

# KINGS MOUNTAIN The Herald

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## KM says CC water decision sets precedent

By ELIZABETH STEWART  
 Republic Newspapers

No county-wide tax will be implemented for Shelby and Cleveland County's amended plan to build a \$6 million, 36-inch water main for emergency unlimited water from the Big Broad River to Shelby.

The original plan, which evolved several weeks ago, was objected to strongly by Kings Mountain, and would have cost, as originally proposed, \$14 million.

Mayor Rick Murphrey said the county is setting a precedent by funding capital improvements with county tax dollars for one city. He said the county will not receive revenue from the investment and Shelby is prepared to use the Big Broad if the First Broad dries up and they need emergency water.

Kings Mountain County Commissioner Ronnie Hawkins said that Shelby needed a permanent solution to its water woes and was following the advice of engineers and the North Carolina Department of Environment Health and Natural Resources (NCDENR) suggestion to quickly pursue the Broad River option.

"Kings Mountain can only supply maximum of 3 million gallons a day of treated water and this would not serve all of Shelby's needs in event of a drought next summer," he said. Hawkins said no new right-of-way would have to be purchased by moving ahead to the Broad and engineers estimate the work can be done in nine months. He said Shelby has treatment capacity.

County commissioners last week unanimously gave the green light to the project but Hawkins said it was after the county staff presented a board-requested analysis of how much was spent for infrastructure in the Kings Mountain area during a period from 1979-2002. He said Kings

Mountain had more county-funded infrastructure than any other entity in the county.

But Councilman Gene White, a longtime retired Kings Mountain city employee, said the memo issued by the county is "totally misleading." He said Cleveland County run water, sewer and gas lines to various parts of the county and all county tax dollars go to the county. "Unless Kings Mountain incorporated one of these areas they got nothing but a marginal amount for water." White said a majority of the hundreds of employees who worked at the plants in the Kings Mountain area lived in the county and paid county taxes.

White said the memorandum that came to Kings Mountain officials under date of October 2 - and which the city responded to during their Monday night meeting - was "no more sound than the memo sent out on their water proposal to Kings Mountain, the sanitary district and Boiling Springs." He called it "a poor, ill conceived document" and said a true test of this water proposal will be determined when the project is done and citizens will see who pays for it.

According to the county commission action, the Shelby project will be funded by the Cleveland County Sanitary District, \$500,000, outside grants of \$2.4 million and the remaining cost of \$3.1 million will be divided between Shelby and the county. The current plan does not include funding for a pumping station or for money to Kings Mountain to help pay for expansion of the water treatment plant. Commissioners unanimously denied Kings Mountain's request for \$150,000 in engineering fees to match the amount Shelby received from the county. Kings Mountain City Council unanimously voted to oppose the original plan. See Water, 3A



## Battle of KM remembered

A large group of participants and visitors attended the 222nd anniversary celebration of the Battle of Kings Mountain Monday afternoon at Kings Mountain National Military Park. The York High School ROTC (top photo) leads a group of participants to the U.S. monument for a wreath laying celebration. A member of the Overmountain Victory Trail Association (right), which retraced the steps of the 1780 overmountain men from Abingdon, VA listens to the keynote address by Dr. Walter Edgar, author and director of the Institute for Southern Studies at the University of South Carolina. Photos by Gary Stewart



## Purchase of generators should mean no tax hike

By ELIZABETH STEWART  
 Republic Newspapers

If Kings Mountain's financial standing continues, as anticipated, Kings Mountain citizens will not see a property tax increase in next year's city budget.

Mayor Rick Murphrey and City Manager Jimmy Maney said the city is moving toward purchasing two used generators for the peak generation plant on York Road and revisit the city's proposed annexation area for a report to council at a future meeting. In a called meeting Monday night,

Council approved spending up to \$499,000 for two used generators which would give the City three generators at each of its two peak shaving stations.

"These peak generators on line will avoid a tax increase," said Murphrey.

Kings Mountain has two peak stations, one on Gaston Street and the other York Road. The purchase of the two additional generators will save the city over a million dollars a year in electricity costs," said Maney. "These are the kinds of things we continue to do to cut expenses and improve See No Tax, 2A

## City negotiating with Duke Power

The City of Kings Mountain is negotiating a new contract with Duke Power that could guarantee no increases in electric rates for four years.

Speaking to City Council in a special meeting Monday night, City Manager Jimmy Maney said the city's current contract with Duke Power will be up in December and that the proposed four-year contract being discussed now "would guarantee our existing rate for four years." See City, 3A

### KINGS MOUNTAIN PEOPLE

## Pastor spreads wings at First Presbyterian

By ELIZABETH STEWART  
 Republic Newspapers

The new pastor of First Presbyterian Church, Rev. Aaron Lee Thomas, 29, was ready "to spread his wings" and put the call to preach in the hands of The Lord.

In the short time he has been here, the newcomer to Kings Mountain says he is impressed with the friendliness of the people and looks forward to getting to know every member and in working in the community.

Currently commuting from his home in Union County, Lee is building a new home at Hall Crossing on Maner Road and is looking forward to furnishing it with some of his favorite musical instruments. He plays

piano and organ and, formerly sang with The Celebration Singers of Montreat College and toured with New Vibrations, a 52-member youth choir organized at Idlewild ARP Church in Charlotte.

One of his strong suits is his rapport and work with young people.

Lee and local youth director, Friar Dixon, have big plans in the works for young people, including possible mission trips, patterning the program



REV. LEE THOMAS

after experiences Lee had as associate pastor of Cook's Memorial Presbyterian Church in Charlotte. Thirteen young people and five adults built a house of concrete and stucco for a family in Mexico. They also shared their Christian witness.

"I had been in very poor communities before but never like Mexico," said Lee, who said people were living in houses made of cardboard boxes, an eye opening adventure and an incredible

experience for the group.

Lee and his youth group also went to Canada, Maryland, Texas, Virginia, among other states, and on beach retreats. In Thunder Bay near Lake Superior they led an outreach program, knocking on doors in the Canadian city to talk to young people about the gospel.

Lee felt the call to preach as a junior at Montreat College. He changed his major a couple of times before he accepted the call to go into full time Christian service as a minister of the gospel. He said he felt the Holy Spirit working in him but could not put off accepting the call to preach any longer.

A native of Charlotte, he

See Thomas, 3A

## Maney: County hasn't given KM one dollar

By GARY STEWART  
 Editor of The Herald

In a called meeting Monday night, Kings Mountain City Council expressed unanimous disagreement with a recent memo from Cleveland County Manager Lane Alexander that explained why the county turned down a request from the city to match a \$150,000 gift to Shelby to help run a water line from the Big Broad River for emergencies.

In his memo, Alexander explained that since 1979 about 62% of county funds for infrastructure have gone to the Kings Mountain utility systems.

But, in City Manager Jimmy Maney's response which was unanimously approved by Council, it was pointed out that the funds were given to run services to industries that are located outside the city limits; thus, the county - not the city - received See County, 5A



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