

The Herald

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Thursday, April 29, 2004

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Hawkins, Moore file for reelection

BY ANDIE L. BRYMER
Staff Writer

Ronnie Hawkins, one of three Cleveland County Commissioners up for reelection, filed to run



HAWKINS

Monday, the first day of the filing period.

Hawkins, a 52-year-old Republican, is vice-president of Harris Funeral Home in

Kings Mountain.

Commission Chairperson Mary Accor and Commissioner Tom Bridges, both Democrats, have indicated they will file for reelection as well. They have until May 7.

Hawkins called the last three years "the most difficult the county has faced in a long time."

He numbered state budget cuts, the drought of 2002, a forced school system merger and the general economic downturn as obstacles he and fellow board members faced.

During the current board's tenure, the county entered into a water agreement to aid the City of Shelby which Hawkins said benefits the county's growth and economy.

Hawkins, Accor and Bridges, all from Kings Mountain, ran opposing school merger. When the Department of Justice refused to intervene in January and the merged system became a reality, Hawkins said the board then backed it.

"We're going to move on and make it the best school system in the state," he said.

According to Hawkins, a one cent sales tax is the only issue that the vote split along party lines with the Democrat majority opposing the tax.

Despite that one area of contention, Hawkins says he hopes to serve again with the same board.

"I think they did a hell of a job. I look forward to serving with them again," he said. "We did what was in the best interest of the community, the best interest of the people."

Republican Will Troutman, 28, of Shelby
See Hawkins, 3A

RELAY FOR LIFE



JOSEPH BRYMER / HERALD
Dena Blalock, left, and Missy Bailey fill out luminary bags at Monday's meeting of the Relay for Life committee at the Patrick Center. The annual Relay is Friday and Saturday at the Walking Track on Cleveland Avenue.

Opening ceremonies Friday at 6 p.m. at Walking Track

BY ANDIE L. BRYMER
Staff Writer

Kings Mountain's Relay for Life has raised approximately \$50,000 so far this year and that number is expected to increase following this weekend's annual fundraiser.

Opening ceremonies are Friday at 6 p.m. at the municipal walking track near the YMCA. Cancer survivors will celebrate life by making the first lap together.

Music begins at 7 p.m. The Echo 1313 Blues Funk Band takes the stage at 8 p.m. Luminaries which will spell out "hope" will be lit at 9 p.m. Participants will walk a silent lap in honor and memory of people affected by cancer as Paul Webb plays the bagpipes.

Cross Reference will perform at 9:30 p.m. Echo takes the stage again at 10:30 p.m.

The David Baptist Church Dance Troup performs at 11:15. A womanless beauty pageant begins at midnight.

The action will pick back up 7 a.m. Saturday morning with music by Wanda Wilson. High Lonesome takes the stage at 8 a.m. and United at 9 a.m. Signs of Hope play at 10 a.m.

A final lap and closing ceremonies are at 11 a.m.

Luminaries may be purchased up to 8 p.m. Friday. For more information, call Andrea Whitesides at 704-730-1227; Dena Blalock, 704-739-1564; Tracy Bledsoe, 704-937-3249; Melissa Davis, 704-739-9655 or Kathy Lovelace, 704-937-9268.

Teams include Bethlehem Baptist, Bethware School, Boyce Memorial ARP Church, Central United Methodist Church, City of Kings Mountain, Cleveland Home Health, David Baptist, Diane's Crusaders, Eaton, El Bethel United Methodist, Farm Bureau, First National Bank, First Baptist Church - Whitesides SS, First Baptist Church - Wannabees, Frank Phillips Express, Grace United Methodist, Grover School, Katie's Small Wonders, Kings Mountain Hospital, Kings Mountain High School, Kings Mountain Intermediate School, Kings Mountain Middle School Sundancers, Kings Mountain Woman's Club, Lockhart Team, Mac's Grocery, Petro Express, Resurrection Lutheran Church, Shelby Star, Summit Place, Total Care, Tracy Bledsoe's Team, Wachovia, West School and the YMCA.

Grand Relay Club Winners are individuals who have raised \$1,000 or more. Those people include Melissa Davis, Joyce Roark, Tracy Bledsoe, Sandra Jenkins,
See Relay, 2A

White chides Council on budget, city manager issue

BY ANDIE L. BRYMER
Staff Writer

Former Kings Mountain City Councilman Gene White chided the current administration for not yet holding public hearings on the 2004-2005 budget.

White's remarks came during the public comment portion of Tuesday night's council meeting.

Councilman Jerry Mullinax agreed with White regarding the budget. This remark was made during the council members' comment period.

White also said Kings Mountain has lost two city managers for the "specific stated reason the mayor and some city council members do not recognize the council-manager form of government."

Former City Manager Phil Ponder issued a memo Feb. 13 stating this.

Mayor Rick Murphrey corrected White, saying that was an alleged reason.

White expressed concern that the situation will not be

corrected.

"Nothing gets changed, (nor) will change based on historical accounts," White said.

He then said the mayor and some portion of the council are trying to discredit the Kings Mountain Police Department.

White questioned Murphrey's credibility. "Does the public believe anything will be changed til the current mayor is replaced?" White said.

He warned the council that it will be blamed for mistakes.

"You get the blame because you have the vote," White said.

During the council members' comment period, Mayor Pro-tem Carl DeVane noted White's presence at meetings.

"Mr. White I'm glad you kept up your perfect attendance," DeVane said.

In other business, Council member Kay Hambright cast the lone dissenting vote against rezoning the VFW
See Council, 5A

New School Board seeks budget increase

BY ANDIE L. BRYMER
Staff Writer

The Cleveland County Board of Education is expected tonight to formally approve asking county commissioners for an increase in funding including \$3.3 million in capital improvements, \$1.1 million in inflationary increases and \$751,500 to even out spending at schools across the system.

Kings Mountain High School's Phifer Road project and enclosing the Nanny building are the two largest items in the capital request falling under repairs and renovations.

Officials say this should reduce some of the 15 mobile units now at KMHS.

Associate Superintendent Dr. Larry Allen presented his assessment of system wide capital needs. The \$3.3 million includes \$185,000 in paving; \$420,000, vehicle replacement; \$115,000, painting; \$497,001, roofs;

\$2,078,054, repairs and renovations; \$450,000, HVAC; \$56,000, furniture; \$373,935, electronics and security; \$193,182, floor replacements; \$137,200, landscaping; \$259,742, small needs grants for all schools; and \$11,344, modular units.

"Not everything on that list is a got to," Superintendent Dr. Gene Moore said.

One million in funds for capital expenses can be used from the existing budget, according to Moore, bringing what is requested this year to \$3.1 million.

The \$751,500 figure evens up local monies which each of the three pre-merger boards spent in different ways. This does not include the approximate \$1,412 per pupil allotment coming from the county.

The \$1.1 million includes \$360,000 to equalize teacher supplements across the three former systems, \$235,000 in benefit increases,
See Budget, 2A

SENIOR PLAY



JOSEPH BRYMER / HERALD
Kasey Sizemore goes over her lines from "The Complete Works of William Shakespeare Abridges" which seven KMHS seniors will present Friday and Saturday at 7:30 p.m. and Sunday at 2:30 p.m. at B.N. Barnes Auditorium. See story on page 3A.

Grover to hold first May Fest

GROVER - The town of Grover will have its first May Fest on May 1. A day of food, music, crafts and games and an evening street dance are planned.

"We have given our park a face lift, spruced things up a bit and want to get everyone together for a great celebration," said Evelyn Willis of the Grover Women's Club.

The festival starts at 10 a.m. at the town's park. Residents gathered earlier in the month for a clean-up day and are now ready to show off their work.

The Grover Fire Department will host a car show on Laurel Avenue from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. and will have hot dogs for sale. Other foods include ice cream, boiled peanuts and candy apples.

Nashville singer and song writer Brandy Clark will perform at the picnic shelter and street dance.

The Huffman family will bring its petting zoo.

Throughout the day entertainers will perform at the park picnic shelter. Those include The Edmondson Family, Bethany Baptist Praise and Worship Team and Drama Group, Allen Memorial Baptist quartet, Long Branch
See Grover, 2A



Nashville singer and song writer Brandy Clark will be the featured entertainer at Saturday's May Fest in Grover.