

TONNEY

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my former students," he said. The elementary students love him too. They hug him openly. Toney has a good rapport with his staff and rewards them with compliments. "I can't say enough about my dedicated staff and the kids," said Toney, who said that West has carried the academic banner for two years. West third graders scored the highest of any students in the system on California Achievement Tests. West students are at the top in testing and attendance and overall place in the 86 percentile of the CAT where the system average is 70 plus percentile. In Social Studies and Science West students scored in the 92 and 93 percentile. "When I came to West School I had heard of the tradition of the school for excellence and I have seen the results of dedication of teachers, parents and students," said Toney. He says that PTO meetings and awards day programs are standing-room only events which attest to the interest of parents in the school. It was a homecoming for Toney when he returned to Central School with West students last year while the new West School was under construction. He had spent nearly

18 years there and had taught on every floor. Moving to the new West School building in the summer of 1992 was thrilling for him and the staff. The new facility has plenty of room to grow and for storage. Walls have been put up for four major classes and six offices in the old building. That wing houses the art, music and PE programs. Participation is the norm for West parents who are helping with an accelerated reading program and a parent center open to the entire system. Parents are going back to school and learning computers and also earning their high school diplomas.

A native of Ellenboro, Toney was educated at East Rutherford High School and Appalachian University and earned his master's and principal certification from UNC at Charlotte. He has been married for 14 years to Ann Pettit and they have two children, Matthew, 5, and Andrew, 8 months. They reside in Shelby and are active in First Baptist Church where he is a former deacon and active in the Sunday School. His hobbies are fishing, hunting and sports of all kinds. Toney finds teaching exciting. His goal is for all students to excel. At West School he has found his niche. He plans to stay.

CAMPING

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other residents of the community to use the facility. David Hancock, director of parks and recreation, will make a recommendation to the board on the policy and also on fees sched-

ules. Other items on the agenda include consideration of a request from Keith D. Wherry for a boat slip and retaining wall; from Life Enrichment Center to hold their annual benefit bass tournament; and from Eric Smith to schedule a barefoot water skiing tournament.

SCHOOL

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of the North Carolina School Boards Association. She encouraged local people to start lobbying legislators by writing letters to elected officials asking them to prioritize education and not make cuts in spending for education. She said she met with local Congressman Alex McMillan who noted that President Clinton's first priority now is working with the deficit. Political analysts and government officials led the seminars. "It was very upbeat," said Miller, who attended the conference with Susan Burgess of Mecklenburg County Schools. They were among a dozen people from North Carolina in the nation's capitol and represented the 9th Congressional District. The board endorsed the upcoming performance by the KMHS Chorus and Drama Departments of "Sound of Music," on March 5-7 at Barnes Auditorium and the April performance of the North Carolina Symphony. The board was invited to a symphony kick-off breakfast February 18 at 8:30 a.m. at

Holiday Inn and a kickoff breakfast for the Adopt a School Program of the Chamber of Commerce Education Committee February 11 at 7:30 a.m. The board hired Margaret Keenan of Charlotte as interim for Annette Parker, English teacher at KMHS, and five substitute teachers, including Isaac Alexander, certified; and Julia Clore, Sarah Davidson Miller, Ronald Stalcup and Bryant Wells, all non-certified. The board approved short term disability for Jeanne Beam, Home Economics teacher, and Annette Parker, English teacher, both at Kings Mountain High School. Student transfers were approved. Matthew G. Hesley, Kindergarten student, will attend Cleveland County Schools and Irwin Garcia, 7th grade student, will attend Crest Middle School. Chris Rider, whose family has moved to Gaston County, will finish the 12th grade at KMHS. Gaston County has also released Emanuel and Nicole Humphries, who are living here with their grandmother. Prior to the board meeting, Patsy Rountree's Commercial Foods Class served dinner in the Home Economics Department.

GUNS

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the school policies. Reynolds said when a weapon is discovered on campus that school officials call police and they question the student and witnesses, take statements and collect evidence. Parents of suspects are also interviewed and documents are turned over to juvenile officers who review each case before juvenile petitions are obtained. It is a general misdemeanor under General Statutes 14269.2 to carry a weapon on school property, concealed or open. "We are dedicated to making the

schools a weapon free zone," said Goforth, who distributed pamphlets on weapon safety, giving helpful suggestions to parents about where weapons should be kept in the home and away from children. Rob Williams of Cleveland County Juvenile Services pointed out that the increase over the past year of firearms and weapons in schools rose to 18 in Cleveland County. "One gun is too many," he said. Reynolds said that parents of all students were notified by telephone of the informational meeting. He estimated the crowd, including all cases of firearms are prosecuted. Some cases involving other

weapons, such as knives, are not. District Court Judge Jim Morgan said that it is hard to prove that parents contribute to the delinquency of minors when their children take guns to school. The stiffest penalty that a school can hand out is suspension and McRae and KMMS Principal John Goforth went over the details. Long term suspensions are turned over to juvenile authorities. A student can't be expelled unless he or she is 14 years of age, presents a clear recognizable danger to the school and commits a felony. Hawkins said that kids who have number of panelists and school officials, at 40. Less than half of the crowd were parents.

Court officials emphasized that knowledge of a gun at school and try to conceal it are not guilty of a crime but may face suspension, particularly if they attempt to hide contraband in lockers, big coats or book satchels. "Your child may just put something in a locker for a friend but he would be suspended whether it's his gun or not," said Hawkins. Principal Goforth said that kids can't take book bags into the classroom. The book bags must be kept in lockers. The policy may be widened to stress that no big coats be carried into classrooms. Police say guns found in two incidents were concealed by students under big coats.

HOMES

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support a county wide sewage policy with the stipulation that the city can withdraw at any time. The plan would stipulate that the city be reimbursed for all expenses and that only septic tank waste from Cleveland County haulers be accepted and deposits per load required from haulers. The commission heard a report that the city's water and sewer line extension project to serve the new Firestone Plant is proceeding on

schedule and the water line project is 80 percent complete. Gas lines will soon be run under the Interstate to serve the new plant. Howard said the city's work on the project would be completed by May 1. The board discussed the water line and sewer line extension policy on Sterling Drive off Waco Road but made no decision. Howard said no formal request has been made for extensions to serve the area. City workers are continuing to check into reports of a high mercury level at Pilot Creek Waste Water Treatment Plant. The mer-

cury level is higher than what the city's state permit calls for and Howard said that finding the cause is like looking for a needle in a haystack. "It's unusual and could have come from a vandal dumping something in a manhole," he said. City crews, slowed by cold and wet weather, are making pot hole

repairs this week and the gas department is beginning construction of new gas lines on Canterbury Road in the vicinity of the new Firestone plant. Employees of the electric department passed a groundsman test administered by Electric Cities recently and now are taking the required Lineman I tests.

MAYOR

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about \$4 per month for water and \$8 per month for sewer. Grover pays Kings Mountain \$1.22 per 1,000 gallons for water and has been selling water to customers for \$1.10 per 1,000 gallons. Before the rate increase, customers paid \$4 per month for up to 3,000 gallons of water. The new rate is \$4 for up to 2,000 gallons of water.

encouraged residents to recycle so that the town won't have to start charging a tipping fee if more trash goes to the county landfill but residents said at Monday's meeting they misunderstood. "The board doesn't want to start charging a tipping fee and the best way to avoid it is for everyone to recycle," he said. Queen promised to check on possible water leaks after one citizen complained her water bill had doubled. He said the new rates reflect a slight increase but he prorated every utility customer's bill fairly.

The new rates were effective February 1. Customers received notification of the hike in a letter last Friday.

Ann McCarter Traugh said that citizens were not notified of the workshop meeting. Traugh charged that the board was violating the open meetings law by discussing the water rates in closed session when it should have been discussing only personnel and legal matters in closed session.

Queen said the board advertised the meeting by notifying the local media and by posting the meeting notice on the front door of Town Hall.

Queen said the board also voted in open session to amend the budget after the new rates were set. He said two citizens were present when the vote was taken.

In his letter to citizens notifying them of the new water rates, Queen

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