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Black commissioners not sworn in

Dickson reelected chairman of County Board

The first action Monday night of the newly-sworn board of county commissioners was a split vote.

Cecil Dickson was reelected chairman and E.T. Vanhoy was reelected vice-chairman by a vote of 3-2.

New commissioner Jim Crawley made the motion to delay the vote until two new black commissioners are seated. Ralph Gilbert seconded the motion but it was defeated by Dickson, Vanhoy and Sam Gold.

Dickson said he was disappointed in the split vote. He acknowledged the board had previous conflicts but said he hoped the commissioners would work together as a team.

Crawley said he wanted to postpone the election of the board officers for up to six months until the black commissioners are sworn in. In the interim, he suggested that Dickson and Vanhoy retain their positions until the vote.

After the vote, Gilbert complained that the board had de-

layed such a vote in the past and should have done so again.

But Dickson said the outcome would have been the same if the two black commissioners had been seated.

Gilbert asked Dickson if the two appointees had promised to vote for him.

"I polled the minority candidates and I stand by my statement," said Dickson.

"I didn't ask them to vote for me," Dickson said.

See Dickson, 16-A

Because of pending completion of a legal settlement, Bobby Malloy and Willie McIntosh were not sworn in Monday as the two minority members on the Cleveland County Board of Commissioners.

U.S. District Court Judge Stanley Sporkin is reviewing their selections, part of a legal settlement with the NAACP, which had to be submitted to the U. S. District Court in Washington, DC if the commissioners chose people the NAACP has objected to.

Shelby engineer Malloy and Shelby Police Lt. McIntosh were not the final choices of the NAACP who had considered 22 nominees for the two new seats which expands the board's membership to seven.

The county board made its decision in a 4-1 vote, bypassing the recommendation of the NAACP. Joyce Cashion of Kings Mountain cast the "no" vote, saying she objected to any commis-

sioner being appointed and favored district representation on the board by election of voters.

The appointment process, the result of a Voting Rights Act lawsuit, has cost the county \$66,663.97, according to a report released last week from the county manager's office. The lawsuit was filed by Rev. M. L. Campbell of Kings Mountain, representing the NAACP.

The County Board of Commissioners announced the appointments of the minority members November 15. Two days after the board voted, the NAACP rejected a request by the board to withdraw their objection to Malloy and McIntosh.

Originally, seven nominees met the NAACP's criteria of leadership experience but only two, Larry Corry, a former county school board member, and Phil Hager, a Kings Mountain City Councilman, were considered finalists. Both had said they were interested in serving on the board

See NAACP, 16-A

A CHRISTMAS WISH

Tabitha and Billy Byers need van for medical trips

Santa Claus is getting a tall order from two special children.

Billy Dean Byers Jr., 9, and his sister, Tabitha, 5, need a specially-equipped van to carry them to Duke Medical Center for treatment of Batten's disease, a rare genetic illness which struck the boy when he was three and his sister when she was four.

"Our old 1978 Chevy Van has more than 130,000 miles on it and no lift for Billy's special chair and I can't let my wife take the kids by herself for fear the old car will break down," said Billy Sr., a truck driver.

The family travels 170 miles to Durham every four to six months or as often as the children need to go. In between visits to Duke, they go to their pediatrician in Shelby for blood work or if the children catch colds.

When they go to Durham, Billy Sr. must take a day off from work. It takes the both of them to lift Billy Jr., who weighs about 50 pounds, and his wheelchair, which also weighs about 50 pounds, into the van.

Tuesday Patricia Byers had planned to meet her husband in Durham with the children. She couldn't make the trip because the family car broke down.

Because Byers is the only one working, the family doesn't have the money to buy a new handicapped-equipped van which could cost as much as \$30,000.

The two children require around the clock care from their mother.

The family receives help with Billy Jr.'s medical bills through Cleveland Center's Community Alternatives Program for the mentally retarded. The program also pays for respite care, which allows Patricia to get out of the house for a few hours on Saturday. A nurse and physical therapist come once a month from Cleveland Home Health to work with the children and a teacher from North Shelby School comes once a week to work with Billy Jr. Some insurance is available for Tabitha through Billy Sr.'s job but there are insufficient funds for a car.

See Van, 16-A



Siblings Tabitha (left) and Billy Byers Jr. battling Batten's disease

In times of trouble, depend on faith

The lights on the Christmas tree fascinate Tab Byers.

The darling little five-year-old fondled the green branches dazzled by the bright balls and by the music box which played Christmas melodies.

"I'd do anything to save this child," said her doting father, Billy Byers Sr., who said he and

his wife's faith sustain them through the bad times.

Billy and Patricia Byers are in a race against time.

Their only two children, Tabitha, 5, and her brother, Billy Jr., 9, are fighting Batten's disease, an incurable genetic disease that affects the brain and causes deterioration of the

intellect and neurological symptoms - twitching, seizures, psychotic behavior, spasticity of legs and arms.

The life expectancy of children with this disease is 8 to 12 years.

"We're hoping to make this a special Christmas," says Patricia, combing her daughter's

auburn hair into a pony tail and smoothing the Minnie Mouse pants and shirt after a romp in the gaily-colored "ball pen" which was an early present to the youngster.

"Two hundred more balls in this play pen is what we need to

See Children, 16-A

Grover board doesn't replace commissioner

GROVER - Town Board voted 3-1 Monday to leave the empty seat on the five-member board of commissioners open for 11 months until the next election.

The action came over opposition from three women, one of whom was the fourth highest votegetter in the November 1993 election. Cindy Cook, a local beautician, expressed interest in the seat after the October resignation of Sandra Spangler Ellis.

Councilman Robbie Sides, Kay Saltz and Ann McCarter also voiced disapproval of the action taken by Councilmen Jack Herndon, Tim Rowland and Noel Spivey.

Saltz polled each board member for his reasons but got little response.

Herndon said he made up his mind after hearing offensive language by Cook during the October open session.

"I would say it again," said Cook, who said other officials had used worse language in open meetings.

"This is a personal thing between me and Spivey and the others are taking sides and too much of a coward to admit it."

Rowland said the board's action was in the best interest of the community but Cook disagreed. She said she received 89 votes to Spivey's 93 in the recent election with voters giving tie votes to Rowland and Sides among 12 names on the ballot for three seats open on the board.

Sides said Council should stick to the election results and appoint the next highest votegetter, Cook.

See Grover, 15-A

Grover may hire part-time officer

GROVER - Mayor Ronald Queen says he may hire a third part-time police officer soon.

Queen made the statement during an update of the town's policing status Monday night.

He said that currently there are two full-time, off-duty sheriff's deputies patrolling the streets and each is working two weekends per month.

Queen said he had spoken with new Sheriff Dan Crawford about the availability of the officers working additional hours and Crawford indicated his only restriction on deputies is that they should not patrol Grover streets before their regular county shifts. Queen said the current deputies work about 22 hours each week in Grover.

In other business, the board-

Set public hearing for January 2 on an ordinance regulating adult-type establishments such as adult book stores and placed a six month's moratorium on issuing of business licenses for such establishments on recommendation of Town Attorney Mickey Corry.

Transferred the cable franchise from Vision Cable to Time Warner Communications pending posting of bond by the company.

Tabled the drafting of a noise ordinance after Corry said that it's tough to criminally prosecute. The mayor said the town has been enforcing the speed limit and with good results.

Donated \$700 to the Little

See Police, 15-A



The jolly old man from the North Pole waves to the crowd in Kings Mountain's Christmas parade Saturday. He'll be riding in the Grover parade this Saturday afternoon.

Grover Christmas parade is Saturday

GROVER - Santa Claus is coming to town in a 103-unit Christmas parade Saturday at 1 p.m.

Newly-sworn Cleveland County Sheriff Dan Crawford will be parade marshal.

The parade will form in Spring Acres and wind down the Main Street of Grover before disbanding on Cleveland Avenue near the First Baptist Church.

Grover Woman's Club is sponsoring the holiday spectacle which will feature three high school bands, from Kings Mountain, Blacksburg, SC and Gaffney, SC, numerous floats, beauty queens and dignitaries.

Woman's Club President Bobbie Spivey and Gail Wilson, a member of the parade committee, announced the order of entries in the parade:

Units of Grover Police, Blacksburg, SC Band, Cleveland County Sheriff's car, NC Highway Patrol, Grand Marshal Dan Crawford, Grover Town officials float, Blacksburg Homecoming Queen, WBTV float, Saint Peter's Church, KMHS Homecoming Queen, Shelby Headline News, Grover Fire Truck 347, Blacksburg, Junior Miss, Little Mr. and Miss Blacksburg

Grover Industries float, Crest High School Homecoming Queen, Carolina Cruisers, Little Angels Day Care, Blacksburg, SC Fire Department, Oak Grove Fire Department, American Red Cross van, American Red Cross clown and Optimist Cheerleaders football members and Queen and Junior Pee Wee Queen.

Also: Grover School bicycle riders from second grade; Senator Ollie Harris, Blacksburg, SC Girl Scout Troops 5 and 196; Penny Dowda's Dancemasters, Po. am, Grover School bicycle riders from third and fourth grades, Senator-elect James Davis, Finally Restaurant float, Grover Baptist Holiness Church, TNT, WADA Radio and N. House of Representatives-Elect Debbie Clary, Cleveland Community College car, Shelby Stopper van, Shelby High School Homecoming Queen, SC High School Band, Shriners

ns, Kings Mountain Drama Club, National Bank, Long Branch Dry's Mountain Carousel Queen Haley International Ultra-Porter School bicycle riders Grover Lions Club float, Eve, Charlie's Pizza, Katz, eland Fire Unit 1, Motor, h Company, Angie's Angels, Shriners wheelchair entry, Parade, 15-A



CRAWFORD