

KINGS MOUNTAIN The Herald

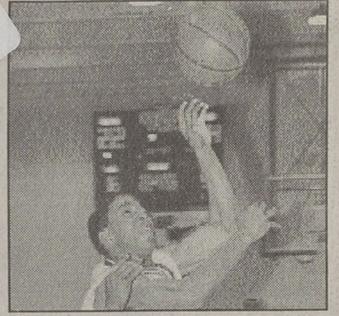
Thursday, February 7, 2002

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County to provide Grover officers

By BEN LEDBETTER
 Staff Writer

Grover will now have police protection, after former police chief Ed Pheagin retired last month for health reasons.

During its Monday meeting the town council voted to contract with the Cleveland County Sheriff's Department to provide the city with law enforcement protection.

Sheriff Dan Crawford said contracting with his office would save the town money.

Councilman Jack Herndon said he liked the idea of contracting with the sheriff's office.

Other councilmen also agreed.

"I think what we're interested in mostly is police protection in Grover," Mayor Pro-Tem Max Rollins said.

Councilman Bill Willis said people he has talked to said they preferred the most coverage for the least amount of money.

Deputies patrolling Grover under this agreement would provide 24-hour coverage in the town, and would be under the supervision of the sheriff.

An additional entry level deputy is expected to be added to the number of personnel covering Grover.

Bessemer City and Gaston County have also made a similar arrangement for law enforcement.

Details regarding equipment are yet to be determined.

Public safety also manifested itself in another part of Monday's meeting, as the town voted to change its leash law, in case the town contracts with Cleveland County to enforce the law.

Also, Jimmy Hensley, with the Grover Volunteer Fire Department, announced first responder service will begin in the Grover Fire District on March 1.

See Grover, 5A

Talley loses DEA privileges, losing patients

By BEN LEDBETTER
 Staff Writer

With his narcotics privilege revoked by the federal Drug Enforcement Administration, Dr. Joseph H. Talley, who has been practicing in Grover for much of his medical career has been seeing his practice decrease over the past few weeks.

"It's creating pandemonium down here," Talley said. "It's just a sick feeling."

The loss of his narcotics license, commonly referred to as a DEA number, means Talley can no longer write prescriptions for controlled substances he has used in his practice.

The federal agency made the seizure on Talley's Grover clinic last Wednesday. He is also scheduled for a March hearing in front of the NC Medical Board in Raleigh.

The DEA agents were accompanied by agents from the NC

See Talley, 5A

CHANGING OF THE GUARD



New Kings Mountain Police Chief Melvin Proctor takes oath of office from Mayor Rick Murphrey Friday morning at Law Enforcement Center.

GARY STEWART / THE HERALD

Melvin Proctor sworn in as new KM Police Chief

By GARY STEWART
 Editor of The Herald

Vowing that department decisions "won't be made by me, they'll be made by God," 15-year Kings Mountain police veteran Melvin Proctor took the oath of office as the city's new police chief Friday morning at the Kings Mountain Law Enforcement Center.

He plans no sweeping changes, but indicated that there will be some reorganization of the department in the coming weeks.

A packed house witnessed the ceremony, led by Mayor Rick Murphrey and attended by members of Proctor's family, city officials, citizens, and representatives of the Kings Mountain and surrounding law enforcement agencies.

"This is a special day for the city of Kings Mountain," the mayor said. "I have a lot of admiration for all law enforcement. It takes a special person to have the leadership ability to move into this position. It takes a lot of dedication and commitment because it is a dangerous job."

"I am so proud of Melvin and his accomplishments, and so proud to have someone already in the Kings Mountain Police Department that we could promote as chief."

Proctor, who moved around a lot in his youth because his father was in the textile business, said he decided shortly after moving with his family to Kings Mountain from Tennessee that it would be his last move.

If he has his way, he said he intends this career move to be his last also.

"Becoming the chief of police has been my goal from the time I started in police work in 1987," he said. "I thought it would take about 25 years, but now 15 years later I'm chief. I've reached the pinnacle halfway through my career. I'm planning on finishing my career here. It would

See Proctor, 3A



Chief Proctor looks right at home in new office.

Good barbecue, good friends send Corn into retirement

By GARY STEWART
 Editor of The Herald

After a feast of barbecue and a lot of well-deserved pats on the back, Kings Mountain Police Chief Houston Corn left the Law Enforcement Center for the last time in an official capacity Thursday.

Retiring with over 30 years with the City, Corn said he'll continue to rise early in the morning. Only now, instead of reporting to work he'll be restoring a recently-purchased '40 Ford Coupe.

Restoring old vehicles has been his hobby for years, and there was even on occasion when he restored one for his job at KMPD.

SBI agent David Bridges, who worked with Corn at KMPD in the 1970s, recalled that the city received a federal grant to fund a Crime Prevention Officer and Corn was appointed to the position.

"He got an old bread truck and turned it into a crime prevention van, with displays that he would

take around to the schools and show the children," Bridges said.

"Those were the good old days...when the basement (of the old police station) would be flooded and when we got a new police car it was one that had already been used up by the Highway Patrol."

Bridges recalled that he and Corn worked shifts together in 1974 and '75, and would cover for each other on occasion. "He'd cover for me when I had to go to class, and I'd cover for him at Christmas and other times. He was great to work with. He was my best buddy."

Corn originally came to Kings Mountain in 1970 shortly after graduation from Enka High School. He worked for the city gas department before being drafted into the Army during the Vietnam War. When he

See Corn, 3A



Retiring police chief Houston Corn with wife, Cathy, left, and daughters Michelle Kale and Christy Nantz at Thursday's retirement party at Kings Mountain Law Enforcement Center.

GARY STEWART / THE HERALD

Opinions different on merger of hospitals

By BEN LEDBETTER
 Staff Writer

Kings Mountain Hospital's decision to open merger talks with Cleveland Regional Medical Center was announced last Wednesday, and the process was expected to take another step forward today.

The committee's first task will be to develop a list of about five to six items of major concern which need to be addressed or conditions that must be met before a merger can take place. The issues addressed would have to be done in a way acceptable to Kings Mountain Hospital, Board Chairman Hack Trammell said.

Secondly, the committee, working with a group from Cleveland Regional and Carolinas HealthCare System is expected to negotiate preliminary terms of agreement between the two hospitals; or find those terms are not possible.

The draft agreement will then be submitted to both Kings Mountain and Cleveland Regional's Trustee Advisory Councils for review.

"We're the ones that live in this town. We need to maintain control of the hospital."

-Stella Putnam
 KM Hospital Trustee

Committee appointee Stella Putnam said her main concern is keeping Kings Mountain Hospital functional.

"I'm interested in it and I want to see the hospital survive and be strong in the community," Putnam said. She also serves on the hospital's Trustee advisory council and is a member of the Kings Mountain District Schools Board of Education.

Putnam said keeping local control of the hospital will be beneficial and she wants to hear what Cleveland Regional could do for Kings Mountain.

"We're the ones that live in this town," Putnam said. "We need to maintain control of the hospital."

Talks of a merger with the Shelby hospital picked up after KMH trustee council members Scott Neisler and J.C. Bridges met with CHS President and CEO Dr. Harry Nurkin. The top executive said no additional money could be given to Kings Mountain.

"Carolinas HealthCare System is committed to helping Kings Mountain Hospital become all that it can be, but that commitment does not mean that

See Merger, 2A



BEN LEDBETTER / THE HERALD
 A truck turned over at the ramp to U.S. Highway 74 east off Cleveland Ave. on Monday. Police said no one was hurt at the scene.



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