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Former KM chief to face charges



WARREN GOFORTH

Former Police Chief Warren Goforth was indicted Wednesday in connection with his trade of a 1987 Chevrolet Suburban truck seized in a drug raid.

Goforth and his lawyer Larry Hoyle of Gastonia were meeting yesterday afternoon with Cleveland County District Attorney Bill Young where Goforth was to be charged with obtaining property by false pretense, a felony.

Goforth pled innocent.

Wednesday morning, Hoyle said he had not seen the true bill of indictment handed down by a

Cleveland County Grand Jury this week which followed a six month investigation by the SBI.

Goforth, a seven year veteran of the Kings Mountain Police Department and a 20-year veteran of law enforcement, could not be reached for comment.

Young told The Herald Tuesday afternoon he would have a statement Wednesday afternoon.

Young reportedly called for the SBI investigation after a Cleveland County Sheriff's Department detective and city councilman and three Kings

Mountain Police Department officers challenged statements they said Goforth made regarding his purchase of the truck.

At a press conference following his sudden resignation last November, Goforth denied any wrongdoing.

Goforth said he and narcotics officer Billy Benton traded the Suburban and another unmarked police car to purchase a new car for the city's detective division. Goforth returned later to Fantastic Auto Sales in Shelby and purchased the Suburban truck for

\$1,095.

"Tommy Granger quoted me \$1,095," Goforth said at the time. "I decided to purchase the vehicle. The perception might seem that he allowed me to purchase the vehicle well under the value to benefit me; however, that is not true."

Goforth said the Suburban's book value was about \$5,000 but the Fantastic salesman said the truck needed extensive repairs. A local bank appraisal Goforth obtained later valued the vehicle at between \$625 and \$2,925.

Goforth said he realized the ve-

hicle purchase could bring questions among city council members and sent a memo to Nance offering to sell the vehicle back to the city. Goforth parked the truck at City Hall for several weeks before he took possession.

Goforth said at the press conference that rumors about the transaction that spread for days around town were only the latest in a series of mounting political pressures which he said took its toll on him and made him decide to quit.

See Goforth, 4-A

KINGS MOUNTAIN PEOPLE

Bowen couple still farming after 61 years of marriage

Happiness for Fred and Verda Bowen is their close-knit family and growing corn which towers over 11 feet tall in a big garden of vegetables they share with family and neighbors.

Bowen, 83, and his wife, 80, have been married 61 years and their love of farming brought them together.

Good-natured Bowen teases his wife that he met her in the cotton patch and courted her at church.

"We are just as happy today as we were when we met during the Depression years," said Mrs. Bowen.

A hailstorm beat their cotton crop to the ground, so in 1940 the Bowens moved from Cherry Mountain in Rutherford County to Kings Mountain and took jobs at the old Phenix Mill.

Fred said he worked at three different mills in one day until he settled on a card grinder job at Crowders Mountain and from there went to Osage where he retired after 25 years and his wife retired after 15 years.

The two have been working a garden for over 50 years, growing vegetables which they share with family and friends and freezing and canning for the winter months.

Their comfortable pink house on Church Street is filled with family photographs and loving memories. Verda is always busy in the kitchen and still prepares Sunday lunch for 15-25 people, serving the home-cooked foods they like after church

services which they never miss.

Their active life belies their age.

"We grew up in the Church of God and joined Chestnut Ridge Baptist Church when we moved to Kings Mountain," said Mr. Bowen, who is an active deacon, assistant teacher of the men's class and sings in the choir.

When "Pa-Pa" Bowen passes around the building fund collection plate he has the reputation of standing at the pew until everyone makes a donation.

The church is a priority for the couple.

Early risers, they walk every morning at the city's walking track to enhance their apparent good health.

Fred is a big fan of the Atlanta Braves and never misses a televised game. He has a cap and other Braves baseball and Tar Heel basketball memorabilia.

Sunday "MaMa" Bowen didn't cook. The whole family gathered at daughter Brenda Dover's home to celebrate Mrs. Bowen's birthday with the four children, George and Winfred Bowen, Betty Fite and Brenda Dover, all of Kings Mountain, their spouses, nine grandchildren and 12 great-grandchildren. The family lost a grandchild, Donna Rene Fite at age 6 in a car accident.

"Pa-Pa" Bowen leaves the success of his garden to The Lord but he helps out with plant food, a tea-

See Bowen, 4-A



FRED AND VERDA BOWEN

County approves \$69 million budget

County commissioners unanimously adopted a budget of \$69,065,638 Tuesday night after a public hearing in which only a few people commented.

The budget lowers the tax rate from 65 cents to 62 cents per \$100 assessed evaluation but many people will still see increases on their tax bills because of the county-wide reevaluation.

County employees will get a 2 percent pay raise and step increases for those below step four of their pay grade, and law enforcement and health and emergency medical service agencies will get more money in the new fiscal year.

County Manager Lane Alexander said the value of real property is expected to be three billion 560 million, the real property values increasing by 9.7 percent and the real property comprising 65 percent of the total taxable property. The net increase in the total taxable property is expected to be six percent, he said. Alexander said the county's next scheduled reevaluation would be in four years and would again be done by county staff.

Cleveland County's general budget is up by \$1.2 million or 3.6 percent. Ninety percent of the total expenditures are for services performed by various agencies of government.

There are no new dollars in the proposed budget for expansion of services in mental health and three people spoke about the need for \$110,000 for developmentally disabled adults who are 21 and no longer in the school system.

The board indicated it would reconsider the request if and when it heard from any allocations from the state.

The mother of a disabled 21-year-old told the board there is a great need for a place for young people to interact and have a life of their own and that group homes are filling up. Of the anticipated \$3 million budgeted, Carolina Alternatives will account for \$1 million in the budget and Cleveland Center is expected to begin this effort in September.

Included in the budget are:

New money for four new deputies in the Sheriff's Department. Sheriff Dan Crawford expressed appreciation to the com-

See County, 4-A

Cable bills to increase

Your monthly Cable TV bill July 1 will reflect higher rates.

Cleveland County Board of Commissioners Tuesday night approved the new rate schedules for Time Warner Cable in Shelby and Jones Intercable in Kings Mountain will increase monthly basic service rates by 37 cents, from \$7.87 to \$89.24 and the monthly cable service rate by \$1.28 from \$11.50 to \$12.79.

New channels included in this rate increase are Court TV, The Travel Channel and CNBC.

Floyd Williams, General manager of Time Warner, made the proposal, along with John Harris of Piedmont Triad Council of Governments which studied the proposal on behalf of the commission.

Williams said there will be adjustments in the cost of Time Warner provided equipment due to changes in the repair and maintenance cost of the equipment and the purchase of new equipment, as allowed by the FCC.

One customer from Kings Mountain, Dale Kendrick, of 134 Muirfield Drive, protested the increase in a letter to the county commission.

Kendrick protested the addition of channels that customers may or may not want and said that another news channel is not necessary. He said the court channel and travel channel would target a small minority of cable viewers.

"We continually see rate increases for channels where we have no input as to whether the majority of viewers want or do not want them," he said.

Kendrick asked the commission as regulatory agency for the industry to stop the unnecessary channel additions and rate increases and ask the industry to survey the customers for their choice of new channels.

Responding to a question from the county attorney, Williams said all subscribers have the right to file a complaint with the FCC regarding the cable service increase within 45 days of receipt of the bill containing this increase.

Patterson Road water gets 'clean' test

Testing of wells for ground water contamination on Patterson Road came back "clean" on Monday.

Walt Ollis, the city's Water/Wastewater Superintendent, said the state has monitored wells in that area for over a year after Spectrum Textured Fibers found groundwater pollution in their test drilling.

City water is being run through Spectrum's meter free of charge to six residents of the area and Spectrum is paying the water bill to the city.

"We don't know if we caused the problem or not but we have been on top of it," said Spectrum engineer Hubert Johnson.

Ollis said the contamination was believed to come from a 20-year-old lagoon that the plant wanted to close but, according to state guidelines, had to first sample groundwater and some 27 wells in the area.

"To keep the neighbors happy the plant decided to furnish them free water off the Spectrum water line," said Ollis.

Ollis approached the city utilities committee over a year ago and the utilities committee gave approval to the plan.

Samples of the groundwater at homes of six residents produced a substance used in a dyeing process,

See Test, 4-A

Sale of water being discussed

"It's worth a study," said Councilman Phil Hager of former city commissioner M. C. Pruette's idea for the city to offer excess water for sale to the county.

Pruette, longtime and an original member of the Moss Lake Authority, reiterated his remarks to the recent meeting of the Moss Lake Commission at Monday's meeting of the city utilities committee.

Pruette said the city produces 55 million gallons of water a week, uses 5.5 million gallons daily and could sell at least 31 million gal-

lons a week and still have plenty of water at city-owned Moss Lake.

He asked that the commission, which also included Jim Guyton chairman and Dean Spears, study the feasibility of selling surplus water at outside industrial rates or trading off water lines with the county which he said would open the door to expanding the city's water service.

"We could pick up \$20,000 a week and get the city out of the financial hole," said Pruette.

See Water, 4-A

Woman found murdered in KM

Charleen E. Simons, 49, was found murdered at 1:45 a.m. Wednesday in Log Cabin Club which she had operated for two years at her residence at 1207 S. Battleground Avenue.

Cleveland County Sheriff Dan Crawford said an autopsy into the cause of death was being conducted at Gaston Memorial Hospital.

The homicide investigation had produced no leads at noon time yesterday but the Sheriff called in the SBI and is also assisted by Kings Mountain Police Department.

"There was a lot of blood at the

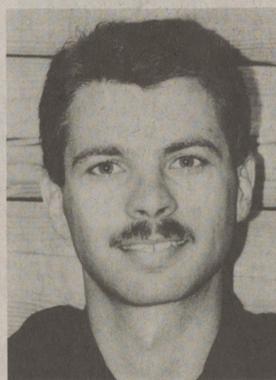
scene," said Coroner Ralph Mitchem. He said the victim was found dead sitting in a chair behind a bar.

Crawford said he had received no reports of illegal activity at the club but acknowledged that he found cases of beer inside the log cabin residence.

Citizens who stopped at the crime scene said the residence doubled as a night club.

"She was a good woman and would not put up with junk," said Henry Foster, of 912 First Street,

See Murder, 10-A



PTL. BILLY FREDELL

Fredell leaving Kings Mountain Police

After he was victimized twice by a burglar and caught the suspect redhanded, Ptl. Billy Fredell went to rookie school to be a cop.

Monday, the Kings Mountain Police Officer will leave his five-year job with the Kings Mountain Police Department for Shelby where he begins work in the Detective Division of the Cleveland County Sheriff's Department.

"Working with the Kings Mountain Police has been like working with family but the opportunity came for advancement," said Fredell, 30, who has worked the

past four months as the full-time Moss Lake officer in addition to regular patrol duties. He has been a member of Sgt. James Camp's squad.

Fredell is the second Kings Mountain man to join the Sheriff's Department in the last two weeks. Monday, Sgt. Billy Benton joined the Cleveland County Sheriff's Department as a Lieutenant in the narcotics division.

Fredell's wife, the former Amy Edmonson of Kings Mountain, is a full-time dispatcher in the Shelby Police Department and a part-time dispatcher in the Sheriff's

Department. Mrs. Fredell graduated from the N.C. Justice Academy in Salemburg after attending UNC-C for two years. She has four years experience in law enforcement.

A native of Fallston, Fredell is the son of Coy and Glenda Fredell of Kings Mountain and Martha and Steve Evans of Patterson Springs. He graduated from Crest High School and completed rookie school at Isothermal Community College. Before getting into law enforcement five years ago, he worked for five years at Chase

See Fredell, 4-A