

Lake Commission wants to sell water

7-A

KM Juniors host Shelby tonight

5-A



Kings Mountain Herald

pl. 107 No. 23

Thursday, June 8, 1995

Kings Mountain, N.C. • 28086 • 50¢

City Manager is leaving

Kings Mountain's City Manager Chuck Nance is resigning, effective August 1, after nearly a year on the job, ending a 12-year career in government.

Nance, 35, submitted his resignation to the Mayor and Kings Mountain City Council Wednesday afternoon, although he had talked informally with them and with department heads on Friday.

He said he will leave city government for private business.

He and his cousin will open and operate a new partnership, Mountaineer Construction, in

Rutherfordton later this summer, a business which will include real estate and construction work.

Nance said he will work to make the transition as smoothly as possible with City Council as it moves to hire a new manager.

Before leaving Kings Mountain, Nance plans to hire a police chief, a planning director and a Parks & Recreation director from a pool of applicants, including the interim directors on the job. Captain Bob Hayes is interim chief, Trip Hord is interim recreation director and Jeff

Putnam is interim planning director.

"The adoption of the new budget and the filling of department head positions are priorities," he said.

A 1982 graduate of Appalachian State University with a major in planning, Nance came to Kings Mountain from Spindale where he had been town manager for 18 months. Prior to that he had served as town administrator in Rutherfordton for seven years. He began his career in government in Edenton as a building inspector

and city planner for three years. He was hired by City Council September 1.

His present annual salary is \$47,000.

Nance said his experience in road construction during his college years and his experience both as a building inspector and administrator will help him in his new career choice.

"I like being outside and my new job will be challenging and a needed change," he said.

Nance said he and his wife made a family decision not to move to

Kings Mountain September 1, one of the requirements of his job in the city's top executive position. City policy requires the town manager to live in the town he manages.

"I agree wholeheartedly with that city policy and had every intention of relocating in Kings Mountain when I took the job," said Nance.

But the Nance tenure he acknowledges has been filled with problems.

See Nance, 2-A



CHUCK NANCE

A DREAM COME TRUE

Missy Wiggins fights off rare disease to graduate high school

Dreams come true.

Just ask Missy Wiggins, 18, who beat the odds and graduated with the Class of 1995 at Kings Mountain High School last week.

The pretty girl with waist-length dark hair and dark eyes got a standing ovation as senior Brad Leonard pushed her wheelchair down the sidewalk from the school building to the football stadium and onto the stage as the 9th grade band played the familiar processional march, "Pomp and Circumstance."

"There really wasn't a dry eye in the house," said her proud parents, Carolyn and Mike Patrick.

"I was so happy and I found out last week that high school boys are cute," said the bubbly teenager who collects Barbie dolls, adores soap operas, talks non-stop on the telephone, plays school for hours with her younger brother and likes to shop until she drops.

Missy attended Kings Mountain Schools for seven years but transferred to special schools, including Graham School and Jefferson

School in Shelby and was one of six seniors in the recent graduating class at North Shelby School.

A rare disease called Leukodystrophy, a deterioration of the brain, put her in a wheelchair seven years ago.

But the young woman doesn't call it a handicap. She enjoys life.

"I like home," said the talkative teen, who admits to tiring easily and is teased by her brother that she likes to sleep.

See Dream, 3-A



MISSY WIGGINS

2-year term election in KM next Tuesday

Kings Mountain citizens will go to the polls Tuesday at the city's two polling places - the Community Center and National Guard Armory - to decide if they want their elected officials to serve four year or two year terms.

Polls open at 6:30 a.m. and close at 7:30 p.m.

The vote totals will be posted by Elections Chairman Becky Cook about 8 p.m. at City Hall.

A total of 4,500 people are registered to vote.

It is the first election in the recent history of Cleveland County by citizens calling for an election to shorten terms of elected officials.

Although political activity has been minimal, several newspaper advertisements have been placed by citizens on both sides of the fence and signs for and against have gone up in several locations in the city.

Chief proponent of a two year term is the retiring City of Kings Mountain Planning Director Gene White who led the successful petition effort to get the names of 433 registered voters on a petition calling for the election.

"The bottom line is to get more and better qualified candidates to come out and to encourage more responsive and responsible leadership," said White who took the leadership of the petition effort and who said he paid for expenses of advertising materials and special mailings from his pocket.

"Without accountable political leadership the city can't possibly progress. We are sitting in an area with all the criteria that encourages industry location and more and better jobs but we can't do it without good political leadership."

The Voting Section Civil Rights Division of the U.S. Justice Department must give approval of the election by June 15.

The ballot will read:

"Shall the charter amendment to

See Election, 2-A

White says vote to silence him

Retired city planner Gene White said the rejection of Mayor Scott Neisler's plan to give citizens time to speak at monthly board meetings is a "gag rule" that reinforces the need for two year terms.

White said that the recent 5-3 vote by Council was an attempt to silence him at city hall.

Earlier this year White charged board members with conflicts of interest when he launched a successful petition effort to call for shortening of the terms of mayor and Council from four to two years. Citizens will go to the polls and decide that issue Tuesday.

"What the new rule means is that a person who wants to speak at a monthly board meeting now has to go to City Hall on Wednesday before the next week's meeting, fill out a form and say what he or she intends to speak about," said White.

"Then Council will decide whether or not they want to put you on an agenda and you may then be invited to speak."

The latest controversy at City Hall started in March when Council started voting on adopting an agenda at the beginning of each meeting after City Manager Chuck Nance said he was questioned by some board members on how residents get on the agenda. The agenda change was based on a booklet of suggestions for city councils put out by the Institute of Government training center.

Fleming Bell, who wrote the booklet, said the suggestions would be appropriate for some boards and not for others.

"It really gets down to the council and its perception of what its citizens expect," he said.

See White, 2-A

Public hearing on KM budget set for Monday

Public hearing on the City of Kings Mountain budget for 1995-96 will be held Monday night at 7:30 p.m. in City Hall.

Citizens can ask questions and voice concerns about next year's proposed \$19 million-plus budget which is scheduled for approval on June 27.

City Manager Chuck Nance has recommended a pay raise for 150-plus employees, raising the water and sewer rate across the boards and essentially raising the amount residents pay for property tax because of county-wide revaluation, although technically the tax

rate will remain the same as last year when it was raised from 36 cents to 40 cents per \$100 valuation.

Because of property revaluation, for instance, on a house valued at \$100,000 a homeowner can expect to pay \$410 annually, an increase of \$12.

Although not changing the rates for electric and gas, the city staff proposes raising the rates for water and sewer so that an average customer using 5000 gallons of water a month would see his water and sewer bill rise 24 cents a month.

Proposed rate increases would start July 1.

Nance had originally recommended that the city absorb and not pass on \$67,000, the estimated annual increase by the City of Gastonia for sewer treatment at the Crowders Creek Wastewater Plant. Nance said the utilities committee had recommended that funds be budgeted for major improvements at the Pilot Creek Waste Treatment Plant.

Under Nance's proposal, city employees will get a 3 1/2 percent across-the-board raise, a cost of

living increase, but not a merit increase.

City customers will also see an increase for landfill costs since the county is upping the rates, an additional 26 cents a month for local customers.

Other proposed recommendations by the staff and utilities committee will be money for a rate study estimated to cost \$50,000-\$55,000 and funds for a customer service position in the city utilities/finance department. A big ticket item will be money for a basin and clarifiers at the Pilot Creek Wastewater Plant.

Grover Council approves budget for 1995-96

GROVER - There are no increases for services and no change in the property tax in the 1995-96 budget which Town Board passed unanimously Monday after a brief public hearing.

Mayor Ronald Queen said that even if Kings Mountain goes up on the cost of water to Grover that the town has "some cushion" to absorb additional costs for at least the next fiscal year.

"I think it's significant that we have not increased utilities nor raised taxes," said Mayor pro tem

Noel Spivey.

The budget tops \$239,000 in the general fund with \$41,545 for office operations, \$36,900 for Town Hall operations, \$67,632 for maintenance operations, \$45,740 for police operations, \$11,620 for fire department expenses, \$17,300 for street and school lighting, \$8,800 for sanitation and environmental department expenses, \$5,000 for community improvement, \$5,000 for the new municipal park or a total expenditures of \$239,537. Revenue from the Powell Bill Fund

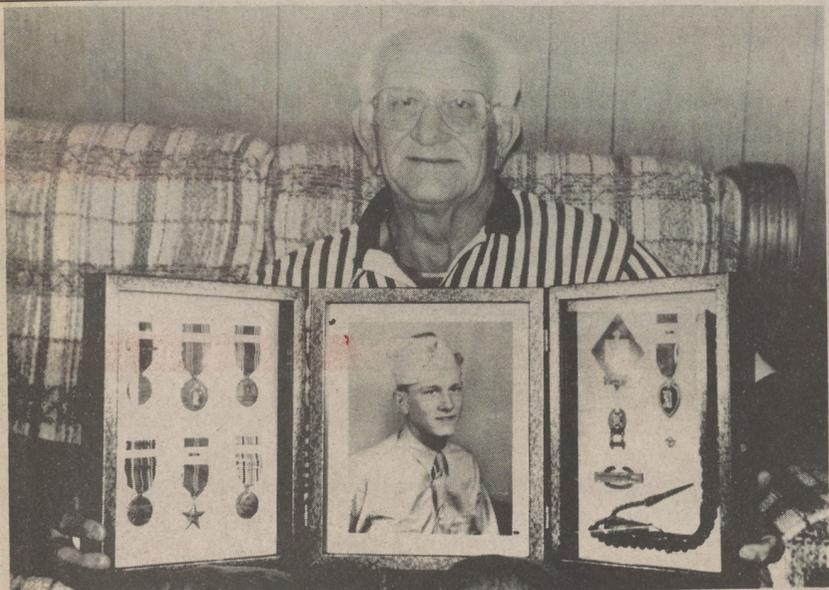
is \$55,709 with all monies to be spent for paving and resurfacing and maintenance. Revenues from the water and sewer fund are expected to be \$181,000 and expenditures from that department will total \$106,655. Water and sewer operational costs of \$74,345 include \$12,000 to Duke Power for water, \$6,000 to Duke Power for sewer and \$20,000 to Kings Mountain for water. Total expenditures from the water and sewer fund are expected to be \$181,000. A grant from the federal Cops

Fast program will allow the town to hire a full time police officer and retain some part time patrols.

The Police budget projects \$35,880 for salaries.

The town expects to receive \$80,000 in ad valorem taxes, \$12,217 from inventory tax credit, \$60,000 from utilities franchise tax, \$40,000 from local sales tax, \$5,500 in interest from cash management and money market accounts, and \$14,160 in sanitation fees.

KINGS MOUNTAIN PEOPLE



Jim Singleton has all the medals and the scars of World War II.

God carried Singleton through war

By ELIZABETH STEWART
Of The Herald Staff

The war memories came flooding back on the 50th anniversary of VE Day for James Singleton.

And even though the years have past, he can still remember hearing his mother praying for him in the foxholes and telling his friend lying beside him that "God said things would be all right."

After that he carried a picture of Jesus Christ throughout the war.

Indeed, the Kings Mountain man must have had an angel on his shoulder.

The narrow escapes he tells about in a Suicide Platoon in Patton's 45th Infantry Division would make your hair curl.

He carried out the dead and carried in the ammunition in the dead of night, but grave duty was the hardest job in the war, he said.

Singleton still has nightmares. He joined the doughboys of the

45th, the foot soldiers, at age 18.

A day before his 19th birthday a bomb blew him out of a foxhole, his home for four months.

"I was raised to hunt and the enemy was just like a fox after a rabbit and we took cover in the woods and forgot our hurts and moved on."

The world's attention was focused on the 45th Infantry Division from the first day in battle during World War II. It got its name as the "fighting s.o.b.s" and the "mean" division correctly and was led by Blood and Guts General of the Army George Patton.

"Patton and I got on a first name basis and he told me many times that a "dead soldier ain't worth a damn."

An honorary guard for Patton, Singleton was called on the platform and saluted by Patton.

The 45th Oklahoma National Guard saw 511 days of front line

duty. There were six men in Singleton's squad, one of whom was Indian. Singleton defended the soldier in a dispute and lost one of his stripes but came out of the war a Technical Sergeant with the Purple Heart, the Bronze Star with Oak Leaf cluster, medals for bravery, five major campaign medals and two invasions and the Presidential Citation. He was scheduled to receive the Silver Star.

Captured on Anzio when the Germans threw a barrage of artillery he said he got away by "the hair of my head."

He ran toward the American front lines and a soldier stuck a gun in his belly and asked for the password he could not remember.

"I finally said something which he recognized."

"If you have ever been to Anzio you've been to hell because it

See Singleton, 2-A