

Sara Lee groundbreaking set for Friday

Groundbreaking for the Cleveland County Industrial Park's first tenant, Sara Lee Packaging and Distribution Center, will be held Friday at 11 a.m. at the park off Vestibule Church Road.

The Cleveland County Economic Development Commission is inviting the public to attend.

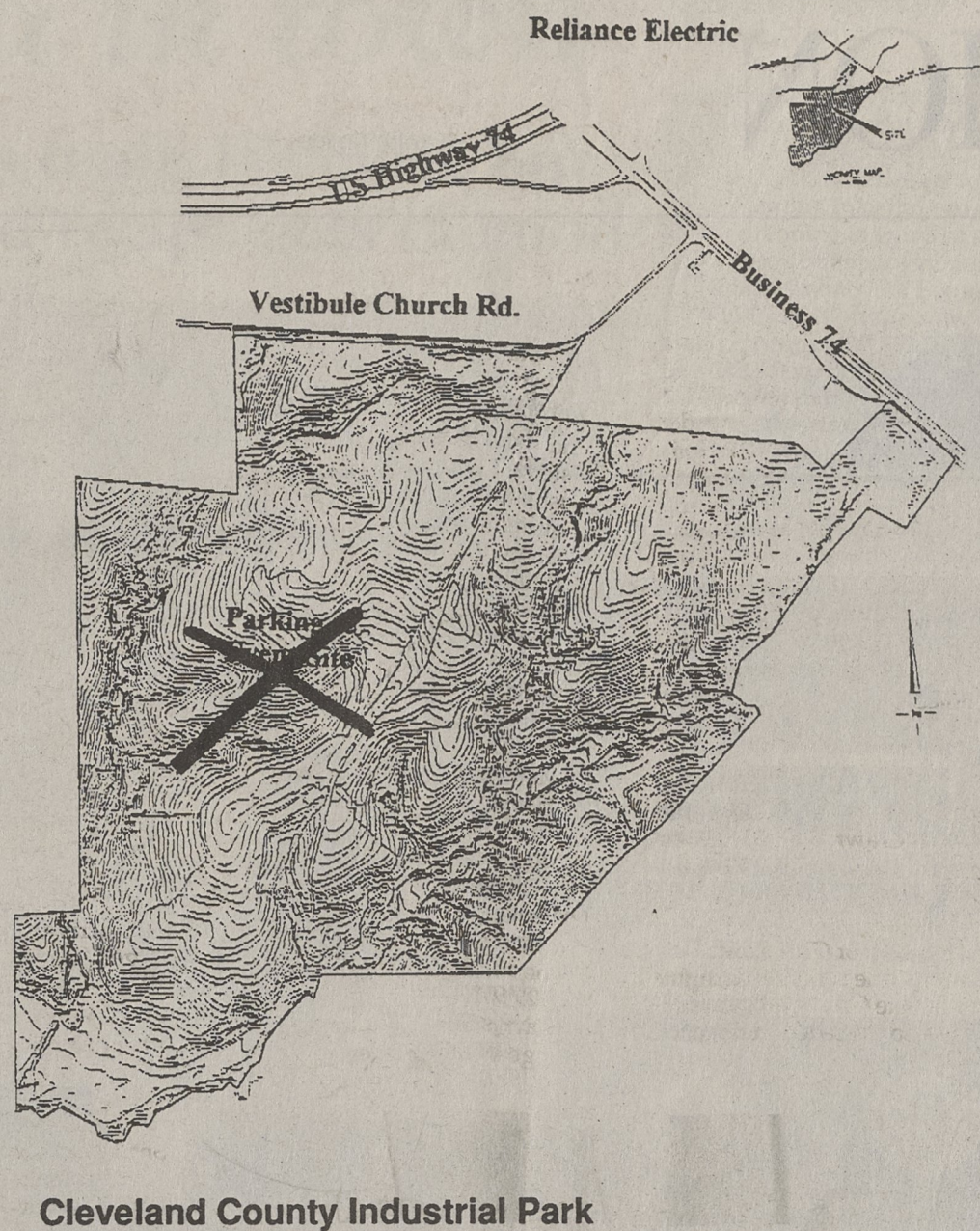
The new facility, a 370,000 square foot packaging and distribution center for its Bali Company, will consolidate the operations of two packaging and distribution centers now located in neighboring Gaston County. The new company is expected to create 100 new jobs with investment projected to be over \$12 million.

Bali employs 700 associates in its present facilities and does not expect any disruption in the present workforce. The company will continue to operate its 220,000 square foot facility on Canterbury Road in Kings Mountain.

New construction is expected to be completed in December.

The industrial park is located at the Waco exit of the Highway 74 bypass in Kings Mountain.

Sara Lee Intimate Apparel is a leading manufacturer and marketer of women's intimate apparel products through its Bali and Playtex companies.



Cleveland County Industrial Park

Public hearing set on KM annexation

City Council will conduct public hearing Tuesday at 7:30 p.m. on an annexation plan, one of its largest, to take in 714 people with assessed property value of nearly \$24 million.

The two tracts are Area F, 10.3 acres on the city's north-east side, and Area G, 2,318 acres on the southeast side.

By 5-1, Gene White voting against and Phil Hager absent, Council approved May 11 an annexation services plan. On April 27, Council unanimously approved a resolution of intent that set in motion a time line to complete the process to become effective June 30, 2000.

Recent state law that gives cities the leeway in providing sewer service was challenged by White at the May meeting. Under the agreement, the city would take care of all septic tanks in the annexed areas until the city has the money to put in a sewer line.

"I see this septic tank maintenance program as positive," said Mayor Scott Neisler who said the annexation plan assures the city growth in the fu-

ture. "Would you rather see Gastonia annex this area or Kings Mountain?" he asked.

White, the retired economic development director for the city, said the board's action would saddle future councils who at some time would have to put up upwards of \$2.5 million to run sewer lines to serve the areas.

Major industries to be annexed would be Cyprus Foote Mineral and the new Johnson Development Corporation off York Road.

Area G extends down to the old city water lake, Lake Montonia Road, Canterbury Road, Hilltop, Galilee Church Road, Hillway Drive and Gold Mine School Road in Cleveland/Gaston Counties.

Area F includes 10 acres in the Linwood Road area. In Area F the assessed value is \$853,100 with 39 people and 14 dwellings.

In Area G, assessed value is \$23.1 million with 672 people on 3.62 square miles, 242 dwellings, 27 establishments and 8.94 miles of streets.

Candidate filing begins July 2

A field of potential candidates are lining up for the seven council seats and mayor's seat up for grabs at city hall in November.

Former mayor Kyle Smith declared his intentions two weeks ago to seek the mayor's job but with filing only a few days away pollsters are saying that some newcomers may enter the political arena.

Mayor pro tem Norma Bridges, a veteran councilwoman,

said this week she is seriously considering offering for the mayor's job and Councilman Rick Murphrey has said in recent weeks that he plans to file for the post. Retired police chief Bob Hayes, a councilman serving his first term, says he is also considering running for mayor.

The rumor mill was grinding out the names of Chamber of Commerce executive Jay Rhodes and Harris Funeral

Home President John Harris as potential council candidates and Becky Cook was also mentioned as a possible candidate for Ward 4. First term Ward 4 councilman Gene White was rumored a potential candidate for an at-large seat.

Candidate filing opens July 2 at noon and closes August 6 at noon at the Cleveland County Board of Elections Office, Shelby, Monday through Friday, 8 a.m.-5 p.m. except July 5

when the office will close for the July 4th holiday. Filing fee is \$60 for mayor, \$35 for council.

Voters will elect a mayor and seven council members to a two year term in November.

Incumbent council members are Phil Hager, Ward 1; Jerry Mullinax, Ward 2; Clavon Kelly, Ward 3; Gene White, Ward 4; Rick Murphrey, Ward 5; and Bob Hayes and Norma Bridges, At-Large.

TERMS

From 1A

council will be working on a very tight schedule which could include several special meetings plus approval by the U. S. Justice Department between now and election day.

"Returning to a four year term would mean that council

seats would be staggered and every seat would not be open as it is currently," he said.

Neisler says he has always supported a four year term of office for elected city officials.

"I just hope that Council will support this idea and we can get to work immediately to place this question on the ballot for voters in November," he said this week.

GA may adjourn in mid-July

The buzz around the Legislative Building has the General Assembly adjourning by mid-July.

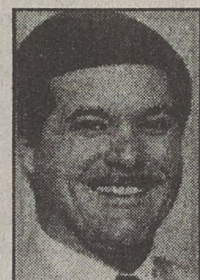
That's the way things were not too many years ago. Lawmakers finished their work by mid-July and had plenty of time for vacations with their families before school started in August.

In recent years, those July and August vacations became a memory. The 1997 session did not adjourn until August 28. Last year, lawmakers shattered all previous records and stayed in town until a few days before Halloween.

There are still many hurdles between lawmakers and a mid-July adjournment this year. Campaign finance reform and a bond bill for the state university system are just two of the contentious issues that must be debated.

But the budget-the biggest bill of every General Assembly session-is moving ahead of schedule. The House passed the \$13.5 billion spending plan on June 2. The Senate rolled out a similar budget bill two weeks later.

Andy Dedmon
North Carolina
House



The similarities between the House and the Senate budgets were intentional. Budget writing subcommittees worked closely together for months to narrow the differences between the two chambers. The idea was to reduce the amount of time needed for negotiators to work out a compromise.

House and Senate budget writers said the spending proposals were closer together than they have been in years.

"I don't think the budgets were this close even when Democrats controlled both chambers," said Rep. Ruth Easterling of Charlotte, a co-chair of the House Appropriations Committee. Democrats held a majority of

both the House and Senate until 1995. They regained control this year.

One of the Senate Appropriations co-chairs said the budgets were 85 percent in agreement. "There are some items in disagreement, but those are very, very few," Sen. Beverly Perdue told the Senate Appropriations Committee.

The House and Senate agreed on all of the big-ticket items.

Both included an average of 7.5 percent pay raise for teachers, the third phase of a four-year plan to bring them to the national average by next year. State employees would get a 3 percent raise under both budgets, and a one-time bonus of \$125.

Smart Start, Gov. Jim Hunt's program for pre-school children, would get \$58 million under both budgets.

And the Senate budget, like the House version, included few changes in state law connected with the budget. Welfare reform, increased criminal penalties and other non-budget issues have been wrapped up in the spending plan in past years, creating

more differences for House and Senate negotiators to resolve.

The similarity in the budgets sparked speculation that the General Assembly could adopt a 1999-2001 budget before July 1, the start of the new fiscal year. The last time that happened was 1985. Even then, lawmakers passed five supplemental budget bills after July 1. They finally adjourned on July 29.

CHARGE

From 1A

where he reportedly kidnapped a 16 year old Kings Mountain man and took his automobile. Police said McNeil held both hostages for a time, then released the men, and went back to the first car he had allegedly stolen. He was apprehended in that automobile around 5:20 am Tuesday morning.

McNeil is being held in the Cleveland County Jail under \$50,000 bond and is charged with kidnapping and possession of a firearm

MAYOR

From 1A

one person. My wish is that somehow I might have made a difference for the betterment of our community. Kings Mountain will always continue to flourish long after I have departed."

Said the mayor, "I have always been proud of our city because of its unique personality. It has given me great satisfaction representing Kings Mountain and watching her develop and grow into a city that

is second to none. There is no place like Kings Mountain with its quality of life. The future looks bright for us and I appreciate the confidence you had in me to take me along on this incredible ride for the past eight years."

Neisler stepped down from his city council seat in 1989 to run for mayor in 1990.

During his first term as mayor he promised to become the city's "cheerleader," remaining active throughout his tenure as a promoter of growth. In private life he said he would continue to push for the programs he pushed as an elected official.

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