

Saturday fund raisers to help children with Batten's disease 3-A

Daylight Savings Time Begins Sunday. Turn Clocks Ahead



KINGS MOUNTAIN NC
100 S PIEDMONT AVE
MAUNEY MEMORIAL LIBRARY
307 10/21/93
*****CAR-RT-SORT**CR02

Kings Mountain Herald

Vol. 107 No. 13

Thursday, March 30, 1995

Kings Mountain, N.C. • 28086 • 50¢

Term election set for June 13

Kings Mountain citizens will go to the polls June 13 to decide the question of whether terms of the mayor and City Council will be shortened to two years.

City Council voted 5-2 Tuesday night to call the election but only after a lengthy debate led by Councilman Ralph Grindstaff who asked to see the petition.

"I am comfortable with the affidavit from the county board of elections that 10 percent of the registered voters have signed it and you must by statute call for the election," said City Attorney Mickey Corry, opening the discussion.

Corry explained that the schedule is tight to meet the statutory requirements. The election must be pre-cleared by the U. S. Justice Department.

"You might have a two or three weeks window to play with," said Corry, responding to Grindstaff's

claim that what the board was doing is illegal if the petition is not before it.

"I have a problem with something that affects all of Kings Mountain when I'm reading in the statutes that we have to have the petition in hand," said Grindstaff.

"I'm not trying to stall," he said.

Corry said the law is very clear on the timetable. He cautioned if the board delayed that it would miss the fall election deadline.

"You've been throwing this up in our face and I want to see the whole thing," said Grindstaff to retired city planner Gene White, presenting the petition.

Councilmen Jim Guyton and Rick Murphrey also asked to see the names of the petitioners.

But White said the elections board certified the petition as valid which was the necessary legal requirement.

Corry said if the board didn't want to take action Tuesday night it could hold a special meeting on Friday and ask White to produce copies of the petition but reiterated that the schedule was very tight.

Guyton said he thought the Council could set the date with the stipulation that the petition be handed to each member.

"I see no problem with setting the date of the election tonight," said Mayor Scott Neisler.

"I see no reason why you would want to hold this up."

Grindstaff asked the cost of a special election and City Elections Board Supervisor Becky Cook estimated \$3,000.

"Debra Blanton is the Cleveland County elections officer and if her word is not good then our whole

election process is in trouble," said Councilman Phil Hager.

"We're mandated to call the election.

"We're arguing a moot point. It's the law."

Murphrey then made the motion to call for the referendum on June 13, a week earlier than White had requested on June 20, seconded by Councilman Jerry White. Also voting to call the election were Council members Norma Bridges, Jim Guyton and Phil Hager. Voting against were Grindstaff and Dean Spears.

Corry said it was his understanding that the Kings Mountain Board of Elections will handle the special election and Cooke concurred.

Cook said registration books will close three weeks prior to the election but that new voters and those who need to change their addresses may do so with her or at the Mauney Memorial Library.

KMH, CMC to extend agreement

Kings Mountain Hospital's board of trustees voted unanimously Tuesday night to extend the hospital's management contract for six months with Carolinas Medical Center.

The action came during a meeting of the executive board followed by the full board of directors meeting after a dinner meeting.

The action was taken without discussion with Chairman J. C. Bridges, Ernest Rohm, Bill Davis and Robert Suber voting for the proposal announced by Hank Neal, administrator.

Neal introduced Jennifer Zarins, the new acting director of finance, who succeeds the retiring Lewis Simpson.

Zarins has been with KMH since August overseeing the business office and joined the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Hospital Authority as the regional Controller for the Carolinas Hospital Network in August 1994.

Prior to moving to Charlotte, she was with Ernst and Young in Syracuse, NY four years. As a senior accountant, she had audit clients in a variety of industries and her health care clients included a hospital, four nursing homes, a clinical laboratory and a home health agency.

Zarins has a Bachelor of Science degree in Accounting from LeMoyne College in Syracuse, New York. She became a CPA in New York State in November 1992 and has recently been licensed as a CPA in North Carolina.

Zarin reported that revenues and expenditures were down during the month of March but that the March census showed improvement in both the acute and psychiatric facility.

Neal said the hospital is completing negotiations with two Canadian family doctors who are expected this summer, one of whom has signed a contract, and with a woman internist who is buying a residence in the area. In addition she said two more doctors are expected for interviews.

Bridges said that the woman in-

See Hospital 2A



SIGNS OF THE SEASON - Spring has arrived and the signs of the season are obvious. Carroll Sanders, left, and Wendell Petty, city employees, weed one of the seven entrances to the city which are bright with white and yellow daffodils.

Spectrum hot over news report

City Manager Chuck Nance apologized Monday to Spectrum Dyed Yarns Inc., the city's biggest water and gas customer, in a letter to Jim Roark, Vice-President, Finance, after he said a story appeared in The Gaston Gazette which reported that the local company got "adjustments to its utility accounts from the city and bounced checks."

Spectrum officials strongly deny the allegations.

"Spectrum is a good industrial citizen. We have not, will not and have never bounced checks, know

nothing of meter changes and always pay the bills that we receive," said Hubert Johnson, corporate engineer.

"For the newspapers to print things like this without an in-depth study is beyond anything that I can comprehend," he said.

"I feel the city, city auditors and other contractors working for the city should be held accountable for information coming from City Hall," Johnson said.

"It seems that we all live in the same community and should work together, rather than working with

outsiders to destroy the integrity of our community."

The utility consultant credited with making statements in the article says he was "quoted out of context" and "burned" by the newspaper.

Nance said the city did not initiate the article which said that "from September 1990 to March 1991 that Spectrum's water and gas bills had been changed 25 times" and quoted a consultant auditing the Kings Mountain utility billing sys-

See Spectrum 5A

Election Board request tabled

A proposal by Elections Board Supervisor Becky Cook for the Cleveland County Board of Elections to run the city elections was tabled for more study by Kings Mountain Council Tuesday.

Cook also made the recommendation that ward lines be redrawn after the year 2000 census and that Kings Mountain change its elections to nonpartisan plurality and delete the election runoff.

"In the last 10 years the runoff election never made a difference," said Cook, noting that the winner in the October general election was

front runner in the November runoff.

She also suggested that if the board decide to call for a change in the methods of elections that it consider setting the municipal election the same time in November as the school board election to get a better voter turnout.

Cook said that it is possible that by 1997 it will be mandatory for county boards of election to run city elections.

She said the county currently handles the registration and she spends eight hours each month up-

dating city records.

Cook said the city board of elections would be abolished under the plan, noting that the city's equipment is in bad shape and the county already has the necessary tabulators and voting equipment. Since the city does not operate a full time elections board office, the city does not permit absentee voting but this would be permitted if the county runs the city elections.

"The only drawback is that we vote in wards and we need to do

See Elections 2A

LGC: Mayor's proposals would weaken finances

Deputy State Treasurer Robert M. High turned down Mayor Scott Neisler's budget proposal Friday, saying the plan reflected "a lack of understanding of sound financial planning and governmental accounting principles."

"Further, as it now stands, the overall proposal would cause further deterioration of the city's dangerously weak financial condition."

High said the city barely had sufficient unrestricted cash in the general and enterprise funds at January 31 to make the debt service payments coming due in the next 60 days.

"Failure to heed the warnings and advice offered by the city could be viewed by citizens, bond holders and potentially by the courts, as negligent," he wrote the mayor, City Council, City Manager Chuck Nance, Finance Director Maxine Parsons and Auditor Darrell Keller in a 12 page memorandum which included a financial analysis of the mayor's proposed plan to amend the 1994-95 budget.

High maintained that the mayor's plan to implement a tax cut and a reduction in residential water and sewer rates won't wash.

He said the city must put itself in a position to pay its vendors on a timely basis which has not been the case in the past and handle downturns in revenue, especially electric and gas, and emergency situations that can and do occur.

He recommended the city continue the measures currently implemented and take further actions to restore the financial stability of the city.

Briefly summarized, the memorandum from the Local Government Commission points out five weaknesses in the mayor's plan:

+ Reductions in expenditures and assets are double-counted frequently.

+ Terms such as surpluses, cash, fund balance and fund balances available for appropriations are used interchangeably and incorrectly.

+ Budgeted surpluses are assumed to be fully realized, even

See Proposal 5A

Council refuses Mayor's request

A divided City Council refused to permit Mayor Scott Neisler to include his written response to the Local Government Commission's turndown of his proposed budget amendments to be spread on the minutes Tuesday night.

The vote was 5-2 with only Council members Norma Bridges and Phil Hager siding with Neisler.

The mayor pushed during the lengthy meeting for his letter to be included in the minutes after the agenda was changed to permit the discussion of the recent letter from the state treasurer's office.

The Local Government Commission opposed recommendations of the mayor for budget amendments and the mayor's suggestion to repeal the city's recent tax hike and water and sewer rate increase to residential customers.

"We have over \$1 million in the bank and the letter from the LGC was written before we made the last bond payment and I can prove we have the revenues," he said.

But Councilman Rick Murphrey insisted that only the LGC's letter be included in the minutes because the board had authorized the mayor six weeks ago to send his proposal to Raleigh.

Councilman Ralph Grindstaff made the motion that City Manager Chuck Nance read the LGC's cover letter to the full board and audience.

On several occasions, the mayor reminded Murphrey that he had the floor. He said his response to the LGC showed "the flaws and some of the erroneous conclusions."

On several occasions several members of Council were talking at the same time and Attorney Mickey Corry finally threw up his hands in an effort to restore the board to the original item on the agenda.

Although there were no shouting matches, the emotional undertones were evident.

See Council 5A

Kings Mountain People

Mayse keeps KM swimmers in the water



SARAH MAYSE

For Sarah Mayse Neisler Natatorium is a dream-come-true for the community.

The popular doctor's wife worked for years behind the scenes as the unofficial coach of the championship Sharks, shuttling her kids and neighbors' kids to Shelby almost daily for practice and swim meets and encouraging kids who didn't know how to swim to learn the sport, not only for good health but for enjoyment.

When her husband, Dr. Scott Mayse and retired KM Hospital administrator Grady Howard took on the ambitious project for an indoor swimming pool on July 22, 1985

Mrs. Mayse was the chief cheerleader and staunch supporter of this community's biggest-ever fundraising effort.

The community raised \$800,000 to build what is now a \$1 million facility on the campus of Kings Mountain High School and it's heading down the home stretch with the final payment next month of \$44,000.

"People probably thought we were working so hard because there were four or five of us families who drove back and forth to Shelby for our kids to swim," said Sarah, always modest about her part in the huge fundraising effort.

Now the Mayse family can point with pride to Nathan, 16, a junior at Kings Mountain High School and a star swimmer on the high school swim team which won two straight state championships in 1993 and 1994 and placed second this year.

Non-swimmers can be challenged by this young man who didn't like the water and sat on the sidelines while mom and dad and his sisters played. He has been swimming now for 10 years and has won numerous regional events.

"Since Nathan had never swam at all he had no bad habits and he was easy to teach," said Sarah who

says that swimmers often have to unlearn their bad habits to really excel at the sport.

Next school year Nathan will be the lone member of the major crowd of swimmers returning to the team because all the others are graduating this June. Some of the divers are returning next season.

The high school team has 20-plus members and is the only co-ed sport at the high school. Men and women don't compete but they practice at the same time in six lanes. At times divers can be at the far end diving off the board at the same time others are lap swimming in the lanes.

It takes discipline to be a good swimmer but Mayse says that most of the swim team includes students with good academic averages. Students who swim must learn how to budget their time.

Marie Mayse, 19, an education major at Lenoir-Rhyne College, and Elise Mayse, 14, an eighth grade middle school student, started swimming as small children and participated in the summer program run by the Sharks at the Deal Street pool.

"By then we were all hooked and four families kept driving back and forth to Shelby," said Sarah, re-

See Mayse 11A