls show the Grover native with President Bush and other leaders of government and plaques point to his record of service for five years as an energetic

leader of postmasters and advocate of federal employees.

"I went to Washington for a five-day national meeting and stayed five years," said Hambright. After his election as president of the National League of Postmasters, he moved to Arlington, VA and after that was elected four consecutive terms.

Carolyn Dedmon Hambright said it was the first time during their 34-year marriage that the couple had lived alone after raising

See Hambright, 13-A

KM won't allow boat on its lake

Moss Lake resident Wanda Hays' dream for a cruise boat on Moss Lake died quickly Tuesday night as City Council unanimously axed the idea.

Hays, who was not present, had contacted City Manager George Wood about the possibility of tabling the matter until she had more time to develop the project.

The board followed the recommendation of the Moss Lake Commission and denied the request.

Both Wood and City Attorney Mickey Corry strongly recommended the board deny a permit to put a dinner cruise boat in the water.

Wood said 50 citizens brought petitions from 91 residents in three Moss Lake subdivisions opposing the cruise service to the recent Moss Lake Commission meeting. They opposed the plan because of possible noise and water pollution.

Hays wanted to bring a pleasure cruise boat similar to a sternwheeler called the Catawba Queen, which is now operating at Lake Norman.

Wood said that the city-owned lake is first and foremost the city's water supply.

He said a large craft/sternwheeler does not fit into the recreational uses outlined in city ordinances governing the use of Moss Lake and that a possible major fuel spillage and the fact that no commercialization has been permitted on the lake for 20 years are other factors that must be addressed. Such a venture, he said, would probably not be successful without the sale of alcoholic beverages. City ordinances prohibit alcoholic beverage on city property. In a speculative venture, it isn't in the city's best interests, he said, to consider dealing exclusively with one person. Wood said Moss Lake is one of the city's nicest residential areas and property owner concerns must also be a high consideration.

"I very strongly recommend denial of this request," said Corry.

None of the board members commented.

In other actions, the board: Heard from Recreation Director David Hancock that the city has been approved to host the 1993 Dixie Youth state baseball tournament in July 1993. Hancock said

See Council, 5-A