

RECOUNT

From 1A

to create the need for a recount."

Moore also said that he felt Gore was "pushing the envelope" with the scope of the hand recount. Even so, Moore remained optimistic about the eventual outcome.

"When it all shakes down," He said. "Bush will be our man."

On the other side of the fence, Cleveland County Democratic

Party leader Betsy Wells was "very excited" about the closeness of the election.

"It was good to see so many people come out and vote," she said.

Wells said she was concerned about the fact that different types of ballots were used in Florida. A point that may have added to the initial confusion.

"This is not a crisis," Wells said. We are just working through the election process. I want to see every vote counted and then let the chips fall where they may." Wells

also felt that it was ironic that George W. Bush's brother Jeb is the governor of Florida.

"I bet he never expected such scrutiny of his state's election process," said Wells.

Veteran politician and Cleveland County commissioner Joe Cabiness was another observer who felt that the recount of Florida votes should continue. In contrast to that opinion were the thoughts of Charlie Blanton of Kings Mountain, Blanton's daughter Donna Blanton is an assistant for the Florida Secretary of State.

"They should follow the Secretary's ruling and stop the recount," Blanton said. "Bush should win."

HAWKINS

From 1A

and know what's going on."

The Board has several options in naming a replacement. It can name someone Thursday night; it can accept letters or word-of-mouth nominations from the public; or it can interview interested persons for the position.

The only requirement is that the appointee live inside the Kings Mountain School District but outside the city limits of Kings Mountain.

In the past, Kings Mountain has appointed the person who received the next highest number of votes in the election, and it has also used the interview process.

The appointee would serve the remainder of Hawkins' term, which ends next

December. The two outside city seats held by Hawkins and Dr. Allen, and the at-large seat held by Melonie Bolin, will be up for election next November.

"Our tentative plan is to try to get someone identified for that board seat in December and have them sworn in in January," Allen said.

Then, the Board will probably begin discussing ways to replace Dr. McRae. His replacement could hinge on how the merger issue plays out in the court system.

The county's merger plan states that none of the three existing school systems can make administrative appointment without approval of the interim school board. However, since the merger is tied up in court there is some confusion as to whether the interim board officially exists.

"Our attorneys indicate that the actions by the court puts everything on hold," Allen said, "so that lifts that requirement (of the interim board approving administrative appointments)."

Kings Mountain could also opt for an interim superintendent

until the merger matter is settled.

"I'm torn between being happy and being sad," said Hawkins, who has been on the Board for over 11 years and served as chairman for six years. "I'm happy to be elected a county commissioner but I'm sad because I'm not going to be a hands-on participant in the school system."

"A lot of decisions that have been made this year have actually been forced on us because of the merger issue," he added. "I never would have considered myself as a candidate for the county commission before this came up. I've always wanted to be a member of the school board. But after the merger issue came up I was trying to look at what we could do from both sides, whether it was merged or not."

"At the time we were having to file for county commission, we were getting beat up pretty bad in the courts, so I thought at that time if I still wanted to be a supporter of the school system and the children of Cleveland County I needed to try to be elected to the county commission and be a champion of the schools. Even though I won't be on the school board I will continue to try to get the children the best education they can get and try to see to it that they are being educated in a safe and secure facility."

In other matters Thursday, the School Board will receive a NC Win Fast Start Award in recognition of being one of the first 10 school systems to enroll 100 or more employees in NC Win; hear a proposal from the Kings Mountain Sports Hall of Fame to name the KMHS gym in honor of Coach Don Parker; and consider a resolution in support of including classified employees in the group eligible for ABC's bonuses from the State.

SCHOOL

From 1A

later meeting in December."

The three newly-elected Commissioners from Kings Mountain - Ronnie Hawkins, Mary Accor and Tommy Bridges - say they will do all they can to make sure Kings Mountain gets the funds to build the school.

"I hate to say things on the spur of the moment," said Accor, who is principal of Bethware School. "I'd like to read it and understand the plan in its entirety, but from what I know of the plan I wouldn't have a problem with it."

"I sure support it," says Bridges, a former KM School Board member. "Just on the surface I would have to make sure we have the money first. If we have the money, I'd do it."

Hawkins said he sees no problem with the county giving Kings Mountain some money out of its \$3.2 million school facility reserve fund, and/or also backing a loan for the system.

"The county has a reserve fund that they can loan Kings

Mountain against the sales tax distribution so we can build the school and not have to skip on it," he said. "This is the first school Kings Mountain has built in many years. The school is going to be an asset for the whole county, not just Kings Mountain. If we can find a way to loan the money or assure the loan from a lending institution, we should do it."

McRae said School Boards cannot borrow money, so KMDS is asking the county board to either give them some money that could be paid back through future distribution funds, or use the county's loan capacity to float a bond of enough money.

"We know the county commissioners have a capital reserve fund which must be used for school construction, and we would certainly entertain some consideration of some of that money," McRae said. "But in all fairness they need to keep some of that to cover emergencies. Also, the larger amount of that money is going to pay back the late 1980s bond issue and they can't give it all. And the other systems need some funds as well."

Could something like the Florida situation and its confusion over vote validity happen locally? Cleveland County Board of Elections supervisor Debra Blanton says that the process used to tally votes in this county are very thorough.

"The election night votes are compared three days later to a second set brought in by the chief judge of each precinct," Blanton said. "We then review the numbers."

The section of the North Carolina General Statutes that Blanton uses as a rulebook has over 300 pages devoted just to elections. Cleveland County follows the state guide lines.

"I know several election supervisors in Florida," Blanton said. "I can tell you that just before an election, there simply isn't time for fraudulent activity, it's just too busy."

VETERANS

From 1A

to be caretaker of the monument.

Following the ceremony downtown, a parade was held to Mountain View Cemetery and the section for veterans there. Led by a police escort, the marchers made their way to the sound of drums played by Jor-el Caraballo and Joel Santora of the Kings Mountain High School marching band.

At the cemetery, dozens of American flags on the graves of veterans fluttered in the cool autumn breeze. Gathering around the Veterans Memorial at Mountain View, participants heard from Claude Pearson, 23rd District State Commander of the American Legion.

"What is a veteran," Pearson said. "A veteran is a soldier and a savior. We served because we knew it was the right thing to do."

Kings Mountain city manager Jimmy Maney was also among the dignitaries who spoke. For his part, Maney delivered a moving prayer for remembrance of veterans.

"They came from every color and every race," Maney said. "All came together so we can exercise our freedom."

Part of the ceremony also included the presentation of a new America flag to the City of Kings Mountain to replace the current one flying in Mountain View. The flag was given by American Legion Post 155 commander Rick Wallace.

Ending the day on a solemn note, Paul Fulton played "Taps" on his trumpet. As the last notes were carried away on the breeze, many of those in attendance seemed lost in thoughts of veterans living and dead who had each given a part of themselves in defense of our nation.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
Scott Neisler took his antique steam engine to Grover during the recent NC Senate campaign. He ground grits and cornmeal and donated all the cornmeal for the Grover Womens Club's annual pinto bean supper, which was attended by 180 people. Neisler is pictured with Edith Morgan, Womens Club Vice-President.

ComScope asks for water line for proposed plant near KM

BY ALAN HODGE
 Staff Writer

Good news came to Kings Mountain Tuesday morning when the Cleveland County Board of Commissioners got a request from Cleveland County Economic Development director Steve Nye for four public hearings on economic incentives to new and expanding businesses.

Nye characterized the economic growth in Cleveland County as "a monsoon." Three of the public hearings approved by commissioners will take place on November 28 at 9 a.m. Chairman Jim Crawley and commissioner Willie McIntosh were absent.

On the schedule will be Hickory-based ComScope who

KM's Alan Gibson wins Ashbrook race

Kings Mountain's Alan Gibson finished first in the inaugural Ashbrook Open Invitational cross country race Tuesday.

Gibson ran the new 3.1 mile course around Ashbrook High School athletic facilities in 18 minutes, 42 seconds. It was the first race on the course.

Runners from KM, Ashbrook, South Point and Forestview competed in the event.

KMPD receives grant for new equipment

Kings Mountain police chief Houston Corn recently confirmed that his department has received a Local Law Enforcement Block Grant totaling \$26,468. The award from the state was \$23,821 and the City of Kings Mountain added \$2,647 to the grand total.

According to Chief Corn, the money will be used to purchase new walkie-talkies, at least three more in-car video cameras, and a totally new recording system for headquarters. The new recording equipment dates back several decades. A new setup will cost about \$15,000 but will give police enhanced ability to monitor calls and radio transmissions.

The grant amount was based on crime statistics and rates.

is seeking a new waterline to its scheduled \$30 million building on Countryside Road near Kings Mountain. The requested line will be 3400 feet of 12-inch pipe at a cost of \$170,000.

ComScope wants to start production at the new plant by April 1, 2001.

Also on the agenda will be a request by Copeland Corp. for a grant to invest \$17 million in new facilities.

The third item on the plate will be a proposed adjustment to the inducement policy so firms can seek more than one program at a time.

Nye also requested a public hearing on November 30 at 9 a.m. to go over incentive grants for a new non-manufacturing project west of Shelby that he said would bring 500 jobs and a \$50 million investment. The name of the company has not been released.

Following a closed session to discuss a legal matter connected with the hospital, commissioners voted to accept an amended lease between Cleveland County, Charlotte Mecklenburg Hospital Authority and Cleveland Memorial Hospital. A key change from the previous lease includes Cleveland Memorial Hospital getting permission from the County before incurring any new major debt. According to County Attorney Julian Wray, the new lease was strongly suggested by the Local Government Commission and will help the hospital obtain bonds for expansion.

In an effort to begin upgrading information accessibility at the Register of Deeds office, county manager Lane Alexander brought forth the proposal that an amendment be made to the budget to put up \$3,180 each month for lease of new computer equipment and software for that department. Alexander said that over 700,000 microfilms at the Register of Deeds would be converted to PC capability by the new equipment.

"The software will streamline access to the records there," Alexander said. "Seventeen oth-

er counties already use it."

In addition to converting the records, citizens would be able to pull up information on their home computers. Later, birth and death records could be added to the on-line system. Alexander estimated that by having the company that will supply the equipment do the transition rather than county employees, it could save \$100,000. All commissioners present voted for the changeover and lease.

Not on the agenda, but on the minds of at least a couple of folks who attended Tuesday's meeting was last week's preliminary go ahead vote by commissioners to purchase a .95 acre plot of land on Campbell Street behind the County Administration Building for \$250,000. The lot could be used for parking and the sale is contingent upon receipt of a letter from the State of North Carolina that no environmental testing has to be done.

The question some had was the value of the property and the fact that it is owned by commissioner Charlie Harry's daughter and son in law Loyd B. Smith, Jr. and Robin H. Smith.

County tax records indicate that the land has a value of \$135,787 with \$96,972 in improvements for a total of \$232,759. The improvements are in the form of seven older homes on the lot. The difference between the tax value and the asking price is \$17,241.

"It is not untypical to ask more for a property than the tax value," Alexander said.

Commissioner Harry said several weeks ago that he did not want to be part of the final vote on the issue.

"I know there are some suspicions, but it's an absolutely clean thing," Harry said. "The reason I don't want to vote on it is because I don't want there to even be a perceived conflict."

Harry was absent when last week's vote was taken to move ahead with securing the property was taken.

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