

# The Herald

KINGS MOUNTAIN

Thursday, March 13, 2003

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## 1st grader with knife suspended for a day

By GARY STEWART  
Editor of The Herald

A Grover Elementary School first grader was suspended for one day last week for taking a small pocketknife on a school bus.

Principal Jackie Lavender said the knife looked like a toy, but actually had a "one to one-half inch" blade in it.

She said, legally, the knife would not be considered a weapon but it is considered a weapon in the Kings Mountain District School's "zero tolerance" weapons policy. Because of that, a report had to be filed with the Cleveland County Sheriff's Department and it will go on the school's State Violence Report.

Lavender said the incident was the first weapons incident of the year at the school. She said the school normally has about one case a year of a child bringing a pocketknife to school.

The child apparently showed the knife to some other kids on the bus, she said.

"He said his daddy knew he had it, but I'm not so sure about that," she said. "His mother said they did not know he had it. It looked like a toy, but it actually had a little short blade that flipped out just like a toy."

## Left turn to be eliminated at Highway 74 bypass bridge

By GARY STEWART  
Editor of The Herald

The North Carolina Department of Transportation will soon eliminate the westbound left turn at the Business 74/Bypass 74 bridge near Bethware School.

Cardinal Construction, Inc. of Indian Trail has been awarded the \$30,000 project that should begin around April 1 and be completed by May 1.

According to Ron Humphries, DDC Engineer with the Division of Highways, elimination of the turn is due to the heavy volume of traffic and accidents at the bridge.

Humphries said a recent 3-year study revealed that there were five crashes at the site. Since the study, there have been more crashes, including one fatality.

When the project is complete, all westbound traffic on Business 74 will have to go around the right-turn loop to gain entrance to Bypass 74 West. East-bound traffic from State Road 1001 will continue to turn right to gain access to Bypass 74 West.

Concrete traffic islands will be constructed to prevent motorists from making an illegal turn.

During the construction period, the NC Highway Patrol will be monitoring the area to ensure safety of workers and the motoring public.

See Left Turn, 10A

### SWINGING INTO SPRING



GARY STEWART / HERALD  
Destiny, left, and Allie Washington took advantage of Tuesday's warm, sunny weather to get in some play time at the Kids Playground at Jake Early Sports Complex.

## KM Council begins work on budget

BY ABIGAIL WOLFORD  
Staff Writer

The Kings Mountain City Council held a special meeting on Tuesday evening to discuss the budget for 2003-2004. At the work session, the Council members listened and asked questions as Interim City Manager Jimmy Maney and Finance Director Lori Hall presented on the proposed budget.

Maney commended the Council for under-spending the 2002-2003 budget in every area except for natural gas so far. The cost of natural gas jumped dramatically at the end of February. The Council has not been dipping into the fund balances at all, said Maney.

"Your company, so to speak, is looking good," he told the Council members. "In the bad economic situations nationwide, we're in good shape."

The new budget includes no tax or utility increases for citizens, something that Maney, Mayor Rick Murphrey, and all the Council members praised during the meeting.

"If there's a city around that can make this statement, let me know, and I'll come out of retirement,"

See Budget, 10A

## City to begin interviewing for manager

BY ABIGAIL WOLFORD  
Staff Writer

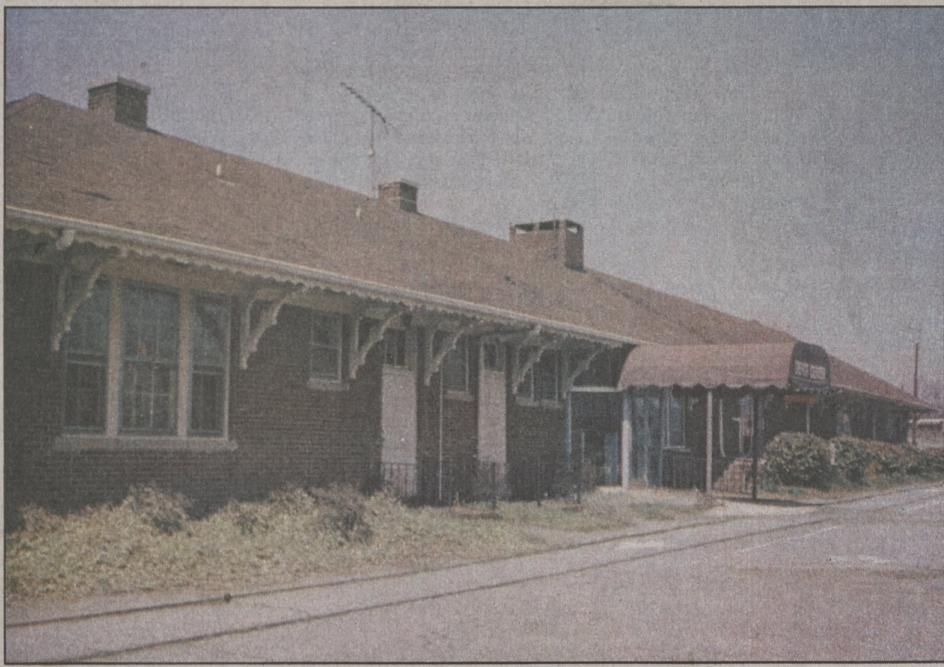
City Council members held another closed session on Tuesday evening to discuss the city manager applications. Although no decision has been made yet, they have managed to narrow down the number of candidates, said Mayor Rick Murphrey.

Less than ten candidates for the position are left, he said. Now the Council will start calling the remaining candidates for interviews, he said. Hopefully, the Council will choose a new city manager by June or sooner, he said.

"This is just part of an ongoing, continuing process," he said.

The current city manager, Jimmy Maney, retired effective December 31, but he agreed to stay on as interim city manager until his replacement is chosen.

The city advertised the position in many state and See Manager, 3A



ABIGAIL WOLFORD / HERALD  
The old depot is being converted into a n arts center by the Southern Arts Society, with the help of the community.

## Old depot where soldiers once said bye to become home of Southern Arts Society

BY ABIGAIL WOLFORD  
Staff Writer

The old depot has seen a lot during its time in Kings Mountain. It has seen soldiers off to war and then home again. It has seen Presidents and other politicians on their way through Kings Mountain. It held the senior citizens of the area for approximately 25 years. Now, it is going to hold art.

The City Council voted in December to lease the depot to the Southern Arts Society. At the February meeting, they voted to

spend \$30,000 to fix the roof of the building. The new roof is needed to keep the building safe, said Pat Childers, fundraising chair of the Southern Arts Society. The original depot roof collapsed.

Once the city finishes the new roof and ceiling, Childers said the society will need to redo the floors of the building and paint. They also plan to furnish it eventually. They will redo the yard around the building as well.

Once it is finished the depot will house a children's gallery and an adult gallery, as well as a library of art books, said Johnnie Reavis,

treasurer of the Southern Arts Society.

"We need all the help we can get," said Childers. "We know we're going to have to do a lot of the work ourselves." She said in addition to monetary donations, the group also needs people who are willing to donate their time to help with the project. The whole building needs to be completely cleaned before any of the other renovation can be done, she said.

The goal of the group is to keep the building as historical as possible, said Childers. Most of the See Depot, 3A

### KM PEOPLE

## White just loves to help K. Mountain

BY ABIGAIL WOLFORD  
Staff Writer

For 27 years, Raeford White, Jr. has been serving Kings Mountain as a reserve officer in the police department. For 25 years, he served as a volunteer reserve officer.

Recently, Region C honored him with an award for his service.

White was named Reserve Officer of the Year for Region C for 2002 at an awards ceremony at the end of January. Region C is made up of Cleveland, Rutherford, Polk, and McDowell Counties. White said he was very honored to get the award.

White has served on the reserves part-time since 1976. Whenever the police department is short on help, they call him, he said. Mostly he does patrol, although for a little over a year, he was part of a team that dealt with license checks, surveillance, and search warrants to find drug dealers and users.

He works approximately 24 hours each week for the police department. Until two years ago, White was strictly a volunteer. Now the reserve members get paid a little bit, he said.

Although he enjoys law enforcement, White worked full-time for Carolina Freight in Cherryville until he retired in September, 2001. He said the pay and benefits were better with Carolina Freight, so he never pursued a full-time law enforcement position.

See White, 3A



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