

The Herald

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Danny McDowell keeps an eye on the action at KMHS basketball game.

Coach Retiring

McDowell to finish year at KM High

By GARY STEWART
 Editor of The Herald

Danny Ray McDowell, the only Kings Mountain High basketball coach to win three consecutive conference championships, is retiring at the end of the year. He will continue to teach and coach the Mountaineers until the end of the school year.

McDowell is in his fifth year as head coach of the Mountaineers and had a 69-48 overall record heading into a game last night at Hunter Huss.

His past three teams have won Southwestern Foothills 3A Conference championships and played in the Sectional Championship game all three years. Two of those teams won the Sectional crown and competed in the Western Regionals.

McDowell, who is completing his 32nd year as an educator, said he wanted to retire to do some traveling, golfing and other activities with friends and family.

"I've put my time in," he said. "There's nothing that's going on over here that made me want to leave, it's just that I want to get out and do some things while I'm still able to."

McDowell is ending a coaching career that has seen him win championships on the local, state and national level. He began his career by winning three consecutive conference championships at Kings Mountain Middle School. He then won three straight JV titles at KMHS where he assisted John Blalock with the 1981-82 and 1982-83 teams which won Southwestern Conference championships.

After that, McDowell spent 12 years at the Kings Mountain Boys Club where his teams won 10 State AAU championships, one national championship and finished second or third in the nationals on three other occasions.

After the Boys Club closed, McDowell spent three more years as an assistant to KMHS coach Larry Sipe before assuming the head coaching duties when Sipe retired from coaching.

Although he's won more than his share of championships, McDowell says that is not what he will cherish about his years as a basketball coach. He said the association with the young athletes and seeing them progress is what is most gratifying.

"Championships come and go," he said. "The most important thing to me is to see the kids develop. People See McDowell, 7A

One councilman, some residents object to long-term YMCA contract

BY ANDIE L. BRYMER
 Staff Writer

Will the Kings Mountain Family YMCA get a 10-year contract with the city? So far five city council members are in favor of exploring the idea but some residents disagree.

Council voted Tuesday night five to one to adopt a resolution of intent to enter into a lease agreement with the YMCA. That means the council will have to advertise the terms of the agreement 10 days before the vote. That vote is scheduled for the January council meeting.

Council member Jerry Mullinax

cast the lone dissenting vote. Council member Kay Hambright was absent due to a death in her family.

"I like it like it is. I don't agree with any lengthy contract," Mullinax said.

Right now the city and YMCA are in the fifth year of a 10-year contract. The proposed contract would create a 10-year agreement. The remaining five years of the current agreement would be nullified.

During the meeting Mullinax asked YMCA Director David Ozmore if the organization was planning to make more requests of See YMCA, 2A

Mayor says he had quick fingers in vote for board appointments

BY ANDIE L. BRYMER
 Staff Writer

November's Kings Mountain City Council meeting ended with everyone knowing who would serve on the Board of Adjustment and the Planning and Zoning Board.

However, no one seemed to know who voted for whom.

City council members use electronic voting which displays their votes on a box facing the audience.

The machine does not record votes.

Council members choose between a number of nominees for each board. This caused several ties. The display of who voted for whom was quickly erased after each vote.

"I flipped it too fast," said Mayor Rick Murphrey. "I didn't realize that."

Murphrey controls the switch which displays the information.

The individuals winning appointment See Vote, 2A

SENIOR PROJECTS



JOSEPH BRYMER/HERALD
 Brittany Allen presents her senior project on computed sonography last week at Kings Mountain High School. Below, Keith Yarbro drives draft horse Hurracane. The Kings Mountain High School senior trained the horse as his senior project.

KMHS senior project key step toward graduation

BY ANDIE L. BRYMER
 Staff Writer

Brittany Allen watched CT scans at Kings Mountain Hospital. Keith Yarbro trained a draft horse. Brittany McCready tutored a student with learning disabilities. Heather Smith-Wilson learned to groom and ride a horse.

These Kings Mountain High School students along with approximately 140 more spent much of the first semester completing senior projects.

The nervous students made five to eight minute presentations last week. A panel of judges from government, business, media, industry and education scored the students.

"I'm ready to graduate and get to work in my studies," Allen told the judges. "It looks easier than it really is. You have to know every part of the body."

See Projects, 3A



FOLDED

Since KM ordinance video poker locations have dropped from 18 to 4

BY ANDIE L. BRYMER
 Staff Writer

Since the City of Kings Mountain created a video poker ordinance in 2000, the number of machines registered here has dropped dramatically.

The number of locations with video poker has gone from approximately 18 to four. Each location is allowed to have three machines.

The four locations include: Kings Mountain Truck Plaza located at 400 Dixon School Road, KM Games/Bessemer City Express at 501 East King Street, Silver Villa at 606 East King Street and Hugo's at 902 South Battleground, according to city records.

The ordinance separates video poker operations from private residences, schools, churches and other video poker operations.

After South Carolina banned video poker games, operators moved the machines north.

"They came over by convoys into our city," said Mayor Rick Murphrey.

The mayor said the video poker ordinance mirrors the city's pornography ordinance.

"It gives some control over what goes on in our city," Murphrey said.

Cleveland County Sheriff Raymond Hamrick has said he would like to see the machines outlawed. According to both Hamrick and Murphrey, the operations are a target for robbery because of the large amounts of cash on hand.

State law limits prizes to \$10 in store merchandise. Local video poker operators deny paying off in cash.

Murphrey said he had received complaints from residents that family members were losing their entire paychecks playing the machines.

The city took several businesses to court earlier this year over ordinance violations. The city was awarded \$548,910 in fines, according to Murphrey. They have received approximately \$100,000 of the fines, Murphrey said.

Earlier this year a bill was introduced into the General Assembly with the stated purpose of increasing regulation of video poker machines. The bill would have shifted responsibility to the state Alcohol Law Enforcement Division. Hamrick said he believed the bill would in reality make enforcement more difficult. He said ALE had fewer personnel than local law enforcement agencies. The bill failed.

"They came over by convoys into our city."

Rick Murphrey
 KM Mayor

KINGS MOUNTAIN PEOPLE

Leigh Ann Long greets everyone with a smile and willingness to help

BY ANDIE L. BRYMER
 Staff Writer

A frown on Leigh Ann Long's face is about as rare as a four-leaf clover.

Long, the receptionist and an administrative assistant at Kings Mountain High, is known for her friendly personality and willingness to help out.

"I don't really have bad days. Life is too short," Long said.

She's worked at KMHS for six years and calls it the "best job ever."

"I never complain. I love to come to work."

Long says her mother and father set the example of going out of one's way to be helpful.

"My Mama always said it comes back to

you."

The abilities to multi-task and work well with others make Long the right person for the job.

"I love meeting people," she said.

"Every day is different."

In addition to helping students, parents and other visitors, Long answers the phones, coordinates driver's education and "whatever they need me to do." This week that has included proctoring exams.

When Long graduated from KMHS in 1979 she says she never imagined working for the school. She studied at Gaston and Cleveland Community colleges, worked other jobs and then took a job at Kings Mountain Middle School. Long credits KMMS's then principal Fred Withers with See Long, 3A



ANDIE BRYMER / HERALD
 Leigh Ann Long hard at work in office of Kings Mountain High School