

Briefs

Barnes qualifies for Honors Choir

Troy Barnes, Kings Mountain High School senior, is one of five North Carolina choral students who has qualified for the 250-member National Honors Choir of the American Choral Director's Association.



Barnes, son of Reginald and Shirley Barnes, auditioned for the group by submitting a tape, "The Vagabond."

BARNES

Mountain students Ben Bumgardner and Josh Sellers, at the Southern Division meeting of the ACDA in Charleston, SC.

"This is a big honor for Troy and a big honor for the school," said choral director Gene Bumgardner. Mr. Bumgardner, music accompanist Sherrie Young, and Troy's father will attend the convention of the group in Chicago, Illinois and hear Troy sing.

A choral member for six years, Barnes plans to attend the University of North Carolina at Greensboro and major in music engineering. He has performed with the N.C. Honors Chorus for four years.

Margery Elledge wins scholarship



Margery Elledge of Kings Mountain recently accepted a scholarship to the University of Pacific to study for a master's degree in psychology.

ELLEDGE

A recent graduate of the University of North Carolina at Wilmington, she earned a B. A. degree in psychology.

Elledge will also have the opportunity to work in the Community Re-entry program during her study in Stockton, California. This facility helps provide life skills training to reduce dependence on institutionalized treatment and supervision for mentally disabled. *Margery is the daughter of Dwayne and Mary Pat Elledge of Kings Mountain.

Christian Womens Club to meet at Days Inn

The Shelby Christian Womens Club will meet Thursday, August 20 at 11:30 a.m. at the Days Inn in Shelby for a "Tea Party Luncheon."

Lucinda Causby will take participants for a browse through "The Silver Tea Pot" in Shelby.

Jamie Bumgardner will be brewing up lovely melodies, and stimulating words of en-

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couragement will be delivered by the speaker, Leslie Page of Franklin.

Reservations are essential and cancellations are necessary. Call Nina at 481-1617 or Lori at 484-3281. Complimentary nursery will be provided at Central Methodist Church.

Christian Womens Clubs are international non-denominational clubs without membership or dues. All women in the area are invited to attend.

Lake Commission reorganizes Thursday

Will the Moss Lake Commission recommend the city continue a late fee schedule or move to tear down piers on property where no lease application has been received?

That's the questions up for discussion at Thursday night's 7:30 p.m. meeting of the lake board at City Hall.

Secretary Steve Killian said the board is also expected to elect a chairman, vice-chairman and secretary for the new year which began July 1. The board is also expected to set the regular meeting date and time.

During its first year of operation Bill Johnson served as chairman and Mike Bolt was vice-chairman. The public is invited.

KM teacher attends seminar in Charlotte

Twenty-two of the state's top teachers are returning to their schools with fresh ideas gleaned from the business world, thanks to the North Carolina Center for the Advancement of Teaching in Cullowhee, the Lynnwood Foundation and William States Lee Leadership Institute of Charlotte, and Wachovia Bank, N.A.

The teachers, all teachers of the year from across the state, gathered at the White Oaks Conference Center in Charlotte for an NCCAT seminar, "Leadership, Creativity, and Change," which focused on keys to effective organizations and communities. Hilda Leonard, a teacher at West Elementary School and Kings Mountain's Teacher of the Year for 1997-98, was among the participants.

Grover parent wants better scores

Grover parent Terry Smith, concerned with the gap between test scores of Grover with other schools in the KM district, called on the KM Board of Education Monday night to give additional support through funding and resources to specifically prepare the staff at the elementary school.

"How do teachers at Grover maintain a high morale when they have a much larger task at hand and when their classes might be performing individually at exemplary level but do not receive a bonus because the whole school isn't ranked that way?" he asked.

Smith, father of two students at Grover School, said he is concerned that parents will become discouraged about test scores and move their children and that teachers might also take other employment.

"We need the proper resources to close this disparity among schools," he said.

Board member Melony Bolin asked Smith if he thought Grover was being slighted in resources but Smith said that was not his intention to leave that impression.

"I'm concerned about the ob-

vious difference in these end of test scores and what can we do at Grover to bring those scores up?" he asked.

"Your concerns are noted," said Chairman Ronnie Hawkins who suggested that Smith talk more with Principal Jackie Lavender. Supt. Dr. Bob McRae said that he planned to talk to parents about their concerns.

A statewide survey released last week by a UNC at Chapel Hill School of Education team showed half the teachers questioned in the state said they would consider changing schools if theirs was designated "low performing." Two-thirds said they had changed teaching strategies to prepare students specifically for the state tests and some give more tests, more worksheets and more lectures than they otherwise would. Sixty percent of teachers said students felt more anxiety about school because of the ABC program. Nearly 53 percent reported that their colleagues have developed more negative attitudes toward low-achieving students. Almost half said preparation for the tests and test-taking had decreased stu-

dents' love of learning.

Kings Mountain Assistant Superintendent for Public Instruction Jane King said that's not the case in Kings Mountain District Schools.

"We teach the state's Standard Course of Study, the teachers know what to teach and include in their lesson plans," said King. She said Four Blocks to Teach reading, writing and spelling were implemented this year and teachers involved in summer workshops began the year with a lesson plan.

"After we received the honor of School of Distinction last year we worked hard to improve and concentrated on the middle group of kids with the most potential for growth," said West School Principal Sherrill Toney. West School won the School of Excellence award this year, moving from 84 percent to 90.7 percent proficiency of students working on the grade level in grades 3-5.

During the normal school work days Toney said teachers teach the Standard Course of Study, teach test-taking skills and before the end of school tests talk to students about test terminology that they may not be familiar with.

Sure, teachers feel pressure and the kids are anxious but kids are anxious about any kind of test.

"Teachers are put under the gun on the ABC," admits Toney. "As educators we have to ask ourselves what these tests are actually measuring if a lot of teachers are spending half their class time having students practice for end of grade tests," he said.

But both Toney and Dr. King said Kings Mountain teachers are not in this category.

"There is pressure but if we instruct our teachers what to teach and they follow through the kids will be prepared for tests," said King.

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