

# PICTORIAL EDITORIAL



GARY STEWART / HERALD

**WELL DONE** -Members of the Vestibule A.M.E. Zion Church Relay for Life team grill hot dogs at their campsite Friday at the KM Walking Track to help the Relay raise over \$80,000 for cancer research. Left to right are Danny Childers, Sarah Manning, Ethel Bess and 94-year-old cancer survivor Callie Thomas.

## LETTER TO THE EDITOR

### CVS decision will affect many

**To the editor:**  
When CVS announced that they were refusing to process claims for the prescription plan held by state employees many beneficiaries were shocked. As the largest pharmacy chain in North Carolina this decision will affect many people. It is one more example of the negative impact of health plans on pharmacy benefits that turn out to be a detriment to the consumer. It needs to be remembered that this affects not just ordinary people but already sick citizens because they need pharmaceutical goods and services.

It is important to know that pharmacists and pharmacies are not refusing to fill prescriptions for state employees. Patients can still have their valid prescriptions filled at any pharmacy in the state and then file a claim with their health plan. It is the claim filing service for state employees with a co-pay that is being refused. By the way, many consumers believe that the pharmacy keeps the co-pay amount and that is not true. Health plans deduct the co-pay from the payment to the pharmacy so it is a dollar for dollar benefit to the plan and nobody else.

Health care is expanding at a record rate but the number of drug stores is declining in this state. The primary cause for this retrenchment is sparse payments from health plans. There were 1706 retail drug stores in 1990 compared to 1481 in the year 2000. The number of prescriptions filled in that decade doubled. Many small communities have one or two drug stores left that are barely surviving.

New chain drug stores on many corner locations give the illusion of expansion and that is not the case. In most of these situations the company is closing a location at a strip mall and moving it to a more desirable

corner lot.

It is important to remember that over 90% of pharmacy payments by health plans go to drug companies such as Merck. This payment share remains high despite many fiscal contortions to encourage generic use or switch therapy to cheaper drugs. Many of these companies are the single sources for essential products.

There is no doubt that the prescription drug delivery system in this state is greatly stressed. The danger to public health increases as each day goes by with more prescriptions and fewer drug stores.

I believe what is needed is a regulatory commission, similar to the Public Utilities Commission, which would regulate the terms, conditions, fees and services of all pharmacy benefit plans operating in the state. This is a justifiable regulation of an essential product, pharmaceuticals provided pursuant to a health plan. This independent group could review the economic and health factors involved and set payment rates that would provide a fair return on investment to pharmacies and assure the public of adequate availability of prescription goods and services in their communities. This agency could operate in a way similar to the Public Utilities Commission which approves the rates and operation of utilities essential to the public welfare. Experts, similar to the Public Staff of the Utilities Commission, would advise the Commission in its decision making.

We should not require pharmacies to go out of business and consumers to forego essential prescription goods and services before serious consideration is given to a plan to avoid these consequences.

(David R. Work)

### Fly flags proudly on Friday

**To the Editor:**

This Friday, June 14th is Flag Day. It is the anniversary of the day on which the Continental Congress adopted the flag of the United States in 1777.

Flag Day is not an official national holiday, but it is observed by Presidential proclamation. It is a legal holiday in Pennsylvania.

Flag Day was first officially celebrated in 1877, when Congress requested the flag be flown from all public buildings.

In 1885, Bernard J. Cigrand (1866-1932), a school teacher of Waubeka, Wis., began a lifetime effort for a yearly national observance of Flag Day. He is sometimes called the "Father of Flag Day."

We should encourage the display of the flag on homes, business establishments and public buildings around the nation. This is an appropriate time for special programs featuring patriotic music and discussion about the flag's meaning and origin.

Russell S. Davis Jr.  
Charlotte

### BEN

From 4A

North Carolina. It doesn't look like Republicans or Democrats will get their way so let's cut losses and move to some campaigning. All that's left now is a review by the U.S. Department of Justice and the elections will be final.

## LETTER POLICY

We appreciate your letters to the editor and encourage you to write. Because we receive so many letters, however, we must impose guidelines to ensure that as many readers as possible are able to share their views. We therefore limit the number of letters that any one person may have published to one a month. Also, we ask that you keep your letters short, no more than two pages double-spaced or one page single-spaced. Handwritten letters are accepted, but must be legible.

We will not publish third party letters, thank-you letters or letters from anonymous writers; names, addresses, and phone numbers must be included. We reserve the right to edit letters for grammar, punctuation, clarity, brevity and content.

Letters must be signed in ink.

Letters must be received no later than 5 p.m. on Monday of the week they are to be published.

Mail letters to The Editor, P.O. Box 769, Kings Mountain, NC 28086 or fax them to (704) 739-0611.

## LOOKING BACK

### Senior board formed in '79

Excerpts from the Tuesday, June 12, 1979 edition of the Kings Mountain Mirror-Herald:

- A Kings Mountain Senior Center Advisory Committee has been formed to have input in activity planning for the city's aging program. Halbert Webb, Alice Hoyle, Lydia Mitchell and Hazel Brown Sr. were elected last week by the senior citizens to serve as the committee, which will work with the program director and city officials.

- Reg Alexander, Housing Rehabilitation Officer for the City of Kings Mountain since Sept. 1, 1978 has resigned, effective Wednesday, to accept the position of Director of Christian Education at New Hope Baptist Church in Gastonia.

- Eight Kings Mountain District Schools teachers were nominated for Kings Mountain Teacher of the Year 1979-80 and new officers of the KM unit of NCAE and ACT were installed at the annual NCAE luncheon Friday at

KM Senior High Cafeteria. - George H. (Sandy) Mauney Jr. of Kings Mountain received the Hubert Plaster Award as male volunteer of the year from the Cleveland County Red Cross Chapter at last week's annual meeting at Aldersgate Methodist Church in Shelby.

- Four Central School students will attend Gifted and Talented programs at Appalachian State University and Milligan College in Tennessee this summer. All the group will study science at sessions of two weeks each during July and August.

- A recreation program which will provide services for the total community is the goal of Kings Mountain's first supervisor of the Parks and Recreation Department, Mike Nappi. Nappi, 32, joined the Kings Mountain Department April 1 and already is implementing new programs and improving existing ones. He came here with five years of experience as recreation director for Silver Springs Shores, Fla.

## Kings Mountain Country Club

109 Country Club Road  
Kings Mountain, NC 28086

**\$5.00**  
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Not Valid  
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**Special During Renovation of Front 9 Fairways Back 9 Open Please Call For Tee Times (704) 739-5871**

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**Public Play Welcome**

## Love Lasts Forever

**Featured Employee**

*Long time resident of Cherryville.  
Member of the Free Saints Chapel.  
Tommy has six children, three sons and three daughters.*

**Family and Locally Owned**

## Carpenter's Funeral Home

*Serving Gaston, Cleveland and Lincoln counties since 1909*  
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## LETTER

From 4A

sented with petitions that had approximately 250 signatures opposing this action and there were approximately 75 people that attended the public meeting to discuss and oppose the rezoning.

As Mr. Kelly stated in a news article on Thursday, March 28, 2002 that we as citizens had the right to ask Mr. Egan questions but the mayor did not let the citizens ask questions as his gavel abruptly interrupted them. he also stated in the article that the questions we might have asked would not have changed the vote. To me it seems that a decision was made before the meeting and no matter what we could have said or

how many people signed the petition or attended the public hearing opposing the rezoning of this land would have changed the outcome.

We the citizens of Kings Mountain have not been treated fairly by our mayor and City Council. They did not listen to the citizens and even our own council representative, Dean Spears, voted against his district's wishes. I hope that the citizens of Kings Mountain will show our city officials how we feel at the next election. We need a new mayor and city council that will represent we feel at the next election. We need a new mayor and city council that will represent the citizens of Kings Mountain and that will listen to the public's view.

Eddie Payne  
Kings Mountain

# Instructions NOT Included.

New babies don't come with owners' manuals. Breast feeding, diaper changing and dealing with mom are all new experiences for first-time fathers. At Boot Camp For New Dads we train first-time fathers to be experienced dads. Participate in one 3-hour workshop taught by dads who bring their own babies to practice with. You will leave more confident in your ability to be a great dad.

**Saturday, June 22, 2002**  
 10 a.m.-1 p.m.  
 Cleveland Regional Medical Center  
 To register 704-487-3199  
 Cost \$10  
 Gift certificates available

Cleveland Regional Medical Center  
 Carolinas HealthCare System  
 201 East Grover Street  
 Shelby, NC 28150  
 www.clevelandregional.org

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