

The Herald

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FIRE 'EM UP

Firehouse Cook-off slated this weekend

BY ANDIE L. BRYMER
Staff Writer

Competitors from near and far will converge on Kings Mountain this weekend for the Firehouse BBQ Cook-off.

Joe Bumgardner and Ray Robinson of the Backyard BBQ team won't have far to go. The Kings Mountain men have competed for over a decade.

Bumgardner learned his way around the kitchen while spending 21 years in the National Guard working in food services.

"I've always loved to cook," he said.

According to Bumgardner, the team competes mostly for bragging rights.

"It's good clean fun, just like going camping except everybody is cooking something good."

Don Harwell of Mooresville served as a table captain during last year's cook-off. This year he and wife Debby Harwell return as competitors.

The Harwells' entrance into the world of competitive cooking started the Christmas before when Debby Harwell gave her husband barbecue cooking school tuition. She thought he would return home with a better grilling technique. Instead, he had found a new hobby for both of them.

Soon after, the couple were driving to Houston, Texas to pick up a custom-made cooker. Debby Harwell compares the purchase to a bass boat.

"He was so excited to get his cooker," she said.

By June the Harwells had entered their first competition. They originally agreed to help a friend cook in the Tryon contest. When he cancelled at the last minute, the couple took over.

"The next thing we knew, we were competing," Debby Harwell said.

Later that summer they competed in Gastonia and Shelby.

"We weren't last. That was always our goal, not to be last. Each time we got a

See Cook-off, 3A

HOPPIN' DOWN THE BUNNY TRAIL



Two-year-old Parker McGuire hunts for Easter eggs during Saturday's hunt sponsored by the City of Kings Mountain at Patriots Park. Below, five-year-old Taylor Davis participates in the Bunny Hop.

JOSEPH BRYMER / HERALD

Kids celebrate Easter with games at park

BY ANDIE L. BRYMER
Staff Writer

Amidst the encouraging cheers of parents and older siblings, they stuffed almost 3,000 toy-filled plastic eggs into pastel baskets, buckets and bags Saturday morning. The children ranging from toddlers to nine years old participated in the City of Kings Mountain's Easter celebration.

"Hurry up, go, get all you can," parents yelled as their offspring picked up the pink, yellow, purple, red and blue eggs.

The fiercest competition was among seven to nine-year-olds. Dillon Frederick was among those older kids scrambling for the eggs. The seven-year-old says finding eggs is his favorite part of the holiday. His mom, Tanya Abdi, said Saturday morning that the bunny will leave Dillon a new outfit that he'll wear to sunrise service.

Linda Carpenter has made the egg hunt an annual tradition for daughter,
See Easter, 3A



KM may borrow \$1.48 million for water and sewer projects

BY ANDIE L. BRYMER
Staff Writer

The City of Kings Mountain plans to borrow \$1.48 million for water and sewer projects.

An eastside flow transfer tops the list. In a memo interim City Manager Gary Hicks distributed to Kings Mountain City Council, plans call for picking up 80 to 90 percent of the flow currently going to the City of Gastonia.

Kings Mountain is paying its neighbor between \$45,000 and \$55,000 per month for waste water treatment, according to the memo. Officials estimate an 80 percent cost savings resulting in an average of \$40,000 monthly. This figure does not include electricity or maintenance for the station.

New pumps are needed at both the Wilson and Second streets lift stations. Wilson Street also needs a new wet well, force main and sewer work. Second Street will need electrical work and relocation above ground.

Moss Lake needs dredging. According to state esti-

mates, lakes lose one-half to one percent of capacity each year. Officials say a conservative estimate puts Moss Lake at 15 percent lost capacity since it was built 37 years ago.

A new connection between the First and Second streets lift stations and new lines should eliminate problems including basement flooding, according to the memo.

The project also includes repair of concrete at City Lake Dam. The repairs were approved in 1994 and now state officials are pressuring the city to do the work, the memo read.

Two additional pump stations and a force main where Canterbury Road crosses a creek to the Floyd Street station will add \$350,000 to the project.

During its March meeting, city council gave Hicks permission to collect information on interest rates for a project loan. In an interview Friday, he said he hopes to have those figures available within two months. Council approval will be required before any money is borrowed.

Water Director Walt Ollis dies

BY ANDIE L. BRYMER
Staff Writer

As word spread through Kings Mountain Monday of the sudden death of city Water Resources Director Walt Ollis, friends and co-workers praised the man.

Ollis, 68, died Monday morning at his home. "I always considered Walt a friend. He meant so much to all of us at the city," Mayor Rick Murphrey said.

Murphrey described Ollis as a team player and an expert on water and sewer. He was willing to work long hours and help other departments.



WALT OLLIS

Murphrey, who works in textiles, said Ollis had a good working relationship with local industry engineers whose companies were water customers.

Water and Sewer Maintenance Director Dennis Wells said Monday afternoon that he lost a mentor.

"You can't replace that kind of knowledge," Wells said. "He'll be missed greatly."

Wells said Ollis sometimes spoke of retiring. The younger man would tease him, saying he had to wait 14 more years until he could retire as well.

Their relationship extended beyond work. It was in Ollis' Sunday school class that Wells began to discern a calling to the ministry. He was willing to work long hours and help other departments.

See Ollis, 3A

Drunk driving demonstration has impact on KM students

BY ANDIE L. BRYMER
Staff Writer

Despite their laughter, Kings Mountain High School students learned a serious lesson Thursday. Farm Bureau staff and members visited campus for a drunk driving simulation demonstration.

Students took to the wheel of a golf cart. They wore goggles which duplicate alcohol impairment. Driving the golf cart through an obstacle course, students swerved, attempting to miss orange cones. Only one student was able to navigate the course without hitting any.

"I thought I was going that way but I was going this way," said Senior Princess Wade, gesturing wildly after her drive through the course.

Wade, who admits she initially thought the course would be easy, hit five cones. Romma Haskins did one better, hitting four cones.

"Oh my gosh, I didn't know what to think. You see it but it's not there," she said. "I don't want to drink and drive. I don't want to find out what it's really like."

A brave volunteer, Bethlehem Fire Department member Avery Turbyfill, rode along on the golf cart. "They can't see. They don't know which cones to go through. They think it's moving," he said.

School Resource Officer P.M. King helped out, giving road sobriety tests to students wearing the goggles.

"It's real good for the kids. They've
See Driving, 3A

"I thought I was going that way but I was going this way."

Princess Wade
KMHS senior



Junior Russ Putnam hit four cones while driving during a drunk driving simulation at Kings Mountain High School Thursday.

ANDIE BRYMER / HERALD