

KINGS MOUNTAIN The Herald

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A COSTNER CHRISTMAS



Grady Costner stands in front of one of his favorite Christmas creations - the carrousel - (top photo). Below, a new Peace on Earth scene that sits on his roof.

Costners' 'Little McAdenville' home to come aglow Thanksgiving night

BY ABIGAIL WOLFORD
Staff Writer

For the last ten years, the Midpines section near Kings Mountain has been getting a taste of modern art. No, Picasso has not come to town. Grady and Katie Costner have been putting up Christmas lights.

"We've always put up a few [lights]. Then it kept getting bigger and bigger. I retired and started making stuff," said Grady Costner. Now they probably have over 200,000 miniature lights on and around their house each year. The arch alone has 1,100-1,200, said Katie Costner.

"I used to count them, but I quit," she said.

They use seven breaker boxes for the lights, they said, and receive two power bills, one for the shop where they make the decorations and one for the house.

The Costners plan all year for their annual Christmas display. Grady Costner makes the forms in their workshop, while Katie Costner wraps them with lights. November normally finds them both in the yard, working like crazy to get all of the lights up.

"We're really just getting started putting it out," said Katie Costner. They start putting out the arches in September, but the big decorations don't come out until after Halloween, she said. This year she was not able to start as early as she would have liked because she had to have knee surgery.

For just beginning to put decora-

to the kids.

With all the lights and home-made decorations that adorn the house, the Costners have something to please everyone. A cartoon area will also be set up for the kids with famous cartoon characters, like Mickey Mouse, Barney and Scooby Doo. Toy soldiers and ice skaters will fill the yard, as well as a tree with boxes, fairies and rocking horses surrounding it. They also have a train set, said Katie Costner.

"We always try to add one box car each year, but it's going to have to stop. We're running out of space," she said.

For the religiously minded, they will have a full nativity scene, as well as a burning bush made out of flicker lights. The Grinch has his sleigh on the roof of the shop, right next to



tions up, though, they certainly have a full yard. Already thousands of strands of lights adorn the house and anything else that will stand still.

The lights will come on at 5:30 on Thanksgiving night, they said, and last until a few days after Christmas. Santa Claus will be there every night from 5:30-9:30 p.m., giving out candy

the real Santa Claus and his eight tiny reindeer. A life-size merry-go-round in lights also holds a prominent place on the front lawn. Angels adorn the roof beside Santa Claus, who appears to be getting ready to climb down the Costner's chimney. This year, they added an arch over
See Costner, 3A

It's official, hospitals are merged

By ELIZABETH STEWART
Republic Newspapers

It's a done deal! Kings Mountain Hospital and Cleveland Regional Medical Center will become Cleveland County Healthcare Systems January 1.

Directors of both boards finalized the merger Tuesday morning following also unanimous approval of trustee and advisory boards of both institutions.

With the new year citizens will see major changes at the local hospital possibly as early as the summer with ground-breaking for a major expansion to the emergency room and operating room. In addition, the entrance will be moved and the staff will get a New Year's gift with increased wages and benefits comparable to wages paid at the Shelby hospital. The construction project is estimated to cost \$8 million with \$4 million budgeted for 2003. Projects currently underway include some landscaping and cosmetic changes.

Current operating names of both Kings Mountain and Shelby hospitals will remain the same.

Architects drawings of the proposed 27,000 square foot two-floor addition were displayed in the local hospital conference room for the meetings of both boards.

In the lease agreement with Carolinas Healthcare Systems, Cleveland Regional has agreed to pay off and retire in full the general obligation bonds issued by the

See Hospital, 2A

'This is a historic moment for Cleveland County. Our hope and vision for Kings Mountain Hospital is exciting and robust.'

John Young
President, CRMC

Downtown murals to be lit December 5

ABIGAIL WOLFORD
Staff Writer

At 6 p.m. on Thursday, December 5, the city will celebrate the new downtown murals by lighting them. After that day, the lights will come on each night to draw attention to the murals, said Mayor Rick Murphrey. The public is invited to the ceremony.

"We'll have a lot of fun. We think that everyone will enjoy the murals even more when they're lit up," said Murphrey.

The murals are intended to draw in some of the people who stop near Kings Mountain to see the three parks, said Murphrey.

"Over 500,000 visitors come to the parks every year. Now we need to be able to have sites for visitors to come on into Kings Mountain. The murals will

be a great way to show off the sites of Kings Mountain," said Murphrey.

The extra visitors to the city each year would help strengthen the already strong economy in Kings Mountain as well. Plus the citizens of Kings Mountain will be able to enjoy looking at their heritage each time they drive downtown, bringing them a sense of community pride in their city's heritage.

"As a historical city, we need to have sites for people to observe," said Murphrey.

The murals will also serve as part of the revitalization effort in the downtown area, said Murphrey.

"It will assist in the revitalization of the downtown area. We look forward to bringing more murals into Kings Mountain," said Murphrey.

See Murals, 5A

KINGS MOUNTAIN PEOPLE

Bumgardner happiest when he sings

BY ABIGAIL WOLFORD
Staff Writer

Eugene Bumgardner comes from a musical family. He said he remembers all seven of his immediate family members singing together when he was a child. Three of the five children in the family majored in music in college. He was one of them.

Bumgardner has been the choir director at Kings Mountain High School for over 24 years. Bumgardner said he has always been

involved in music and has always wanted to be a choir director.

"I started piano when I was six. I sang in church always. I sang with my family," he said.

He said he was influenced in his decision to study music by his brother, who was also a musician; his high school choral director, Myrle McClure; and Dr. Glenn Draper of the Junaluska Singers.

Bumgardner graduated from Kings Mountain High
See Bumgardner, 3A



GENE BUMGARDNER

CAROLINAS CARROUSEL

Propst to represent KM in parade

Sarah Alicia Propst will represent Kings Mountain High School in the 55th Carolinas Carrousel Thanksgiving Day in Charlotte.

Propst is the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Alan Propst and is a senior at KMHS. The Carrousel parade begins at 1 p.m. and will be telecast at 4 p.m. on WBTV Channel 3.

This year's Grand Marshal is Charlotte Fire Chief Luther L. Fincher Jr. The Marching Cavaliers from East Burke High School in

Connelly springs will be the Honor Band.

The Pepsi Coronation and Awards Ceremony, which features the crowning of the new Carolinas' Carrousel Queen, will be held Wednesday, Nov. 27 at 7:45 p.m. at the Adams Mark hotel in Charlotte. Keynote speaker will be Dr. Pamela S. Lewis, newly installed President of Queen's University in Charlotte. Entertainment will be provided by the East Burke High band, and Yours Truly,

See Propst, 3A



SARAH PROPST



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