

The Herald

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Anvil to close KM plant next year

Anvil Knitwear, Inc. announced today that, beginning in late 2002, operations at its Kings Mountain facility will be relocated to and consolidated with the Company's operations in Asheville, and the Kings Mountain facility will be closed.

The complete relocation is expected to take approximately 18 months.

A substantial number of employees at the Kings Mountain operation are expected to be offered transfers to Asheville. The Company currently employs approximately 400 at the Kings Mountain plant.

The company is developing an incentive bonus program for those employees who do not transfer and remain through the transition period.

Employees of the Kings Mountain plant were reportedly given letters explaining the company's plans to close the plant.

The letter indicated that the Kings Mountain plant will close its dye house and finishing departments in January 2003, and that the knitting department will continue to operate until around September 2003.

No other details were available at The Herald's press time.



GARY STEWART / THE HERALD
 Stephanie Wilson and her 10-month-old son, Eli, took advantage of Tuesday's 78-degree temperature to take a stroll at Jake Early Memorial Park. The spring-like temperatures of Tuesday and Wednesday will give way to more normal conditions by the weekend. The weatherman says highs will be in the 50s.

KM Hospital to open merger talk with CRMC

By BEN LEDBETTER
 Staff Writer

Merger is now back at the front of the Kings Mountain landscape.

During the Kings Mountain Hospital Board of Directors annual meeting Wednesday morning, the board approved the recommendations of the hospital's Trustee Advisory Council to open talks with Cleveland Regional Medical Center in Shelby about merger.

"This is an exciting possibility," Trustee Advisory Council Chairman J.C. Bridges said. "We go into this process committed to a strong and growing Kings Mountain health care presence."

But while he saw it as exciting, Bridges said no action has been taken yet.

"Nothing has been done. It is all to be studied," Bridges said.

The possibility of merging with Cleveland Regional, which is part of Carolinas HealthCare System with Kings Mountain, was part of the approved strategic plan. It was a second option in the hospital's quest to answer several financial questions.

The first option was to look for additional funding from CHS.

But after meeting with CHS President and CEO Dr. Harry Nurkin, Bridges and board member Scott Neisler said getting the additional money would not be possible.

Nurkin, who was also on the KMH board, recently resigned, according to KM Hospital CEO Hank Neal.

In a letter to Bridges, Nurkin said CHS does not have a legal obligation to give additional funds to Kings Mountain Hospital.

Dr. A.R. Gangoo, current head of the hospital's medical staff, had addressed

the issue of the health care chain's obligations during the meeting.

"Given the financial prosperity of CHS in the last year and prior years, such a commitment will not pose undue financial strain on CHS," Gangoo said. "On the contrary, not helping KMH at the time it has the potential to flourish, would amount to abandoning the hospital and the community."

Both Bridges and Neisler said they thought their meeting with Nurkin went well, and they understood his point of view.

"I felt like we had an excellent meeting," Bridges said. "They have other hospitals in the area they need to help."

While Kings Mountain Hospital will not see any additional money from Charlotte, Neisler said he felt Nurkin wanted to hand them a check. He also said while the health care chain has been doing well financially, a majority of funds goes for other purposes.

"Most of that is placed back into the indebtedness of the system," Neisler said.

Trying to recover 25 percent of patients that are seeking health care in Gaston County would also be one way a merger could help the system, Neisler said.

The nearest hospital in Gaston County is Gaston Memorial, which is owned by CaroMont. The health care company also operates a family practice clinic in Kings Mountain.

Competing with Gaston concerned Dr. Everette Thombs.

"Do you tear down one county to build up another?" he asked.

Harrison "Hack" Trammell, Chairman of the board, said the hospital would not

See Merger, 5A

Seniors speak out at legislative lunch

By BEN LEDBETTER
 Staff Writer

During the annual legislative luncheon Friday at the Patrick Senior Center, senior citizens were given a chance to participate in a question and answer session with local and state officials.

Much of Friday's questions were directed to state officials who serve Cleveland County in Raleigh. State officials fielded questions from lottery possibilities to the status of the new bypass in Shelby.

Since Medicaid is projected to be another problem with the state budget this year, it was a topic during Friday's session.

"It's a very large monster that continues to grow with unemployment," State Representative Debbie Clary, R-Shelby, said.

Part of the state's projected Medicaid increase

See Seniors, 5A



BEN LEDBETTER / THE HERALD
 Kings Mountain resident Lou Ballew gestures while explaining her point during the legislative luncheon last Friday at the Patrick Senior Center.

Council discusses hotel tax, locking gas rate for plants

By BEN LEDBETTER
 Staff Writer

New tourism revenue and locked natural gas prices for two Kings Mountain industries were topics discussed by the Kings Mountain City Council at its meeting Tuesday.

Council established a hotel/motel tax, which would fund tourism for the city and would involve a tax on the four hotels in the city limits.

State legislature approved the tax this summer.

In addition to the tax, council approved the creation of the five member Kings Mountain Tourism Development Authority, which was part of the state ordinance regulating the tax.

Four of the members were named Tuesday, while the fifth spot was left vacant.

See Council, 5A

Dupin Crusade planned in KM

By BEN LEDBETTER
 Staff Writer

With the aura of a revival under a tent, the Clyde Dupin Crusade held its kickoff banquet last Thursday at the Patrick Senior Center.

The Dupin Crusade, which is scheduled for April 14-18, will be held at the Kings Mountain High School gymnasium.

While it was far from the amount of activities planned for the five-day event, all elements from an address from Dupin to two songs by crusade saxophonist Donnie Hauk were part of the evening.

During his message, Dupin told several stories of how people in different cities he had held crusades had become Christians. Several of the stories were of how Dupin or his staff reached out to others.

One moment took place during a crusade in Oxford, a town near Durham.

Dupin had met a man who had not been

in church in about 20 years who became a Christian that night.

Personal evangelism is an element important to Dupin.

"That is such a vital part of the crusade," he said.

"God is about to do something very special," Dupin said about the upcoming crusade in Kings Mountain.

But while Dupin referred to the crusade locally, he also touched on things he saw affecting the nation.

"America is in need of a spiritual awakening," Dupin said, identifying a spiritual decline in America.

Elements called multiculturalism, free expression, and the lottery were a few of the things Dupin spoke out against in his Thursday message.

While the crusade is three months away, plans have already been made for the week-long event.

A crusade office is expected to be open,

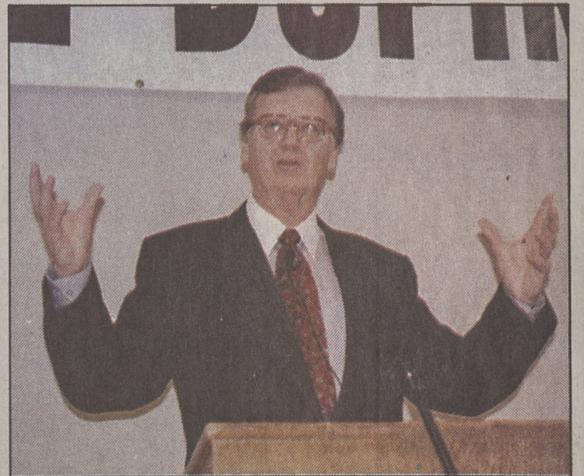
and will be at 103 Regal Drive, Suite 1. It will be open from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays.

On February 7 at 7:30 p.m. a leadership rally will be held at Macedonia Baptist Church, and on Feb. 28 at 7:30 p.m. a prayer rally will be held at the Church of the Nazarene.

Dupin pastored a Wesleyan church in Evansville, IN for 10 years and worked with evangelist Bill Glass for six years.

In 1974, he started his own interdenominational ministry, based in Kernersville. He also writes a weekly newspaper column, "Religious Viewpoints", which is published in newspapers around the nations. Locally, his column can be read in The Eagle and the Bessemer City Record, sister papers of the Herald.

The last crusade Dupin held in Kings Mountain was in 1987 at John Gamble Stadium at Kings Mountain High School.



BEN LEDBETTER / THE HERALD
 Kernersville evangelist Clyde Dupin speaks at a kickoff banquet for his April Kings Mountain crusade last Thursday at the Patrick Senior Center.



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