



**Photo by Ellis Noell**  
Kings Mountain Mayor Rick Murphrey, right, and police officers shop for needy families for Christmas.

## Community Kitchen ministry growing at Central Methodist

BY ANDIE L. BRYMER  
Staff Writer

Since diabetic neuropathy damaged the nerves in her feet, Carmon Brice has trouble standing in the kitchen to cook a meal. On Mondays, she doesn't have to struggle. Church volunteers deliver a hot meal to her door.

While Brice usually eats at home, this Monday was different. John Clemmer drove Brice and several others folks who are homebound to Central United Methodist Church's dining room. There they joined others who regularly eat Monday's lunch at the church.

On a typical week, 40 to 50 folks come in for the meal. Drivers deliver around 80 more boxed lunches to folks who are homebound.

The community kitchen was the brainchild of John Plonk. A member of Central, he thought the church should put its new kitchen and multi-purpose room to use feeding the community's less fortunate. The kitchen served its first meal Dec. 9 last year.

While Plonk has since died, his dream continues every week.

In a year, the community kitchen which uses volunteers from several area churches has gone from one freezer to three. Food is purchased through Metrolina Second Harvest Foodbank. Harris Teeter customers donated 500 pounds of food and boy scouts contributed another 1,000 pounds this season.

The kitchen has run on donations for all of 2003, not having to ask the church for funding, according to John Mattox.

He would like to see the kitchen expand the number of days it serves meals.

While the kitchen primarily serves people who are economically disadvan-



**ANDIE BRYMER / HERALD**  
Volunteers Gene White (left), Bill Tinsley and Dru White look over paperwork at the community kitchen Monday.

taged, anyone is welcome. Some Mondays local businessmen have dropped in for a plate, Mattox said.

Brice said the weekly meals and the fans and blankets the church has provided are greatly appreciated.

Monday morning she didn't feel well and planned to eat at home. Instead, she took her daughter's advice and rode the bus. Once at the church, Brice was glad to be there with others.

When asked if she had made new friends through the kitchen, she pointed toward Mattox. He had enlisted her help in explaining diabetes to his son. A favor she was glad to grant.

Vernie McSwain, a 79-year-old woman who uses a wheelchair, calls Mattox and his wife Linda her adopted children. Monday, Linda Mattox served the elderly woman a bowl of pintos, cornbread and corn.

The community kitchen reunited Reggie Whitmire and his high school coach Warren Goforth who volunteers there. Whitmire wrestled at Kings Mountain High School under Goforth.

The coach helped him get into college. After teaching

for 15 years in Winston-Salem, Whitmire had to return home with end stage renal disease.

Today, he must undergo thrice weekly dialysis. Whitmire is not able to work as a result. While dialysis can be grueling, Mondays are a bright spot in his week.

"I enjoy going up there, shooting the breeze with him (Goforth)," Whitmire said.

The two laugh over trips to out of town matches. Once the athletic bus hit a cow. Another time it spun out of control after hitting a patch of ice.

Jerry DePew, Barbara DeVane and Linda Mattox head up two cooking teams which alternate weeks. Trica Propst takes blood pressure readings for any guests who request it. Dru White and Linda Childress are in charge of meal delivery.

The community kitchen gives Bibles away to anyone who would like one.

Monday, they also gave out non-perishable food and blankets.

Additional drivers are needed to deliver meals. For more information, call the church at 704-739-2471.

## Police make Christmas merry for local families

BY ANDIE L. BRYMER  
Staff Writer

While police serve the community year round, Kings Mountain officers with the help of the community are doing extra at Christmas.

The department has collected over \$2,600 to buy presents for economically oppressed families. Collection jars were placed at Family Dollar, Dollar General, Rick's Old Country Store and Wendell's Barbecue.

"We've exceeded our goal by far," said Police Chief Melvin Proctor.

The department hoped to raise \$1,800 and help out six families. Now they'll take parents from nine families shopping.

Officer Tony Walker spearheaded the project. He and Sgt. Lisa Proctor interviewed potential recipient families. Referrals came from the Kings Mountain Housing Authority, Kings Mountain Crisis Ministry and patrol officers who often see poverty up close.

Officers, dressed in plain clothes, took parents shopping Friday morning. This



**ANDIE BRYMER / HERALD**  
Kings Mountain Police officers Sgt. Lisa Proctor (left), Capt. Jerry Teseneer, Officer Tony Walker, Chief Melvin Proctor and Mayor Rick Murphrey count money which the department collected to buy presents for economically disadvantaged local residents.

allows parents to give the children the presents themselves. Families also received gift cards to area grocery stores.

"There is no better feeling than to be able to give to people who need help," Chief Proctor said.

The department traditionally helps families with

Christmas presents but stepped up its efforts this year due to the economy, Proctor said.

Proctor said he is thankful to community members who helped police reach their goal.

"I wish they could see the expression on people's faces."



**CONTRIBUTED PHOTO**  
Clay Barber, Zack Price and Bryson Barber, left to right, tell Santa Claus what they want for Christmas when he made a surprise visit to the home of their grandmother, Teresa Barber.



**ANDIE BRYMER / HERALD**  
Bethware Elementary students have collected canned food the Kings Mountain Crisis Assistance Ministry. The school is calling this a Season of Giving. Music teacher Linda Trevino incorporated giving into a student performance during a recent PTO program. Pictured here are some students who have helped with the drive Logan Nicole Simpson, left, Johnnie Henninger, Tevin Friday and Isabella Ramirez along with teacher Linda Trevin, left, and counselor Janet Suber.

### ANDIE

From 4A

Nobody says it during our holiday meals, that would be way too uncomfortable for us. But I think we've all decided we won't let disagreements separate us again.

### ALAN

From 4A

No words are spoken as one takes back his pipe and the other his coffee cup. They turn and go back to where they had been.

This example of peace on Earth is a lot like the way many folks approach Christmas. That is, with a longing for peace, harmony and brotherhood, but with the suspicions, jealousies, fusses, and disappointments of the year still weighing heavily upon their hearts and minds.

I for one have never been a fan of Christmas. For no particular one, but for various reasons, this will be an especially trying one. With an already bad attitude about Christmas, plus everything else, I had decided to sit in a dark cave, watch TV, and continue my struggle with the banjo. But that would be the coward's way out.

Just like the two Civil War soldiers from the movie- mortal enemies in a struggle that cost 600,000 lives- it would be easy to remain on the shore of self pity and depression. On the other hand, it takes an effort to get up and wade the river to something as good and simple as a cup of coffee or a pipe of Virginny tobacco. There is a risk involved, that's for sure, you could be fired upon by the relative you have had a disagreement with for years, you could feel the cold steel of rejection, you could taste the hot lead of the year's failures, or you could be blasted into oblivion by the cannons of a condescending attitude towards the less fortunate.

I have decided to shoulder my musket and take the breastworks of sorrow and plant upon them the hope of a better year to come and to seek the symbolic tobacco and coffee where ever it may be found. Won't you come with me my bully boys? Won't you stoke up the warming fires of December 25 and so perhaps bask in the peace we all need that those golden flames can bring?

### GARY

From 4A

-City commissioners and School administrators and Board members, who are are usually willing to talk about any story, good or bad. With the Department of Justice merger decision due by January 12, I just hope the next big story about the school system isn't bad.

-All of my co-workers here in the log cabin and at our sister publications in Belmont and Cherryville. I've never seen or heard of a newspaper where everything runs smoothly, and that's certainly true here. A lot of times we're under intense deadline pressure but usually everyone pulls together.

-All of the folks on the Kings Mountain Sports Hall of Fame committee, who give up a lot of personal time the first five months of the year to make the induction ceremony special for some of our local sports heroes.

-To folks who call to give us tips on stories. Some of our best feature stories come about because of someone telling us about someone who has an interesting hobby or job.

-And, to all of our readers and advertisers. You're the reason we're here and if we can ever be of service to you please give us a call.

**Keep The Holidays Safe This Year..and every year. Think and act responsibly, Don't Drink and Drive!**

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