

Moss Lake improvements approved

Moss Lake Commission approved Monday seven requests from citizens wanting to make improvements, all subject to compliance with Moss Lake regulations.

The requests were from Ken Crawley, to remove sand from a creek; Steve Moffitt for rip-rap; Ken Cross and Frank Meeker for seawall construction; Bobby Stringfellow for a boat cover; Van D. Durrett, to construct a dock pier; and Jonas Bridges, to construct a dock.

Secretary Gene White reported

that he will request a noon meeting with City Manager George Wood after January 15 for members to discuss the possibility of the city employing a full-time policeman at the lake to also handle budgeting and organizational responsibilities. Presently, D.A.R.E. officer Allen Hardin is assigned to the lake in a part-time job and other responsibilities are under the direction of the city recreation department.

New Recreation Director Bruce Clark was recognized. Members attending were Chairman Joe Smith,

Jackie D. Barrett, Billy Hawkins and Murray Pruette Jr.

Smith asked an update of the procedures for approval of applications and permits. White said city Council approved on June 14 that the lake commission or building inspector grant all approvals, subject to compliance with regulations, with the exception of special events which must be approved by City Council.

Upon motion by Barrett and seconded by Hawkins, it was voted unanimously to change the regular-

ly scheduled meeting to the first Monday of each month.

White relayed a request from a citizen to increase the size of game fish taken from Moss Lake. Barrett said this request should be pursued through the North Carolina Wildlife Commission. Clark was asked to look into the possibility of contracting with the restaurant lessee at the lake to also contract for the bait shop.

Visitation day slated at Abbey

Belmont Abbey College will host a visitation day for high school juniors and seniors on Friday, Jan. 28 beginning at 9 a.m.

"Abbey Experience" affords visitors an opportunity to learn more about North Carolina's only Catholic college. Visitors will attend classes, tour the campus, including the Abbey Church and St. Leon Hall. College officials will be available to answer questions about the college.

For more information call the Admissions Office at (704) 825-6665 or 1-800-523-2355.

EAST

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Instruction, said that East will be a model school for the program since East was the first school in Kings Mountain to use computers.

East Principal Jerry Hoyle recognized the school board's commitment to funding a pilot program at East and in placing computers in grades 3-6.

"We had to retrain teachers in grades 3-5 and take on a whole new philosophy of teaching but it has paid off in giving kids the individual help they need," said Hoyle.

"This is a great night for East School," said Hoyle.

Supt. Dr. Bob McRae also credited Dr. King and former East Principal John Goforth for their expertise and leg work in getting computers to East School.

Computers in the elementary grades gives students 30 minutes of individual tutoring each day in reading and math on the computer.

McRae said the computers have made a difference in test scores.

In other actions, the board heard the review changes in the Performance Based Accountability Program. King said that all staff members are required to vote on a differentiated pay plan by March 15 and prior to that the pay plan must be finalized and teams must develop goals and milestones for new indicators.

Pay committees will be meeting to discuss the pay issue and present their reports to the board of education at 2 p.m. on February 18.

Eight people were appointed to the Kings Mountain Health Council. They include Krista Smith, Janice Queen and Catherine Mills, two-year terms; and Dianne Dooley, Audrey Harris, Lynn Eskridge, Ethel Bumgardner and Dr. Staley Jackson, one-year terms.

The board change the date of the February meeting from Monday, February 14, to Tuesday, February 15.

The board approved a teaching contract to Tim Setzer, who replaces Ronnie Funderburke at KMHS. Funderburke has resigned to go into business with his father. Setzer has a B.S. degree in mathematics from Gardner-Webb University.

Don Ware was hired as a maintenance employee and LeRoy Smith was hired as a custodian at Bethware School.

The board approved three substitute teacher positions: Donna Logan, non-certified; and Sandra Gregory and Page Wells, certified.

The board accepted resignations from Dennis Thompson, custodian/bus driver, and Ronnie Funderburke, math teacher, Kings Mountain High School.

REPORT

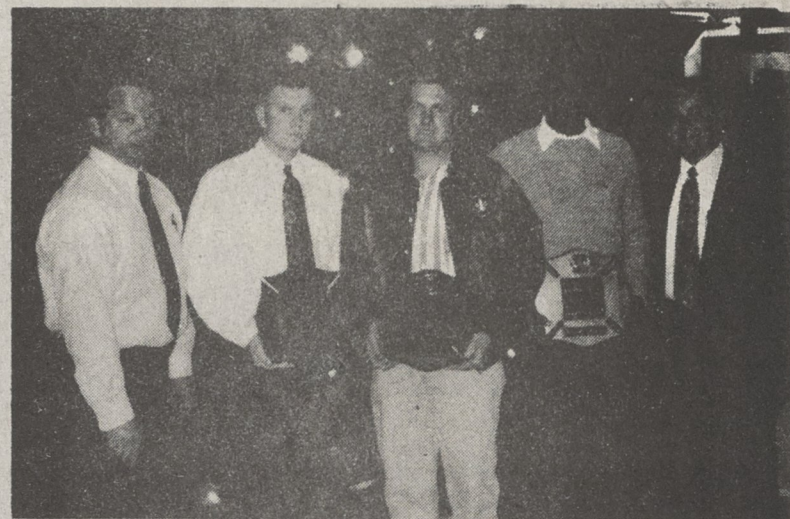
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elementary students on the writing tests.

"It's a tribute to the language arts teachers at the Middle school that eight graders topped the state averages," said McRae. The report was 75.4 percent compared to state wide figures of 58.6.

Thrift said the North Carolina writing tests would be given to fourth graders again February 1. She said that staff development courses currently underway, hopefully, will help bring up the test scores. A new end-of-grade test will be given to social studies students that matches the new curriculum.

Thrift said the tests given to math and reading students in grades 3-8 were multiple choice tests.



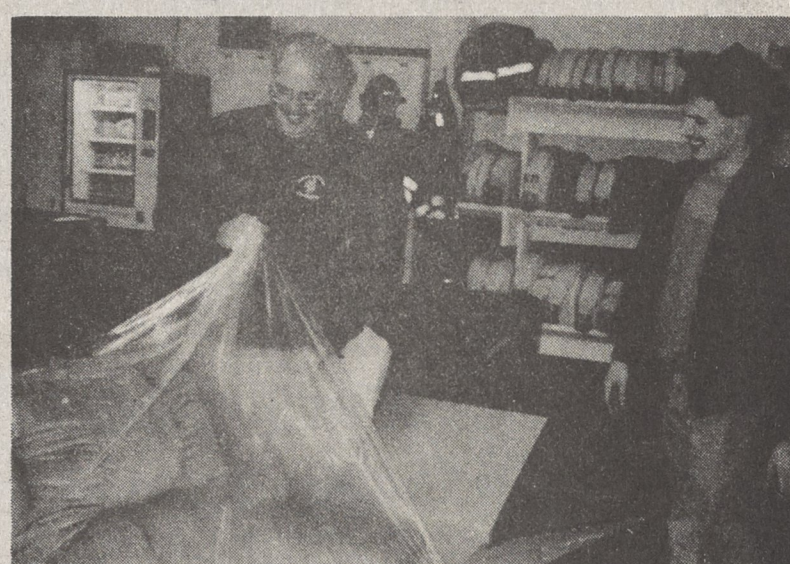
FIREMEN HONORED - Kings Mountain firemen were presented special awards at a recent Christmas party. Chief Frank Burns, left, and Volunteer Assistant Chief, Johnnie Caldwell, right, present plaques to David Ayscue, Rookie of the Year; Jamie Black, Officer of the Year; and Ernest Camp, Firefighter of the Year.



CITATIONS TO FIREMEN - Citations to firemen responding to the most fires and completing the most training were presented recently. Back row, from left, Ernest Camp, Jamie Black, Johnnie Caldwell and John Wright. Seated, David Ayscue and Joe Hamrick. Volunteers completed 1,698 hours of training and paid members completed 1,167 hours of training. Firemen responded to 252 fires.



NEW FURNITURE TO FIRE DEPARTMENT - Badcock Furniture of Kings Mountain recently presented \$1,000 worth of living room furniture, including three recliners, to the Kings Mountain Fire Department. Pictured, left to right, Bob King, Rick Morrow, Chief Frank Burns, Kathy Gentile of Badcock and Assistant Chief Bud Ware.



FIREMEN UNPACK NEW FURNITURE - City firemen Bobby King, left, and Shad Johnson unpack new furniture donated to the Kings Mountain Fire Department from Badcock Furniture.

Education program set on cable

Jones Intercable will cablecast a discussion on how schools and communities can involve the arts in education reform on Saturday, Jan. 22 from 7-8 p.m. The Goals 2000 program will be carried on cable channel 3 via Mind Extension University: The Education Network.

"Our viewers are very concerned about what is happening in the field of education and how these development affect us locally," stated Rob Bridges, General Manager. "The rebroadcasts of these monthly satellite town meetings puts them in touch with national and community leaders who are shaping the future of education in our society."

Each month, Education Secretary Richard Riley and Deputy Education Secretary Madeleine Kunin host panels representing national, state and community organizations who discuss the National Education Goals with more than 2,000 community groups participating in the teleconference. These satellite town meetings will be rebroadcast by MEU: The Education Network on channel 3 to assist the Education Department in its efforts to widen public awareness about the goals and policies and initiatives designed to meet them.

Mind Extension University: The

Education Network, a subsidiary of Jones Education Networks, Inc., is the only basic cable television network devoted to education. MEU reaches more than 25.5 million households in approximately 8,500 communities. Among other things viewers learn about computers, languages, career development and can participate in classes which lead to a college degree. For more information on Goals 2000, area residents may contact the Goals 2000 office (1-800-USA-Learn).

Jones Intercable services approximately 20,000 households in Gaston, Cleveland and York counties.

Lopez to speak

Dr. Fred Loper, national missionary for the Home Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention, will speak at Gardner-Webb University in Boiling Springs Monday at 9:30 a.m. on "The Christian's Response to AIDS."

Loper is an Oklahoma City, Oklahoma physician who specializes in health care missions, educational workshops and utilizing volunteers in medical and dental mission work.

Loper will respond to questions about HIV/AIDS after the presentation.

NEWSOME

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installed by the Presbytery of Western North Carolina on January 22.

Mrs. Newsome has served in three Presbyteries in Alabama and served in Sheppards Lapsley Presbytery in Hoover as an associate minister at First Presbyterian Church in Auburn.

Newsome will earn his Doctorate in May from Columbia Seminary. His sister, Rev. Laura Newsome, is pursuing her doctorate from Vanderbilt.

Another sister, Carolyn Newton, lives in Shelby with husband, Warren. His identical twin brother, Burns, lives in Atlanta, Ga.

The new minister likes to jog, play tennis, read and play basketball. At six feet tall, it's little wonder that he scores the baskets every time. Newsome plans to interest the men of the church in a church team.

Newsome's philosophy is built around a ministry of service - that following Christ's model will lower ourselves in order to serve others because greatness is giving.

What makes the church special for Newsome? "I would say it's the enthusiasm and love of the gospel reflected in the people of the church," he says.

What would Newsome do if he could not be a pastor? "I suspect I would be a college or seminary professor," he says.

Newsome comes to a congrega-

tion of 292 with an average attendance of 135 and from a pastorate of 880 people. He says his goals for First Presbyterian are to see it continue to practice the faith in light of God's love and to find fresh, new ways in sharing God's love for people.

"Christ is The Head of the Church" was the appropriate sermon for his first day in a new pulpit. He used the text from I Corinthians 12.

Newsome plans to preach on his favorite Bible verse in future sermons. It comes from Isaiah 40: 30-31. In part it reads, "But they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run and not be weary; and they shall walk and not faint."

AUDITOR

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the period, he has requested materials from various city offices.

"You could spend more time on selecting an engineer for a small job than to do the work," said City Manager George Wood, explaining the exemption policy the state allows. He said the state doesn't require that cities go out for bids for professional services less than \$30,000. The city does take bids for construction projects less than \$30,000.

"This isn't to say that the city would never contract with any other professional services other than the ones we now use but if you hire an engineering firm to do a small design job for \$5,000, for instance, and you aren't exempt from the announcement provision it means that you would have to advertise and request proposals and spend countless hours of staff time and Council time in selecting the person to do the work," said Wood.

Keller said he didn't see a signed contract for alterations on a gas line to Firestone Plant.

Wood said that Council approved alternative proposals by W.K. Dickson Company to look at alternate routes and do a survey and preliminary design down Canterbury Road to run the gas line to the new Firestone Plant for which the City of Gastonia paid 100 percent for the project. "This look additional engineering which was not a part of the original contract."

Mayor Scott Neisler said that

normally in big projects there are "add ons" or change orders which the Council routinely approves.

"In the future we will be sure all contracts are signed," said the mayor.

Keller also called attention to the deficit in the utility fund which left an undesignated \$85,000 in the fund balance. He said the state requires the fund balance be eight percent of prior year general fund expenditures.

Keller also pointed out that state statutes require daily deposits of city funds and noted that on one occasion a fill-in clerk at City Hall had not made a daily deposit. "Each person who collects money should have a drawer and no one shall work out of another drawer," he pointed out, in reviewing his auditing procedures.

Wood said that fill-in clerks serve as collection clerks in the utility department when a worker is out for lunch and that often that fill-in clerk does not collect much money and the deposits are held for several days. "We will deposit each clerk's collections every day, even though it may not be small to comply with this law," he said.

Responding to question of Commissioner Norma Bridges, Finance Officer Maxine Parsons said that Moss Lake, unlike other city offices, makes its own bank deposits and the reports are connected to the city system by computer. The City Hall staff handles the paperwork and updates a general ledger.

Keller praised city workers for improved inventory controls. Wood said that the city appreciated the

recommendations and the work done by the auditor.

Keller cited two findings of non-compliance in a Community Development Block grant program.

Keller said that CDBG funds must be disbursed within three days and the city on one occasion disbursed the funds within nine days. Keller said the person responsible for the disbursement was on vacation and that's why the payment was held up. The Finance department said this matter would be corrected.

The city failed to comply with a written agreement with Benchmark to administer the CDBG fund. The agreement called for payment of the administrative fee to be based on the actual percentage of scope of service completed each month. The auditor suggested that the city and Benchmark amend the original agreement and that the fee be paid in 30 equal monthly payments. Wood said the agreement would be amended.

The audit findings said that "the city complied in all material respects."

Keller's recommendations involving the internal control structure were passed on to the respective department heads for implementation.

The board, in its special meeting Tuesday, appointed Roger Goforth and Lou Ballew to the Board of Adjustments and John Reavis, Odus Smith and Jerry Mullinax to the land use plan committee.

The board granted a final plat approval for Williams Villas Subdivision.

RATE INCREASE

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Mountain," said Johnson. "If you've got good paying customers, why not give them the business and keep on trucking with those who pay the bills?"

Wood explained that when municipalities reach 80 percent of their total state allocations they must make plans for additional treatment capacity and that costs money.

"I'm for industry in town but we can't get our backs against the wall," said Mayor Scott Neisler. "We have to leave room for growth potential."

Wood said the matter with Spectrum evolved as a judgment call from City Council and was not an issue now.

"It's behind us," said Murphrey, who is associated with Spectrum.

Businessman Kelly Bunch suggested that the city assess a company for the maximum demand for water like some utilities do. Wood agreed that the city could look at the reallocation issue and Murphrey suggested that the top 15 industrial users of city water and sewer be asked to meet with City Council to get their input and find a workable plan.

"Users need to have some input about these increases," said Murphrey, who said the city had increased water costs to industry a total of 28.7 percent since January 1, 1991 and made increases to residential users of 26 percent in the last three years. "This is astronomical."

"We dye yarn four cents cheaper in Belmont than we did in Kings Mountain," said Johnson. "It concerns me that City Council finds ways to increase rather than cut costs."

Johnson said that industry finds ways to cut and City Council should find ways to cut costs.

"People think industry can get their money back from increases in utilities in sales but it's tough," said Johnson.

Wood said that next year the budget picture could be brighter. The city will realize more money for capital outlay improvements with the payment of \$300,000 ending major lease purchases.

Keller, in the budget report, said that at year-end the utility fund owed the general fund \$549,912. He said the city transferred \$2 million dollars from the gas and

electric fund to the general fund and the Local Government commission has advised that the city reduce its policy of transferable of funds to balance the budget. He noted that Kings Mountain is one of only two cities in North Carolina that operates both a gas and electric system.

Grindstaff speculated that a four cent increase in the property tax would generate only about \$104,000 in the general fund. Keller said that the bottom line is that the city has 3/4 of a million dollars in its fund balance.

Wood said the water and sewer fund continues to be the major problem in the city's overall budget since usage has drastically decreased.

Last fiscal year the city pumped 813,503 million gallons from July-December. This half year the city pumped only 795,008 million gallons. Even with a new plant, Dye-Tech, on line for six months, the totals have not reached last year's level. Wood said the decreased usage has created a shortfall in revenues for the first six months of the fiscal year and will create a similar shortfall the last six months unless usage increases or the rates are raised.

Even with an upsurge in the economy, Wood said that the city can't gamble when the latest six months usage is down, not up. He said the projected shortage for the full year would amount to \$235,946.

Wood recommended that rates be increased to industrial customers only since industrial customers represent about 74 percent of revenues. A 6.7 percent rate increase would generate the equivalent of a 4.96 percent overall rate increase. A second option would generate more, using an increase of 7.5 percent on industrial rates, which equals 5.6 percent on overall rates. A third option would generate enough revenue to close the gap completely, using an increase of 9 percent.

All three options, Wood told the board, assumes that usage in the second half year would at least equal the first half year. They also assume that the late charges will continue to exceed the budget and the Crowders Creek payments to Gastonia will come in the same as the first half. Gastonia is raising its sewer rate to Kings Mountain and other customers four percent in January and six percent in July.

City council members didn't endorse either of the rate proposals. The mayor said after the meeting that the matter would probably come up for discussion and a vote at the Council's January 25 regular meeting.