

KINGS MOUNTAIN The Herald

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Apartment project gets new life

Construction tax credit approved

BY ANDIE L. BRYMER
Staff Writer

Construction will begin in December or January on a 56 unit apartment complex on Kings Mountain Boulevard, developers say. The time table was set after the state Housing Finance Agency announced last week it will give Eagan Partners a \$391,557 construction tax credit.

Gaye Morgan, a spokesperson for Eagan, called the announcement the "third and

final hurdle" for the project.

With the tax credit in place, the company only has to borrow \$1.407 million to finance the project, according to Morgan.

"We're able to ask for much lower rents," she said.

The two bedroom units will rent for \$360 to \$580 and the three bedroom units for between \$400 and \$610. According to Morgan, this is \$200 below market rates.

While some area residents have criticized See Project, 3A

Water line nears completion

BY ANDIE L. BRYMER
Staff Writer

As completion nears on a water main extension project, city council must decide how much if any to reimburse a local developer.

Jim Testa, owner of Kings Mountain Truck Plaza, is asking the city for between \$20,000 and \$22,000 in reimbursement for the line. The water line runs to the area around the truck plaza located at the intersection of I-85

and Dixon School Road.

Neither Testa nor Kings Mountain City Manager Phil Ponder have been able to locate any written agreements nor any record of verbal agreements between Testa and the city. Ponder was not the city manager when talks began on the project.

"Apparently Mr. Testa moved forward after discussing it with the utility commission," Ponder said.

Testa's truck plaza is outside the city limit See Water, 3A

Outdoor drama possible

BY ANDIE L. BRYMER
Staff Writer

Valdese, Cherokee, Boone and Manteo all have outdoor dramas. Kings Mountain could soon be added to that list.

In September, the Kings Mountain Little Theatre will see if area residents are interested in a drama. The organization will mail surveys to between 3,000 and 5,000 people.

The survey will gauge interest in volunteering with or watching the drama; should tax money generated through tourism be used or should only private money be used; are other outdoor dramas visited and where should the drama be produced.

"We're looking at a fairly brief survey," said Jim Champion. He is project director for the survey.

The theatre will use its own mailing list and will get names from the Cleveland County Arts Council.

According to Champion, a drama could entice national park visitors to stay overnight in Kings Mountain.

"This could stimulate some downtown businesses," he said.

The little theatre sponsored two outdoor dramas, "Sword of Gideon" and "Then Conquer We Must" in the 1950s. "Conquer" was revised in the late 1970s during the town's centennial.

Champion credited city councilman Carl DeVane and events coordinator Ellis Noell for renewing the effort to once again have a historical drama in Kings Mountain.

TRAIL BOSS



Paul Carson is stationed at Kings Mountain National Military Park

ANDIE BRYMER / HERALD

Paul Carson oversees marking of Overmountain Victory Trail

BY ANDIE L. BRYMER
Staff Writer

While most national park superintendents oversee one large land mass, Superintendent Paul Carson's responsibility stretches for 330 miles through portions of four states. Carson is superintendent of the Overmountain Victory Trail.

Carson works out of an office at Kings Mountain National Military Park.

"They've been gracious enough to allow space," he said.

While the trail was established by federal legislation in 1980, a full time staff member was not assigned until last year. Before that Rick Sussman coordinated the trail project on a limited basis from a National Park Service office in Atlanta.

"I think we're fully committed to full time management of this trail now," Carson said.

Carson, who has been with the National Park Service for 27 years, was chief ranger at DeSoto National Memorial in Florida before coming to South

Carolina.

While developing a trail-style park is different than his last job, Carson is happy.

"It's an unusual approach to parks... I enjoy all the contacts I make," he said.

Communication is vital to Carson's job. Unlike most parks, NPS does not own the majority of land covered by the trail. Instead, it is entering into agreements with non-profit organizations, other government agencies and private individuals See Carson, 3A

Riddle Fabrics faces closing, STI expanding

BY ANDIE L. BRYMER
Staff Writer

While one Kings Mountain textile plant may be shutting its doors, another is expanding.

Riddle Fabrics is seeking a buyer but if none come forward, the company will shut its doors soon. The small label making plant located on Second Street employees six people.

Ralph Hinson, who owns the plant along with three other partners, said that if no buyer is found, the plant will close in the near future.

Sales of labels are down because most products are shipped into this country already labeled, he said.

"There is a market though not like it used to be," Hinson said.

For information on purchasing the plant, call Hinson at 828-464-4743.

Speciality Textiles, Inc. is expanding its facility by 55,000 square feet.

Located on Marie Street, the company hopes to have the expansion completed by early 2004 though weather delays could occur.

The expansion will create between three and nine jobs initially.

"It really depends on how business grows," said Candace Nichols, human resource manager.

Construction is being done in one phase though machinery will be installed in multiple phases.

"We're excited about a business expanding. They (STI) are a good customer to the city," said Mayor Rick Murphrey.

The company was started in 1964 as K Mills. In 1985, it was purchased from Hickory Springs by Maurice J. Walsh and was renamed Kings Plush Inc.

The company produced cloth for furniture inside vans, recreational vehicles, eaters and motels until 1989. At that time, it began producing fabric for aircraft and mass transit furniture.

In 1994, the focus went to medium to high end residential furniture fabric. In 1999, the company began producing fabric coverings for lower end retail furniture. STI expanded its facility from 100,000 square feet to 170,000 square feet in the mid to late 1990s.

During the last three years, it has upgraded its weave and weave prep equipment See Riddle, 3A

Project TEACH

Gilmore helps steer minorities into teaching profession

BY ANDIE L. BRYMER
Staff Writer

Decades have passed and Henry Gilmore can still remember his fourth grade teacher, Mrs. Webber.

"She was strict but we loved her. She wanted everyone to succeed," Gilmore said. "She would tell us we could do anything."

Mrs. Webber was Gilmore's first African-American teacher. Today, as part of Project TEACH, he is working to make sure more minority students have that same experience.

"Students need people in the classroom who look like them," he said. "We need

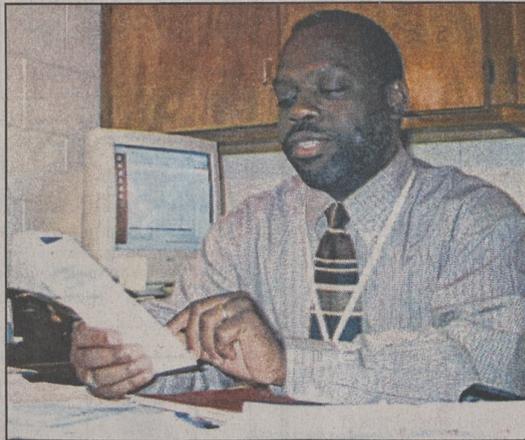
African-Americans and Latinos in the classroom."

The state started Project TEACH in 1985. Kings Mountain District Schools implemented the program five years ago.

"North Carolina wanted to put something in place to generate minority teachers," Gilmore said. "We hope some come back to Kings Mountain."

While Gilmore has been part of Project TEACH for several years, he took over as KMDS liaison this year. Valerie Boyd held that post until now. Bendetria Hart is the middle school liaison.

Gilmore and Hart plan monthly sessions See Teach, 3A



ANDIE BRYMER / HERALD

Henry Gilmore is the liaison for Project TEACH in Kings Mountain District Schools

Storms cause minor damage

BY ANDIE L. BRYMER
Staff Writer

Thunder storms knocked off power in a few areas and lightning knocked windows from a home this week.

Lightning struck a home in Woodbridge Subdivision at 11:20 p.m. Monday night bursting two front windows.

"Luckily the occupants were in the back of the house," said Perry Davis, chief of Oak Grove Fire Department.

No one was injured. See Storms, 3A



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