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Thursday, October 19, 2000

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GARY STEWART / THE HERALD
 Lynn Welborn address Planning and Zoning Board at Tuesday's meeting at City Hall.

Countryside residents said Council 'arbitrarily' rezoned land industrial

Tracts were listed residential on ETJ maps sent from P&Z Board

By GARY STEWART
 Editor of The Herald

While walking his dog recently, Countryside Road resident Lynn Welborn made a startling discovery. He learned that land near his home which he and his neighbors thought had been zoned by the City of Kings Mountain as residential, had in fact been zoned for Light Industry.

After a marathon 3 1/2-hour session by the Planning and Zoning Board Tuesday night at City Hall, the Board recommended that the city take another look at the issue.

The area in question, which includes two tracts of land owned by the Elam and Plonk families totalling almost 200 acres that an unnamed industry is looking to locate on, was listed as Residential-10 on the recent ETJ zoning map sent from

the P&Z Board to City Council.

But, sometime between the P&Z action and last month's City Council meeting, someone requested that the city change the zoning to L-1.

Council did, without any prior notification to adjoining property owners, and that's what prompted Welborn and his neighbors to come out in force Tuesday night to protest the way the matter was handled.

Welborn said when he walked his dog that day he saw some men out in a pasture taking soil samples. When he inquired what they were doing, he was told they were "taking soil samples for an industrial building."

"We had been told this was R-10," Welborn said. "We knew nothing about any impending change. All of the maps in the newspaper and all of the letters

the city sent property owners said it was R-10."

Members of the P&Z Board had requested more information about the intended use of the land and its impact on adjoining property, the environment and infrastructure, but said they had not received that information at the time the proposed zoning maps had to be sent to Council. They also stressed that their Board only makes recommendations, and Council has the final authority on zoning matters.

Many members of the Board said the industry looking at the site would provide from 150 to 400 jobs, invest \$25 to \$30 million, would be environmentally clean, and would be a great asset to the area, but they did not know the name of the industry.

That, also, drew the ire of residents.

"If this is so great, why is it

such a big secret?" asked Welborn and many of his neighbors.

But the bottom line, they stressed, is that the proposed industry is not the problem. Most of them said they were not opposed to industry. The problem, they said, is that the city failed to notify them of the impending action.

"You have an obligation to inform citizens when something like this is taking place," said Kings Mountain School Board member Ronnie Hawkins, who lives on Countryside. "In the last month or so someone has arbitrarily placed their finger on the zoning map and said 'I want this changed to Light Industry.' You're not doing your job when you arbitrarily allow changes without citizen input."

Citizens stressed that such an

See Zoning 6A

OCTOBERFEST 2000

Downtown KM activities feature entertainment, battle of bands

BY ALAN HODGE
 Staff Writer

A lively and eclectic blend of entertainment and activity will be coming to Kings Mountain when "Octoberfest 2000" gets underway this week. Scheduled to run from 5 p.m. Thursday, October 19 until 11 p.m. Saturday, October 21, Octoberfest 2000 will keep the town hopping with music and more.

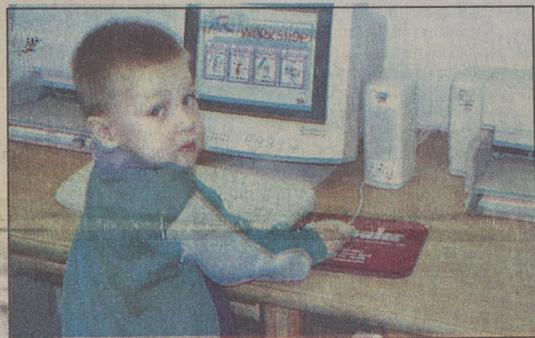
The sounds of Crimson Rose will kick the weekend off Thursday afternoon when they perform at the "KM @ PM" concert, downtown at Patriots Park beginning at 5 p.m. The show will wrap up at 8 p.m.

A talented group of musicians consisting of Kim Truelove, Debbie Terry, Rick Terry, Ronnie Whisnant, Kathy White and Danny Bridges, Crimson Rose plays a variety of tunes with energy and style.

Next on the Octoberfest 2000 menu will be a "Fireworks Extravaganza" after the Kings Mountain High School football game Friday night. Sponsored by the City of Kings Mountain, the fireworks will go off behind Barnes Stadium at KMHS.

October 21 has been dubbed "Xtreme Saturday" in Kings Mountain. Octoberfest 2000 events slated for that day will

See Saturday 6A



Even if he's just two years old, Casey Black is learning how to operate the computers in the new Harris Children's Wing at Mauney Memorial Library.

Man found dead at KMH may have been Grover burglar

Kings Mountain Police and the Cleveland County Sheriff's Department are investigating the possibility that a man found dead on the grounds of Kings Mountain Hospital Saturday was involved in an earlier burglary attempt in Grover.

According to the Sheriff's Department, it received a call at 4:06 a.m. about an attempted burglary at the home of Alan Skidmore, 132 Buren Drive, Grover. Skidmore told officers he was awakened by the sound of someone banging on his front door and the sound of someone breaking into his residence through a window. Skidmore told deputies he fired shots at the suspect coming through the window, and thought that he hit the suspect. He said the suspects fled the scene in an older model blue car.

At 5:40 a.m., a security guard at Kings Mountain Hospital reportedly found Fledell Alvin Glover, 110 Velvet Drive, Kings Mountain, lying in a semi-fetal position near the front entrance at the hospital. The guard notified Kings Mountain Police. The man was pronounced dead by a hospital doctor.

Lt. Derek Johnson of the Kings Mountain Police said an autopsy was performed Sunday morning in Chapel Hill, and officers are awaiting the results. But, he said, it appeared the man was shot by a handgun in

See Hospital 6A



The new \$600,000 Harris Children's Wing at Mauney Memorial Library in Kings Mountain will be officially dedicated Saturday at 10 a.m.

Harris Children's Wing to be dedicated Saturday

BY ALAN HODGE
 Staff Writer

Saturday, October 21 at 10 a.m. will be a date long remembered by patrons and supporters of Mauney Memorial Library in Kings Mountain. That day will see the official dedication of a dream come true - the Harris Children's Wing.

"The dedication will mark a milestone in the development of library services for children in Kings Mountain and Cleveland County," said head librarian Rose Turner. "It will celebrate the commitment of the citizens of Kings Mountain to the intellectual development of children."

In actual use now since its

July 4th opening, the Harris Children's Wing is 4,516 total square feet of bright and airy space. This in marked contrast to the cramped and convoluted arrangement that had for many years characterized the juvenile literature section of the library. Time to build the addition was 18 months at a cost of around \$600,000.

One of the primary driving forces behind the new wing is the Harris family. Harris Funeral Home is located next door to the library.

"I lost my grandparents and father in a short period of time during 1996," said John O. Harris III. "In early 1997, the library committee approached

See Library 6A

Armed robbery reported Monday at Ramada Ltd.

Kings Mountain Police are investigating an armed robbery that occurred late Monday night at the Ramada Ltd. near I-85.

According to Det. Lisa Proctor, a black man entered the front entrance of the hotel at 11:20 p.m., displayed a long gun (possibly a shotgun), and demanded money from two clerks. No injuries were reported.

According to Proctor, the man told the two female clerks to go into another room and "wait

See Robbery 6A



CLARY



HORN



DEDMON



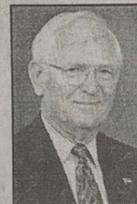
DAVIS

House candidates list priorities

(Second in a three-week series of the important local races in the November 7 general election. This week: State House District 48. Next week: Cleveland County Board of Commissioners).

By GARY STEWART
 Editor of The Herald

Education, the needs of a growing elderly population, state spending and re-districting are some of the top priorities of the six Cleveland County men and women who are running for three seats in the November 7 NC State House



WEATHERLY



GREENE

District 48 race.

Incumbents Debbie Clary, Andy Dedmon and Jim Horn are facing a challenge from former NC legislators Dennis Davis and John Weatherly, and

former Cleveland County School Board member Connie Goforth-Greene.

Greene, Horn and Davis list education as their top priorities. Health insurance and drug costs are most important to Dedmon. The state budget is Weatherly's major concern, and improving the quality of life for the elderly is most important to Clary.

The Herald asked each candidate to list his or her top two priorities:

(Republicans)
 Dennis Davis:
 #1 - Education.

He said many people, including major universities, are questioning the validity of the state's ABC testing plan and are suggesting that the state would be better off to use a more standardized national test, "which would give us more comparable results with other states." Davis said critics feel that North Carolina "is judging ourselves against ourselves...and that those instruments are not well constructed and do not adequately reflect the educational progress we are making."

Davis, a teacher at Crest

See Election, 3A



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