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Young 'troopers' lead walk-a-thon

Billy Bridges Jr., 4, and Kristin Gillespie, 6, were the real troopers in Saturday's five-mile March of Dimes walk-a-thon in which 400 walkers raised over \$52,000 to fight birth defects.

The two children sent a message of hope to the crowd that cheered them for a mile.

The little boy with an oxygen tank behind him and his grandparents ready to pick him up and carry him and the pretty girl talking to the crowd as she walked were a testimony in courage.

Little Billy is terminally ill with a rare birth defect.

Gillespie was born extremely premature.

Gillespie, Cleveland County Ambassador for the March of Dimes, is the daughter of Joanne and Richard Gillespie of Shelby. A kindergarten student, she is an active little girl who tips the scales at 40 pounds but at birth weighed only one pound, six ounces.

Billy, grandson of Clarence and Helen Barnette of Kings Mountain, beats the odds every day that he lives.

"We had to pick him up and car-

ry him some of the way and of course the rescue unit brought us back from the one mile mark," said his devoted grandmother, a nurse at Kings Mountain Hospital.

Billy, 30 inches tall, weighs 28 pounds. He has been hospitalized seven times since December and his grandparents are hoping that someone who reads this story will know of a source for a smaller feeding pump they can get for the child to give him his life-saving medicine and food.

"His back pump is just too big for him," says his grandfather who said doctors are trying to find a pump and have been told it may take a year to locate the right one.

"Billy can't wait a year," says Mrs. Barnette.

Billy Bridges Day will be held May 13 at New Hope Baptist Church and proceeds from the hot dog and bake sale will be applied to a pump, which the family says is expensive.

Local industries, including CleveMont Mills, Eaton Corporation and the City of Kings Mountain walked in the event and

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Kristin Gillespie, left, and Billy Bridges Jr. led off the March of Dimes walk-a-thon which raised \$52,000 Saturday.

Another tight budget likely

City Finance Director Maxine Parsons says the fiscal year 1995-96 city budget will probably be little changed from the previous year's budget and that she will recommend that Council "continue to hold the line on expenses."

Parsons and City Manager Chuck Nance will lead a workshop on the budget with City Council on Saturday, June 13, from 9 a.m.-5 p.m. in the second floor conference room of City Hall.

Nance has received department head requests and is continuing to review them prior to the annual retreat.

City officials anticipate no utility increases and no tax increases.

"Mr. Nance and I are working on revenue projections for next year as well as anticipated disbursements and we will be ready to make some recommendations at the budget meeting," said Parsons.

Nance said Council will hold a workshop on a proposed wage study at 6 p.m. Thursday at City Hall.

Becky Veasey, representing Management and Personnel Services, presented the result of a study of a proposed wage plan at a recent City Council meeting but Council tabled a decision until commissioners studied it further and scheduled a workshop. If adopted, the pay plan could result in a 6.8 percent hike in the city's weekly payroll. Adjustment of salaries to at least the minimum of the new range would be over \$187,000 annually.

New doctor to keep sign

Dr. Deepak R. Gelot has won his fight with City Hall to keep his sign.

Jeff Putnam, interim planning director, said this week that "theoretically Dr. Gelot's sign was in existence before the new sign regulations went into effect."

City officials notified Gelot on his first day in his new office in town that his new sign was in violation of present city ordinances.

Councilman Dean Spears charged at last week's meeting that the doctor blatantly ignored instructions on procedures and rules.

But Gelot and several businessmen argued that majority of the signs on King Street don't comply with the ordinances and that Gelot's sign in both attractive, blocks no one's view of traffic and is secured.

Councilman Rick Murphrey called the issue a communication problem.

Putnam said he has informed Gelot's attorney that he can withdraw his appeal to the board of adjustments.

Signs already up, including Gelot's, are grandfathered and permitted under the new sign ordinance that went into effect last Tuesday after a public hearing and a unanimous vote by Kings Mountain City Council.

Mayor wants to add time to meetings

Citizens will soon be able to have their say to City Council without getting on the meeting agenda ahead of time if Mayor Scott Neisler has his way.

The mayor asked City Council last week to consider adding Citizen Recognition as the last item on the agenda of every City Council meeting, giving citizens who sign up just prior to the meeting a chance to speak at least three minutes about their concerns or comment, for instance, about any action of the meeting.

"We would recognize them at the end of the meeting as other boards such as Cleveland County Board of Commissioners, Kings Mountain Board of Education and Grover Town Board does on a regular basis," said Neisler.

Councilman Ralph Grindstaff agrees with the mayor that recognizing citizens to speak is "one of the things we need to do."

"We're here to listen to citizens," he said.

The mayor said that for the last six years that he has been on the

board it has been the policy for the public wishing to speak at Council meetings register their names with the city manager on Friday before the Tuesday night meeting so the city manager could put their names and requests on the agenda.

If the mayor's proposal is approved at the May meeting, as expected, persons wishing to appear before the Council would register their names and the subjects they wish to address with the Clerk to the Board prior to the beginning of

the meeting.

Each presentation would be limited to three minutes.

If more time is needed, the citizens would register his/her request to be placed on the agenda of the next regular meeting with the clerk.

Councilman Rick Murphrey made the motion and Councilman Jerry White seconded it that the board table the mayor's suggestion and take action at the May meeting.

KM church plans major expansion program

A community-wide Family Life Center with a gymnasium, a dining room and classrooms could be on the drawing board soon at Mount Zion Baptist Church.

Rev. Clinton Feemster said Mount Zion owns land off Waterson and Cansler Streets adjacent to the 500-member church and will make definite plans for the new building program at the May retreat of church trustees and deacons.

"It's a dream we have to expand our church plant and involve our whole community in a place that is badly needed," said Feemster.

Feemster says he hops to "turn the dirt soon" since a building fund has been started. He estimated it could take up to \$800,000 to build the facility.

Feemster, 40, sees the center as a place for kids to be comfortable and involved, a place not only for



REV. CLINTON FEEMSTER

the members of his present congregation to enjoy but for the whole community.

"Young people need an outlet and it's my hope that a family life center would be just that," he said.

Feemster said that an adult day care center is also in the works.

"The church recognizes that we need 21st Century ideas for our programs to work and that our youth are the future of the community," he said.

He said that the Youth Ministry, the Couple's Ministry and the Young Singles Ministry of the church aim to help people where they are.

"Why do our youth have to go to Charlotte when we can give them a viable program in Kings Mountain?" he asked.

Feemster said that while all adults do not relate to youth that he is enlisting volunteers who do and the ministry is meeting the needs of the whole congregation.

Young Singles and Young Couples do not meet in a traditional church classroom setting. They

meet at times in homes and take retreats and trips and they invite speakers to concentrate on the problems they face. Katherine Hardy and Melba Clinton are leaders of Young Singles and Larry and Jane Orr are directors of the Young Couples ministry.

"We try to make all our programs attractive," he said.

The youth program is gaining speed and the church calendar is full of activities for youth of all ages. Geraldine Dye is youth director.

Lamont Littlejohn is the first student from the church to enter the ministry but there will be others," said Feemster.

Feemster said that young men and young women are finding out that it's the "in" thing to be a Christian and their impact on the community will be a strong influence into the 21st Century.



HERITAGE DAY - Janet Smith, Guidance Counselor at Grover School, shows students how to churn butter during Heritage Day activities Thursday.

Top teacher, principal named

Middle School teacher Carol Elliott and Bethware Principal Hugh Holland won the top awards at Monday's eighth annual Service Awards Banquet of Kings Mountain District Schools.

Elliott, 7th grade language arts teacher, Kings Mountain Teacher of the Year for 1996, was cited for her success in leadership of the accelerated reading program, first in her classroom at Central School and then at Kings Mountain Middle School.

Holland, Principal of the Year for 1996, who is retiring this year, was praised by Supt. Dr. Bob McRae for his genuine love and care of children.

McRae, who was master of ceremonies for the event, said that both Elliott and Holland were not only solid teachers but they "looked for the extra things to do for kids."

Also recognized as Teachers of

the Year in the eight schools in the system were:

Barry Webster, Physical Education teacher, Bethware Teacher of the Year.

Dorcas Beasley, fifth grade teacher, East School Teacher of the Year.

Adriana Macchiavello, elementary Spanish teacher and high school Spanish teacher, Grover School Teacher of the Year.

Pat Regan, third grade teacher, North School Teacher of the Year.

Bonnie Bryson, West School Teacher of the Year.

Carol Elliott, Middle School Teacher of the Year.

Ann Bennett, director of the food service program at the high school and leader of the Future Homemakers of America, the staple program of the home economics department, Kings Mountain High School Teacher of

the Year.

Belinda Kinder, high school English teacher, the new Parker Street School Teacher of the Year.

Jackie Blanton, Grover elementary teacher and last year's Teacher of the Year, presented the plaque to Elliott.

John Goforth, Middle School Principal and last year's Principal of the Year, presented the plaque to Holland.

Retirees, who represented 209 years of service to the KM schools, were also honored with awards.

They included Linda Dover, secretary at Bethware School for 18 years; Anna Duell, custodian and bus driver at the high school for six years; Barbara Jones, teacher assistant at North School for 19 years; Bill Hawkins, maintenance employee for five years; Howard

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Supt. Dr. Bob McRae, left, and Middle School Principal John Goforth, right, congratulate Middle School teacher Carol Elliott and Bethware Principal Hugh Holland for winning "Teacher and Principal of the Year."