

# The Herald

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## In like a lion

High winds Tuesday morning put this huge oak tree on the home of Tommy and Marcella Morrow of Kings Mountain. The Morrows were asleep in their bedroom when the tree came crashing through the ceiling.

GARY STEWART / THE HERALD



## Strong March wind uproots tree, damages home in Kings Mountain

By GARY STEWART and ALAN HODGE

While some Kings Mountain area residents were greeted early Tuesday morning with a dusting of snow, others saw the sound of a huge oak tree come in like a roaring lion.

Tommy and Marcella Morrow of Shelby Road were awakened by the crashing sound of a huge oak tree which did considerable damage to the outside of their home and inside the bedroom in which they were sleeping.

The Morrows had gone back to bed at 10 a.m. for their usual

mid-morning nap. About the time they dozed off, the tree came crashing through the ceiling.

"It didn't take long to get out," Mr. Morrow said. "I didn't know if a plane had hit the house or what. It shook the whole house."

The Morrows' insurance agent was quickly on the scene, and an adjuster was scheduled to be there later in the day to assess the damage. A big portion of the ceiling was caved in.

Kim Crowe and Terry Mizelle were in the living room at the opposite end of the house and they, too, feared the worst.

"The whole house just shook," Crowe said. "We thought it might be a wreck," Mizelle added. "There's wrecks happening out there on the highway (U.S. 74 Business) all the time."

Mizelle said the wind had been howling all morning, and she had looked out a back window on one earlier occasion to see how severely it was blowing.

"It sounded like something rumbling," she said.

Morrow said the oak tree was large when he moved into the house 25 years ago.

"There are several more out

there that need to come down," he said, "but not the way that one did."

The Morrows had already begun moving everything out of the bedroom so the adjuster could get a good look at the damage.

"We'll get someone to do the carpenter work," he said. "There's just not much we can do until the adjuster comes. But the tree needs to be taken down and a tarp put up to keep the weather out."

The gusts that caused the trees to topple were part of a

See Wind, 3A

## Tuesday wreck fatal to student Sharon Ellis, 17

By GARY STEWART Editor of The Herald

A 17-year-old Kings Mountain High School senior died Tuesday following a 6:06 p.m. traffic accident at the intersection of Tracy Street and U.S. 74 Business.

Police reports indicated that Sharon Elizabeth Ellis ran the stop sign at the intersection and was struck by two other vehicles. She was transported to Cleveland Memorial Hospital, where she was pronounced dead.

Police Chief Houston Corn said a report filed by Cpl. M.T. Dellinger, investigating officer, indicated that Ellis ran the stop sign and was struck in the left side by a vehicle that was traveling west on Highway 74. That spun the Ellis vehicle around and into the eastbound lane, and she was struck by another vehicle traveling east. The drivers of the other vehicles were treated at Kings Mountain Hospital and Cleveland Regional Medical Center, and released.

KMHS students were informed of the tragedy upon their arrival to school on Wednesday morning, and counselors and teachers were available to help them deal with their grief. Fellow seniors from her first period English class decorated their lockers and made a banner, and decorated

Sharon's desk. Her picture was placed on her desk and will remain there the rest of the school year.

"Sharon was a sweet young lady," said Assistant Principal Dianna Bridges. "She always took her time to speak and say hello. She was involved in her Senior Project and had put a lot of time and energy into it. She loved children, and that was what her Senior Project was about. The first period English class was where they did their Senior Project, and when you go through that project you bond."

Sharon's P.E. teacher, Tony Leigh, echoed Bridges' statement.

"She was a very likable young lady," he said. "She always wanted to come up and talk to you. She had injured her arm at McDonalds a couple of weeks ago and we'd talk about it every day. She was always talking, always laughing, always going on with everybody."

"She was a fine student and a very fine person," he added. "I've already had some students come by that are pretty upset."

Principal John Yarbrow said the students appear to be dealing well with "a tragic situation." He said he witnessed Sharon's first period English class Wednesday morning and her

See Student, 11A

## City takes no action on utility reduction

By ALAN HODGE Staff Writer

The Kings Mountain Utilities Committee met Monday afternoon and voted 2-1 to recommend to City Council that no action be taken in response to a letter from Spectrum Dyed Yarns and Anvil Knitwear requesting a lower natural gas rate.

The companies said in the letter dated February 22 they would move forward with building their own gas pipeline if the City didn't provide a

written definitive plan by March 16" to their inquiry for a lower rate.

The two firms are the largest users of natural gas in Kings Mountain. They currently receive the city's "interruptible" rate, the lowest charged, and represent 35 percent of the city's gas load. In 2000, Anvil paid Kings Mountain about \$1.5 million for gas and Spectrum approximately \$1.4 million.

Speaking at the Utilities Committee meeting, city man-

See Utilities, 11A

## Body found under Interstate 85 bridge

By GARY STEWART Editor of The Herald

A homeless man found dead underneath the I-85/Dixon School Road bridge Monday morning apparently died of natural causes.

Det. Billy Benton of the Cleveland County Sheriff's Department said an inmate helping Department of Transportation crews pick up trash and litter around the bridge found the body of Marlin Edward Blume, 60, about 10:30 a.m.

Authorities believe Blume was just passing through the area and was not known by anyone here. He had ID and medical papers on his person linking him to several states, including Minnesota, California, Arizona and South Carolina.

"We're trying to notify these places where he had ID in his

pocket," Benton said. "All of them were like social agencies. We're attempting to find some type of address. He didn't have a firm address for notifying any next of kin."

"That's why we went ahead and released his name. Hopefully somebody will read the name that will know him and point us in the direction to find some kinfolk. We usually do not release the name until we notify the next of kin, but in this case we had no choice."

Blume's body was taken to Gaston Memorial Hospital for an autopsy, but Benton said it appears he died of natural causes.

"When we pulled him out from under the bridge he didn't have any apparent trauma," Benton said. "Just based on the appearance of the body, he

See Body, 3A



GARY STEWART / THE HERALD  
 Paul Cash, left, and Billy Benton of the Cleveland County Sheriff's Department work Monday at the I-85/Dixon School Road bridge where the body of a homeless man was found.

## Grover supports CC branch library

By ALAN HODGE Staff Writer

Lovers of books in Grover got a big boost at Monday's town council meeting when unanimous approval was given to adopt a Resolution of Intent to provide support and at least some funding for the proposed Southern Extension of the Cleveland County Library.

The letter will be presented to the Cleveland County Board of Commissioners at their March 20 meeting. Grover officials have already said they would provide sewer, water, and trash pickup for the new library when it is built. The motion adopted Monday will add cash to the pot.

The amount of that annual cash stipend was at the heart of the discussion. After a bit of debate on just how much Grover could afford, it was decided

that an initial figure of \$2,500 was appropriate - with the note that the figure could be adjusted as future town budgets permitted.

Also on Monday's agenda was the appointment of a council member to fill the seat vacated last election when current mayor Bill Favell took office. The new council member will serve until the upcoming election in November. When the question of a possible candidate was brought up, council member Jack Herndon was quick with an answer.

"I talked to John Harry and he said he would be available for the position," said Herndon. "I feel like he would do a good job."

Grover mayor pro-tem Max Rollins agreed with Herndon. "He would be an excellent

See Grover, 3A



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