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# The Herald

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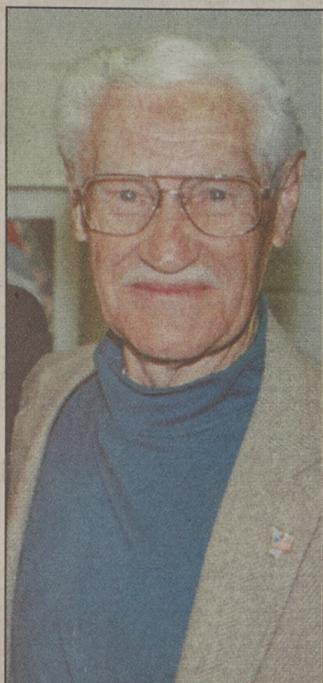
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## KM mourns death of Coach Parker



COACH DONALD L. PARKER

By GARY STEWART  
 Editor of The Herald

Don Parker, whose 23-year tenure was the longest of any coach at Kings Mountain High School, died Saturday at his home in Tennessee. He was 91.

The news of his death didn't shock those who knew of his declining health, but still brought a great deal of sadness.

A memorial service was held Wednesday in Tennessee, and another memorial service is scheduled for Friday, August 6 at 3 p.m. at Central United Methodist Church in Kings Mountain, where

he was a longtime member. Visitation is from 1-3 p.m.

Parker, who taught and coached at Kings Mountain High School from 1943 to 1975, and his wife Nell moved to Bloomington Springs, TN in 1998 to be near their son, Punch. Coach Parker often said he would have never left Kings Mountain had it not been for his declining health.

Coach Parker was diagnosed with pancreas cancer last year and underwent surgery in May 2003. According to his son, Punch, who lives about 75 yards from his parents, Coach Parker was admitted to a rest home but didn't like it

and demanded to go home. He lost from 133 to 103 pounds, but rebounded and started eating again and got back up to 127.

"He looked good and felt pretty good from about September of 2003 until March of this year," Punch said. "Then we noticed he wasn't eating much and we knew something was wrong."

Parker was taken to a doctor who found a spot on his liver, and just two weeks ago he went to Nashville for his regular appointment with his cancer doctor and he found numerous tumors. Again, Coach Parker said he didn't

See Parker, 3A

### Scholarship started in memory of Parker

Some of Coach Don Parker's former players are beginning a scholarship in his memory. It will be administered through the Kings Mountain Sports Hall of Fame and will be given each year at the Hall of Fame ceremony to a deserving Kings Mountain High senior.

Send contributions to the Donald L. Parker Scholarship, c/o Kings Mountain Sports Hall of Fame, P.O. Box 1373, Kings Mountain, NC 28086.

All donations are tax deductible.

### Interim manager leaving August 6

By ANDIE L. BRYMER  
 Staff Writer

Kings Mountain's interim City Manager Gary Hicks won't be on the job after



HICKS

Aug. 6. Council members voted 4-3 Tuesday night against entering into a contract which would have kept Hicks

at the city.

Hicks, who receives state retirement, would have jeopardized that money had he continued to be paid by the city. By working for a temporary agency, Hicks could get around the restriction. Mayor Rick Murphrey called the measure "normal" and said Kings Mountain and other cities have used it before.

Council members Rick Moore, Brenda Ross, Jerry Mullinax and Kay Hambright objected to the approximate \$450 weekly fee the temp agency would charge.

Hicks told the board that a permanent manager will cost the city even more.

Hicks is making approximately \$1,538 weekly, but no benefits.

Murphrey called Hicks an experienced, knowledgeable professional.

"You've done a wonderful job. If I had a vote, I'd vote for you," Murphrey said.

See Hicks, 3A

### BEACH BLAST



JOSEPH BRYMER / HERALD

Three-year-old Taylor Dawson gets some finishing touches before the teeny weenie bikini contest at Saturday's Beach Blast at the Waling Track. Below, 5-year-old Darrius Archie waits for beach balls to drop from the sky.

### Big crowd attends annual KM event

By ANDIE L. BRYMER  
 Staff Writer

Decked out in bright swimsuits, sun glasses and flowered sandals, contestants fidgeted as parents straightened their straw hats, hula skirts and leis.

The roar of the ocean was almost audible in Crimson Rose vocalist Debbie Terry's performance.

"That's where I want to be, on the beach, baby. Baby come join me. We're going to groove all summer long," she sang.

The summer sun bore down on the municipal walking track as the teeny, weenie bikini contest got under way at 1 p.m. signalling the official start of the city's annual beach blast.

Junior Miss Kings Mountain Miranda Harris, parents and older siblings walked the sometimes nervous youngsters across the stage.

See Blast, 12A



### City hears citizens' plea to keep kids in KM schools

By ANDIE L. BRYMER  
 Staff Writer

Cleveland County School Board members may hold an emergency meeting to discuss the fate of Kings Mountain students living inside Gaston County. Board member Terry McClain said Tuesday night he will ask chairman Dr. George Litton to call the meeting.

Advocate Mike Smith is asking Cleveland Commissioners and School Board along with the City of Kings Mountain to come up with \$250,000. The money would replace the funds Gaston County is withholding for its students living inside the Kings Mountain city limits.

Before the county's three school systems merged in January, Gaston County Commissioners released local money each year to Kings Mountain. This money covered students living in the Gaston County portion of the city. After merger, Gaston Commissioners refused to send the money for the 2004-2005 school year.

Families of affected students were on hand during Tuesday's Kings Mountain City Council asking for help.

Ella Leach introduced herself to city council as "nothing but a granny." Leach told the council she feared violence would erupt if Kings Mountain students were sent to Gaston County schools.

Carolyn Neally, the mother of five, told council she would not have purchased a home in Northwoods in 1996 had she known her children would later be turned away from Kings Mountain schools.

Earlier this month, the Cleveland County School Board voted to charge all out of county students \$1,414 in tuition. The tuition is designed to make up for the money Gaston is withholding. Kings Mountain board representatives McClain and Shearra Miller cast the only votes against the measure. Rising seniors and children of school personnel were exempted.

"Do I look like I have \$4,200 and less than two weeks to get it together?" Neally asked the council.

Parent Sherri Black attended the meeting. See Kids, 5A

## School bells ring August 9

By ANDIE L. BRYMER  
 Staff Writer

Administrators and many teachers are back on the job this week readying for students' arrival Aug. 9.

Kings Mountain High School expects just under 1,300 students. Tuesday afternoon counselors were still enrolling incoming students.

The high school is offering four new classes - digital communications, video production, character education and career

management. Students will use I-Pods in the digital class.

Guidance counselor Leigh Bell described it as "advanced technology. A lot of neat gadgets."

A total of 10 new teachers are joining the KMHS faculty. Students will receive schedules in the mail by the end of this week, Bell said. The school will host an open house Tuesday at 6 p.m. for freshmen and new students.

At Kings Mountain Intermediate School new faculty members are meeting with men-

tors.

Sixth grade social studies and science teacher Charles McNeilly's new colleagues had his room set up. McNeilly says all he'll have to add are a few posters.

Other new teachers report similar warm welcomes.

Meredith Pruitt, who will teach fifth grade reading, says Cleveland County's program surpasses what she was given in Gaston County. Pruitt comes to KMIS after teaching in the neighboring county for one and

one half years.

Aimee Feldman admits to being nervous but also excited about having her own classroom. Before taking a few years off when her child was born, Feldman worked one-on-one with a student who was being mainstreamed into a classroom. This year Feldman will teach exceptional students.

She's taken good notes during county-wide orientation sessions at Cleveland Community College and is taking advantage See School, 5A



JOSEPH BRYMER / HERALD  
 Monyette Gowans holds her son Nahzaj, who is in Head Start in KM, during protest outside city hall.