

The Herald

Thursday, June 29, 2000

Vol. 112 No. 26

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INSIDE COMMUNITY

Fourth of July blast Tuesday

Kings Mountain's annual Fourth of July celebration will be held Tuesday beginning at 3 p.m. on the Deal Street ball fields behind the YMCA. 5A

Curbside collection begins on July 10

Kings Mountain City Council Tuesday night took the final official steps to begin a new curbside garbage collection system. Service will begin the week of July 10. 3A

New Senior Center going out to bids

The Kings Mountain Senior Center Advisory Committee looked at update architectural plans in a meeting Tuesday, and expects to see the project go out to bid in July. 4B

Relay for Life kicks off drive

The annual Kings Mountain Relay for Life, set for this fall, was kicked off at a meeting Monday night at City Hall. 12A

INSIDE SPORTS

Hollifield joins Kannapolis staff



A.L. Brown High School in Kannapolis. 6A

KM baseball team in state tournament

The Kings Mountain 8-year-old Dixie Youth All-Stars won the District 3 Tournament in Bessemer City last week and will compete in the State Tournament July 1-3 in Riegelwood. 6A

Cool Cookout race at Lowe's Speedway

The top Hav-A-Tampa dirt track drivers in the world - including Kings Mountain's own Freddy Smith - will compete in the first annual One Cool Cookout race July 2-3 at Lowe's Motor Speedway in Charlotte. 7A

Herald closed on July Fourth

The Herald business offices will be closed on Tuesday, July 4. Deadline for Lifestyles news is Friday at 5 p.m. Deadline for all other news and opinions is 5 p.m. Monday. The office will reopen Wednesday at 8 a.m.

Making the Connection



Workers for Crowder Construction Company lay casings in place to carry new 36" water lines across Muddy Fork Creek.

New section of KM water line to go into place July 4th week

By GARY STEWART
Editor of The Herald

The first phase of a mammoth project to replace the water lines from Moss Lake to the City of Kings Mountain will take place next week. Approximately 3,600 feet of 36" line will be tied into the system from the T.J. Ellison Water Plant at Moss Lake to Muddy Fork Creek. The project will begin at 6 a.m. Wednesday, July 5 and continue through midnight Friday, July 7. During that period, city officials are asking all Kings Mountain water cus-

tomers to conserve water and refrain from watering lawns and washing cars.

Also, the DOT will close Oak Grove Road from Tom's Family Mart to New Camp Creek Church Road. Only local traffic will be allowed on the road, and no traffic will be allowed from Muddy Fork to New Camp Creek Church Road.

A portion of the road will be completely torn up in order to tie in the new 36" line to the existing 24" inch line.

See Water, 3A

Justice Dept. KM's last hope to stop merger

Injunction requests denied in Raleigh, Shelby

By GARY STEWART
Editor of The Herald

In the wake of the most recently judge's decision in Cleveland County Court Tuesday afternoon, Kings Mountain School Board members may be holding their final meeting Thursday at 4 p.m. at Central School.

The planned merger of the Kings Mountain, Shelby and Cleveland County Schools is slated to take effect at midnight Friday, provided it is pre-cleared by the U.S. Justice Department.

At least one member of the Kings Mountain School Board, Ronnie Hawkins, said it's time to give up the fight and work toward making the new Cleveland County School System the best it can be, but others say they are not giving up the fight "until we can't fight any longer."

Board members Stella Putnam and Melony Bolin said following Judge Noble's Tuesday decision to deny a KMDS injunction request that they aren't giving up.

"I realize we are at the 11th hour, and I realize that we need to come together July 1 if the merger goes through and do what's in the best interest of students, but prior to that I believe we have to do what our citi-

zens feel is in the best interest of our students and that is to fight until we can fight no longer," Bolin said.

"I'm not a quitter," Putnam said, "I had a bad day Tuesday, but I'm, not terminated until July 1."

Judge Noble noted Tuesday that there are legal appeals that can be made, but he did not feel irreparable harm would be caused Gaston County students through a merger, and that he didn't feel Kings Mountain District Schools could win its case in court.

The ruling came on the heels of a Monday decision by Administrative Law Judge Morrison in Wake County, who ruled that the Cleveland County Commissioners' merger plan and the State Board of Education approval of it were legal.

Kings Mountain School Board had earlier instructed its attorneys, Richard Schwartz and Brian Shaw, to do "whatever is necessary" to halt the merger, so there could be appeals filed before Friday midnight.

However, with the timing of the whole issue, school board members doubt anything can be done to stop the merger train unless the Justice Department refuses to approve it under the Voting Rights Act of 1965.

See Merger, 9A

South Carolina video poker to play its final hand Friday

By ALAN HODGE
Staff Writer

Video poker in South Carolina will play its last hand at midnight Friday when state law requires all machines to be turned off. The industry had provided 10,400 full-time jobs to South Carolina and saw gamers spend \$2.767 billion there in 1999.

Not only must the 22,000 poker machines currently in operation in South Carolina be unplugged by Friday night, they must be out of the state in no more than eight days. Each video poker machine is estimated to have brought in an average of \$23,727 profit during 1999-after payouts, but before subtraction of business expenses.

The video poker industry has been a part of South Carolina life for quite a while. Last year, the number of video poker machines peaked at 37,000. The amount of money spent in those machines was \$3.3 billion. In mid-1999, South Carolina was fourth in the nation in the number of gambling devices. The only states outranking it were Nevada, New Jersey, and Mississippi.

See Video, 9A

KM is updating game ordinance

By GARY STEWART
Editor of The Herald

With the video poker industry in South Carolina closing down at midnight Friday, Kings Mountain's Planning and Zoning Board is moving quickly to draft an ordinance to regulate amusement games in the city.

Although the ordinance won't be in effect by Saturday, the board has come up with a rough draft and an official document could come before the City Council by its July 27 meeting.

P&Z Board Chairman Jim Belt has called for a special work session for Tuesday, July 11 at 5:30 p.m. to discuss the issue, along with numerous other rezoning matters.

In fact, Belt said, the board's agenda is so heavy right now it's likely there could be a special work session every month until the fall.

See Zoning, 9A

Grab 'N Go

With gas prices soaring, stations on lookout for thieves

By ALAN HODGE
Staff Writer

Why pay for what you can steal. That's the philosophy more and more drivers are taking since the price of gasoline went sky-high.

Higher gasoline prices have become a way of life nationwide. The Midwest has been especially hard hit. The price of a gallon of regular gas was \$2.13 in Chicago, \$2.03 in Detroit, and \$2.01 in Milwaukee last week. Gasoline prices in Charlotte were averaging \$1.51.

The overall average nationwide price is \$1.68 per gallon.

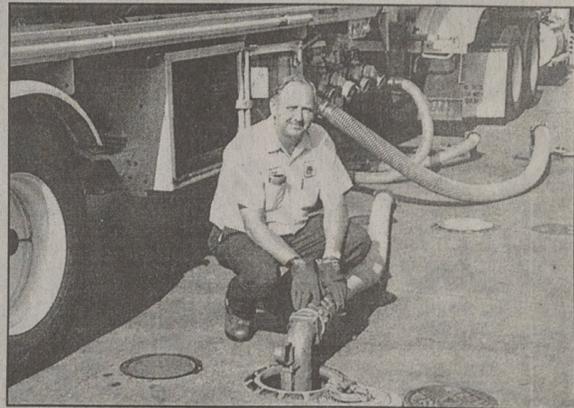
Gas prices in Kings Mountain are between the Charlotte and national averages. Prices for a self serve gallon at Lil' Dan's at Highway 161 and I-85 are \$1.79 for premium, \$1.69 for mid-grade, and \$1.59 for regular. Silver Express on King Street is selling their fuel for \$1.49 regular, \$1.59 mid-grade, and \$1.69 high test. Parker's Amoco on Shelby Road has prices of \$1.49 regular, \$1.59 mid-grade, and \$1.69 premium. The Texaco on the corner of Kings Street and

York Road had their pumps set at \$1.46 for regular, \$1.56 for mid-grade, and \$1.66 for premium. All prices were on Friday.

Debbie Dover at Lil' Dan's on Battleground Avenue says she is constantly asked about gas prices by customers.

"People are asking us when the price is going to come down," Dover said. "We don't know the answer either. I would like to see it drop too. It takes a bigger bite out of our checkbook to buy a tanker load

See Gas, 3A



ALAN HODGE/THE HERALD Gasoline tanker driver Roger McSwain was making another delivery in Kings Mountain recently. McSwain says wherever he goes, people ask when the price of gas will be coming down.



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