



Happy Thanksgiving

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End of an era in Kings Mountain: Gaffney's Barber Shop is closing

By ELIZABETH STEWART
of The Herald Staff

The closing of Gaffney Barber Shop December 31 will mark the end of an era on the Western Front, the Piedmont Avenue section of the community.

Personable barber Curtis Victor Gaffney, 74, is retiring after 50 years in the business, closing the door on a trade which was started by his late father in 1932.

Gaffney Barber Shop was born in a wooden shop on North Piedmont Avenue 64 years ago. Back in the early days Barrett Grocery, a laundry and the A&P were the only other businesses located on what oldtimers remember as the "western front."

Curt has told his grandchildren numerous tales about the good ole days of barbering in Kings Mountain.

He tells them the story of how he was born in Great Falls and came from South Carolina by covered wagon with his parents, Lloyd and Elizabeth Gaffney. He changed the tale after the grandchild-

dren grew older and wiser. He and his family actually settled in Gastonia and his father cut hair at the Firestone Mill until he moved the family to Kings Mountain in 1925. Curt went to West Elementary School and Central School but dropped out of high school at age 17 to join the U. S. Marine Corps.

As a young boy growing up in Kings Mountain Curt probably made more money shining shoes for a dime at his father's barber shop than some folks made after a week's work at the local mills. His summer job was shining shoes but Curt also took a job during winter months at the Margrace Mill when he was 16 years old. Curt recalled that some of the young shoeshine boys at Gaffney's were Darrell Austin Sr., Richard Reynolds, Fuzzie Davis and his two sons, Paul and Mike Gaffney.

With the advent of World War II Curt finished boot camp at Parris Island, SC. He saw duty at Guadacanal, Guam, and in the Pacific Theatre of Operations. December 26, 1944 he married Mary

See Gaffney, 10-A



GAFFNEY'S CLOSING - Curt Gaffney cuts Danny Shockley's hair at Gaffney's Barber Shop, a Kings Mountain landmark which is closing December 31.

KM citizens take a break to give thanks

Kings Mountain citizens were preparing for Thanksgiving this week.

With few exceptions, Thursday will be a holiday for most Kings Mountain area people.

Housewives were busy this week preparing big family dinners, schools and downtown businesses will be closed.

Thanksgiving breakfasts were being planned by at least two churches- Kings Mountain Baptist and First Presbyterian. The 7 a.m. breakfasts prepared by Men of the Church will include brief worship services led by the pastors.

The traditional Christmas lights will be turned on in the downtown area Thursday night. Although the new Victorian style lights have not arrived which the city ordered several weeks ago, City Manager Jimmy Maney said decorations would be up by Thursday and lights on the trees downtown will glow.

See City, 11-A

Police Chief Hayes wants more money for salaries

Chief of Police Bob Hayes is lobbying City Council for more money for his department.

Hayes said that Kings Mountain officers are paid considerably less than officers in departments in smaller population towns in the immediate area. Hayes said he was promised two years ago that City Council planned to budget more money for police salaries.

Hayes cited salaries of telecommunicators, patrolmen and officers in a survey/study he prepared recently for City Manager Jimmy Maney and the full city council.

Friday afternoon Maney met with police officers, reinforcing the chief's concerns and inviting the Chief to present the requests for consideration in the 1997-98 budget.

Hayes said that hiring one officer in KMPD costs \$1,329.36 and this is for clothing, breast badges, etc. and does not include the cost of weapons and ammunition issued to each officer. He said the cost of training one new officer is over \$9,000 and there are other monies involved in the hiring of an officer, including physicals, drug tests, etc. The chief's estimates don't include any time spent in training on the firing range which is necessary due to a state mandate.

A comparison by the Chief reveals that a telecommunicator hired by neighboring Bessemer City makes \$15,775-\$22,753 compared to Kings Mountain's \$14,706-\$20,280. A Cherryville telecommunicator is paid \$16,444-\$23,237. A Shelby Police telecommunicator is paid \$18,444-\$26,848.

An officer hired by Bessemer City is paid \$18,262-\$26,340 and a KMPD officer makes \$17,909-

\$24,690. A sergeant in the Bessemer City Police Department makes \$21,141.30-\$30,492 and KMPD pays \$19,781-\$27,269. A Cherryville officer is paid \$19,987-\$28,123 and a sergeant makes \$23,137-\$32,555. A Shelby officer is paid \$18,532-\$23,150 and a sergeant is paid \$23,688-\$33,426.

The salary of a Kings Mountain Captain ranges from \$24,086-\$33,197 and the Kings Mountain Chief's salary ranges from \$27,955-\$38,522. The Bessemer City Chief's salary ranges from \$28,739-\$41,450. The Cherryville Chief's salary ranges from \$28,814-\$40,545. The Shelby Chief's salary ranges from \$38,896-\$53,622.

The salary of a Police Lieutenant at KMPD ranges from \$21,840-\$30,118. Shelby pays \$24,939-\$31,137. The salary of a Bessemer City Lieutenant ranges from \$22,198-\$32,016. A Cleveland County Lieutenant in the Sheriff's Department is paid \$24,432-\$35,556, the Captain is paid \$25,614-\$37,260 and the Chief is paid \$40,116-\$53,622.

In 1994 Hayes said the recommended salaries for local officers were \$24,753-\$36,574 for a Lieutenant; \$25,991-\$38,403 for a Captain; and \$36,574-\$54,037 for the Chief. The recommended salary for a telecommunicator was \$16,752-\$24,753. The recommended salary for an officer was \$19,394-\$28,656 and the recommended salary for a sergeant was \$22,451-\$33,173.

Hayes said the salaries of records clerks and other secretaries in the police department are also lower than the salaries paid for similar jobs in other departments. He said the salary for the chief's secretary ranges

See Police, 10-A



Kenny and Jean McAbee, seated on the top row, are now in their second year with the "Be A Pal Program" at Second Baptist Church. The kids seated around them here are just a few who are in the program this year. They are (from left to right): second row, Josh Adams and Brittany Jones; third row, Jackson Wright and Brittany Stewart. The couple's grandson, Ryan Bolin, is atop.

McAbees are special 'Pals'

Jean and Kenny McAbee aren't clowning around when they talk about their "Be A Pal" program in its second year at Second Baptist Church.

This Thanksgiving season the Kings Mountain couple count their blessings for being able to share with 43 children who have become pals with 36 other caring adults.

The McAbees want to spread the ministry of love by encouraging other churches to sponsor pals.

Jean, who is known as Ms. Jean in clown circles, incorporates mission work wherever she entertains. She put her missionary dream on hold when

she married and started raising a family but now and she and her husband of eight years share a dream on the home mission field by forming a bus ministry in the Second Baptist church which has grown into the expanded pals program.

Brittany Jones, 6, says she's thankful for Ms. Jean and is proud that her parents will permit her to be a part of the program.

Mrs. McAbee says she gives the credit to God and to the inspiration from The Bible in the words of Jesus in Matthew 25:40 - "whatever you do to the least of these my brethren you do it unto me."

"We felt called to take the Bible to unchurched children of the community," said Kenny of an experience which he said has touched many lives.

"We both love kids and together have four children and one grandchild, Ryan Bolin, so it was natural that we fell in love with 300 children doing clowning parties for six years and then started taking children to church and into our home," he said.

The vision of the popular clown team spread and was encouraged by Pastor Gene Land. Thirty-five pals were on the

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Schools dropout rate down

The Kings Mountain District Schools dropout rate improved slightly in grades 7-12, resulting in 10 additional students remaining in school over last year's numbers, according to the 1995-96 dropout data released today.

The 1995-96 dropout rate in Kings Mountain Schools is 2.76 percent, down from 3.30 percent in 1994-95. Statewide, the 1995-96 dropout rate is 3.73 percent, 19,727 students, down from 3.88 percent, 19,987 students, in 1994-95.

In 1993-94 there were 60 dropouts, in 1994-95 there was one less and the current year showed 49 dropouts.

The current statistics rank Shelby City Schools at 3.01 percent and Cleveland County Schools at 3.10 percent. Cleveland County Schools reported 117 dropouts in 1995-96, up from 93 in 1994-95. Shelby reported 44 dropouts in 1995-96, up from 42 in 1994-95.

Local testing director Jean Thrift said that while she is pleased the number decreased from last year, local and state educators are concerned about the futures for any students who fail to get a high school education.

The dropout numbers are based on the calculation method required by the National Center for Education Statistics. This method contains some duplications because students may be counted more than once if they drop out, return to school and drop out a second time.

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Mountaineer Christmas will bring back old times

Plans are underway by the Kings Mountain Business Association for a community-wide Mountaineer Christmas December 13 from 5-9 p.m.

"We want to bring back an old-fashioned Christmas to the community and the red carpet is out for everyone to get involved," says President Kathy Neely.

Neely said the festivities will begin with an opening ceremony on Railroad Avenue. The star of the show will be Santa Claus and bake sales, popcorn stands, hotdogs and the sale of commemorative mugs are planned at booths to be set up by interested organizations and spon-

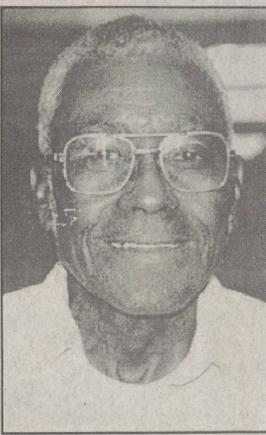
sors on Railroad Avenue.

"The mugs will be filled with hot chocolate or cider and will be available for \$4," said Linda Allen of Ashley's Antiques who is taking orders for the mugs which will be decorated with a Christmas wreath and the inscription, "A Mountaineer Christmas." Call 734-0044 or 730-9400 to order the mugs.

The Kings Mountain Little Theatre and various dance groups will provide entertainment along with carolers from local churches. Mr. and Mrs. Santa Claus will be on hand at Kings Mountain Antique Mall for photographs with children.

See Christmas, 11-A

Kings Mountain People



ANDREW McCLAIN

McClain, 81, just has to work

By: DAWN M. SWIFT

Imagine if you will, war has erupted in Europe and threatens to involve the United States, the biggest local news in Kings Mountain is public drunkenness? In 1915 Andrew McClain was born to such a time.

Today, 81 years later, McClain isn't worried about wars or drunkards, as long as he can enjoy his new found employment at Kings Mountain High School (KMHS), and fishing on his lake. "That's 'bout all I like to do," says McClain.

McClain has held many jobs over the years, working as a

farmer and laborer. He now rents his land for someone else to farm. He previously worked for KMHS for approximately seven years before he retired. "I get short of breath, so I just gave it up." Now, however, McClain is back to work as a custodian at KMHS. His job duties include the upkeep of the interior.

McClain says, "I got to feeling like [coming back to work]. The [work] doesn't keep me too busy. I just like to do things to occupy my time. You can't help yourself long as you don't help someone else."

Faculty and staff all agree with KMHS secretary Barbara Starnes, "Mr. Andrew is a super guy, very energetic." Walking down the hall of KMHS with "Mr. Andrew," a faculty member slaps McClain on the back and says he's, "the best one we have let go, and the best one we have coming back." McClain was even a hot topic during the School Board meeting when McClain was accepted back as an employee. "They [the school] seem like family. They're real nice to me," says McClain.

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