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Thursday, February 15, 2001 Vol. 113 No. 07 Since 1889 50 Cents

3 to be inducted into KM Hall of Fame

Two longtime supporters of Kings Mountain High athletics and one of the school's all-time great female athletes will be inducted into the Kings Mountain Sports Hall of Fame at the 14th annual induction ceremony Tuesday, April 17 at Kings Mountain High School.

This year's honorees are Delbert Dixon and Gary Stewart of Kings Mountain and Judy Medlin Champion of Monroe.

Dixon has been an avid supporter of Mountaineer football since the 1950s. He helped B.S. "Sonny" Peeler film KMHS football games for several years, and then became the score clock operator for 43 years, tracing back to the time that the team's very first score clock was installed at the old City Stadium.

As a newspaperman, Stewart has been covering sports in Kings Mountain since 1964, most of that time as sports editor/editor of the Kings Mountain Herald. He is also one of the original founders of the Kings Mountain Sports Hall of Fame.

Judy Medlin Champion was a basketball star for the Lady Mountaineers from 1956-59. She scored 1,028 career points and had a career scoring average of 18.4 points per game. Her senior year she scored 501 points in 20 games (25.1 average) and scored a school record 55 points in a single game. She is retired from the Union County School System.

Another highlight of the Hall of Fame ceremony will be the dedication of the KMHS gym in honor of retired coach Donald L. Parker. Parker, who now lives in Tennessee, was KMHS basketball coach from 1943-1967 and compiled a career won-lost record of 247-139. Many of Coach Parker's former players will be returning to Kings Mountain to take part in the event, and Kings Mountain school officials will participate in the dedication ceremony.

The banquet gets under way at 6 p.m. in the school cafeteria. The induction ceremony follows at B.N. Barnes Auditorium.

Tickets are \$10 each and cover the meal as well as the induction and dedication ceremonies. They may be purchased at McGinnis Department Store, Linwood Restaurant, The Herald and from any member of the Hall of Fame committee.

Hillway Drive resident found stabbed to death

Kings Mountain police are investigating the death of a Kings Mountain man who was found dead of a stab wound early Monday morning.

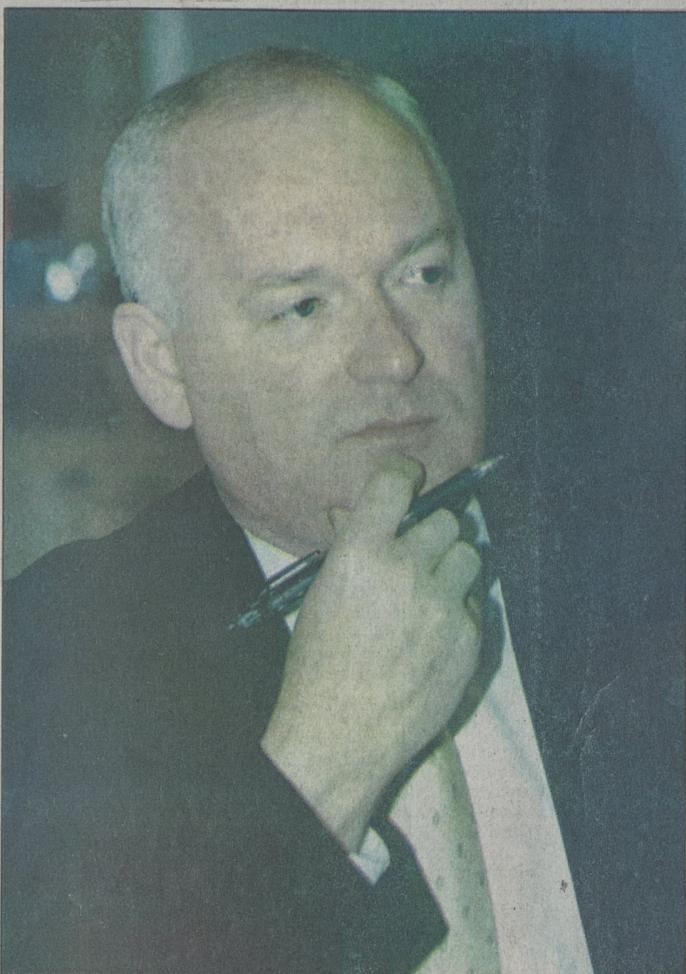
Police answered a 2:40 a.m. call to 218 Hillway Drive, where they found the body of Rickie Lee Moore, 22.

An autopsy was performed on the body Monday at Gaston Memorial Hospital, confirming that Moore died of a single stab wound.

According to police, Moore's cousin and housemate, Tommy Lee Moore, discovered the body and called 911.

Det. Lisa Proctor is heading the investigation for KM Police, and said they hope to be able to close the case soon.

"Right now we're trying to track down the information," she said. "We're getting a lot of information and we're just trying to cipher it all."



GARY STEWART / THE HERALD
 County Commissioner Ronnie Hawkins of Kings Mountain listens intently as the commissioners and the county's three school board discuss alternatives to merger at Saturday morning meeting in Shelby.

Boards attempt to work out merger solution

By GARY STEWART
 Editor of The Herald

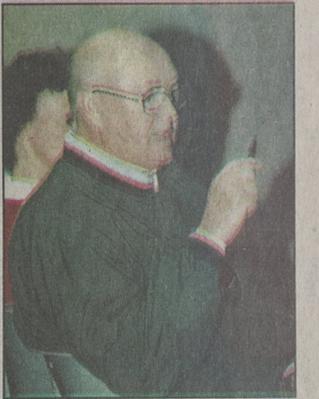
Kings Mountain, Shelby and Cleveland County school officials will be busy between now and next Tuesday night's meeting of the Cleveland County Board of Commissioners.

The commissioners and school systems are trying to see if they can put together a proposal for area State legislators to introduce a special bill to repeal the State Board of Education's approval of the merger plan.

In a special meeting between the commissioners and three boards on Saturday morning at the County Administrative Building, Commission Chairman Willie McIntosh asked County Manager Lane Alexander and the superintendents of the three school systems to come up with a plan regarding equitable funding of the three systems and a review of attendance lines every five years; and asked representatives of the three Boards of Education to work on a redistricting plan that would place more students into the Shelby district.

If those groups can put together proposals that everyone can agree on, the commissioners will ask the local Legislative delegation to take the matter to Raleigh.

In a meeting last Wednesday night at the Kings Mountain Teacher Center, the Cleveland County Board's Attorney, Michael Crowell of Tharrington Smith, LLP of Raleigh, pointed out several op-



GARY STEWART / HERALD
 George Litton of the Cleveland County School Board makes a statement at Saturday's meeting.

tions the systems could take as an alternate to merger, but short of it being ruled on in the court system most of the options would require action by the General Assembly.

The Shelby School Board dropped a bombshell on the marathon 2 1/2-hour meeting when, near the end, its Chairman Dr. Jack Hamrick read a prepared statement which more or less imposed a deadline for settling the matter or Shelby would have no alternative but to support the merger.

See Merger, 3A



ALAN HODGE/THE HERALD
 Joe Sox, superintendent of Crowders Mountain State Park, points out some interesting vegetation on Juniper Ridge. The land Sox and a group of hikers walked Sunday is part of a new wilderness area that encompasses over 2,000 acres.

Making the Connection

Hikers find out how tough park to park trail can be

BY ALAN HODGE
 Staff Writer

As rugged and beautiful as it gets. That's a good way to describe the new connector land between Crowders Mountain State Park and Kings Mountain National Military and State parks.

A hardy group of hikers got a chance Sunday morning to find out just how unspoiled the Juniper Ridge section of the land is when they took part in a two-hour trek led by Crowders Mountain park superintendent Joe Sox.

One of the dozen or so hikers

who joined in the trail breaking included Leroy Mercer of Gastonia.

"I've always been interested in nature," Mercer said. "So the connector trail is especially exciting. It's wonderful to have that much natural area so close by."

The section of trail that Sox took hike participants across is totally unmarked and relatively untouched. Large boulder formations, briars, underbrush, fallen logs and steep hillsides make it something that only the fit should attempt. Total new area added to Crowders Mountain by the connector land

is 2,061 acres. The ridge line itself is 12 to 13 miles long and extends from Crowders Mountain to the South Carolina State line.

"We own the whole ridge," Sox said.

Even though the area is a challenge to hike, the rewards for those who make the effort are great. At frequent intervals during Sunday's hike, Sox stopped and pointed out unusual plant species. Just a few of these were ground juniper and turkey's beard.

Other plants included yucca,

See Hike, 3A

What Gap?

Whites, Blacks in Kings Mountain performing close to the same level

BY ALAN HODGE
 Staff Writer

Depending on how you look at the numbers, there might or might not be an achievement gap between white and black students in Kings Mountain District Schools.

That's how John Goforth, Executive Director of Instruction and Curriculum describes the diverging and converging lines on a series of charts tracking the percentage of students proficient in reading and math over a five year period in different grades in Kings Mountain. The charts showed both individual schools as well as proficiency percentages systemwide.

"Individual schools in individual years can have situations

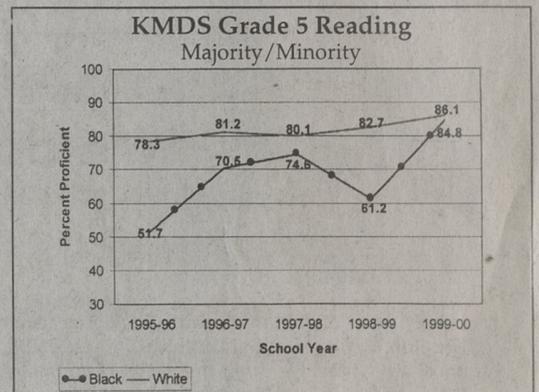
which might skew the percentage of proficient students," said Goforth. "It's more accurate to look at the long term scores for the entire system to see if an achievement gap exists and how much it might be."

Goforth said that according to statisticians, the larger the sample, the more accurate the data. Also, if the scores between white and black students were not widely divergent, then perhaps a gap didn't exist at all.

"Some statisticians say that if two numbers are within 10 percent of each other, then there's no gap," he said.

According to the charts Goforth has in his "Closing the Gap 2000-2001 Task Force" notebook, some proficiency

See Gap, 10A



The Kings Mountain District Schools have compiled a series of charts that track the percent of white and black students who are at grade level proficiency in reading and math. As this chart shows, fifth graders of both races in Kings Mountain are currently performing at very close levels in reading skills.



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