

# KINGS MOUNTAIN The Herald

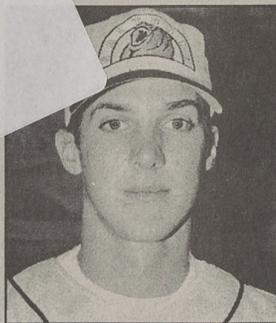
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7A

## KM, Shelby hospitals approve merger

By BEN LEDBETTER  
Staff Writer

Kings Mountain Hospital and Cleveland Regional Medical Center in Shelby took the first step toward merging the two facilities when both hospitals' board of directors approved a letter of agreement Monday morning.

That will also give Kings Mountain Hospital about \$4 million needed to expand its emergency room and outpatient services.

Both boards met simultaneously before announcing their approval of the agreement at a news conference.

"I think first off the citizens of Cleveland County and Kings

Mountain ought to feel real proud of the negotiation team," CRMC Trustee Council member Larry Corry said.

Corry said one of the points they dealt with first was keeping two acute care facilities in the county under a single hospital system.

And one thing that is valued in many hospitals is the emergency room.

Officials from both hospitals said a 24-hour emergency room will be kept running in Kings Mountain.

"Geographically, in my opinion, it would make no sense to close this emergency room because of the proximity to Gaston Memorial," KMH Trustee

Advisory Council member Stella Putnam said. "To keep patients in

this county and revenue in this county, we're going to have to have a viable emergency room in Kings Mountain Hospital. I certainly expect that to happen."

Corry said maintaining an emergency room in Kings Mountain is a point he considers critical.

And while emergency room doctors move fast in treating patients, representatives from both the Kings Mountain and Shelby hospitals said they would like to move forward and try to have the merger process completed by the end of the year. Final approval would be made by the Cleveland County Board of Commissioners.

Here are selected points from the letter of agreement:

- Assure that a combined lease

states that both hospitals will continue to be acute care hospitals.

- Allow both sites to maintain their current names/identities under the umbrella of a system name.

• At the completion of the integration between KMH and CRMC, sufficient capital investment will be provided for emergency services expansion and outpatient surgery expansion as defined in the KMH 2002-2003 strategic plan.

- Assure there will be no major layoffs of staff at KMH or CRMC as a direct result of the integration of the two hospitals.

• Within the first year, provide salary and benefit equity for Cleveland Regional Medical  
See Merger, 3A

**"To keep patients in this county and revenue in this county, we're going to have to have a viable emergency room in Kings Mountain."**

Stella Putnam  
KMH Trustee

## High speed chase ends in wreck

A Kings Mountain man faces 28 charges following a high speed chase which began late Sunday night in Kings Mountain and ended in a wreck early Monday morning in Albemarle.

According to Captain Maurice Jamerson, officers stopped 37-year-old Michael Haithcock of 207 Ware Street, Kings Mountain at approximately 11:30 p.m. at a license checkpoint on NC 216 near Center Street.

According to Sgt. R.S. Costner's report, Haithcock presented a Florida license and a KM officer reported smelling alcohol and seeing two cans of beer in his truck. Kings Mountain officers told Haithcock to pull over to the shoulder of the road, at which point he took off traveling south on NC 216. Police later learned the Florida license had been revoked.

Kings Mountain officers pursued him. They entered Gaston County on US 74 and onto I-85 North. After a four-mile run on Lowell-McAdenville Roads with speeds exceeding 120 miles per hour, police lost sight of the truck.

The NC Highway Patrol took up the chase in Gaston County, but the pickup eluded them also.

The vehicle was spotted at approximately 1:30 a.m. Monday by an officer with the Stanly County Sheriff's Department. Haithcock reportedly ignored blue lights and siren and another chase ensued with speeds

See Chase, 2A

## GONE FISHING



It's never too hot or too cold to go fishing. Brandon Davis, Buddy Davis, Bubba Noell and Matt Ledbetter, left to right, weren't bothered by the 92-degree heat while fishing near the boat landing at Moss Lake in Kings Mountain.

GARY STEWART / THE HERALD

## New primary date September 10

By BEN LEDBETTER  
Staff Writer

The State Senate approved a schedule for the 2002 elections Tuesday after the May primaries were delayed.

The proposal sets the primary date at September 10 and a filing period which could open Friday.

There would also be no runoffs. The top vote-getter in all races would win regardless of the margin.

"We certainly do believe the 10th of September is a real good date for the primary elections," Cleveland County Board of Elections Director Debra Blanton said.

Blanton said while the board has done work preparing for the elections since the cancellation of the May primary, other things still need to be done.

"We have all of the supplies ready to go and have done everything we can do generically," she said. What's left is preparing forms specifically for the election, she said.

She said ballots have to be printed, a piece of equipment is needed for the voting machines and four precincts are being informed of polling place changes. None of the four precincts are in the Kings Mountain area.

But while the primary date has been set, other work needs to be

done.

Blanton said candidates would have to file for their new districts and filing dates would need to be established. New candidates could also file.

Filing dates would have to be precleared by the U.S. Department of Justice.

While preclearance usually takes 60 days, Blanton said the Justice Department expedited its request for changing the absentee voting place from the Courthouse to the former Council on Aging Senior Center on Marion Street in Shelby.

The original May 7 primary date was delayed after Republicans

See Primary, 3A

## Summit addresses textile woes

By BEN LEDBETTER  
Staff Writer

About 150 citizens, local officials and textile industry personnel filled the H. Lawrence Patrick Senior Life and Conference Center Monday to discuss possible solutions to the decline of the textile industry in the area.

Kings Mountain Mayor Rick Murphrey, who organized the summit, said he was pleased with it.

"I was very pleased with the response," he said. "We had a good cross section of industry leaders."

Industry leaders came from Gaston, Lincoln, and Catawba counties and South Carolina.

The summit started with state and local officials, who sat up front, answering a series of questions followed by a question and answer session with audience members.

Kevin Monroe, a representative from the office of Sen. John Edwards', D-N.C., said textiles, along with the economy, were the top two issues for the junior senator when he was in Shelby twice this year.

One of the issues discussed was retraining. Many workers who have been laid off in the area have sought retraining at community colleges.

State representatives Debbie Clary, R-Cleveland and Andy Dedmon, D-Cleveland, said retraining is important.

"They don't know anything else," Dedmon said about textile workers laid off with just a high school diploma.

U.S. Representative Cass Ballenger, R-N.C., said he is trying to get federal money for displaced workers to learn new skills.

"All in all I want to say this is a huge issue for all of us," U.S. Representative Sue Myrick, R-N.C., said.

Myrick mentioned a possible meeting with Grant Aldonis, federal Commerce Under Secretary, which could take her

See Summit, 3A

## Bethware Fair begins 6-day run on Monday

The 55th annual Bethware Fair will be held July 22-27 on the campus of Bethware Elementary School in Kings Mountain.

The six-day event is sponsored by the Bethware Progressive Club.

This year's Fair Queen is Karla Elizabeth Chavis, daughter of Stephanie and Chuck Dover. She is a rising fifth grader at Bethware School.

This year's fair booklet is dedicated in memory of Jim Yarbro, longtime active member of the club and farming community.

President of the Club is Chuck Dover. Co-managers of the Fair are Glenn Hicks and Marshall Jones.

Hours of operation will be 6-11 p.m. Monday through Friday, and 3 p.m.-12 midnight on Saturday.

Smoky Mountain Amusements will again be in charge of rides.

There will be live music nightly, and the Fair will be broadcast by WKMT Radio.

Admission is free. Parking will be handled by the White Plains Shrine Club and will be \$3 per car.

See Fair, 3A



KARLA CHAVIS

## KINGS MOUNTAIN PEOPLE

### Talbert, Goforth have given over 60 years to Girl Scouts

By BEN LEDBETTER  
Staff Writer

When Jane Talbert and Susan Goforth were younger things were different, one being the small amount of opportunities for women.

But the two Kings Mountain natives took advantage of one that was available - Girl Scouts.

Talbert and Goforth have been active in area Girl Scouting for over 30 years apiece. They both started as scouts and have stayed with the organization to become leaders.

See Talbert, 3A



Jane Talbert, left, and Susan Goforth have been active in Girl Scouting since their youth.



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