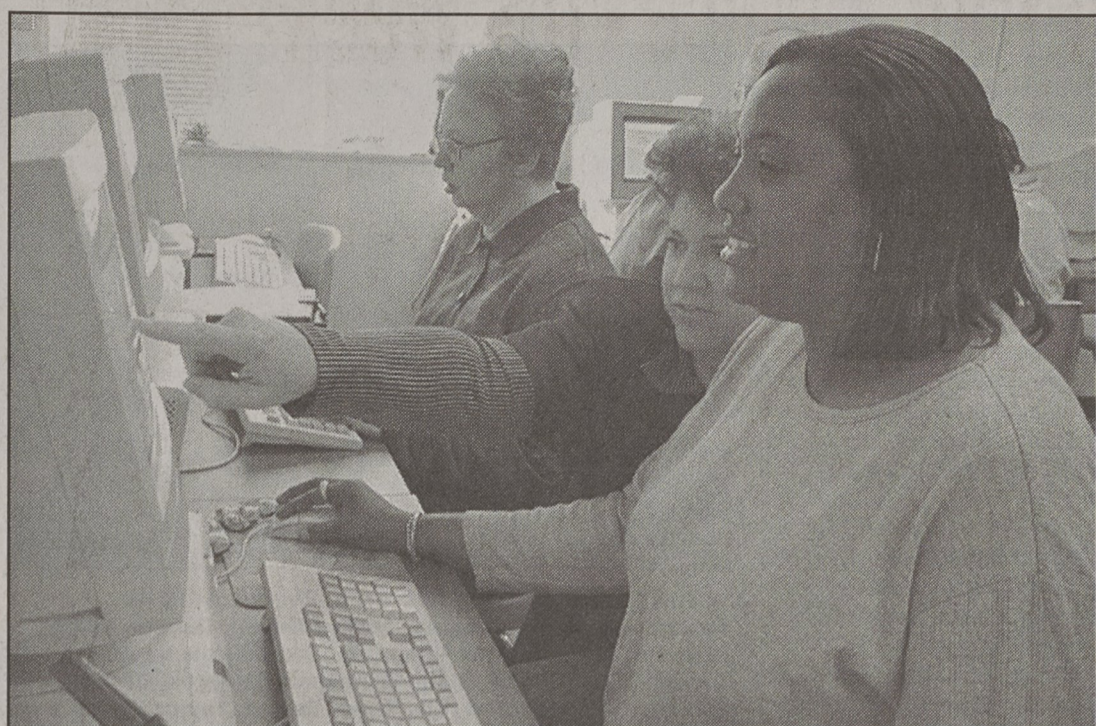


SCHOOLS



ANDIE L. BRYMER/HERALD
Barbara Bridges of the Parent Center helps Adrienne Myers with Microsoft Word

Parent Center helps adults help children

BY ANDIE L. BRYMER
Staff Writer

When Debrerah McClain heard about the Cleveland County School's Parent Center computer lab, she knew the skills taught there would help her help her son.

McClain is brushing up her computer knowledge so she can teach her son to type. He's already using the computer mouse to operate spelling tutorial Roger Rabbit and a program which teaches short and long vowels. McClain believes that keeping kids intellectually stimulated at home helps then do better at school.

Recently, McClain offered to staple lessons together.

"To show my appreciation I'm volunteering to help," she said.

McClain calls the center's two staff members Barbara Bridges and Lori Holland "a breath of fresh air."

Bridges helped parent Adrienne Myers with Microsoft Word. The two worked on using keys and a mouse to bold, underline and highlight words.

"I'm trying to brush up on it," Myers said.

She hopes the new skills will help on the job search. Myers heard about the program when West Elementary School sent home a parent survey.

Martha Evans learned about the computer lab after taking a computer class at the Patrick Senior Center. She wants to increase her typing from 33 to 40 words per minute in hopes of getting a job with the county or state.

Though parents and grandparents of school children are given first access, the computer lab is open to the public also.

The Parent Center offers more than computers know how. Materials are available on the Saxon Phonics program used in local schools. This helps parents better understand the method teachers are now using.

"They learn the why of language, not just how it is," Bridges said.

Information also is available on math. Once a month the center sponsors an activity time for pre-schoolers which includes

arts, crafts, stories and singing. Parents should pre-register by calling the center.

Kings Mountain High School students volunteer as tutors for first graders on Wednesday afternoons. This program begins after the first progress reports are issued.

"The little kids really like the big kids," Bridges said.

Story packets including a book and activities are available for free at the center. Educational games can be borrowed.

Center staff are trained in the Laubach literacy training method. There are also GED preparation materials available at the center. English as a Second Language assistance is available too.

Center staff have helped people with limited English understand utility bills and learn to better communicate with service providers.

Bridges will meet one-on-one with parents needing help with Attention Deficit Disorder, discipline, financial planning and other issues.

"Not that we have all the answers, we brainstorm," Bridges said.

The center has hosted support groups around ADD, discipline and divorce. Education workshops also take place throughout the year.

Parents of newborns may receive a book for their baby and register for regular mailings on child development.

All of the center's services and materials are free. Federal money makes up 80 percent of the Parent Center budget with the remaining 20 percent from local coffers. Last year the center had 768 contacts with parents, grandparents and community members and gave away 100 story packets.

For a schedule of classes and other events, call 704-739-0017. That number will change to 704-476-8000 soon. The Parent Center is located in the basement of the former Kings Mountain District Schools office on East Ridge Street.

Andie Brymer can be reached at abrymer@kingsmountainherald.com or 704-739-7496.

Ambassadors help out in community

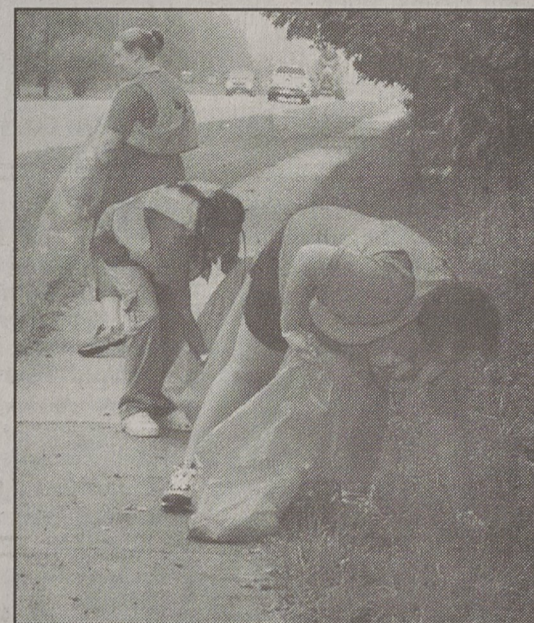
The Ambassadors, a new school/community service organization at Kings Mountain High, recently completed its first community service project.

Sarosh Majeed and Harsh Patel organized a trash pickup project on Phifer Road and around the high school. Members picked up trash for two hours.

Two more projects are planned for Saturday, Oct. 23. Several members will be raising money for the YMCA by participating in the Y's "We Build People" campaign to provide scholarships to families and students to participate in YMCA programs. They will be taking pledges and participating in a walk-a-thon at the YMCA walking track from 8 a.m.-11 a.m.

Members will also participate in the United Way "Make a Difference Day" by going to the Wendover Hospice facility in Shelby and landscape their playground, make cards and cookies for residents, decorate scrapbooks and visit patients.

Students from Jeff Melton's, Dan Potter's and Kami McKay's classes will also participate in the project at Hospice.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
Lindsey Carpenter, Angel Smith and Lindsey Holland of The Ambassadors pick up trash along Phifer Road.

Thulin receives Pfeiffer scholarship

Jennifer Thulin of Bessemer City has been awarded an academic scholarship for the fall 2005-06 academic year at Pfeiffer University in Misenheimer.

One of Pfeiffer's most prestigious, this scholarship is awarded to incoming freshman students based on the student's outstanding academic record.

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Educators attend seminars

Steven W. Sutherland, fifth grade mathematics teacher at Kings Mountain Intermediate School, and Melanie Ballard, eighth grade counselor at Kings Mountain Middle School, recently attended seminars at the North Carolina Center for

Advancement of Teachers at Cullowhee.

Ballard participated in "Beaches; Yesterday, Today, and Tomorrow."

Sutherland participated in "Support Seminar for Teachers Pursuing National Board Certification."

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