

## Thinking 'bout things and people

Just wondering:

Why do they have magazines in an eye doctor's office? The reason you're in there in the first place is because you can't see!



**Gary Stewart**  
Editor

Do deer and cattle know they're supposed to cross the road only where the crossing signs are?

Why do you park in a driveway and drive on a parkway?

If winning isn't important, why do they keep score?

If blondes have more fun, do they know it?

Just thinking:

If Stephen Fisher is as fierce a competitor as head coach as he was as a baseball player, he'll get the most out of his talent as new head baseball coach of the KM Mountaineers. Of all the outstanding players I've seen here in my time, he's one of the few that just absolutely refused to let anyone beat him.

It seems like July 4th is getting hotter and hotter. I used to could stay at a city celebration all day, now it's all I can do to stand that hot sun for a couple hours. Maybe it's not that it's getting hotter, but I'm getting older. The heat last week didn't seem to be having that much effect on the kids...

Where has the summer gone? One of the announcements made at Monday night's school board meeting is that teachers will be returning to work on July 29th. Kids, time's running out!

Nostalgia:

A friend who collects stuff brought me something I hadn't seen in years the other day: A Double Cola. You 'youngins won't know what I'm talking about, but it was a very tasty soft drink back when I was a kid. I didn't know they still made them. He found this one in Tennessee. Wonder if there are any Lotta Colas still around?

Another friend called to ask if I could remember when President Roosevelt rode through Kings Mountain (in a car, not on the train as he did sometimes going to Georgia). I've seen it in old papers before, and I suspect it was in the

See Gary, 5A

## LOOKING BACK



The Kings Mountain High School baseball team of 1993 won the State 3A championship in a best-of-three series against Asheboro at KM's Lancaster Field. One of its players - ace pitcher Stephen Fisher - Wednesday was named new head coach of the Mountaineers. Members of the '93 team included, front row, left to right, Chris Rider, Caja Ormand, Mike Smith, Kevin Melton, Robert Wingo and Sheldon Smith. Second row, Robbie Ruff, Todd Ware, Doran Moore, TeeGee Goforth, Stephen Fisher and Rick Marr. Back row, Shane Webb, Damon Putnam, David R. Jenkins, Benji Ingle, Sharee Hopper, Johnny Bunch, David C. Jenkins and Lewis Nantz.

## Merger or not, KM should keep its hospital

This merger is moving, but is it at its conclusion?

Kings Mountain Hospital and Cleveland Regional Medical Center started discussing merger possibilities this year and by July 15, the first approval for the two hospitals' integration may happen.

Unlike the school merger, Kings Mountain would not be yielding power to Shelby, but Charlotte.

Both Cleveland County hospitals are managed by Carolinas HealthCare System, which has Carolinas Medical Center as its flagship facility.

Unlike the school merger which took place behind closed doors and made itself known after commissioners hand delivered a letter to a newspaper, merger talks with the two hospitals has mostly been done out in the open.

And considering both hospitals are owned by county citizens, it's a good thing.

Let's just hope all involved stick to their guns and Kings Mountain keeps its hospital.

The town now has an office housing the county's American Red Cross Chapter, a satellite county health department office and a new complex housing doctors' offices.

And while mergers seem to always have people talking around here, another issue that occurred in California has had several people speaking out.

The 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals ruled that the words "under God" in the pledge of allegiance are unconstitutional.

Wow is the only word that could describe that decision. More words could not begin to describe the absurdity or lack of reasoning used in the decision.

If the pledge ruling stands, which it hopefully will not, what's next?

Do we ban any songs that have any implicit or explicit religious meaning? Where does it end?

If a person who gets offended at every little thing can bring such a trivial lawsuit this high in the court system, something needs to be done.

Either remove the judges that let such frivolous things go through the court system or implement a stiff financial penalty for anyone who files such laughable litigation.

See Ben, 5A



**Ben Ledbetter**  
Staff Writer

## One too many trips to the trap and you're dead

This is a two part ditty. The first part doesn't have anything to do with the second part but for some reason or another they seem to go together rather well. Sort of like a slice of cold pizza and a cup of coffee for breakfast.

There is a word in the language that has become more and more irritating to me. No, it's not seborrhea, it is celebrity.

What is a celebrity? Who decides who will become a celebrity? Who worships celebrities and places them on a higher pedestal than mere mortals? Last but not least, what gives so called celebrities the right to think they can mostly do as they please?

In both TV and print we are constantly bombarded with the shines of spoiled brats young and old who have been crowned as celebrities. These reported exploits, travails, and pseudo-triumphs are not limited to the television show that has a man who looks like he was made of plastic as the host. Nor are they to be found only in tabloids of the type which also feature such journalism as Bill Clinton's relationship with a creature from outer space.

No indeed, celebrities and their indulgent lives are a regular page feature of many newspapers who feel it necessary to inform the populace of so and so's divorce, or this that and the other's latest tantrum. Why waste space on this rot? Not I.

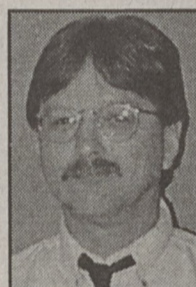
Who cares what happens in Malibu? Who gives a flip over the latest Hollywood scandal? Like my mammy used to say about flies and wasps - ignore them and they will go away.

Now for the next chunk of opinion from Old Alan.

I have this past week been witness to a death caused by two very powerful forces - that is, greed and overconfidence.

For several evenings the slumber at my dwelling place was disturbed by a scritch, scratching, and gnawing sound in the darkness. No, I was not having a snack. It was a mouse seeking air conditioned comfort and free-

See Alan, 5A



**Alan Hodge**  
Guest Column

## YOUR VIEW

### Citizens need to be heard on merger of hospitals

To the editor:

I am writing this letter in response to the article "Done Deal?" published on July 4, 2002 in the Kings Mountain Herald.

The future of Kings Mountain Hospital (KMH) is going to be decided on July 15, 2002 when the advisory board of Kings Mountain Hospital will vote over the "letter of intention of merger" with Cleveland Regional Medical Center (CRMC).

The Charlotte Hospital System (CHS) leased Kings Mountain Hospital in 1995 and promised to help the hospital as long as it stays profitable. But for the past four years, CHS has refused to financially assist Kings Mountain Hospital which has hindered the growth of the hospital.

Kings Mountain Hospital is not in any dire need of financial help but is going through growing pains. Because of this area's potential for growth, CRMC administrator, John Young, has referred to Kings Mountain as a "fertile crescent" of the county. This projected growth creates the need for financial resources for Kings Mountain Hospital.

Charlotte Hospital System has directed Kings Mountain Hospital to seek financial assistance from Cleveland Regional Medical Center. This shift in their policy, originally unforeseen, is aimed to give CRMC control of Kings Mountain Hospital. A shift in control, whether short-term or long-term, may jeopardize the existence of Kings Mountain Hospital as an acute care facility.

Kings Mountain Hospital has several options to consider at this juncture:

1 - Go back to CHS and request them to reconsider financial assistance to fulfill their promise and moral obligation to KMH. this may require persuasion by the county commissioners, local leaders, and members of the community.

2 - For Kings Mountain Hospital to be left alone and expand when funds become available from the day-to-day operations of the hospital. Meanwhile, seek funds from the community for the growth and expansion of the hospital, similar to community proj-

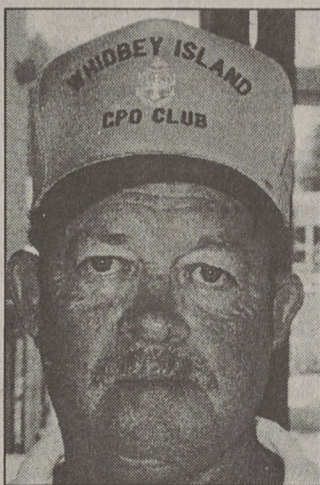
See Letter, 5A

## SIDEWALK SURVEY

BY BEN LEDBETTER  
THE HERALD

Do you think America has become more patriotic since September 11?

Got a question you'd like to submit to Sidewalk Survey? Send your question by mail to us here at The Herald. If we use your question, we'll give you the credit.



Oh, without a doubt. People are finally realizing what this country's all about.

**Larry Bridges**  
Kings Mountain



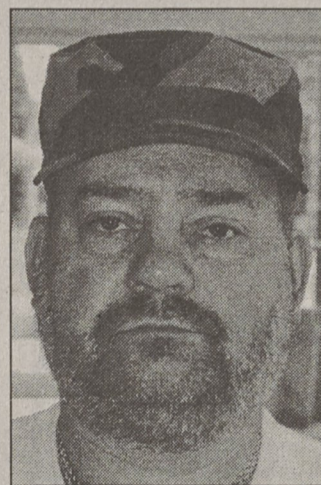
I'm hopeful. I think it brought us to our knees.

**Esther Muench**  
Kings Mountain



I think so. You just see a lot more flags.

**Kim Shelton**  
Kings Mountain



Well, people have more customs. I just wish it never happened, it's a bad thing.

**Memory Lowery**  
Kings Mountain



Yes. It seems like the people are coming together more.

**Glenda Moultry**  
Kings Mountain