

# KINGS MOUNTAIN The Herald

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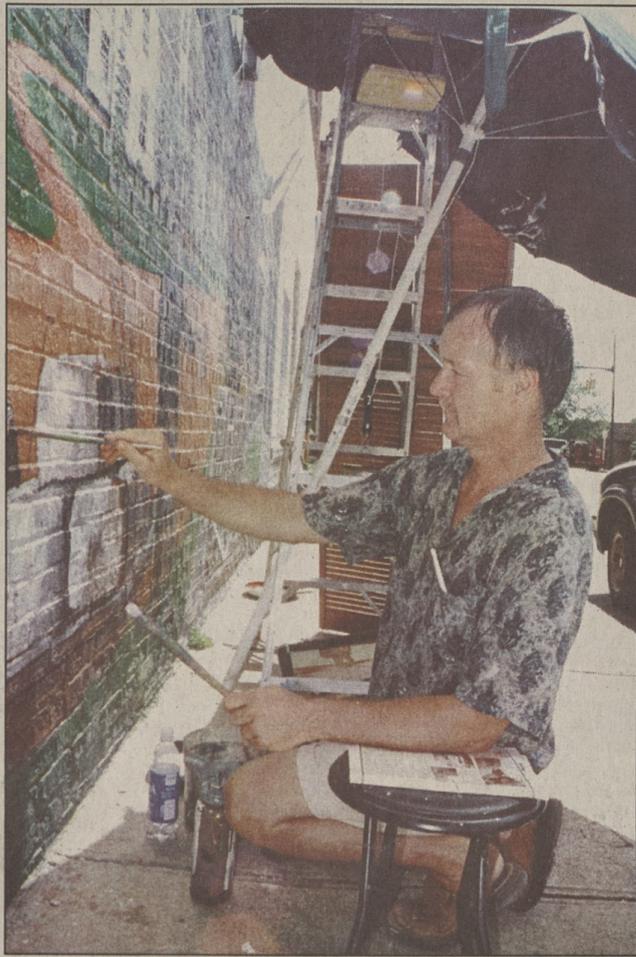
## Utility committee discusses debt collection plan

By BEN LEDBETTER  
Staff Writer

There may be a new way of collecting debt in the city of Kings Mountain. That was the word during Friday's City Council Utilities Committee meeting. Billing Director Jean Wyte said the state has approved a new debt collection program which allows for collection of funds against a customer's income tax refund. The program calls for cities and counties to submit any outstanding debt of \$50 or more through a clearinghouse to attempt the match to tax refunds. Other utility policy changes were also discussed, including new deposit requirements and tampering fees. Proposed deposits are for class 1-\$150, class 2-\$250 and class three-\$300. Tampering fees suggested were \$300 for the first offense, \$600 for the second and denial of service for the third offense. "We felt the need to go ahead and get that in place," City Manager Jimmy Maney said about the proposed policy changes. Committee members also heard an update on the second phase of the stormwater management program from city engineer Al Moretz. Moretz also discussed other projects the N.C. Department of Transportation will be scheduled to start including the Kings Mountain Boulevard Extension. That is expected to connect to Interstate 85. Reconstruction of the N.C. 161/I-85 interchange will also be on the DOT's slate, Moretz said. Maney said the proposed greenway would also tie into the interchange work.

See Committee, 5A

## A WORK OF ART



BEN LEDBETTER / THE HERALD  
Forest City artist Clive Haynes works on his mural on the side of Fred Kiser's Grill on Gold Street on Monday.

## Council -3 discusses revitalizing downtown

By BEN LEDBETTER  
Staff Writer

The old saying in theater is the show must go on, and with three members of the Kings Mountain City Council absent at Tuesday's meeting, including the two that preside over meetings, that's just what happened. Mayor Rick Murphrey, Mayor Pro-Tem Howard Shipp and Rick Moore did not attend the meeting and the remaining four councilmen appointed Carl DeVane to run the meeting. They were away at a seminar on council effectiveness in Big Sky, Mont. During the meeting businessman Bill Marcellino, with the Mountaineer Partnership downtown revitalization group, gave a presentation about creating a municipal service district for the downtown area. Marcellino talked about a four-point plan, which involved hiring a full-time director. Shelby has one employee who runs its downtown group. "Our real goal in the end is to have a prosperous downtown," he said.

See Council, 5A

## Next week's postage stamp will cost 37 cents

By BEN LEDBETTER  
Staff Writer

On June 30, the price of mailing a first class letter will increase 3 cents from 34 to 37 cents, which is about 45 cents per month more per household, according to United States Postal Service estimates. "And while we're talking sense, it makes good sense for customers to purchase stamps before the new rate takes effect," Kings Mountain Postmaster Bob Howard said. Howard said many busi-

nesses will be able to adjust to the rate hike since they have postage meters. The new stamp went on sale earlier this month and a new 3-cent stamp to add to the current postage will also be available. The end of the month rate increase is the third since January 1999. Eight years before that, the rates rose once. Last year, the postal service lost about \$1.7 billion and expects to lose another \$1.5 billion this year even after the rate hike.

See Stamps, 5A



BEN LEDBETTER / THE HERALD  
Kings Mountain Post Office Clerk Teresa Jeffers sells a book of the new 37 cents stamp book to Kim Morgan. The rate increase takes effect on June 30.

## Plant moving to KM

By BEN LEDBETTER  
Staff Writer

Kings Mountain received another economic boost last week when a Richmond, Va.-based company announced it move its Charlotte plant to the Cleveland County Industrial Park, just west of the city on Shelby Road. Owens and Minor, one of the nation's leading distributors of medical and surgical supplies announced last Wednesday that it selected

See Plant, 5A

## Fireworks, drought bad combination

Extreme drought conditions across the state have fire officials on alert, and the approaching July 4 holiday adds a new reason to worry. Insurance Commissioner and State Fire Marshal Jim Long reminds everyone of the dangers associated with fireworks and urges all North Carolinians to practice caution when celebrating this year. And Kings Mountain is no exception. Kings Mountain Fire

See Fireworks, 3A

## FABULOUS FOURTH

### KM's annual celebration includes plenty of fun, games and fireworks

Kings Mountain will host a "Fabulous Fourth" Thursday, July 4 around the playground at Jake Early Sports Complex adjacent to the YMCA on Cleveland Avenue. The event begins at 4 p.m. with games, and concludes with a gigantic fireworks display around 9 p.m. The Raggs Kids Club Band, consisting of five furry canine characters will perform high energy, multiple 30-minute choreographed shows, and then meet with the young people for photo opportunities. "The band is all about self-esteem for young people," said

Toni Stedman, creator and president of RAGGS, LLC. "Each character is independent and has worked to excel in the band in their personal lives. And, they deliver their messages in a hip format that is fun for the whole family. B. Max, for example, is disabled and demonstrates a true can-do attitude while participating in the band's activities from a wheelchair. The crowds love him and his character is helping to change the way disabilities are perceived by young people." All children in the area are invited to participate in the Lil' Patriots Parade around the play-

ground. Children are encouraged to decorate their tricycles, scooters and bicycles and compete for prizes for the most patriotic costume and decorations. Plans are also in the works for a bike rodeo. Two home run derbies will be held, one for T-ball and another for coach pitch. Other activities include sack races, watermelon eating contest, and a dunking booth. There will be a pre-fireworks observance with a tribute to the soldiers who fought in the Battle of Kings Mountain. For more information call 730-2103.



BEN LEDBETTER/THE HERALD  
Work began Tuesday on the Hillside Drive drainage project that Kings Mountain City Council recently approved.



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