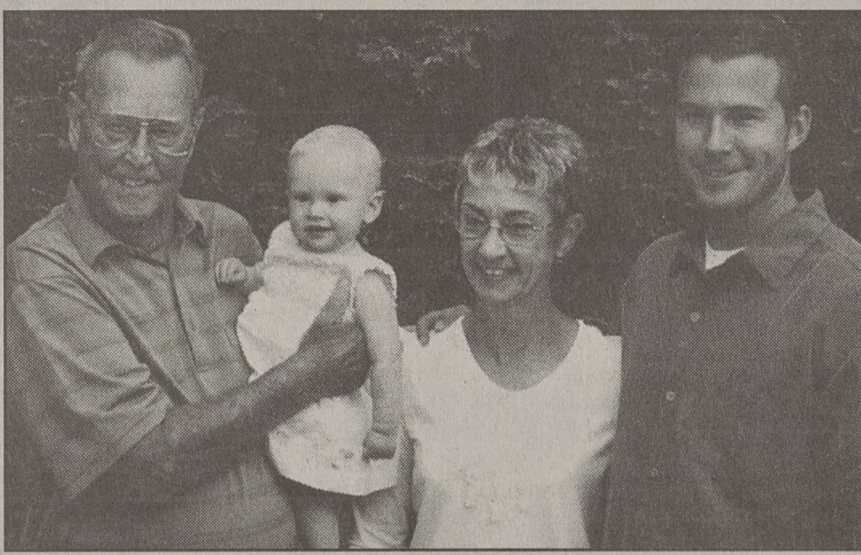


LOCAL

Four generations of the Sherrer family are pictured above. Left to right are great grandfather Louis "Bud" Sherrer of Kings Mountain, great granddaughter Gracelyn Leonard, grandmother Linda S. Leonard of Asheboro, and father Beattie Leonard Jr. of Englewood, CO.



GRASS
From 1A

grass. According to Black, this year and last are higher than the past few drought stricken years.

The city can get involved once grass reaches 12 inches. Neighbors who make complaints are sometimes frustrated when the grass is not cut in three days, Black said. However, due process is lengthy.

First an investigator visits. If the grass is too high a certified letter is mailed citing the property owner and giving three days from receipt to cut the grass. The city

then waits for the Post Office to give confirmation the letter was either delivered or refused. At that point the three-day-clock starts ticking. Only after the time is up can Black's office hire a lawn care service.

For most property owners all it takes is the initial citation. Others start taking care of their lawns after the first mowing bill from the city. However a few never comply. Some of these are out-of-state and refuse to sign for the registered letter, according to Black.

Regardless, the city is legally in the clear on notification. Until now hiring a collection agency has been too costly,

however as bills mount this may become cost effective, Black said.

Homes in foreclosure are another problem. Real estate agents have been willing to keep the grass cut, though there is a three or four month window between the time the home is vacated and it is put up for sale, according to Black. The city cannot recover the money spent mowing a home in foreclosure. The surrounding community can step in, though.

"Be a good neighbor. With one hour of your time, you've saved yourself and others money," Black said.

If the problem continues she fears the city will have to hire another investigator. "It's disheartening as a taxpayer myself," Black said.

Property owners who owe the city for mowing or other abatement may set up a payment plan.

"If they are having a hard time they can get the debt paid off over time," Black said.

Other abatements have included filling in an unattended swimming pool which had become a mosquito breeding ground, spraying a yard for fleas and dealing with junked cars.

Keeping grass cut helps the city keep fleas, snakes and disease carrying rats at bay.

"People would be surprised if they saw how big they (rats) can get," Black said.

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OBITUARIES

REV. HAROLD JOHNSON
HESPERIA, MI - Rev. Harold J. Johnson, 78, formerly of Kings Mountain, died August 17, 2004 at Hillsdale Community Health Center.

A native of VanWert, OH, he was the son of the late William H. and Pearl Baker Johnson. He was also preceded in death by stepfather Lawrence Schaadt, stepmother Ruth Johnson, and stepbrother Donald Schaadt.

He was a World War II veteran of the U.S. Navy. He graduated from Bryan College in Dayton, TN and received a Masters in Theology from Dallas Theological Seminary. He served as pastor in Carson City, MI, was Associate Pastor at Forest Avenue Baptist Church, Ypsilanti, MI, then Daystar Living Church, Holland, MI, which he helped build, and before retiring in 1989 he pastored Cloverville Baptist Church, Freeport, MI for 17 years. Following retirement he was the Spiritual Director of DeClors of Muskegon.

He is survived by his wife, Mary "Louise" Early Johnson of Hesperia, MI; son David Johnson and wife Melanie of Holton, MI; half-brother Paul Johnson and wife Tammie of Hamilton, IN; stepsisters Dorothy Gleckler and husband Dale of Convoy, OH, Ellen Crow and husband Richard of Ft. Wayne, IN, and Marilyn Brown and husband Larry of Rochester, IN; grandchildren Benjamin and Joel Johnson; and aunt Ruth Bauer of Convoy, OH.

A graveside service was held Monday at 4 p.m. at Mountain Rest Cemetery, Kings Mountain.

Memorials may be made to International Life Ministries of the Daystar Church, 11025 Paw Paw Drive, Holland, MI, 49423.

Harris Funeral Home, Kings Mountain, was in charge of arrangements.

Mountain; nephews Taylor Ledbetter and Jason Ledbetter of Shelby and Dustin Robinson and Cameron Robinson of Blacksburg, SC.

The funeral was conducted by the Rev. John Sloan at 2 p.m. Wednesday at Stamey Funeral Home Chapel, Fallston. Burial was in Cleveland Memorial Park.

Memorials may be made to First Baptist Church, P.O. Box 786, Kings Mountain, NC 28086.

Stamey Funeral Home, Fallston, was in charge of arrangements.

REV. JAMES PETERSON
HICKORY - Rev. James Albert Peterson, 75, died August 21, 2004.

A native of Cleveland County, he was the son of the late Theo James Peterson and Beatrice Black Peterson. He was also preceded in death by his wife of 55 years, Gerald Huntley Peterson, brother William Peterson and sister Frances P. Jackson.

He lived in Hickory for 40 years and in Taylorsville for the past year.

He is survived by three sons, Ronnie Peterson, Randy Peterson and Rickie Peterson, all of Taylorsville; daughter Diann Kiser of Hickory; brothers Jerry Peterson of Conover and Harold Peterson of Hickory; sisters Catherine Whitesides of Joliet, IL and Margie Palmer of Norcross, Ga; 13 grandchildren and 18 great grandchildren.

He was a veteran of the US Navy, and a retired salesman with Killian's Hardware after 19 years of service. He was a Baptist minister for 50 years and a member of New Hope Missionary Baptist Church in Taylorsville.

The funeral was conducted by the Rev. Julius Hall and Rickie Peterson at 11 a.m. Tuesday at Catawba Funerals & Cremations Chapel. A military service was provided by Hickory American Legion Post 48. Burial was in Catawba Memorial Park. Pallbearers were Mr. Peterson's grandsons.

Catawba Funerals & Cremations were in charge of arrangements.

JAMES WIGGINS
KINGS MOUNTAIN - James Carol Wiggins, 75, 706 Bethlehem Road, died August 23, 2004 at his home.

A native of Burke County, he was the son of the late William Luther and Rosie Mae Downs Wiggins. He was a Baptist, retired painter and country musician. He was called the "Mountain Boy" on his music.

He is survived by his brother, Earl F. Wiggins of Kings Mountain, and sister Lala Marie W. Teague of Kings Mountain.

A graveside service will be held at 4 p.m. Thursday at Mountain Rest Cemetery. Visitation will be from 2:30-3:30 p.m. at Harris Funeral Home.

Harris Funeral Home is in charge of arrangements.

MARK LEDBETTER
KINGS MOUNTAIN - Robert Mark Ledbetter, 33, died August 22, 2004 at Gaston Memorial Hospital.

A native of Cleveland County, he was the son of Ralph and Lora Ledbetter of Shelby and Brenda and David Childers of Shelby. He was a salesman with Kings Mountain Auto Sales and a member of Bethlehem Baptist Church.

In addition to his parents, he is survived by his wife, Twila Martinez Ledbetter of the home; son Brandon Mark Ledbetter of Shelby; daughter Ashley Renee Ledbetter of Shelby; brother and sister-in-law James Ralph and Lynn Ledbetter Jr. of Kings Mountain; sister and brother-in-law Donna Lynn and Steve Robinson of Blacksburg, SC; mother-in-law Lillian Joan Martinez of Kings Mountain; sister-in-law Debra LaFollette of Kings Mountain; nephew David LaFollette of Kings Mountain; brother-in-law Marty Martinez of Kings



MEETING

From 1A

agreement." Mullinax believes the four and the mayor discussed hiring and a compensation package for McGinnis before he was notified of the meeting on Wednesday. Mullinax has consulted a private attorney and is talking with the North Carolina Council of Governments about the issue.

Murphrey defended the council members' right to talk one-on-one before the

vote. "There's nothing wrong with council members to talk, call each other," he said. "It's normal as you do in any company."

State statute defines an official meeting as a "meeting, assembly, or gathering together at any time or place or the simultaneous communication by conference telephone or other electronic means of a majority of the member of a public body for the purpose of conducting hearings, participating in deliberations, or voting upon or otherwise transact-

ing the public business within the jurisdiction, real or apparent, of the public body."

The mayor also said it was permissible for individual council members to talk with job candidates.

Murphrey says he was following the normal procedure when he called the meeting at the request of Corn, DeVane, Moore and Shipp.

When the council took a consensus during an Aug. 5 closed session meeting, six of the seven members voted against McGinnis, Mullinax

said. "He simply wasn't qualified," Mullinax said. "I don't have anything against McGinnis."

Mullinax says the fact that McGinnis has not worked for a city which provides gas or electric service makes him unqualified to lead Kings Mountain. McGinnis contends that those departments are effectively managed already and he can learn on the job.

"It gives me more motivation to get qualified if they don't feel I'm qualified," McGinnis said.

MCGINNIS

From 1A

McGinnis graduated from

the University North Carolina at Greensboro in 1996 with a Masters in Public Administration. He holds a Bachelor of Arts in

Political Science from Lenoir-Rhyne College in Hickory. McGinnis is a 1979 graduate of Kings Mountain High School.

He and his wife Karen Morton McGinnis have two

daughters Lindsay Daria, 5, and Emma Nadia, 1.

Interim Manager Gary Hicks will stay on until Sept. 1. McGinnis replaces Phil Ponder, who left in February after nine months on the job.

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