

The Herald

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'A tough pill to swallow'

Tuition for transfers to Cleveland County Schools set at \$1,414

BY ANDIE L. BRYMER
Staff Writer

Kings Mountain students living in Gaston County will have to come up with \$1,414 a year to attend the schools they've been attending for free, the Cleveland County School Board voted Monday night.

"That was the last chance," said Alison Champion whose son

Austin is a rising third grader at East Elementary.

The Champions have the money but many of their son's friends don't.

"I'm sad for all the other kids," Alison Champion said.

Many of the students at East Elementary come from lower income families. Despite the socio-economic status of the area, East has been nationally recognized for

its test scores.

Teachers and administrators at East have campaigned to keep the current attendance lines. They have offered after school tutoring and other enrichment programs.

The proximity of the students' homes to East has kept transportation from being an issue. They fear that the approximate 15 to 20 minute drive to Gaston schools will be a barrier to after school and

parent involvement.

Approximately 175 students will be affected.

During the public comment portion of the meeting, East Principal Jerry Hoyle referred to the story of the good samaritan in the biblical book of Luke, saying many students were "left beside the road by merger."

"You can prove this board has a heart," Hoyle said, asking that the

current students be grandfathered.

Hoyle reminded the board that \$5,000 per pupil in state funds will follow each of the children in question. He asked that if tuition is imposed, it be kept between \$125 and \$150.

"You can boldly take action to show black or white, resident or not, Cleveland County cares for kids," Hoyle said.

See Tuition, 7A

Educators' opinions vary on late start

BY ANDIE L. BRYMER
Staff Writer

Opinions vary among local educators regarding a proposed bill that would require school to start no earlier than August 25 and end by June 10.

Earlier this year, the Cleveland County School Board passed a resolution against the bill, asserting it would take away local control.

To keep the state mandated 180 instruction days, the new calendar would eliminate 10 teacher workdays.

Gail McDougal, a business instructor at Kings Mountain High School, says that teachers will still have the same amount of lesson planning, grading and other paperwork. If work days are taken away, they'll have to use personal time to get their jobs done.

"It takes away from a teacher's time with family. We still have the same amount of work to do," she said.

McDougal also believes her students' grades will suffer. Under the current calendar, end of course testing takes place before the Christmas break. This will change if the start date is pushed back.

"That's horrible for test scores," McDougal said.

Not all McDougal's colleagues agree with her.

High school science teacher Brian Thompson likes the idea of fewer work days at the same salary but doesn't want to wait until after Labor Day to start the academic year.

Rebecca Thompson, a KMHS English teacher, says that teachers are pursuing continuing education requirements on their own time already so losing the days is not an issue for her. Unlike her husband, she doesn't see a problem with waiting until after Labor Day for school to start.

"I would like to start back later; a lot of people disagree," Rebecca Thompson said.

Dave Greene, KMHS assistant principal, believes high schools will be affected the most due to testing schedules. In addition to the holiday break adversely affecting scores, testing in January is complicated by the risk of inclement weather, Greene said.

John Goforth, an administrator with Cleveland County Schools, agrees with

See Opinions, 5A



Kings Mountain Mayor Rick Murphrey will arrive on horse back during the city's Fabulous 4th patriotic celebration Saturday night at the Jake Early Sports Complex walking track.

Fabulous Fourth in KM to honor WWII veterans

Free swimming, fireworks, music and a salute to World War II vets happens Saturday. The City of Kings Mountain is hosting a Fabulous 4th at the YMCA and Jake Early Sports Complex walking track.

The day begins with the YMCA pool open from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. Pool games and a horse shoe tournament start at noon.

The Jam Association, a county

and Top 40 band, takes the stage at 7 p.m. The public may bring lawn chairs and picnic baskets.

The Loch Norman Pipe Band, Kings Mountain Police Explorers Honor Guard, American Legion Flag Brigade and the 505th National Guard Unit will participate in a patriotic ceremony at 9 p.m. Shana Butler, Sabrina Collias, and Cellia Collias will sing.

See Fourth, 7A

Council approves resident's plea for pool fences

BY ANDIE L. BRYMER
Staff Writer

After hearing an impassioned plea from a grandmother, Kings Mountain City Council will now require all swimming pools to have a fence.

Betty Humphries told the council that her grandchildren's neighbor Paul Morrow should be required to put a fence around the pool at his Lee Street home. Pools installed before 1996 were exempt under a grandfather clause. Morrow could not be reached for comment.

Humphries said she feared that either of her grandchildren, Mikayla, 8, or Zachary, 3, or one of the other neighborhood children could drown in the pool.

The neighborhood is located near Kings Mountain's high school and middle school. Humphries said this was further proof the pool is a nuisance.

She told council that she had worked with the city for seven years to change the law.

"At times I felt like I was beating my head up against the wall," she said in an interview after her presentation.

Monday night she made her campaign public.

"I will not go away. I will stand firm," Humphries told the council.

She presented the city with a petition signed by neighbors.

"So many times nothing is done til death or injury," said Councilwoman Kay Hambright, who met with Humphries earlier in the



JOSEPH BRYMER/HERALD Tuesday night Betty Humphries asked Kings Mountain City Council to require pools have fencing. She held up tennis shoes as an example of how fast children can run out of range of the watchful eye of caretakers.

day. Humphries praised Hambright, Mayor Rick Murphrey and former city councilman Gene White for their work on the issue.

The city can probably use county property tax records to determine which residents have pools. The new ordinance will apply to people living in the two-mile extra territorial jurisdiction also.

In other business, council members voted down a cycle billing proposal five to one. Councilman Rick Moore was absent.

The plan would have shortened the time between when a utility service is used and when the customer is billed. Officials say the plan could save the city between \$40,000 and \$50,000 in bad debt.

To put the plan into action, some customers would have received two

See Pool, 5A

Primary care services at KM health department

BY ANDIE L. BRYMER
Staff Writer

Starting today primary care services will be available at the Kings Mountain branch of the Cleveland County Health Department.

Jill Spangler Parker, a family nurse practitioner, will be at the local office from 2 to 5 p.m. weekdays. Parker can provide routine physicals, sick and well care to people of all ages.

"We're seeing a need for sick care. We've already had a lot of calls," said Gay Melton, RN, adult health nurse supervisor.

Parker will provide services like those offered in a general practitioners office. As a

nurse practitioner, state laws allows her to diagnose, treat and write prescriptions.

Spangler earned a masters degree in nursing from UNC-Chapel Hill. She completed extra course work and clinical hours studying health care in rural and medically underserved settings.

"I have a heart for the segment of the population not covered by insurance," she said.

The health department uses a sliding fee scale for patients paying out of pocket and accepts Medicaid, Medicare, Blue Cross and most other insurance plans.

Some of the services offered in Kings Mountain include blood pressure checks,

See Health, 5A

CLEVELAND COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT

Office Hours: Monday-Friday
8:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m.
Closed for Lunch: 12 noon-1 p.m.

ANDIE BRYMER / HERALD Nurse Practitioner Jill Spangler Parker is on duty for primary care at the Cleveland County Health Department's Kings Mountain branch on E. King St.

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