

Car wash to aid KM Relay for Life

Christian Freedom Baptist Church will sponsor a car wash Saturday from 9 a.m.-3 p.m. at KM Pools on King Street.

All proceeds will go to the Kings Mountain Relay for Life.

Car wash Saturday at House of Prayer

Kings Mountain House of Prayer for All People, located on Highway 74 West beside Morris Scrap Metal, will hold a car wash Saturday at 9 a.m. to raise funds for a mission trip to Africa.

The cost is \$10 inside and out (\$15 for vans).

For pickup or more information call Bishop Brady Jackson at 974-4324.

BUILDING PERMIT.

The Kings Mountain Building Codes and Zoning Enforcement office issued the following permits for the week of April 15-19.

- 4/15 - 638 Margrace Road, Michael and Conchita Hoyle, construction of a modular home, \$105,550.
- 4/16 - 219 Commerce Blvd., Sara Lee Corporation, adding shell to existing industrial building, \$2,000,000.
- 4/16 - 705 Canterbury Road, adding shell to existing industrial building, \$4,100,000.
- 4/18 - 508 Rhodes Ave., Willard Millen, installing utility building, \$1,000.
- 4/18 - 806 Southridge Drive, Mark Champion, building modular home, \$150,000.
- 4/18 - 801 Princeton Drive, Keith Bowen, enclosing carport to make a sun-room.
- 4/18 - 303 Landry Drive, Tommy Hall, single family dwelling, \$102,000
- 4/18 - 302 Landry Drive, Tommy Hall, single family dwelling, \$92,700.
- 4/18 - 304 Landry Drive, Tommy Hall, single family dwelling, \$112,000.
- 4/18 - 309 Landry Drive, Tommy Hall, single family dwelling, \$95,000.
- 4/19 - 956 Brooklee Drive, Gerald Tate, garage, \$60,000.

KM FIRE REPORT

The Kings Mountain Fire Department responded to the following calls for the week of April 15-21.

- 4/15 - 610 Meadowbrook Road, service call.
- 4/17 - 117 Linwood Road, structure fire.
- 4/18 - South Sims Street and West Gold Street, accident.
- 4/18 - West King Street and Cansler Street, accident.
- 4/19 - South Battleground Ave, grass fire.
- 4/19 - North Piedmont Ave., grass fire.
- 4/19 - Linwood Road at railroad crossing, grass fire.
- 4/19 - U.S. Highway 74 & N.C. Highway 216, accident.
- 4/20 - 113 South Piedmont Ave., gas investigation.
- 4/20 - York Road & Woodlake Pkwy, accident.
- 4/21 - First Street, grass fire.

BLANTON

From 1A

Blanton said it started with two softball benefit games. During one of the games in the Double Shoals community he had a close call with a line drive.

"I took a line drive to the nose, knocked me out of the game, broke my nose," he said. "Believe it or not I stayed. I didn't quit."

His years of service in the rescue squad have yielded the role of captain of the rescue squad, a position he has held since 1987. That role also brings with it meetings and other classes.

"There's meetings to attend all the time," he said. "We have a couple of meetings a month and training sessions." He also teaches a class through Cleveland Community College.

Blanton's leadership roles have not been confined to the rescue squad; he has been a past president of the White Plains Shrine Club and an ambassador for the Oasis Temple, which includes shriners from

around the area.

Blanton, who was raised in Boiling Springs, has lived in Kings Mountain since 1970, coming to the area when his parents moved.

He said he wants to stay with the squad until August, when he will have served 20 years. That will make him a lifetime member.

Seeing the rescue squad advance in equipment and training has been some of the things Blanton has seen during his time with the rescue squad.

He has also seen an increase in call volume and demands by the state.

With his retirement coming in August, he plans on spending more time with the Shrine Club.

During his time with the rescue squad Blanton has worked a number of 24-hour shifts which took up a lot of weekends during the past years.

"We pull, every fourth weekend, a 24-hour shift," he said. "And we pull a 12-hour shift every two weeks. So I've given up a lot of weekends in 20 years."

BUDGET

From 1A

Mountain should support the merged EDC/Chamber.

"I think we need to support this issue," he said. "Both (Cleveland and Gaston) counties have been good about extending services."

Cleveland County Chamber President Rob Youngblood and County Manager Lane Alexander presented a presentation to council at the beginning of the meeting.

"It's exciting to see what could happen from the chamber's standpoint," Youngblood said.

According to the merger plan, Kings Mountain and Shelby would contribute \$60,000 a piece.

Council member Gene White did not agree with the amount.

"Sixty thousand is not cost effective under any circumstances," he said.

Although he did not agree with the figure, White said the city plans to continue working with both Cleveland and Gaston Counties.

Cuts of staff vacancies are also part of the city's new proposed budget as one PC assistant was cut from administration, one crew leader and two laborers are cut from the streets department, one building inspector from codes and one Smart Start Library Assistant which will generate approximately \$170,000.

The PC assistant worked with computers in a technical support role.

Other cuts came from planning and economic development which went from \$359,514 to \$301,810 in the proposed budget for this year. The special events/public relations department's budget was slashed from \$465,378 in the current budget to \$109,495 in the proposed budget for next year. City officials said some of the special events items were moved to other funds.

The Special Events/Public Relations position was created when current mayor Rick Murphrey took office.

"I will say every department has been effected with the budget cuts," Maney said.

Several requests for additional positions and hours were denied. The fire department requested three full time and four part time positions and special events requested a 10-hour increase for its administrative assistant, which currently works 10 hours a week.

Approximate savings generated from not granting the requests is \$152,000.

And while savings may be generated other utility funds could be in trouble because of weather and the state's financial woes.

According to city figures, the water/sewer fund and the gas fund had the lowest fund balance projections of all the utility funds.

The water/sewer fund had a balance of \$1,308,632 at the beginning of the last fiscal year and has a projected balance of \$633,372 by the end of June.

The gas fund's balance at the end of the last fiscal year was \$793,031 and is projected to be at \$330,339 by the end of this fiscal year in June.

Maney said the electric fund was one of the utilities funds expected to make money in the upcoming fiscal year.

And while some fund balances are low Maney said it's because the city has been providing service to more people.

"You've been providing more services more efficiently than you ever have," he said comparing now and 1990.

Kings Mountain's area was doubled in 1998 by annexation.

HOSPITAL

From 1A

Humphries said he would like to see CHS pay more to taxpayers for use of the facility. He also questioned a clause about the board of a consolidated hospital and said that a criteria about geographic representation could dilute a Kings Mountain presence.

Bob Bridges said he remembered the hospital helping one of his children.

"One of my youngest children is alive today because of Kings Mountain Hospital," he said. "We need to save our hospital."

While people talked about saving the hospital others said a merger of the two hospitals was already planned when CHS took over management of Kings Mountain.

"I will tell you, it was a done deal," Lou Ballew said.

Committee member Stella Putnam said in response to Ballew's comment that county commissioners took the best they could get when giving CHS management control. Putnam said commissioners will have to get involved with the issue eventually.

When Putnam asked where people in Kings Mountain would go if the hospital closed, people in the crowd said "Gaston", "Charlotte."

"We've got to take what we've got and make it better," Putnam said about keeping the hospital.

City council member Clavon Kelly said he can remember when the hospital was once full and thriving, and that has changed.

"People now say if you want to die go to Kings Mountain Hospital," he said. "The administration was sent here to give this hospital away and they've done a good job of it."

Kelly talked about a situation where he said he was ignored by hospital staff.

"They paid absolutely no attention to me when I had a problem," he said. "If the hospital doesn't listen, it should be closed down."

While he expressed his anger about one situation, Kelly said the hospital does have good doctors there.

Hospital lab employee Christine Stewart said some staffers are stressed out and are working with equipment that is older, but could be updated. She said a lot of the patients that she has seen are older. She is for the merger.

"Our services have not decreased, we have gotten better in the lab," she said.

An issue hospital medical staff wanted to change in the lease was about the possibility of merging the two medical staffs in the future.

"It does not mean that a physician from Shelby can not become a part of the medical staff," Dr. Everette Thombs said.

Committee members said they would like to hold another community meeting.

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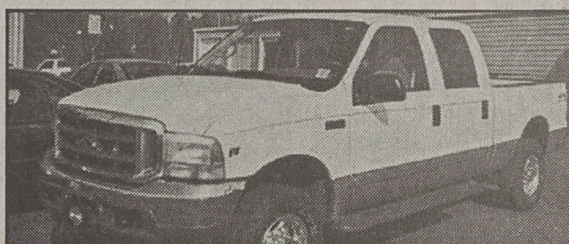
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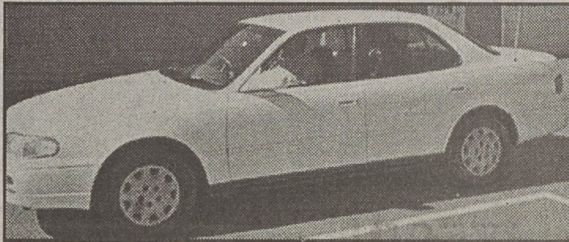
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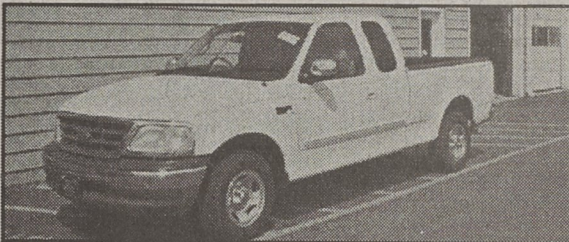
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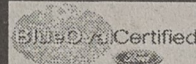


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