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## KM fire called suspicious

By GARY STEWART  
 Editor of The Herald

An Easter Sunday morning fire at a duplex apartment at 315 Wilson Terrace caused extensive damage and is being investigated as a suspicious fire.

According to Kings Mountain Police and Fire Department officials, the fire was noticed by a neighbor about 2:25 a.m.

Fire Chief Frank Burns said when firemen arrived at the scene two rooms were fully engulfed in flames.

"The neighbors were telling us the tenant's car was home, so we went in and did a preliminary search," he said. "We didn't find anybody but we found a cat, a bird and a dog. We saved the dog but the cat and bird didn't make it."

Burns said firemen and the County Fire Marshal found "two points of origin," one in the living room and one in the front bedroom.

Since no accidental cause could be determined, Burns said the fire was ruled as suspicious.

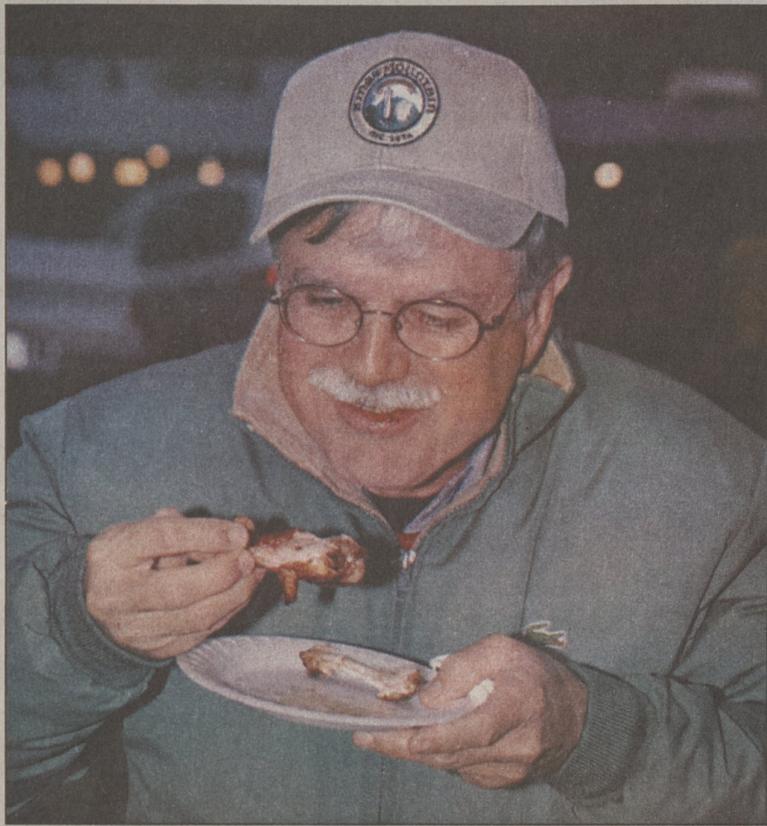
"Because it was a duplex apartment and the other apartment was occupied, it will be a first degree arson charge if we find out who did it," Burns said.

Burns estimated damage to the structure at \$25,000 to \$30,000 and damage to the contents at \$10,000 to \$15,000.

In his report, KMPD Ptl. P.M. King said the owner, Joana Richardson, arrived home while firemen were working on the fire. After talking with Richardson and neighbors, police came up with leads on a suspect.

Sgt. Chris Moore, who is heading the investigation for KMPD, said the fire cannot be considered arson at this time but the department is "still working on a suspect" and hopes to know more in about a week.

## MAYOR'S CHOICE



Mayor Rick Murphrey enjoys barbecued chicken during "Anything But" judging Friday night at the Kings Mountain Walking Track.

GARY STEWART / HERALD

## Rain doesn't dampen spirit at KM Firehouse Cook-Off

By GARY STEWART  
 Editor of The Herald

The rain which pounded the ground most of last week and the heavy trucks and campers hauling cookers into the walking track infield created a muddy mess for last weekend's seventh annual Firehouse Cook-off at the Kings Mountain Walking Track.

But the cooking competition was as good as ever, and after judges sampled all the barbecued pork, beef and chicken Hickory Knoll Cookers of Franklin, NC was crowned Grand Champion and earned the right to receive an invitation to the prestigious Jack Daniels Invitational Cook-off in Lynchburg, TN.

Defending Grand Champion Roadrunners BBQ of Shelby was declared Reserve Grand Champion.

Thirty-eight teams from as far away as Seattle, WA competed for \$5,000 in prizes and trophies and helped raise over \$2,000 for a thermal imaging camera for the Kings Mountain fire and police departments.

Firemen worked around the clock Friday and Saturday to pull the event off, and Fire Chief Frank Burns was overjoyed with the success.

"The rain was a hamper to the cooking teams about getting in their spots," he said. "We had a few vehicles stuck up, and we have a little repair work to do at the waling track. It was only the second time in seven years that it's rained on us. But the cooking was as good as ever."

Burns said firemen and other city workers will be busy over the next several days filling in the ruts, because the annual

See Cook-Off, 5A

## Ebenezer, deputies face drug problem

### Meeting Friday to discuss battle plan

By GARY STEWART  
 Editor of The Herald

A small group of residents in the Ebenezer Community north of Kings Mountain hope to persuade everyone in the community to join them and the Cleveland County Sheriff's Department to rid the community of drug dealers.

A meeting is scheduled for Friday, April 25 at 6 p.m. at Ebenezer Baptist Church to discuss the drug situation and what can be done. The church is located on Highway 216 north just outside the Kings Mountain city limits.

William Roberts, a long-time resident of the community, said a small group of residents have already had some meetings and hopes by organizing an effort with the Sheriff's Department they can be "eyes and ears" in the community.

Sheriff Raymond Hamrick and Det. Joel Shores, head of the Sheriff Department's Narcotics Division, said drugs are a big problem in the community.

Hamrick and Shores said the Sheriff's Department put a concentrated effort into running drug dealers out of the Light Oak Community near Moss Lake about a year ago, and some of them probably have relocated to Ebenezer.

"When we had a COP program out there several years ago drugs were cut out pretty good," Hamrick said. "But the COP program

was cut out and changed to a traffic control division and we're trying to get officers back in that community."

Shores said sometimes efforts to rid one community of drugs results in an increase of activity in other communities.

"Sometimes what we end up doing is moving them from one place to another," he said, "but we're going to keep the pressure on them. If we move them out of Ebenezer they'll move somewhere else. We just have to keep the pressure on them and do what we have to do for the citizens of Cleveland County. We'd like to get rid of the problem completely, but it is U.S.-wide and that has to come from higher powers. We have to get it at the source, Colombia being one of the main sources."

Shores cited numerous drug-related arrests in the Ebenezer community since 1995, and he said numerous other crimes such as house burglaries and armed robberies are the result of drugs.

"Drug use leads to every kind of crime imaginable," he said. "If you take a crack head who is desperate for a rock they'll do whatever it takes, whether it's robbing a convenience store or bank...it's unlimited. If they need money they will steal and rob and that can lead to murder if a robbery goes bad."

Shores said the drug of choice in Cleveland County now appears to be methamphetamine, known on the street as speed, meth and crack.

He said "street interdiction" officers within the department will be introduced to the community during Friday's meeting and they will discuss ways city

See Drug, 3A

## Law requires diabetic students to be given insulin at school

### Board approves Ready, Set, Grow

BY ABIGAIL WOLFORD  
 Staff Writer

On Monday evening, Kings Mountain Board of Education members unanimously approved the plans for the Ready, Set, Grow program this summer.

The program is for kids getting ready to start kindergarten in the fall who may not have ever been in a classroom-type situation. The program is meant to help prepare them for what they will face in the fall. The kids are screened to see who would most benefit from the program. The Ready, Set, Grow program is free for all of the students and their families.

The program takes place at three sites with two teachers for a period of 17 days. Parents may also attend parenting classes for a few days while their children participate in the Ready, Set, Grow program.

Statistics show that the program is successful, said John Goforth, executive director of curriculum and instruction with Kings Mountain District Schools.

Approximately 93 percent of the 31 remaining third graders who participated in the

See Ready, 3A

BY ABIGAIL WOLFORD  
 Staff Writer

North Carolina legislators recently passed a law requiring schools to have students with type 1 diabetes carry their insulin injection supplies with them.

Kings Mountain has five type 1 diabetes students in its school system, said Diana Bridges, school nurse, at the board of education meeting on Monday evening. Not all of them need injections at school; however, some have to check their blood glucose levels throughout the day. Traditionally, their supplies have been kept in the health room, but the new law states that they have to keep their supplies with them at all times.

Elementary students will be able to keep their supplies in a closet in the classroom; however, older kids who have to change classes will have to carry their supplies with them.

Bridges said she has not yet spoken to the parents about the new law. All those who work at the schools, including the maintenance staff, must be trained to handle situations with the diabetic children if the needs arises. Their training will last approximately 15-20 minutes.

Schools will also have to identify someone, probably the child's teacher for the year, as a first responder. First responders

See Law, 3A



Rev. Dale Swofford, who played Joseph of Arimathea, leads the crowd through the last few days of Jesus' life on earth in CrossWalk performance in downtown Kings Mountain.

ABIGAIL WOLFORD / HERALD

## CrossWalk brings Easter story to life

BY ABIGAIL WOLFORD  
 Staff Writer

CrossWalk battled rain and cold this year, but this past weekend those involved were able to bring the Easter story to life to the hundreds who came anyway.

"It went great when it went," said Reg Alexander, one of the organizers of CrossWalk. "We spent a lot of time looking at radars on the internet."

CrossWalk was delayed a week because of rain during the original week it was supposed to take place. However, organizers had sunny weather to build their sets. Despite the threats of rain and the cool weather, they were able to draw more than 1,000 people to the event last weekend, said Alexander.

Alexander said that participants in CrossWalk spent much time praying for the rains to be held off until it was over. The rain was indeed held off, although Alexander said he has heard reports that it was raining all around Kings Mountain on Thursday and Friday.

The Saturday crowds exceeded what the organizers had planned for,

See Walk, 3A



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