

SCHOOL

From 1A

Contrary to what many people think, the supplemental tax is not used for the construction of new schools, but rather for salaries, utility bills, insurance, and other costs of running the schools on a day to day basis.

The money used to build new schools does not come directly from the supplemental tax, but is affected by it in a way known as "taxing effort." Money for new schools comes from the redistribution of state sales tax money.

Kings Mountain has plans for a new school for grades 5-6, but it's possible the building won't be constructed. According to the merger plan, all construction for new schools will be halted unless the school in question is approved by the Board of Commissioners. Commissioners did say, however, that Kings Mountain could continue with their plans and that the interim school board that will take power under a

merged system on July 1 could handle the situation.

"We've already made plans and purchased the property for the new school," said Kings Mountain school board member Melony Bolin.

Cost for a new school in Kings Mountain is expected to be between \$9 and \$10 million, according to superintendent Dr. Bob McRae. So far, Kings Mountain has gotten \$6.142 million from state bonds and \$2.5-\$3 million from the sales tax redistribution for the proposed school. About \$420,000 has been spent for the land on Phifer Road near Kings Mountain Middle School. About \$1 million more is needed to have all the money for the job.

What are the plans in Kings Mountain since merger could possibly prevent construction of the school? McRae and his staff are meeting with their architect and reviewing the draft of a plan for the school regardless of what the commissioners or an interim board does.

"We are going ahead with our plans until we are told to stop," McRae said.

Though as not well known as his civic endeavors, Smith's greatest legacy may be the quiet way he went about helping other people who had cancer.

"Anytime he heard about anyone that had cancer he would make a quiet phone call and say, 'I'm here if you want to know anything about cancer, or just to talk,'" said Joni. "That was kind of his ministry. He touched so many lives."

Smith was instrumental in forming the local Prostate Cancer Support Group which met monthly at Kings Mountain Hospital. He and Ruby Alexander were co-Grand Marshals of Kings Mountain's first Cancer Relay for Life two years ago.

Smith had been battling cancer for almost eight years, and his daughter said he fought it to the end.

"He was at work last week," Joni said. "He was going out to lunch with everybody. I don't think there was a minute of his life that he didn't live."

Joni said it was a blessing that her father died at home the place he wanted to be.

"He was here with the one woman that he adored more than anything else in this world," she said. "He was with his Nancy, and that's just where he wanted to be."

"He did so much for this town and the people of this town," she added. "It was such an honor to have been his child."

Joni, too, recognized her father's courage in the face of death.

"Anytime someone would ask him 'how are you doing,' he would say, 'the best you ever saw.' And that's the truth," she said.

His friends and those who knew him as a Kings Mountain advocate, would agree. They know they've lost one of the best.

SMITH

From 1A

Mountain Business and Professional Association and the building of the downtown gazebo park.

Kathy Neely, who along with Linda Allen had the idea to form the association, said the group always looked to Smith for advice.

"He always knew the right thing to do and the right person to call," she said. "Anytime we had a question we would call on Joe. It's going to be hard to do without him."

"He was definitely the pillar of our organization," she added. "I think that he was extremely proud of the progress that we've made. I'm glad that he was here when we were able to finish the gazebo. It was his idea to make that corner (West Gold and Railroad Avenue) into some kind of park. As far as the association is concerned, that will always be Joe Smith's park no matter what they name it."

Neely said Smith taught her, and others, a valuable lesson in courage.

"This is a tremendous loss," she said. "He was there every step of the way for us. Even through his illness he never demonstrated any type of pain or suffering to us. His strength every day was beyond belief."

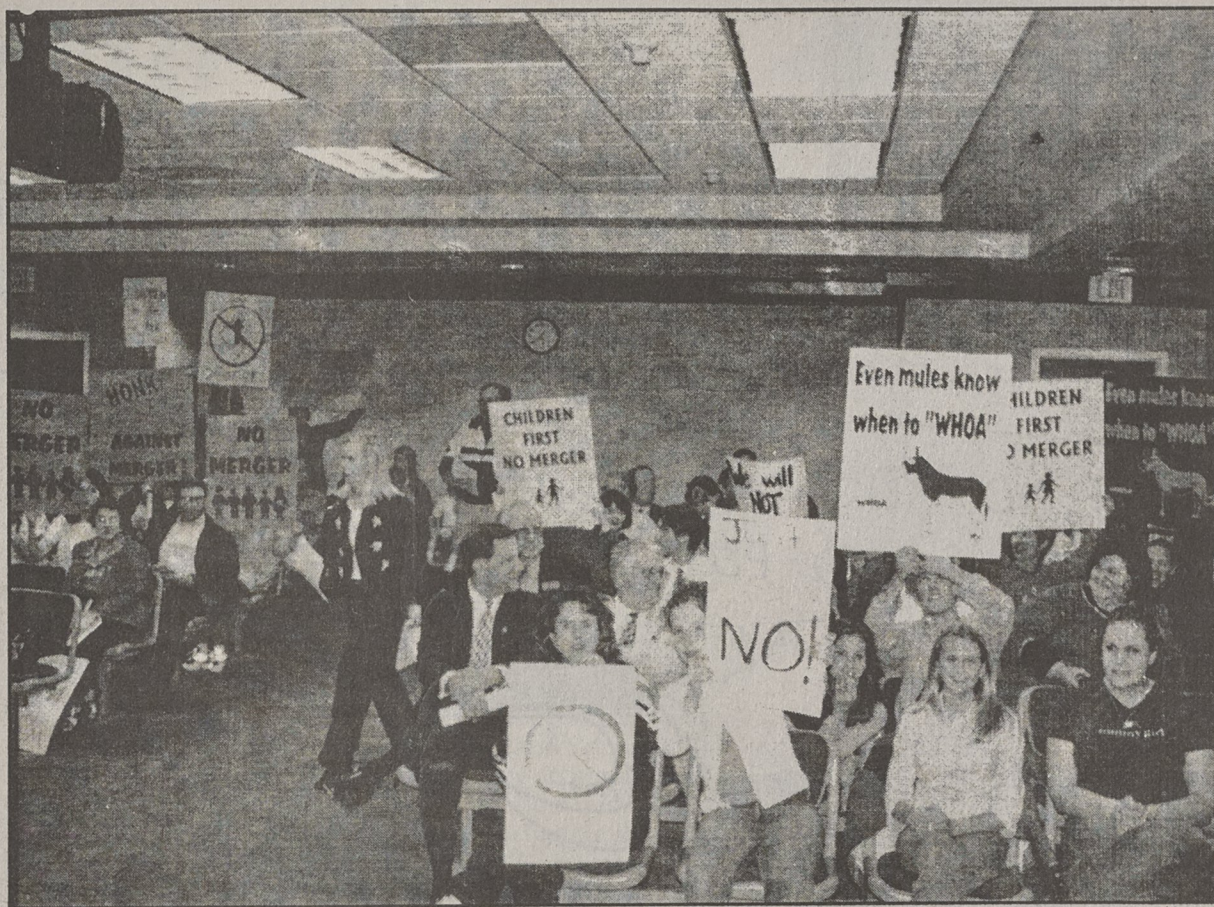
That courage was also noted by Jay Rhodes, one of Smith's fellow Rotarians and Director of the Kings Mountain Branch of the Cleveland Chamber of Commerce. Despite the pain associated with cancer, Rhodes said Smith always had a positive outlook.

"I found Joe Smith to be a man of God, who was very pro Kings Mountain and sought out avenues to improve our community," Rhodes said.

Kings Mountain Weather Report

(Compiled by Kenneth Kitzmiller)

| | March 29-Apr. 4 | Yr. Ago |
|---------------|-----------------|-----------|
| Total precip. | .56 | 1.01 |
| Max. 1 day | .38 (2nd) | 1.01 (31) |
| Year to date | 13.65 | 8.82 |
| Min. temp. | 35 (4th) | 38 (31st) |
| Max. temp. | 75 (2nd, 3rd) | 86 (4th) |
| Avg. temp. | 60.3 | 65.6 |



ALAN HODGE/THE HERALD
It was standing room only Tuesday night when the Cleveland County Board of Commissioners voted to go ahead with school merger. The proceedings were emotional and interrupted several times by outbursts from the crowd.

MERGER

From 1A

er because they are scared of losing their money power base in Shelby. I find this entire affair amazing."

Though merger to this point has caused more bruised feelings and egos than an angry mule kick, those wounds must heal and the nuts and bolts of getting the plan ironed out taken care of.

Details of the deal include: an interim school board made up of nine members- two each from the current school boards and three new members from anywhere in the county; no tampering with student assignments for school year 2000-2001; grandfathering of 11th and 12 graders at current high schools; staggered elections for permanent board seats beginning in November 2001 when the three at-large interim members seats will be up for grabs, then November 2002 when three of the current school board members on the interim board will go up for votes, then November 2003 when the remaining three interim seats will be up for reelection. The new system will be called Cleveland County Schools. The new board will be named the Cleveland County Board of Education.

Other elements of the plan include freezing construction of new schools in the county- with the exception of the Springmore School. Planning work on the new grade 5-6 school in Kings Mountain was also spared. The interim board will have responsibility beginning in September to report on the progress made by lower achieving students in the county. The current school supplement tax will also be replaced with a base 13 cents per

\$100 education tax which could be raised if need be. The disposition of current school system employees was also taken into consideration Tuesday night. According to the accepted merger draft, all employees of the separate systems would become employees of the new merged system until reassigned. Contracts in place with employees would remain in effect but could not be renewed or extended.

Once the details of the merger draft had been presented and approved by the commissioners, the public was given a chance to express their opinion on the subject- and express it they did. For over one hour citizen after citizen railed at commissioners over their decision. Ron Humphries of Kings Mountain deliver a rousing, stump-pulling speech in which he invoked our nation's founding fathers and the Constitution. Ninth-grader Elizabeth Logan of Kings Mountain High School took commissioners to task and said merger would destroy her school. Gene White predicted that the bitterness caused by merger would "last for years."

Only one person commended the commissioners on their voting. Tom Brooks of Kings Mountain said he "took his hat off to the commissioners for giving this county direction."

Now that the draft proposal for merger is a done deal, all eyes will be watching the calendar for the April 18 public hearing. The event is scheduled to take place at 6 p.m. on that day at either Malcolm Brown Auditorium or the auditorium at Cleveland Community College. Once the last voice from the populace is heard that evening, commissioners can vote to send the draft to the State Board of Education for final approval and enactment into law. When the gavel strikes that evening, many expect it to be the death knell for schools as Cleveland County has known them for decades.

Special Achievement Awards will go to KMHS teams that won championships in the Southwestern 3A and/or in higher levels of competition. Those include:
 ■ The 1999 KMHS men's track team, which won the SWC and Western North Carolina championships and finished second in the state 3A championship.
 ■ The 1999 KMHS women's volleyball team, which won the SWC title and was Western N.C. runner-up.
 ■ The 1999 KMHS women's soccer team, which won the SWC championship in their first year playing the sport.

■ The 2000 KMHS men's wrestling team, which won the SWC regular season and tournament championship.
 ■ The 2000 KMHS men's swim team, which won the SWC championship.

In addition, four deserving KMHS student athletes will receive \$500 college scholarships. Two of the scholarships will be given by the Hall of Fame Committee. Two will be given in memory of Alfred "Duck" Phillips by the KMHS Booster Club and Phillips' widow, Anita.

HALL

From 1A

head wrestling coach at KMHS. Prior to that he organized the successful wrestling program at Kings Mountain Junior High. He had an overall record of 200-48-2.

Layton played football, baseball and basketball at KMHS from 1955-58. He was Honorable Mention All-State in football and played in the North-South All-Star basketball game his senior year. He went on to play baseball and football at The Citadel, helping the Bulldogs win Southern Conference championships in both sports.

Special Recognition Awards will go to present and former KMHS athletes who won State championships during the past year, including:
 ■ Anthony Hillman, the school's all-time leading rusher and scorer in football and State 3A wrestling champion.
 ■ Kareem Marshall, former KMHS athlete who won both the Shot Put and Discus in the 1999 State 3A track championship.

■ Matt Ash, KMHS junior who won the 2000 State 3A wrestling championship.

DAVID GARRISON SR. KINGS MOUNTAIN - David Douglas Garrison Sr., 76, 130 Gunsmoke Trail, died April 4, 2000 in Bessemer City.

A native of Gaston County, he was the son of the late Geneva O'Daniel Gladden and Gus Garrison. He was a machine shop foreman and a World War II Army veteran. He was retired from Wallace Machine Shop, Bellview, NJ after 26 years of service.

He was married to the late Eva E. Garrison.

He is survived by his sons, Mark S. Garrison of Gastonia, Roger Hawkins of Wilmington, and Lynn Hawkins of Topeka, KS; daughters and sons-in-law, Judy and Jerry Jones of Lebanon, MO, Terry and Don Lassen of Lawrence, KS, Tracy and Jeff Crisp of Bessemer City, and Kelly Garrison of Kings Mountain; sister, Violet Lowery of Bessemer City; 15 grandchildren and seven great-grandchildren.

A graveside service will be conducted by the Rev. Jerry Millwood at 4 p.m. Friday at Gaston Memorial Park.

The family will receive friends from 6-8 p.m. Thursday at Sisk-Butler Funeral Home, Bessemer City.

Memorials may be made to Hospice of Cleveland County, 951 Wendover Heights Drive, Shelby, NC 28150.

Sisk-Butler Funeral Home, Bessemer City, is in charge of arrangements.

Career fair set Thursday at CCC

Two career fairs will be held Thursday at Cleveland Community College.

Workforce 2000, a career awareness fair for seventh grade students, will be held from 8:30-2:30 p.m.

JobLine 2000, a job fair for anyone seeking employment, will be held from 2-8 p.m.

Area businesses will have representatives on hand to speak to anyone seeking summer, part-time and full-time jobs.

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 Gary Stewart.....Editor
 Alan Hodge.....Staff Writer
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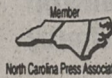
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