

RUSSIA

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Starostina left Moscow in 74-degree weather and flew to the United States via Frankfurt, Germany. She arrived on a flight from Philadelphia about 7:30 p.m. Monday night.

What does she like best about Kings Mountain?

"The people are friendly," she says.

And she could not believe how clean and quiet the airports are in this country, compared to her country.

Starostina took a two week vacation from Oman Oil Company, where she is a secretary and personal assistant for an American company headquartered in Houston, Texas.

She met the Kings Mountain men when she volunteered as an interpreter for the Rick Gage Crusade. She had heard about the Crusade at Moscow Bible Church, of which she is a member and which was organized with 600 members in 1992 and has grown to 800 members in recent years.

Fourteen teams of mission workers were involved in the Gage Crusade and Natasha said she was lucky to be assigned to the Macedonia pastor and Glass.

"Hal could speak Russian fluently and often he and Natasha would get into a conversation and forget all about me," said the pastor who teased the visitor. Philbeck said he learned little Russian during his trip. But Glass, who works at Commercial Intertech, is often called to serve as an interpreter to Russian visitors at area plants.

Philbeck said he saw 5300 people accept Jesus as Saviour during the evangelistic mission by 46 people in Moscow.

"Billy Graham had just been to a school that I visited and really paved the way for our visit and we were warmly welcomed," he said.

"The evangelistic field is wide open in Moscow," said Philbeck. Natasha agreed. She said people are flocking to the churches.

Natasha read America history for years as a student at Moscow State University where her goal was to be a geophysicist.

"It seems incredible that I am here," she exclaimed over and over to new acquaintances.

Natasha described the economy in her country as very poor. She said she is disturbed about organized crime in the Soviet Union but she said that Americans are welcomed warmly and the Russian people like Americans and want to welcome them to their country.

Moscow, said Natasha, is a country of 12 million people, many of them strangers and visitors.

Comparing colloquial or slang sayings, Natasha said that Russians often use the expression, "counting crows," to describe someone who is acting foolish or who is absent-minded.

"Do you have crows in your bag," Philbeck teased Natasha when she stepped off the airplane Monday night, explaining that his comment about someone being

"full of mud" compared to her saying.

Natasha said that crows are unique in Russia because they look like penguins.

"My longest plane flight was 10 hours inside Russia from the north-west tip of Russia near Alaska," said Natasha, who loves to fly but was not prepared for a 20-hour international flight in which she was continually served food and drink.

"Our railroad stations and airports are the most dangerous places to be and there are refuges from all over the country there," she said, saying that she was surprised by the quietness and cleanliness of this country.

Various members of the host church plan to take their visitor shopping and to various places of interest. The pastor and his family plan several outings. Natasha will be a guest at church services on Sunday and will play the piano.

An accomplished pianist, she plays by ear and her favorite pieces are Chopin and Mozart.

Caviar is the favorite food in Russia and Natasha loves it.

But for the next week or so she will be treated to American foods and customs.

"And besides I don't like caviar and we've told our young visitor that caviar is too expensive," laughs Philbeck.

Natasha says caviar would take second place to hushpuppies, a corn meal delicacy that she can't find in her country because the climate is too cold for corn crops.

"I have really fallen in love with America and Kings Mountain," said Natasha.

"I am just so happy and find it incredible that I am finally here."

MAYOR

From Page 1-A

For Ward 2 - incumbent Jim Guyton

For At-large seat on Council - incumbent Norma Bridges, James Norris, Ronnie Grigg and Wendell Bunch.

Wilson gets two life sentences and 14 years

An all-white jury sentenced convicted murderer Shalon Wilson to two life sentences in the 1993 double murders of Little Dan's convenience store clerks Ervin Lovelace and Hugh Marcrum last week in Cleveland County Superior Court.

Wilson was also sentenced to 14 years in prison on a charge of robbery with a dangerous weapon and three years for conspiracy to commit armed robbery. The sentences will run consecutively.

Local people testifying at the trial were Captain Richard Reynolds, Lt. Houston Corn and Ptl. Ronald Creech, all of the Kings Mountain Police Department, Lt. Billy

HICKS

From Page 1-A

The retired City Manager of Gastonia was responsible for all activities for Gastonia, including operation of the city's electric system.

"I am familiar with the operation of all utilities except the natural gas system," he said.

Hicks said he planned to meet with department heads soon.

He was hired, effective August 1, to succeed Chuck Nance who came to Kings Mountain from Spindale nearly a year ago and has resigned to go into private business.

Hicks met with Council in closed session for about 20 minutes after the regular meeting to finalize the contract between the city and TSS, Inc. with a salary comparable to the current manager's annual salary of \$46,000.

Hicks was hired for a six month's period. He will serve, under the contract agreement, until such time as the city gives at least one week's notice to Temporary Staffing Systems Inc. and the manager in writing to terminate the contract which calls for a bill payment of \$879.99 weekly to TSS, Inc. for services rendered by Hicks and \$900 per month to Hicks for automobile allowance and professional dues and expenses related to official travel as the city's chief executive officer.

After Council reentered the Chambers and continued the meeting, Mayor Neisler called for the vote. Councilman Jerry White made the motion to hire Hicks and it was seconded by Councilwoman Norma Bridges. The action was unanimous. Councilman Phil Hager was absent.

"I want to congratulate Mr. Hicks and know that the city will reap the benefit of his expertise," said Mayor Scott Neisler.

Keller retained as city auditor

The auditing firm of Browne, Keller and Associates was retained by the city to audit the city's books for two more years in a 4-2 vote Tuesday of City Council after Councilwoman Norma Bridges' motion to take bids and give other auditing firms a chance at the work failed 4-2.

Voting for the present auditors at salary of \$18,000 per year were Councilmen Rick Murphrey, Ralph Grindstaff, Jerry White and Dean Spears. Voting to let the audit out to bids were Bridges and Councilman Jim Guyton.

Bridges said she favored letting bids because the terms of city council have changed to two years and she does not want to make decisions for future councils.

"We need auditors who won't play politics, won't take sides and if they do a good job they will be retained," she said.

Bridges said the auditor is a key person in restoring confidence and credibility to the city.

No other council member or the Mayor commented.

In 1991 then-city manager George Wood recommended a three year renewal of the Keller contract at cost of \$17,000 in 1992, \$17,500 for 1993 and \$18,000 for

1994. Auditors are hired, subject to approval of the NC Local Government Commission and its rules and regulations for municipal audits and auditing contracts.

In other actions, Council: Appointed Rev. Harold Bumby, Lou Ballew, Dorothy McNamara, Plato Pressley, Bob Webster and Libby Blanton to the Senior Center Advisory Board.

Authorized contract with the NC Department of Transportation to

perform the biennial inspection of the old bridge adjacent to the overhead bridge on US 74 at King Street.

Adopted a resolution honoring the Kings Mountain 13 and under AAU Boys Basketball Team which recently participated in the National AAU Junior Olympic Championships in Memphis, Tn. among a field of 81 teams.

Set the date for public hearing on an annexation request from Roger Todd Conner for August 29 at 7:30 p.m. in Council Chambers.

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Reptile Day set at Crowders Park

Reptile Day will be held Saturday, July 29 from 10 a.m.-3 p.m. at Crowders Mountain State Park.

Staff and volunteers will teach participants about numerous reptile species that make their home in the park.

A schedule of specific presentation times can be obtained by calling the park office at 853-5375.

Dance set Friday at Grover Rescue

There will be a dance Friday from 7-10 p.m. at Grover Rescue Squad.

Music will be provided by The Ordinaires, featuring Clyde Fore, vocalist.

Admission is \$5 for couples and \$3 for singles.

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(An Affiliate of)

CLECO PRIMARY CARE NETWORK, INC.
LEWIS H. ROBERSON, M.D.

Announcing the addition of Lewis H. Roberson, M.D. July 24, 1995. Dr. Roberson is a graduate of East Carolina University School of Medicine and completed his residency at the East Carolina Family Practice.

The Kings Mountain Medical Center is located 711 West Mountain Street, Kings Mountain, N.C. Appointments may be made during regular office hours Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

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C.O.P.

From Page 1-A

A 1975 graduate of Doss High School in Louisville, Ky., Creech completed four years of duty in the USAF as a heavy equipment operator attached to the Strategic Air Command in North Dakota. He moved to Kings Mountain in 1980 and met Sherry Clark, a local girl, and they were married. They have three sons, twins Austin and Houston, 8, and Dallas, 11.

Creech said he enjoyed his job as a warehouse supervisor in Shelby for eight years but did not find the self-satisfaction he wanted and changed his career plans.

"I wanted to get into something that was never dull and routine and police work is never that," he said.

Creech said his new role will get him out of the car where he will mingle with the people who ultimately are the success of the new program.

"The federal grant allotted only one officer at public housing complexes but it's a start," he said.

Creech said that a Community or Neighborhood Watch will be established on his first beat and he will have weekly meetings with citizens of the area to get their input on how he can help them.

"The whole community will need to get involved to make this program successful," he said.

"One officer can't do it by himself."

Creech said that most people see police as a "set aside group that enforces laws when something bad happens."

Creech said COPS aims to stop crime before it happens.