

4-A

All-State band clinic Friday and Saturday in KM



6-A

KMHS football team to play in scrimmage at NC State



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Rev. M.L. King remembered at Monday breakfast in KM

The late Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. was remembered as a man much like the Apostle Paul who God used as an instrument for great things by speakers at a prayer breakfast Monday at Bynum Chapel AME Zion Church.

Dr. Claude T. Williams, Central Piedmont Community College professor and pastor of Moore's Chapel AME Zion Church in Lincolnton, said the world has been waiting for nearly 30 years for another King.

"We have an identity crisis in 1997 because we have forgotten who God is and that God will work in us to change situations," he told the large crowd. Williams said that Americans

put pictures of their fallen leaders on their walls never realizing they can "turn this nation around."

Martin Luther King Jr. would have been 68 years old January 15 if he had not been assassinated April 4, 1968. A good student, King entered Morehouse College at the age of 15 and graduated with honors at 19 in 1948. He graduated first in his class at Crozer Theological Seminary in Pennsylvania in 1951 and earned a Ph. D. in theology from Boston University in 1955.

It was as pastor at Dexter Avenue Baptist Church in Montgomery, Ala. in 1955 that he led the year long boycott of

See King, 9-A



TRIBUTE TO KING - Dr. Claude Williams, the speaker for a prayer breakfast Monday, led tributes to Civil Rights leader Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. at Bynum Chapel AME Zion Church.

Commissioners extend options on 2 properties

By a split vote, Cleveland County commissioners Tuesday night extended for another 120 days its option on two pieces of property it is considering for an industrial park.

The vote came after three commissioners - Willie McIntosh of Shelby, Mary Accor of Kings Mountain and Ralph Gilbert of Lawndale - voted to table the matter until the next meeting. Commissioners Joe Cabaniss, Ray Thomas, Bobby Malloy and Chairman Jim Crawley voted to extend the option after the motion was made by Vice-Chairman Cabaniss.

The options on three tracts expire Feb. 12.

The options are held by the county on 328 acres northwest of Shelby owned by the Shelby Loan and Mortgage Corporation, 235 acres in Kings Mountain owned by the Grier Plonk family heirs and seven acres adjoining the Plonk tract owned by the Odessie McSwain family. The cost to extend the option on the Plonk property is \$15,000, the cost to extend the option on the Shelby Loan

See County, 9-A

Express Container to build near Grover

Kings Mountain will provide the water and sewer utilities to serve Express Container Corporation, a contract packager who plans to invest \$3 million in a new plant at the interchange of I-85 and N. C. 216 in Grover.

The Cleveland County Board of Commissioners, after a public hearing Tuesday night, gave the go-ahead to extend water and sewer lines to the new industrial site in keeping with state law and the county policies. The county's policy is to expend funds to make such extensions as long as the tax receipts from the industrial customer repay the cost within the first four tax years.

Steve Nye, executive director of the Cleveland County Economic Commission, and Steve Killian, Planning Director for the City of Kings Mountain, attended the public hearing. Nye said the estimated cost for the construction would be \$3,525 for 200 feet of sewer and

See Express, 9-A

KM bank president found shot in head

Brenda N. Lovelace, lending officer at First Carolina Federal Savings Bank and a veteran employee, was this week named the bank's acting president and chief executive officer in the absence of veteran bank president Gary Whitaker.

Whitaker, 49, of 2008 Eaves Rd., Shelby, was still critical and stable in the Neuro Progressive Unit at Carolinas Medical Center in Charlotte recovering

from a gunshot wound to the head.

Dr. John C. McGill, chairman of the bank's board of directors, said the board approved an interim reorganization of the bank's management in the absence of Whitaker who was found shot in his car in Grover Friday morning from what authorities are investigating as an apparent suicide attempt. "We deeply regret the circum-

stances under which we are making this appointment," McGill said.

"The Board of Directors is confident that Mrs. Lovelace and the bank's management team, who will assume some of her current responsibilities, will manage First Carolina successfully during this difficult period," he said.

Whitaker was elected to the board of directors in 1979 and

became the bank's president and chief executive officer in 1987.

"He has been a dedicated, loyal and trusted employee of First Carolina since 1977 and during his tenure the bank's total assets have grown from \$20 million to over \$100 million," said McGill.

McGill said Whitaker has

See Bank, 9-A

Kings Mountain People

Blanton keeps cops looking sharp

Marty Blanton has never worn a Cop's uniform.

But as Chief Bob Hayes' secretary, she makes sure the officers are outfitted properly.

"Good morning Chief Hayes' office" is the friendly greeting that a caller to the Police Department hears on any given day of the week.

If the caller is a city officer he may be looking for a tie or a shirt and Blanton helps with the selection.

"I worry about our officers and I consider all of them my extended family," she said.

Blanton joined KMPD August 25, 1977 as secretary to Chief J. D. Barrett and also served previously as secretary to Chief Warren Goforth.

In August she will celebrate 20 years in a profession that she loves but one in which she has seen many changes.

Marty's first desk was in the basement of the Police Department which was in 1977 the home of City Hall. The Police Department shared quarters with the Codes Office and a

small detective division, among others. The present Chief's Office on the first floor was the Mayor's office and Marty's present office belonged to the Mayor's secretary. The city utilities department and bookkeeping department was located in what is now the police records office. There were no computers and no high tech communications systems.

Blanton has mixed emotions about leaving the historical building when and if the city builds a new police department.

"This building has a lot of history and if it is torn down I want to salvage the cupola on top of the building for sentimental reasons," she says.

Computerization and new equipment revolutionized law enforcement and today the police force numbers 45, including reserve officers and school crossing guards. Veteran officer Bob Hayes became Chief of Police, Captain Richard Reynolds, formerly in the Detective Division for many years, is patrol commander and

Lt. Houston Corn is head of the detective division. New positions have included a school resource officer, a D. A. R. E. officer and a COPS program, among others.

Marty's responsibilities have included the paperwork for the new programs, correspondence and a DWI grant and much more.

A native of the Oak Grove Community, Blanton is the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Stokes Wright. She graduated from Kings Mountain High School in 1971 and learned her secretarial skills in Suzie Howard's Cooperative Office Practice Class. She worked in the Kings Mountain Hospital Business Office while in high school and later in several law offices in town and at Carolina Throwing.

Her activities have expanded to the four county Region C and she was runner-up secretary of the year in 1988 and has won the secretary of the year award locally five times, an honor voted by her co-workers. She won the civilian Top Gun



MARTY BLANTON

Award after scoring 100 on the police rifle range in a training program offered female employees by Sgt. Raymond Garris. Blanton completed Dan Stark's concealed weapons class. She keeps her Division Criminal Investigation certification to help out when needed in communications.

Marty is married to Jerry Blanton, manager of Shelby Paint Store. They have a daughter, Laura, and a son, Steven.

See Blanton, 3-A

P&Z Board to recommend White Oak Manor's plans

By a unanimous vote, the Kings Mountain Planning & Zoning Board Tuesday night gave the green light to White Oak Manor's revised plans for expansion.

The action means that the board will recommend to the January 28 meeting of City Council that the nursing home property on Sipes Street be rezoned from residential to conditional use.

"On January 29 we plan to move ahead with expansion of the facility by 60 beds," said retired city planner Gene White, who has worked with White Oak officials in a compromise agreement with the adjoining property owners.

Adjoining property owner Lou Ballew, a member of the planning board, called the decision a "landmark case." She said White Oak's is the first conditional use request to come before the board since the city adopted a new zoning ordinance.

"We have all worked together but every case that comes be-

fore us will be different," she said.

Landscape contractor Joe Champion will do the work and the adjoining property owners will select the buffer materials, shrubs and trees with the cost to be paid by White Oak Manor. The contract stipulates that the landscaping be completed by May 31 but that the completion date could be extended in event of inclement weather.

Codes Officer Jeff Putnam said no one had sent letters or called his office in opposition to the rezoning request. He said White Oak's revised site plan meets all the city's requirements outlined in the new ordinance and in most cases far exceeds the requirements.

Putnam said the minimum requirement for a vegetative buffer strip is 10 feet wide but that White Oak has agreed to a 14 feet wide buffer and in placing the vegetation and materials at the discretion of the property owners. Setback requirements for the proposed new building

See White Oak, 9-A

Indiana company eyes KM property

City officials say an Indiana company is eyeing property off Crocker Road to build manufactured homes that could employ up to 250 people.

City Planning Director Steve Killian said that Shelby realtor John Barker has submitted an application from Phillip R. Elam for rezoning from residential to light industry.

The 80 acres fronts 2000-plus feet on the East side of Crocker Road.

The Planning and Zoning Board will have the request on its February 18 agenda, said Killian.

City Council will have the item on the agenda for its January 28 meeting. It is customary for the City Council to refer zoning matters to the planning board for a recommendation and then set a public hearing at its February meeting.

See Zoning, 3-A



TERMINAL OPENING - Benton Express Inc. plans to open a terminal and new direct carrier service on York Road February 4. Steve Lemmons, terminal manager, who stands in front of the big rigs, is hiring local drivers.

Benton Express Inc. to open terminal in Kings Mountain

Benton Express Inc. will open its first terminal in the Carolinas at the old Fredrickson building on York Road February 3.

Steve Lemmons, terminal manager, is currently hiring drivers for direct runs to Charlotte, Monroe and Hickory and as far South as Greenville and Spartanburg, SC.

He expects to hire six local drivers immediately and to put on as many as 20 in the next 90 days. He is taking applications this week and putting the building in shape for a grand opening.

Formerly account executive for 10 1/2 years with Fredrickson before it closed its Kings Mountain operation two years ago, Benton is excited about the new trucking venture for Kings Mountain.

He was terminal manager for

Saia Motor Express in Hickory for 18 months before joining Fredrickson. For the past two years he has commuted from Kings Mountain to Hickory to work. His associate, Becky White, wife of city councilman Jerry White, will serve as office manager for the new Kings Mountain terminal.

The 36-door terminal sits on 12 acres of land which Benton Express, owned by Herb and Chip Matthews of Jacksonville, Fla., has an option to buy. The Matthews family will be in Kings Mountain for a barbecue officially opening the new business.

"I saw our neighbors Cleveland, Fredrickson and Sterling Equipment all close and I thought we have a lot of opportunity on this corner of

See Benton, 3-A