

# The Herald

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Thursday, February 13, 2003

Vol. 115 No. 7

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## Accor to fill new position in schools

By GARY STEWART  
 Editor of The Herald

Bethware Principal Mary Accor was appointed to the new position of Director of Administrative Services for Kings Mountain Schools at



Monday night's School Board meeting at Central School.

The promotion becomes effective

ACCOR July 1.

In addition, the School Board appointed three new principals and extended the contracts of current principals, assistant principals and directors. Their contracts will be extended from July 1, 2003 until June 30, 2007.

New principals will be Valerie Boyd, Bethware; Gary Blake, West; and Janet Anthony Grover. Current Grover Principal Jackie Lavender and current West Principal Mike Rhoney will be retiring on June 30.

Persons who were awarded four-year extensions on their contracts were:

Sheila Sisk, Director of Career and Technical Education;

Ethel Pedersen, principal of Kings Mountain Intermediate School;

Susie Wray, assistant principal at Grover School;

Bob Grigg, principal of Davidson School;

Phil Weathers, Director of Student Support Services;

John Goforth, Executive Director of Instruction;

Ronny Funderburke, assistant principal of Kings Mountain High School;

John Yarbrow, principal of Kings Mountain High School;

Lynda Stewart, principal of Kings Mountain Middle School;

Mickey Powers, assistant principal of Kings Mountain Middle School; and,

Dave Greene, assistant principal of Kings Mountain High School.

See Accor, 3A

## ALONG FOR THE RIDE-



GARY STEWART / HERALD  
 4-month-old Miyana Brice is pushed around the Kings Mountain walking track by her godmother, Miranda Logan

## Council votes to consider annexation of Shelby Road

BY ABIGAIL WOLFORD  
 Staff Writer

On Monday evening, Kings Mountain City Council members voted to consider annexing a section of Shelby Road. The area consists of approximately 500-600 acres, which is less than a square mile.

The meeting consisted of a presentation by John Witherspoon, of Benchmark, Inc., and a vote by City Council.

Council members voted 5-1 to adopt a resolution to consider the annexation, with Carl DeVane dissenting and Rick Moore absent. Even with the affirmative vote, nothing is set in stone yet, said Mayor Rick Murphrey. The city is simply considering the annexation. The public will have its chance to speak out on the issue before any

final decisions are made.

A public informational meeting has been set for March 31 at 7 p.m. City officials will share plans for extending services to the annexed area at the meeting and will answer questions from both Kings Mountain citizens and residents of the proposed area of annexation.

A public hearing has also been set for April 11 at 7 p.m. Plans for extending the services of the city to the residents of the proposed annexation area will again be discussed, and the public will be given a chance to voice concerns regarding the annexation. Both meetings will take place at City Hall.

The report on service extension plans, as

See Council, 2A

## No decision in school merger case

By GARY STEWART  
 Editor of The Herald

No decision was rendered by the North Carolina Court of Appeals in the Kings Mountain school merger case Wednesday.

Kings Mountain's appeal against the State Board of Education's approval of the Cleveland County merger plan was heard by a three-judge panel composed of judges James A. Wynn Jr., Patricia Timmons-Goodson and Eric Levinson.

The judges heard attorneys representing KM District Schools and the State Board of Education, and said they would make their decision at a later date.

The hearing could be the final step in the merger fight, which began more than three years ago after Cleveland County Commissioners approved a plan to merge the Kings Mountain, Shelby and Cleveland County systems. The plan did not include 184 students who live in the Gaston County portion of the Kings Mountain city limits so KMDS and a group of parents filed suit to stop the merger, claiming the county commissioners did not follow State law in drawing up the plan.

The State School Board approved the plan on June 1, 1999. Kings Mountain then filed action against that board and the matter has been held up in court ever since.

According to KM's attorneys, Brian Shaw and Richard Schwartz of Raleigh, if there is a split decision in the Court of Appeals the losing side can appeal to the State Supreme Court. However, if the vote is 3-0, the decision can be appealed but the Supreme Court can choose not to hear it.

If Kings Mountain loses its case - which it has in every other appeal so far - the Civil Rights division of the U.S. Justice Department would have to preclear the merger. That decision could

take up to 60 days.

Kings Mountain Superintendent Larry Allen said he was pleased with the way Wednesday's hearing went.

"The judges listened intently and from the questions they asked we knew they had prepared themselves as far as reviewing other cases' transcripts," he said. "We feel very comfortable that they were giving us a fair hearing."

Kings Mountain's attorneys indicated that NC Court of Appeals decisions usually take about 90 days, but it could take longer because of a backlog of cases in that court, Allen said.

Among those attending the hearing was School Board member Mike Smith, a Gaston County resident who was elected to the School Board in November 2001. Kings Mountain hopes the fact that a Gaston County resident was elected to the Board will carry some weight in the judges' decision.

Although there has never been any State legislative action to make the Gaston County portion of the KM city limits a part of Kings Mountain District Schools, Allen said KMDS has been receiving per pupil expenditures for the Gaston students for more than 35 years.

"Our attorneys checked all of the books and closets and files in Raleigh, and there was no legislative action that took place," he said. "But all of this goes back to when Don Jones first became superintendent here. They worked through the school board attorney and the State Controllers Office, and the State Controller sought counsel from the Attorney General office, and it was determined by the Attorney General's representative at that time that the (Gaston) students were Kings Mountain students. So Gaston County started sending the money."

## KINGS MOUNTAIN PEOPLE

## Proctor versatile policewoman

BY ABIGAIL WOLFORD  
 Staff Writer

Being a woman has its advantages for Detective Sergeant Lisa Proctor, Child and Sexual Abuse Investigator for Kings Mountain. She is able to relate to her clients more easily than she would be able to as a man, she said. Recently Proctor was named Child Abuse Investigator of the Year by four-county Region C Law Enforcement Association.

Proctor was originally put in the narcotics division of the police department, but she was given the additional job, partly because she is a woman, she said. As a woman, she often has an easier time getting

children and victims of sexual abuse to talk to her than a uniformed male officer would, she said.

She said she investigated approximately 15-20 cases of child and sexual abuse last year, but not all of them turned out to be legit. One of her jobs as an investigator is to determine the truth in a situation. She said her job is not to prove that someone is guilty or not but to find the truth.

Reports of child abuse are initially made by the victim or by social services, said Proctor. Officers could also notice something unusual about the child and notify social services of the problem. Anonymous reports also come in occasionally, but she said she has no

power to investigate those claims. The anonymous reports are passed on to social services, which investigates the claims and notify the police if they find problems.

When a report of abuse comes in, Proctor said an officer immediately files and incidence report. If the allegation occurred recently, the department immediately contacts her, she said. Otherwise, she looks at the report when she returns to the office.

"Child abuse is a hard thing to investigate. I'm human just like anybody else, but no personal feelings can creep in. The hardest part is trying not to get involved personally."

See Proctor, 3A



LISA PROCTOR

## Deal guarantees KM Schools will cut energy costs

By GARY STEWART  
 Editor of The Herald

Kings Mountain Board of Education Monday night voted to enter into a contract with Energy Education, Inc. to reduce energy costs in Kings Mountain District Schools.

The system will pay the company \$69,000 per year for four years in return for what the firm promises to be \$1,203,467 in energy savings over a seven-year period.

The company offers a guarantee that if the projected energy savings are not met in each year of the agreement, it will reimburse the school system the difference. The projected savings in the first year is \$74,000.

Glenn Gaines of EEI said the company has been in business for 17 years and has a sound track record with 486 school districts in 44 states. During those 17 years, he said the company has written

See Deal, 3A



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