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TV at school comes under fire

Mother says daughter saw video on abortion

Several Kings Mountain Middle School parents voiced concerns at Monday night's meeting of the Kings Mountain Board of Education.

Deana Brown questioned the board's security policy after a girl brought a loaded weapon to school last Thursday and was suspended for the remainder of the year.

Myron George, President of the recently-formed Partners for Quality Education, also expressed concern over the incident as well as some programs being shown by video tape; and Melany Bolin questioned the school's judgment in showing several Channel 1 programs which she said dealt with abortion and other controversial issues.

Mrs. Brown urged the board to take precautions to prevent weapons from being brought onto school grounds in the future. "You need to keep in mind that it only takes one gun and one bullet to hurt or kill somebody," she said.

Supt. Bob McRae said the school board's discipline policy requires that students who bring weapons onto school grounds be suspended for the remainder of the school year. Under state law, students cannot be permanently ex-

cluded for that violation, he said.

"The existence of a firearm on campus is reason for alarm," he said. "The Middle School handled the matter very well. Anytime a situation like this happens we want to re-examine our precautions. We've asked Mr. (John) Goforth (KMMS Principal) to take a look at this situation, and he has called an expert with the State Department to see if any changes are needed. We don't know if there are any procedures which would eliminate any possibility of a weapon coming on campus."

Melany Bolin, mother of a KMMS sixth grader, objected to several videos which have been shown at the school, particularly one earlier this year on Channel 1 which dealt with the abortion issue. Mrs. Bolin said the intent of the 12-minute daily program was to broadcast current events.

Mrs. Bolin said she was shocked one day when she picked her daughter up at school and she was told "it's okay to have an abortion." Mrs. Bolin said her daughter arrived at that conclusion after seeing a program on Channel 1 which stated that fetal tissue from abortions is used for medical research.

See Bolin, 8-A



Melany Bolin speaks about Channel 1 in the schools to the Kings Mountain Board of Education at its monthly meeting Monday night at the Superintendent's office. A packed board room heard Mrs. Bolin

and two other parents voice their concerns about several issues at the Middle School.

PQE speaks on issues

Parents for Quality Education, a group of parents who organized to fight against the proposed 12-month school program at West School, explained some of its goals and expressed concern over some issues at Monday night's School Board meeting.

President Myron George told the board that his group is interested in volunteering to help at-risk students, providing financial help in forms of mini grants for teachers, and fostering better communications between parents and school officials.

He said the group's intent is not to replace PTOs.

George applauded the board for allowing prayer at football games and other school events, for sponsoring the recent education summit and parent's forum, and requiring boys and girls to be separated in sex education classes.

George said he hoped "lines of communication will remain open, no matter the issue" and that parents and schools can always work together to provide quality education for the children.

George urged the board to adopt a policy stating what can and cannot be shown on TV. "We don't want you to be censors, but you should have guidelines," he said.

George recalled three instances when his group felt that videos were shown that were too controversial for middle school students.

Last year, he said, sixth graders were shown a taped program on AIDS by basketball star Magic Johnson. George said students were instructed how to use a condom.

"In our opinion, Magic Johnson and his lifestyle in no way should be used as a role model," he said.

He also made reference to an incident earlier this school year when a Channel-1 program on abortion was shown to sixth graders.

"Students are taught all their lives that abortion is wrong, and then they see it on TV and it sounds okay," he said.

The third incident, he said, was a video titled "Rock the Vote" which was taped by a teacher and shown when the school was conducting a mock election. He said several controversial scenes were shown, including a rock band performing in its underwear, the burning of crosses, nudity, exotic dancing, and vulgar messages.

See George, 11-A



School Board delays decision on designating at-large seat

The Kings Mountain Board of Education decided to wait another month to decide whether or not to designate one at-large seat for upcoming school board elections.

Almost a year ago, Board member Billy Houze suggested that one of the five seats be designated as an at-large seat because the majority of the population of the school district has shifted outside the city limits. Currently, three of the five seats are reserved for persons living in Kings Mountain.

The board had been considering designating Priscilla Mauney's inside city seat as the at-large seat since she is up for re-election next year.

However, at Monday night's board meeting, parent Kathy Livesy suggested that either Sonny Peeler's or Shearra Miller's seat be designated as the at-large seat to prevent three outside city residents from being elected in the same year.

Attorney Scott Cloninger said whichever option is approved will have to be approved by the U.S. Department of Justice to ensure that minorities have equal opportunity to be elected.

Supt. Bob McRae said Livesy's recommendation is accepted, terms would have to be staggered for the next inside city election with the top vote-getter getting the four-year seat and the second highest vote-getter getting the two-year seat.

Board chairman Ronnie Hawkins warned the board that it was making the issue too involved.

"The only motive for doing anything at all is the shift in population," he said. "We've discussed this for over a year. Logically speaking, the only seat available is seat number five (Mauney's seat)."

The board will seek more input from the community at its December meeting.

Kings Mountain underspent 1991-92 budget by \$183,761

Despite a down economy and a mild winter Kings Mountain underspent its 1991-92 budget by \$183,761.00, City Manager George Wood and Auditor Darrell Keller reported to City Council in a work session Tuesday night.

Wood will recommend at the November 24 meeting of City Council a budget amendment to tighten the belt and omit fund balances.

"Had there been a normal winter last year the city would have had surplus monies in both the gas and electric funds," Keller told the board.

Wood described the current budget as "pretty solid."

Keller pointed out that last year's budget reflected a shortfall in state sharing revenues of \$166,000.

"We're at a break-even year," said Wood, who said industries cut back dramatically last winter in the use of utilities.

One of the bright pictures from the report was from Wood, who said that due to gas deregulations the city could receive, either through direct funds or gas, more than \$200,000 this year once the Federal Energy Commission rules on an action filed by the city to collect from its suppliers. Wood said the city purchases gas on an

open market and the price fluctuates monthly.

Wood said although the city upped its electric rate 3.4 percent last spring that the price of the commodity dropped and the city lost \$330,000 in sales due to the mild winter. Wood said the city didn't meet its quota of sales for either gas or electricity due to the weather but one bright spot in the gas report, he said, was that the price of gas collapsed in the winter and the city saved \$539,837 by buying cheaper gas.

Keller, in presenting the audit to the board for study, praised the staff for dramatic improvements over the past four years in internal controls. He said the city staff is well qualified and has been segregating all accounting control duties after adopting an accounting manual which calls for strict adherence to policy.

"There are some minor violations of the manual policy but no major infractions," said Keller, who said no letters are included in the audit report calling attention to infractions. He said that he will send a separate management letter with some suggestions for improvements.

See Budget, 11-A

Kings Mountain People

Music helps counselor unwind after a long day

By ELIZABETH STEWART
of The Herald Staff

Composing music for hours at a time helps Betsy Beach unwind after a grueling day in Domestic Violence Court.

The new director of the DAVID program - Domestic Assault and Victimization Intervention and Deferral - applauds the Wednesday court being held in Cleveland County's 27-B Judicial District.

Since she went to work in August, the Kings Mountain woman has been counseling abusers how to get angry without getting violent and how to survive in a relationship without striking out physically, sexually and emotionally.

Beach, 34, believes the court-ordered program will help break the cycle of abuse. She has seen a 60 percent rate of success. The remaining 40 percent of the men she counsels are angry at the courts and resent being referred to the program which requires their attendance two hours a week for 26 weeks for group therapy in behavior modification.

"They have to learn a whole set of new behaviors from the way

they were brought up," she said.

Some of the participants are volunteers. Some are referred by other agencies like CAPS. Most all take parenting classes.

Beach says the DAVID program turns lives around.

"This saved my marriage," said Bill, not his real name. "Every person in Cleveland County should take it."

"Other guys shyster their way through it because they know if they drop out they will be hauled back to court," says Beach. She is firm with the 8-10 men in her classes.

The men call Beach "The heavy, the make it or break it lady."

Beach makes regular reports to the client's partner and to the judge. The rules are tough.

Music, the love of Betsy's life, shuts out what she deals with on a daily basis. When she sits down at her keyboard, she can compose all night long and has written about 60 songs at night.

The words and melodies surface in her dreams, she says, and she keeps paper and pencil by her bed and completes her compositions on

See Beach, 11-A



BETSY BEACH