

The Herald

KINGS MOUNTAIN

Thursday, December 2, 1999

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Since 1889

50 Cents

 KINGS MOUNTAIN
 100 S. HIGHLAND AVE.
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 KM swimmers encourage teammates in opening meet 10A



COMMUNITY

Schools negotiating land for new school

The Kings Mountain Board of Education authorized Supt. Bob McRae to negotiate a price for 58 acres of land near Kings Mountain Middle School where the system hopes to build a new 5-6 grade school. 2A

Committee to offer name for new gazebo

City Council Tuesday night approved a committee to recommend a name for the new gazebo in downtown Kings Mountain. 3A

KM Council may fund downtown mural

City Council Tuesday night moved forward with a plan to paint a mural in downtown Kings Mountain. There are some details to be worked out, but the board will probably take action on the matter at its December meeting. 7A

Local companies say they're ready for Y2K

Several local companies and government agencies held a Y2K seminar Tuesday afternoon at City Hall. All say Y2K will be business as usual. 11A

SPORTS

Fall sports awards given at KM High

Kings Mountain High's Booster Club honored fall sports athletes at a ceremony Monday night at B.N. Barnes Auditorium. 8A

PEOPLE

John Yarbro's 98, but still in charge

John Yarbro is 98 years old, but he still makes the rounds and calls the shots at his farm in the Bethlehem Community near Kings Mountain. 2B

POLICE

Undercover investigation results in 82 charges

Kings Mountain Police and the Cleveland County Sheriff's Department worked together on a six-month undercover drug operation which last week resulted in 82 charges against Cleveland County and area residents. 4B

Mountaineer Christmas at the downtown gazebo

- 5:00-6:00 - Melody Masters
- 6:00-6:30 - Opening ceremony
- 6:30-7:00 - Jim Belt
- 7:00-7:30 - Little Theatre
- 7:30-7:45 - Jim Belt
- 7:45-8:15 - Dance Magic

Merger forum Saturday at KMHS

By GARY STEWART
Editor of The Herald

An open forum to discuss the possible merger of the three Cleveland County school systems will be held Saturday at 7 p.m. at Kings Mountain High School. The forum is being sponsored by the Kings Mountain Citizens for Effective Government, with cooperation of the Kings Mountain PTOs.

The committee urges all interested citizens to attend. Members of the Kings Mountain School Board and Cleveland County Board of Commissioners have been invited and citizens will have an opportunity to voice their opinions and ask questions.

However, whether any County Commissioners attend is questionable right now. In conversations with The Herald, commissioners said they have not yet been formally informed of the meeting, and most of them indicated they probably won't attend.

Commissioner Willie McIntosh of Shelby said he has a previous commitment at the same time but hopes to make it to Kings Mountain for at least part of the meeting. Other commissioners say they have not yet begun their study of merger, and participating in any public meeting at this time would be premature.

"People are staking out positions and we don't even know what the position is going to be," said Commissioner Joe Hendrick. "We need to look at all the information available, then we'll listen to the folks that want to talk about it because that's what it's all about."

Commissioner Joe Cabaniss said he feels sure public hearings will be scheduled on the issue later, but added that any citizens wanting to voice opinions on the issue are welcome to attend County Commission meetings on the first and third Tuesdays of each month at 6:30 p.m. at the County Administration Building and sign up to speak.

"I don't have any feelings on it at this time," he said. "I feel like we need to take a good hard look at what's best for the schools and students. I think our children are the most important factor, and we need to do what's best for all of them."

Chairman Jim Crawley said it's doubtful Commissioners would take up the merger issue at next Tuesday's meeting. "It's not on our agenda, and we're not in a position to do anything yet," he said.

See Forum, 3A

Telephone numbers of Cleveland County Commissioners:

- James E. Crawley (Chm.) 482-2528
- Joe E. Cabaniss (Vice Chm.) 487-6900
- Joe Hendrick 482-4616
- Willie B. McIntosh Jr. 538-3768
- Charlie Harry 937-7434

Christmastime in the city



Kings Mountain is coming alive with the sound and sights of Christmas. The home of Grady and Katie Costner in the Midpines Community is one of many homes with unique Christmas decorations inside and out.

GARY STEWART / THE HERALD

Tree lighting ceremony kicks off Christmas in KM

BY ALAN HODGE
Staff Writer

The Yuletide season got under way in Kings Mountain Monday night with the ninth annual tree lighting celebration on the lawn of Mauney Memorial Library. Blending the sacred and secular, the gathering saw hundreds of kids young and old assemble in the chill evening air to enjoy carols, Christmas related scripture and poetry reading, and a spectacular appearance by Santa Claus.

"This is a special time," Kings Mountain mayor-elect Rick Murphrey told the throng. "The world is filled with a sense of loving and giving that should be shared throughout they year."

Murphrey went on to read passages of the Christmas story from St. Luke.

Entertainment at the tree lighting was provided by carolers from the preschool class at St. Matthew's Lutheran Church. The young singers were led by Nancy Smith who conducted the youngsters in several selections including "Silent Night," "Away in a Manger," and "Hark, the Herald Angels Sing."

Following the singing, mayor Scott Neisler shared one of his family traditions by reading "The Night Before Christmas" to everyone. "I've read this poem to my family every Christmas season for eighteen years," Neisler said. "It's important to sit down with your children and read things like this to them."

Though Santa has traditionally arrived at Mauney Library in

See Library, 3A

KM parade, downtown activities slated Saturday

A full day of activities including a parade, food, fellowship and entertainment is scheduled for Saturday in downtown Kings Mountain.

The parade, sponsored by the city, gets underway at 3:30 p.m. Winnie Robinson, widow of former Negro League baseball great Frazier "Slow" Robinson, will be the Grand Marshal.

The parade will begin at the corner of Battleground and Gold Streets, proceed up Battleground to King Street, turn right and disband at Kentucky Fried Chicken.

The parade will include 76 units, including five floats.

The fourth annual Mountaineer Christmas, sponsored by the Kings Mountain Business and Professional Association, will run throughout the day with most of the activities coming after the parade and continuing into the night at the new downtown gazebo.

Linda Allen and Kathy Neely of Ashley's Antiques are coordinating the KMBP events.

An old fashioned market, which will open at 9 a.m. on Railroad Avenue, will include crafts, baked goods and other items for sell. Food booths will be located on the street and other items will be sold inside Ashley's.

Immediately after the parade, citizens are urged to make their

See Parade, 3A

KM concerned with 911 response time

By GARY STEWART
Editor of The Herald

Some Kings Mountain city officials are concerned about the slow response time of Gaston County EMS into the Gaston County areas that are part of the city limits of Kings Mountain.

"Services in the Gaston County area of Kings Mountain are very much inadequate," Councilman Phil Hager told

City Council at Tuesday night's regular monthly meeting at City Hall.

Hager and other city officials and residents, including City Manager Jimmy Maney, Planning Director Steve Killian, and citizen Jim Belt, have been meeting with Gaston and Cleveland County officials to try to work out a solution.

According to Maney, a worker at a construction site last week was injured and it took

about 30 minutes for an ambulance to respond from Belmont because Gastonia and Bessemer City EMS crews were tied up with other calls.

Since Emergency Medical Services are operated by counties, Maney said Gaston and Cleveland County commissioners should come to an agreement to let Cleveland County EMS, which has a unit located in Kings Mountain, respond to Gaston County calls here.

Hager said Gaston County commissioners hadn't been aware of the problem until recently, "and they are very concerned about it."

"At least everyone is aware that there is a problem," Hager said. "Gaston County now has a system going on line to monitor their vehicles at all times. They're doing better training to make people aware of the roads coming into Kings Mountain."

Hager said, in some instances, Gaston County EMS must travel into Kings Mountain and back into Gaston County to get to a residence.

"They're going to monitor it for 90 days and see if they need to put another vehicle in Kings Mountain," Hager said.

Hager noted that with recent KM annexation that took in even more portions of Gaston County, it may be necessary for Gaston County to purchase a

See Council, 3A



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