

# The Herald

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## Council candidates discuss issues

ANDIE BRYMER

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Where do Kings Mountain City Council candidates stand on liquor by the drink and eminent domain? Where do they think the city will be in a decade? The Herald posed these questions and several candidates responded.

**Should cities be allowed to use eminent domain to take property for economic development?**

Ward Two incumbent Brenda Ross: "No. I oppose the seizure of private property to favor a private

business."

Ward Two challenger Mike Butler: "No, I'm against that but it could be beneficial to the city if a house has been abandoned for years, the landlord can't be found," Butler said.

Ward Three incumbent Jerry Mullinax: "No."

Ward Three challenger Tommy Hawkins: "No."

Ward Four incumbent Kay Hambricht: She called for studying the issue and seeing how constituents feel. "We should do the best we can to protect property

rights," Hambricht said.

Ward Four contender Rodney Gordon: "Absolutely not, being a property owner is the right of every American. There are ordinances governing private property to prevent it from becoming a hazard and keeping it zoned within its limitations."

Ward Five challenger Clarence "Buddy" Smith: "I do not feel like the city should be able to force people to sell their land or move from their land. There's enough undeveloped land around the city. I would not like it if the city tried

to take my permanent place."

Ward Five challenger Keith Miller: "No. The eighth commandment says, 'Do not steal'. Using eminent domain statutes to redistribute private property from one private entity to another private entity against the will of the current owner, regardless of the purpose and regardless of compensation, looks too much like stealing for me to support it."

At-large incumbent Houston Corn: "I don't think so."

At-large incumbent Rick Moore: "No I am totally against that."

At-large challenger Dean Spears: "I have mixed emotions on that but if a particular piece of property that is not serving any good for the city, the community, yes I would vote for the city condemning and taking it for economic development."

At-large challenger Roy "Butch" Pearson: "The use of eminent domain to seize private property for economic development is wrong. If real property is deemed detrimental to the city or presents a hazard for our citizens, relief

See Issues, 2A

## Bates dinner tonight

GARY STEWART

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A Salute to Bill Bates, honoring the former Kings Mountain High teacher,



BATES

coach and athletic director, will be held Thursday at 6:30 p.m. at the Patrick Center.

At half-time of

Friday's home football game with East Gaston, the Kings Mountain Sports Hall of Fame will dedicate the John Gamble Stadium field house in honor of Coach Bates. At the Hall of Fame's request, the Cleveland County School Board approved the naming of Bill Bates Field House at its June meeting. A permanent plaque will be displayed on the outside of the building.

Tonight's dinner will bring out a number of Bates' former players and other persons who will speak on his contributions to athletics and his impact on education and the community. A limited number of tickets will be available at the door beginning at 5:30. They are \$25.

Speakers include:

■ Ken Baity, Shrine Bowl running back from Bates' first year (1957) as backfield coach under the late coaching legend John Gamble.

■ Punch Parker, All-State running back on the 1960 football team which finished 9-1.

■ Jim Medlin, All-Conference lineman on Bates' first SWC championship team in 1963 and one of only three teams in KMHS history to finish the season undefeated.

■ Pat Murphy, All-State quarterback on Bates' 1964 SWC championship team which finished the regular season undefeated.

■ Charles Barnes, a running back/quarterback on Bates' 1968 and 1969 teams.

■ Geeper Howard, quarterback of Bates' final team in 1970.

■ Bobby Hussey, an assistant football coach and head basketball coach during the 1960s who went on to become a successful basketball coach on the collegiate level.

■ Dr. Larry Allen, Deputy Supt. of Cleveland County Schools, who will speak on Bates' impact on the educational community.

■ Dr. George Litton, for- See Bates, 2A

## DOUBLE THE FUN



Twins Kelly Sarvis, left, and Cameron Sarvis enjoy new playground equipment at North Elementary. North's playground was dedicated Tuesday night. For story and more photos see page 4A.

## 5 participate in CCC forum

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Five candidates for Kings Mountain's city council and mayoral races participated in a Chamber of Commerce candidate forum Thursday night at Cleveland Community College. Candidates were asked a series of questions by moderator Dr. Steve Thornburg, president of CCC.

**Will you permit a referendum allowing citizens to vote on mixed beverage sales?**

Ward 5 challenger Keith Miller: No.

At-large challenger Lamar Fletcher: Yes.

At-large challenger Dean Spears: No.

Ward Three challenger Tommy Hawkins: No.

Incumbent Mayor Rick Murphrey: "Liquor by the drink is for citizens to determine. That is a citizens' issue."

**What is the relationship of Kings Mountain to the rest of the county and what can be done to improve it?**

Dean Spears: "Kings Mountain is on the verge of economic development, Spears said. He told the audience he served on the EDC before serving on council. I would vote for all the incentives I could and persuade others to."

Lamar Fletcher: "Kings Mountain and Shelby need to sit down and work together to bring in economic development."

Tommy Hawkins: "Kings Mountain and the rest of the county get along fine." Hawkins said he would promote Kings Mountain as a good place to live, work and retire.

Keith Miller: "We work together as friends and neighbors but I sleep with one eye open. Shelby, Gastonia, Gaston County, Cleveland County and Kings Mountain are all competitors." Miller said all benefit from local assets like Gardner-Webb University and the state and national parks and Kings Mountain has the advantages of Interstate 85, water, the transco pipeline and having the parks nearby.

Rick Murphrey: "The city and county have a great relationship and work together on economic development."

**What is your general position on taxes and what specific pledges would you make regarding taxes.**

Tommy Hawkins: "Kings Mountain has been blessed the See Forum, 3A

## Council passes North Piedmont rezoning request

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A controversial rezoning request passed 5-1 during Tuesday night's Kings Mountain City Council meeting.

Council member Houston Corn cast the lone dissenting vote against J. Glenn Carroll's request to rezone his property at 605 N. Piedmont Avenue from residential to general business. Councilman Carl DeVane was not at the meeting.

Three members of nearby First Wesleyan Church spoke against Carroll's request, calling it spot zoning. The church representatives said that general business included so many uses, leaving them afraid of what could be built there. Carroll said he had several offers including business and residential uses.

Church member and former councilman Clavon Kelly said he lived in the neighborhood as a child. He talked about the "fine homes" which were moved when Highway 74 was

built. He questioned what the property would be used for.

"It could be a bingo parlor, shooting range, garage, car wash, convenience store, liquor store, pawn shop," Kelly said. "We don't know what they're going to put there."

"I have no intention of putting anything in the area that would disrupt the neighborhood," Carroll said. "It's really not a neighborhood."

According to Carroll, 8,000 cars pass through the area daily and the highway has four lanes in front of his property.

Church member Ted Huffman argued that the church's pastor was on call 24 hours a day and business traffic could disturb his sleep. The church used that same argument when a home day care provider located next door to the parsonage asked the zoning board to allow her to provide childcare around the clock. That request was turned down.

Initially council members asked

Carroll to resubmit his request as a conditional use which would require specifics on use. Carroll said he did not want to work with the planning board or planning director.

In other business, Cleveland County Commissioner Johnny Hutchins told the council that the city's extra territorial jurisdiction is under represented on the planning board. He said this is not fair and that the board's decisions could be challenged in court because of this.

Fire Chief Frank Burns updated council on disaster preparedness. Burns explained that the fire department works with other city departments, Cleveland County Emergency Management and Gaston and Cleveland county EMS agencies. Generators have been installed at the police department, both fire departments, public works where an emergency command center is located and at the Red Cross office.

The types of disasters Kings Mountain is most at risk for include

heavy rains, tornadoes, ice storms and train or vehicle accidents.

"You would not believe some of the chemicals that go up and down the road and the railroad," Burns said.

Kings Mountain has access to decontamination through Cleveland County and Gastonia's hazardous materials teams and a regional team from Charlotte and has access to urban search and rescue.

To notify citizens in the event of an emergency, police and fire vehicles are equipped with public address systems. The fire siren can be sounded to alert residents that they should tune in to a news station. Staff can go door to door as well.

During a natural disaster extra staff can be used at the police and fire departments and vehicles are kept full of fuel. The fire department has a meteorologist on staff. The Red Cross office located behind Kings Mountain Baptist Church is the city's designated shelter.

## Hutchins wants more ETJ representatives

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A Kings Mountain extra-territorial-jurisdiction resident and Cleveland County commissioner is asking for more representation on the city's planning board and Kings Mountain's mayor says more mem-

bers can be added.

Johnny Hutchins says the board should have four representatives from the city's ETJ instead of just one. Currently there are seven members representing the city and one representing the ETJ which falls in Cleveland County and one for the Gaston County ETJ.

Using 2000 Census data, there is one city representative per 1,406 people and one Cleveland County ETJ representative per 5,580 people, Hutchins said.

"I see nothing wrong in having additional representation," Murphrey said.

The portion of the city's ETJ which falls in Gaston County only

has 345 people total. Hutchins agrees that this area should continue to have only one representative.

Cities recommend planning board members to county commissions who have the final say on the appointments. Planning boards make recommendations but the final say-so is left to city councils.