

Alexander Realty sold, now Gateway Properties

One of Kings Mountain's oldest realty companies has been sold and is undergoing a name change.

Alexander Realty, founded by the late Ruby Alexander and her husband, Charles, was recently purchased by Steve Padgett and has become Gateway Properties of the Carolinas, LLC.

Alexander Realty has been serving Kings Mountain and greater Cleveland County since 1974. The company not only represented home buyers and sellers, but also constructed homes, business facilities and housing developments in and around Kings Mountain.

"Alexander Realty has a prestigious reputation," says Padgett. "It is our plan to build on that reputation as we take the company into the future."

"Ruby Alexander was known as a person of vision and great concern for the Kings Mountain area. We are changing the name

of Alexander Realty to Gateway Properties of the Carolinas, LLC, with the idea of expanding on this quality."

The company will operate with a three-member staff that includes Fain Hambright, Donna Sutton and Micki Padgett. Sutton and Micki Padgett will be co-owners of the company. The staff offers a combined 30 years of experience in all areas of residential and commercial real estate.

Charles Alexander said his family's decision to sell the company came with mixed emotions.

"We all agree that it is time to close the door on our involvements with the realty office," he said. "But this has been such a big part of our family's environment for many years. Though it is the right thing to do, it was not an easy decision to make."

The agency's new location is 214 South Railroad Avenue. The telephone number is 730-9991.



Jim Heffner photo
Kings Mountain native Rene Jackson loves her work as a crime technician for the Mount Holly Police Department

KM native Timmy McClain passes Florida Bar exam

Timmy McClain, son of Sally Ann McClain of Kings Mountain and the late Robbie McClain, recently passed the 2002 Florida Bar Exam.

McClain graduated from Berry University in February.

McClain is a 1992 graduate of Kings Mountain High School, and a 1996 graduate of Livingstone College where he attended on a football scholarship.

After earning a B.A. in Political Science at Livingstone, he taught at Kings Mountain Middle School and coached football under Coach Ron Massey at Kings Mountain High School.

He plans to remain in Florida and practice either criminal defense or personal injury law.

McClain is married to the former Marcheal Moore, daughter of Robert and Dorothy Moore of Kings Mountain. They have two children, Ashley Moore and Timmy Jaquael McClain.

McClain is a member of Ebenezer Baptist Church, Kings Mountain.

Berry University is an independent Catholic school accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools and the American Bar Association.

Crime scene technician has found her niche

BY JIM HEFFNER
Special to The Herald

Mount Holly Police Officer Rene Jackson thinks she has found a job she wants to do for the rest of her working career.

Jackson recently completed an intensive course of study at CPCC Huntersville which qualified her as a crime scene technician. She is the first certified crime scene technician in Mount Holly.

"I love it," Jackson said. "Now I want to acquire more knowledge. This work is really interesting."

Jackson, a native of Kings Mountain has been a police officer for six years. She spent two years with the Gaston County Sheriff's Dept. and has been employed in Mount Holly since 1998. Her daughter, Kim, is an honor student who has attended Governor's School. She is a senior at Kings Mountain High School and intends to study medicine at UNC Chapel Hill upon graduation.

Jackson became interested in police work because of a relative she admired.

"I always looked up to my cousin Deborah Garris," she said. "She was a police officer, and still is. She works in Gastonia. I would talk to her about the work and that's where my interest came from. I don't know exactly why I decided to head in that direction, but I'm glad I did."

Since coming to work in Mount Holly, Jackson has worked almost every kind of crime. "I've worked on two murders, two suicides, child molestations, breaking and entering, rapes and anything else that came up while I was on duty."

A Laotian couple was found murdered in their apartment on E. Catawba St. last March 12, a crime that remains unsolved. That murder scene was the first for Jackson as a crime scene technician. A murder is the ultimate crime scene, perhaps, but Jackson also lifts fingerprints at break-ins, takes photos and videos at other crime scenes and is available for anything else where her specialized talents can be used.

It is obvious that Jackson loves her work. "I do enjoy crime scene work," she said. "I

was fascinated by the class. It was taught by a forensic scientist who has been everywhere. I learned a lot from every part of the class."

Most police investigations begin at the scene of the crime. Jackson says it is important that the first officer on the scene properly protect potential evidence.

"The first officer should tape off the area, and log everybody in and out of the scene," Jackson said. "The purpose of securing the scene is to restrict access and prevent evidence contamination."

Once the scene is secured, the restrictions should include all nonessential personnel.

"When I arrive at the scene I do a walk through to get an idea of equipment I will need," she said. "If it's a murder scene you can obtain a lot of information just by observing the body. Location of the body and any lividity can be important information in the solution of the crime. I usually take photos and fingernail scrapings."

Jackson has attended several autopsies. "I was a little nervous at the first one," she said. "But I found out you can learn a lot about the human body from an autopsy, but they aren't for the squeamish. The first one I went to the individual had been dead a long time and had turned green."

The Mount Holly Police Department will take advantage of Jackson's training by having her teach a class to local officers about keeping a crime scene uncontaminated.

She wants to advance her knowledge and skills in her specialty. "I'd like to be certified as a crime scene analyst. That comes from experience."

Jackson has been told to order any equipment she needs for the job. Smaller cities which have crime scene technicians can perform initial analysis, but when it comes to advanced analysis, the electron microscopes, spectrometers and other sophisticated equipment is located in Raleigh and Washington. She sometimes takes evidence to Raleigh, and she has toured the FBI facility in Washington.

If enthusiasm for the work is any indication, Jackson is going to be a topnotch crime scene technician.

BRIEFS

Jack King passes Florida bar exam

Jack D. King, son of Mrs. Ruth Ware King of Kings Mountain and the late City

Commissioner W. Norman King, passed the July 2002 Florida Bar Exam.

King plans to practice corporate law.

He is a 1971 graduate of Kings Mountain High

School and resides with his family in Oviedo, FL.

Amanda Mitchell earns scholarship

Amanda Renee Mitchell of Kings Mountain, daughter of Rhonda and Rob Nivens, has been awarded the North Carolina Nurse Scholars award to attend East Carolina University in Greenville.

Ms. Mitchell graduated from Kings Mountain High School.

Nurse Scholars recipients are selected by the Nurse Scholars Commission and are chosen based upon outstanding academic achievement, school and community involvement, and leadership potential. Ms. Mitchell's award is valued at \$20,000 over four academic years.

Local teacher attends seminar

Janice M. Sabetti of Kings Mountain, kindergarten teacher at Bethware Elementary School, recently attended a seminar at the North Carolina Center for the Advancement of Teaching.

Sabetti participated in "Teaching Social Studies Through Children's Literature," conducted by Tricia Cook, center fellow.

Part of the University of North Carolina, NCCAT provides a year-round series of residential seminars and teacher-scholar programs for teachers and professional development activities for teachers and staff in selected school systems. At the center, teachers engage in stimulating scholarly activities and professional networking to renew their vitality for teaching and learning.

Eight local organizations share KM tourism money

Eight organizations received parts of \$16,576.12 in grant money from the city's Kings Mountain Tourism Development Authority.

Two of the applicants are associated with the city.

The Kings Mountain Business and Professional Association was granted \$1,276.12.

Cross Walk, a yearly event during the Christian observance of Easter, got the largest share of the money at \$5,000.

The Kings Mountain Historical Museum was granted \$3,000.

The Kings Mountain Little Theater was granted \$1,500.

The Kings Mountain Mural Commission was granted \$2,300.

The Kings Mountain office of the Cleveland County Chamber received \$2,500.

The triathlon and a Gateway Arts Festival, which are sponsored by the city, received \$500 each.

KM WEATHER REPORT

(By Kenneth Kitzmiller)

	Sept. 18-24	Last Year
Total precip.	.72	.83
Max. 1 day	.34 (22nd)	.38 (19th)
Month to date	3.47	5.55
Year to date	27.69	37.71
Low temp.	64 (24th)	58 (18th)
High temp.	82 (19th)	85 (23rd)
Avg. temp.	66.9	71.3

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