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Out with the old, in with new

New year sees more people getting in shape

BY ABIGAIL WOLFORD
 Staff Writer

The holiday season has ended, but the holiday pounds have not been packed away with the silver bells. With the new year, many people vow to lose weight.

Whether beginning their own walking or jogging routine or depending on local fitness centers, there seems to be an increase in the number of persons hoping to shed the extra pounds put on by Christmas and New Year's feasts.

"We've enrolled 125 new members in the last three weeks," said Kings Mountain YMCA Wellness Director Rosemary Sues. "Our goal is to retain at least half."

Suess said that people normally begin to stop coming to the YMCA in March, in part because the weather is nicer to exercise outside. However, some members stay throughout the year.

Chris Smith has been a member of the YMCA for two years. While he attends nursing school, he has to vary his workout hours each semester to work around his class schedule.

"I just started back coming [to the YMCA] several times a week. For the last few weeks, I've come on a regular basis," he said.

He should be able to come more regularly this semester, he said, because his schedule is not as demanding.
 See Shape, 3A



ABIGAIL WOLFORD / HERALD
 Chris Smith runs on the treadmill at the YMCA. Smith, a nursing student, works his exercise time around his class schedule each semester.

Homeland security touches KM

Police training program required by federal law

BY ABIGAIL WOLFORD
 Staff Writer

Homeland Security is not just an office in Washington. Kings Mountain also has a number of Homeland Security requirements to meet locally. Currently certain city police officers are going through the third and final training program now required by federal law.

The city already has a natural disaster response team, said Mayor Rick Murphrey. In addition to snow storms, hurricanes, and floods, the team is also trained to respond to major accidents on the freeway and train wrecks, said Murphrey. While the Homeland Security Training is required by law, it is actually just the next step in the process to protect the citizens of Kings Mountain, he said.

"The goal is to have adequate protection," said Murphrey. That protection will be available regardless of whether the problem is a snow storm, a train wreck, or bioterrorism, he said.

The Homeland Security training and implementation will take approximately another eight months to a year to complete, said Murphrey.

City officials are conducting vulnerability studies on the infrastructure of Kings Mountain to see where the problems that need to be addressed are. The vulnerability study will address the safety of the gas lines, pipelines, electric lines, and the water supply in Moss Lake. The vulnerability study, like the Homeland Security training, is required by law, said Police Chief Melvin

"The goal is to have adequate protection."
 Rick Murphrey
 Kings Mountain Mayor

Proctor. All cities have to go through it.

The training is given at three levels. The first two tiers, for executive officers like chiefs and sheriffs and mid-level management respectively, have already been given in Kings Mountain. The training for these two groups was conducted by the Federal Bureau of Investigation, State Bureau of Investigation, Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms, Immigration and Naturalization Service, U.S. Attorney's office, and the Governor's Crime Commission, said Proctor.

The third level of training for street-level officers will begin this month and will be conducted by the Academy of Counter Terrorism, said Proctor. The training will last until March, he said.

See Security, 3A

Relay for Life kickoff Monday

BY ABIGAIL WOLFORD
 Staff Writer

Each year Relay for Life raises millions of dollars for cancer research. Kings Mountain alone raised \$84,010.50 last year, helping Cleveland County rank sixth in the nation for per capita giving. As a whole, Cleveland County raised \$356,000 for cancer research.

This year, the Kings Mountain organizers hope to exceed that amount of money and earn \$100,000, said Dena Blalock, one of the chairs of this year's event.

The Relay for Life organizers are holding a kickoff party on Monday, January 13, at the senior center. Pre-registration will start at 5:30 p.m., while the program starts at 6. Blalock

said she is hoping for about a hundred people to come to the event.

The kickoff program will include a guest speaker, games, and light refreshments. Attendees are encouraged to show the "Power of Purple" by wearing purple, said Blalock. The new award to be given at the Relay for Life, called the "Spirit of the Relay" award, will also be discussed at the kick-off, said Dorothea Gonda, the publicity chair of the event.

The Kings Mountain Relay for Life will take place at the walking track on May 2 at 7 p.m. until noon the following day. Last year, 34 teams and 138 cancer survivors participated in the event. Teams are typically made up of five or more people, said Blalock. She encouraged the public to go ahead and start forming teams for the event now.

Team packets will be handed out at the kickoff.

Walkers usually include cancer survivors, friends and family members of both survivors and those who lost their lives to cancer, and interested community members. Many times, organizations, churches, and businesses form teams to walk in the relay. During the relay, entertainment and information about cancer research is usually provided.

The Kings Mountain chapter of Relay for Life is named after the late Joseph R. Smith, the very first person in Kings Mountain to walk for 24 hours to raise money for research for cancer, said Blalock. He started the relay in Kings Mountain, she said.

For more information, contact Dena Blalock at (704) 739-1564.

KINGS MOUNTAIN PEOPLE

Steve Killian right at home in small town

By ABIGAIL WOLFORD
 Staff Writer

On December 26, Steve Killian will celebrate his seventh anniversary with the city of Kings Mountain. He came to Kings Mountain in 1995 as director of planning and economic development.

As a child, he used to visit the Kings Mountain National Park.

"My first remembrance of Kings Mountain is going there," he said.

Born in Taylorsville, Killian said he has lived all up and down the Piedmont, including Cleveland, Stony Point, Blowing Rock, and Boone. He attended UNC-Chapel Hill to major in geography and then Appalachian State for his

Master's in geography. Geography is the study of the arrangement and relationship of physical places, he said. His study of geography naturally led him to an interest in how various elements of a small city worked together, he said.

"I was very interested in planning and in particularly how small cities operated," he said. He said he liked studying how the various elements of a city, like the transportation and industry,



STEVE KILLIAN

work together. It only made sense that he pursued a career in city planning.

Before he came to Kings Mountain, Killian said he worked as a planning director in Lincoln County. When the job in Kings Mountain became available, Killian said he applied and was hired. He said he likes working in

small cities.

"It's a good thing in terms of profession to work in a small city. It has the quality of life that everyone is seeking.

People want the opportunities and conveniences without the overbearing stress you might have in a metropolitan area," he said.

He said he has especially enjoyed working with Kings Mountain city officials, like the mayor, council members, and committee members, because everyone is very eager to help Kings Mountain grow and develop into a place with a high quality of life.

"It's nice to be part of a group of people who want improvements for the city and who are willing to work for them," he said. "They strive to make meaningful improvements to the city of Kings Mountain."

See Killian, 3A

Police allege man left kids in car to play poker

A Gastonia man is scheduled to go to trial Monday, January 13 on accusations that he left children in his car for five hours while he was playing video poker machines at a Kings Mountain business.

Cpl. J.C. Shull of KMPD arrested Jeffrey Scott Mews, 42, of 412 S. Emerson Street, Gastonia, on two counts of misdemeanor child abuse at 9:04 p.m. on New Year's Eve.

According to Shull's report, Mews is accused of leaving children and a girlfriend who is "mentally handicapped" inside a car while he was playing video machines at Little Dan's, 1233 S. Battleground Avenue.

According to Shull's report, they were "left unattended in car for five hours without any type of involvement or food."

Mews was jailed under a \$5,000 secured bond.



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