

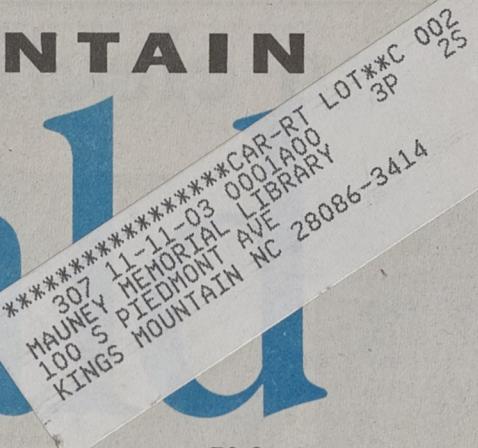
KINGS MOUNTAIN The Herald

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Since 1889

50 Cents



Reading program celebrates success

1B



Bethware Fair family tradition

BY ANDIE L. BRYMER
Staff Writer

Giant strawberries that spin round and round, funnel cakes and cotton candy, games with stuffed animals as the prize, it's a kid's paradise also known as the Bethware Fair.

The 56th annual fair started Monday night and runs through Saturday on the Bethware Elementary campus.

Sponsored by the Bethware Progressive Club, the event raises funds for the school and other community projects.

Kay Franklin and her husband Randy watched their granddaughter Bailey Kenna Tate ride the Bumble Bee Boop. As the little girl went round and round inside the giant yellow and black bee, the grandmother reflected on the fair.

"I've been coming since I was 13," Franklin said. "It's gotten larger, more interesting."

Though she has missed a few years, she and her husband come more now that they are grandparents.

"Just watching the kids," Randy Franklin named as his favorite part.

Across the midway, Eddie Baines tossed a dart, trying to win a stuffed animal for Darlene McPheters. The pair have attended the last four or five years. Both say the food - hotdogs, candied apples and homemade ice cream - is the best part of the whole event.

Ron Heller watches both his games, the Balloon Store and One Ball. This is the second year at Bethware for Heller who is part of Smokey Mountain Amusements.

"It was good here last year. The people are real nice, treat us well," he said.

Shane Adams brought daughter Haley out to the fair to see the livestock. The two were

See Fair, 3A



ANDIE L. BRYMER/HERALD
Ethan Davis climbs the wall during the Bethware Fair. Ethan and his family are visiting from England.

Beach Blast Saturday in Kings Mountain

Kings Mountain will celebrate summer Saturday with its annual Beach Blast.

Opening ceremonies began at 11 a.m. at Patriots Park.

"We would like for everybody to come. We'll all have a good time," said Mayor Rick Murphrey.

At 11:15 a.m. kids ages newborn through six can show off their beach ware during the Teenie Weenie Bikini Contest.

Trophies will be awarded in

four categories - newborns to age three and ages four through six, both boys and girls.

There is a \$5 entry fee. For more information, call 704-739-0441.

Family members of the 505th North Carolina National Guard Unit will be honored at noon. Kids will be invited to release balloons with soldiers' names.

Crimson Rose will play at 1 p.m.

Kids can cool off in the spray

from a fire hydrant at 1 p.m. when officials open it up.

Antique fire truck rides start at 3 p.m. A beach ball release follows at 3:45 p.m.

The Magic 96 Band of Gold plays at 4 p.m. A watermelon eating contest is sponsored for this time also.

Tethered hot air balloon rides began at 5 p.m. Sponsored by Summit Place, rides are free for the first 150 participants.

Harley Davidson motorcycles

roar into town at 6 p.m. Awards will be presented to choice bikes.

At 7 p.m. events in the park and gazebo area wrap up. At 7:30 p.m. streets around city hall will be closed. The parking lot will be turned into an amphitheater.

Billy Scott and the Prophets will play at 8 p.m. kicking off the summer concert series. The free event ends at 11 p.m.

Sports legends remembered in KM History Museum display

BY ANDIE L. BRYMER
Staff Writer

What do New York Yankee Tony Cloninger, Kevin Mack of Clemson and Cleveland Browns football, and L.A. Laker James Worthy have in common? All are from this region.

The famous trio and many more local sports legends are featured in an exhibit that opens today at the Kings Mountain Historical Museum.

"It's amazing to me how many professional athletes come from this area," said curator Mickey Crowell.

Uniforms, autographed balls and photos, biographies and statistics of players from Cleveland, Gaston, Lincoln and Rutherford counties will be on display through October 12.

Crowell readily admits sports memorabilia is not what most folks expect to see at a museum.

"I hope people will enjoy it. It will bring in a different visitor group," she said.

Crowell, whose father named her after baseball great Mickey Mantle, enjoyed putting the exhibit together. She called sports reporters across the region, talked to friends of players and former coaches.

"It's been a fun exhibit to pull together," she said.

See Sports, 3A



ANDIE BRYMER / HERALD
Margrave Mill baseball uniforms are part of an exhibit opening today at the Kings Mountain History Museum.



GENE ATKINS

KINGS MOUNTAIN PEOPLE

FINDING HISTORY

Providing grave stones mission for Gene Atkins

By ANDIE BRYMER
Staff Writer

GROVER - If Gene Atkins had it his way, every deceased veteran's grave would have a head stone. The Grover man has worked for the past four years to put stones on his ancestors' graves. He also helps others with the work.

"They need to be honored," Atkins said of veterans.

What has become a mission for Atkins started four years ago. Shortly after his father's death, Atkins started searching for family history.

"I just wanted to find out where I came from," he said.

The search meant Atkins began making more frequent visits to Yancey County where many of his ancestors were from. While visiting, he met Thelma Adkins Whitson, 84. The elderly

See Atkins, 3A



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