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KM TRIATHLON



Over the Mountain Triathlon winner Trent Kirk, left, and second place finisher John Dewey cool off Saturday morning.

Over the Mountain Triathlon course proves challenging

BY ANDIE L. BRYMER
Staff Writer

Friday night Gregg Dean arrived at the Patrick Center wearing a tee-shirt emblazoned with "multi-tasking" and drawings of a man swimming, biking and running. The Cary man's clothing summarizes perfectly the Over the Mountain Triathlon he was registering for.

Dean along with almost 300 others competed in the grueling race Saturday morning. He came in seventh. Competition started at 8 a.m. with a swim across Moss Lake. The athletes then rode approximately 30 miles crossing the South Carolina state line into Cherokee then York counties. The course led back into North Carolina by way of Gaston County ending in Kings Mountain with an approximate 7.5 mile run through town.

"It went off without a hitch," said Ellis Noell, city



Jamie Collins finishes ninth in the Over the Mountain Triathlon.

special events coordinator.

A few athletes were treated on site for heat exhaustion but there were no serious injuries, according to Noell.

Dean and several other competitors called the race "challenging" because of the hills through Kings Mountain state and national parks.

Despite the course's difficulty, Michael Seuss of Kings Mountain enjoyed the race.

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Area man charged in homicide

GROVER - Christopher James Burns, 22, of 112-A Main Street has been charged with first degree murder in the death of Eddie Lee Whitener.

Burns was placed under arrest by the Cleveland County Sheriff's Office and the North Carolina State Bureau of Investigation on June 18. He is in the Cleveland County Detention Center with no bond.

According to a press release from the Sheriff's department, the homicide occurred in Cleveland County on June 16.

After the homicide was committed, the victim was transported in his own vehicle and left on the side of the road just off Boss Moore Road in Rutherford County.

Steven Magic Oglesby, 16,

of 6021 Deep Green Drive, Shelby has also been charged with one count of murder in connection with Whitener's death.

Also charged is Debra Ann Burns, 44, of 3819 Barrier Drive, Shelby with one count of conspiracy, one count accessory before the fact to felony and one count accessory after the fact to felony.

She is in the detention center under a \$150,000 secured bond. Oglesby is jailed with no bond.

Warrants have also been issued for Marcus Crank, 22, of 1308 Hunt Street, Shelby and Keith Eugene Patterson, 19, of 716 Nalley Drive, Shelby charging each with one count of murder.

Whitener, 40, was from Rutherford County. The case is still under investigation.

Bell tower project continues forward

Mountain Rest Cemetery is designed as a wagon wheel, according to Jim Belt who is spearheading a fundraising drive to build a bell tower in the "hub."

The wagon wheel, with a missing spoke, is a common flower arrangements at funerals, Belt said. Some of Mountain Rest's "spokes" end at gates named for area residents.

The gate nearest city stadium bears the name of Otis Green who was Kings Mountain's first resident to die in World War I.

The Blackwell Gate fronting East Gold Street is named for the first native son to die in World War II.

The Falls Gate is named after the local family which donated land for the cemetery.

Cemetery designer H.C. Dwelle is remembered with a gate at Dilling Street near the office.

Former park superintendent, the late Sam Suber, is memorialized with an East Gold Street entrance.

Jenkins Circle memorializes another past superintendent.

Original cemetery plans called for a bell tower, according to Belt.

"We're completing something that has always been a dream of somebody," he said.

The computer programmed bell tower will play 1,200 songs and will be used during holiday services and funerals.

Belt expects to break ground on the bell tower during the second week of July.

Over half the money needed for a bell tower has been raised, he said.

Belt has raised funds for the bell tower by holding a Christmas Eve candle lighting service.

This year's service will be the tenth. Volunteers collected donations from motorists who came to see the service.

To purchase a name paver for placement on the name wall, call 704-739-5425 or 704-477-0522.



Rev. Mitchel Pruitt and his wife Martha Pruitt in front of the Chestnut Ridge Baptist parsonage.

Loyal Minister Retires After 40 Years at Chestnut Ridge

BY ANDIE L. BRYMER
Staff Writer

Rev. Mitchel Pruitt has as the Apostle Paul wrote "fought the good fight, finished the race, kept the faith" and is now retiring after 40 years as pastor of Chestnut Ridge Baptist Church.

Rev. Pruitt, 86, preached his official farewell sermon Sunday but will stay on until a new minister or an interim is hired. He is retiring for health reasons and will remain a member.

"I love to preach. I'd like it to continue but the Bible says there is a time for all things," he said. "I told them to stick together till God sends them another man."

Rev. Pruitt's ministry career started in early January, 1958 when he told fellow church members at Dover Baptist that he had accepted a calling from God. Eight days

later he was sitting in on classes at Gardner Webb, then a junior college. After passing a high school equivalence test, Rev. Pruitt enrolled as student at Gardner Webb. Later he transferred to Limestone College, graduating in 1963.

While a student, Rev. Pruitt worked full-time in a factory and pastored a Blacksburg, S.C. church. In 1964, Chestnut Ridge called him to be their full time minister.

"It's been a little corner of Heaven for me," Rev. Pruitt said of his four decades with Chestnut Ridge.

The church is located just over the Gaston County line off N.C. 216. Rev. Pruitt is the oldest minister in the Greater Gaston Baptist Association.

His advice to new ministers is simple. "If you love people and treat them right,

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