

KINGS MOUNTAIN The Herald

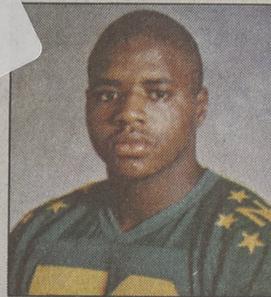
Thursday, April 11, 2002

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Barn raises zoning issue

By BEN LEDBETTER
Staff Writer

Representatives from Ebenezer Baptist Church expressed concerns about a possibly illegal horse barn which has been built near the church during Tuesday's Kings Mountain Planning and Zoning Board meeting.

Ebenezer Associate pastor Calvin C. Miller presented a letter expressing the church's and community's disagreement with the barn stating that it's offensive to church activities.

"We are very much displeased with this barn in a 'R10' zoning district within a few yards of the from the church door," the letter said. "We consider this an affront to a public place of worship for more than one hundred and twenty years."

The barn in question is owned by Dennis Putnam who lives on County Line Road, near Cherryville.

Previously Cleveland County issued permits for building the barn, then sent a letter to Putnam dated February 26 revoking the permits.

In the letter signed by Cleveland County Codes Administrator Paul Ezell, it said the property is located within Kings Mountain's jurisdiction.

Board members and city planning staff said the city has not received any application from Putnam.

"The barn looks to me like it's complete," Planning and Zoning Board Chairman Jim See Zoning, 3A

THE BRITISH ARE COMING



BEN LEDBETTER / THE HERALD
John Thornton sews while Brian Thornton watches during Sunday's Revolutionary War encampment at Kings Mountain National Military Park. See story on page 9A.

Spectrum asks city for lower gas transportation rate

Proposed 2002-03 budget to be presented Wednesday

By BEN LEDBETTER
Staff Writer

It now comes down to the numbers. In what could be a tight budget year for state and local government, Kings Mountain City Council will hold a budget work session Wednesday at the Patrick Center at 10 a.m.

During the session City Manager Jimmy Maney will present a proposed budget that may be without Anvil Knitwear, one of the city's largest utility customers.

Anvil had announced earlier this year that it plans to move about 400 jobs to another plant near Asheville.

While Anvil Knitwear is moving jobs, another large Kings Mountain company has asked the city to reduce one of its fees.

In a letter Spectrum Corporate Engineer Hubert C. Johnson sent to Maney dated April 1, he asked the city to reduce the company's industrial gas transportation rate from \$1.35 to \$.85.

If the city agrees to lower the rate, Johnson said the company will stay on gas and not switch to oil. It has also been trying to get the Kings Mountain plant back to a "break-even status."

"We do not want to relocate our plant to another country like so many other textile companies have, but we have to maintain at least a break-even status," Johnson said in the letter.

When contacted Tuesday, Johnson said the company is trying to stay in business in the southeastern United States.

"We've lost money for the last two years and we can't continue to do that and stay in business in this part of the country."

Council member Gene White said the letter had a common thread of coercion through it and questioned parts of the correspondence.

Johnson said the letter was not meant as an ultimatum. He said if the plant can get the lower gas transportation rate, it will continue to burn gas and will not start using oil.

Cost cutting measures such as automation have been instituted at the plant, Johnson said.

"We're just asking the city if there's any way they can help us on cutting costs," he said.

One statement White questioned was a wish by the company to buy its own gas.

White said the price for 1,000 cubic feet of gas was at one of its lowest points in four years last fall and Spectrum had the opportunity to lock in their gas price.

"From my own personal standpoint, I along with everyone else does not want to see Spectrum leave here under any circumstances," White said.

If Spectrum continues to say it has a need for a decrease in utility rates it should give the city council a proof of need, White said. He said it did not matter about the company being private, it should prove its need if it's using public funds.

"If you want the taxpayers' money, yes you do," he said.

If any rates for interruptible gas customers are changed, all users would feel the effect, not just one of them, White said.

"We have to respond to this on a business-like basis on its own merits," White said.

During Spectrum's time in Kings Mountain, White said the city and company have had a mutually beneficial association.

See Spectrum, 3A

Council action draws anger of citizens

See Letters, 4A

Dupin Crusade begins Sunday at KMHS

By BEN LEDBETTER
Staff Writer

Final preparations are being made for the Clyde Dupin Crusade which will start Sunday and run until Thursday at the Kings Mountain High School gym, starting at 7:27 p.m.

Already signs have been placed around town advertising the crusade.

During the Kings Mountain crusade, a youth night is scheduled on Tuesday and a

focus on patriotism and people who work in public service on Thursday night.

"There's going to be a lot of folks that have been involved in that area of the community that are going to be exposed to the gospel," Crusade Director Jeff Ray said.

Dupin, who was previously in Kings Mountain in 1987, is an evangelist who lives in Kernersville.

One of the final activities leading up to Sunday's crusade will be a 24-hour prayer vigil at Second Baptist Church starting

Friday at 6 p.m.

Ray said a group of area pastors were instrumental in bringing another crusade back to Kings Mountain.

Dupin's son Ken said the ministry staff try to leave things in a way that would warrant another invitation to a community.

"After about 10 to 15 years we seem to have the ability to leave things in such a way that they desire for us to come back."

See Crusade, 3A

KINGS MOUNTAIN PEOPLE

Perry Davis has been fighting fires since age 14

By BEN LEDBETTER
Staff Writer

From an early age, Perry Davis wanted to work as a fire-fighter.

Since his father was the Oak Grove Volunteer Fire Department Chief, he was able to gain some experience.

"When I was the age of 14 I was able to join the fire department," Davis said.

So when he got his opportunity, he went to all that he could.

"I had grown up on his shirt tail basically wanting to go to fire calls with him when he would respond going to the

station with him, washing the fire trucks and cleaning the fire hose," he said.

Seeing his father help prevent loss of property and loss of life during work hours was one of the main things that drew Davis into firefighting.

And while he moved jobs, going from Oak Grove to the Cleveland County Fire Marshal's office in Shelby, he still keeps his home in the Oak Grove community.

"The community is a nice community," he said. "It's a close knit community. Most of my family's from there."

When he graduated from Kings Mountain High School,

Davis worked full time in the grocery business, and after working nine years in that field, a county fire inspector's position came open.

He applied and got the job which involved inspecting a variety of establishments for safety violations, following certain cases through the court system and performing certain emergency management duties.

Already knowing some of the emergency management steps at the office helped him attain his present position as Assistant County Fire Marshal, a position that came open when former fire marshal Beau Lovelace took a job with the

city of Hendersonville.

One of the toughest cases Davis said he's worked on was when a mother and three children were in a mobile home that was set on fire by an angry husband. He was later prosecuted and sent to a federal prison.

He also has experience with weather-related emergencies working during the Palm Sunday tornadoes about nine years ago that struck Boiling Springs and parts of the Oak Grove community before leaving the county.

Davis has also used lifesav

See Davis, 3A



PERRY DAVIS

Men charged with robbing KM store

Two Gastonia men were charged by Kings Mountain police shortly after an armed robbery Tuesday afternoon at Falls Superette, 1003 York Road.

According to Sgt. C.N. Moore of KMPD, two men entered the store at 5:30 p.m., brandished weapons and demanded money.

They reportedly were given an undisclosed amount of money, and the store in a dark green Chevrolet going east on Lake Montonia Road.

Moore said officers quickly set up around the perimeter, and shortly afterward a vehicle fitting the description was

See Robbery, 3A



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