

KINGS MOUNTAIN

The Herald



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BREAKING NEWS

WDYT Radio to operate out of Lincolnton

EMILY WEAVER

The 53-year-old Kings Mountain radio station, WDYT (formerly WKMT) 1220 AM, will make its last personal broadcast from Kings Mountain on December 31, 2006. The programs Swap Shop and gospel music will no longer drift on the radio waves produced by the station house. DJs and personalities that the town has come to love, like Jerry Mullinax and Tony Washam, will no longer share the airwaves. But of all of the changes set to take effect on January 1, 2007, the building on Cleveland Road will remain.

"The location is not being shut down in anticipation of our new reformation," said Casey Shannon, VP of Communications with CRN Communications, Inc. He said that as of January 1, 2007, they will not be broadcasting on the same format. A station in Lincolnton, WLOK, will be picking up the station's format.

The Lincolnton station is another ownership or holding of Fontana Communications.

"We wanted to give a clean separation at the beginning of the year," Shannon said. So the company sent out letters to radio personalities and workers at the Kings Mountain radio station to inform them of their New Year's resolutions, changes that no longer require their services.

Washam will continue to supervise the station and take care of the studio location but no broadcasts will emanate from Kings Mountain, Shannon said. "Tony and Jerry's broadcasts will cease."

Shannon encouraged them to talk to Lanny Ford at the Lincolnton station to continue their broadcasts there, but admitted that he was not sure how interested Ford would be about the programs. Ford is picking up some of the paid or syndicated programs emanating from Charlotte like the gospel talk show. "The paid program 'Real Country' will be emanating from Kings Mountain as an original hub," Shannon said. "It (WDYT) will act as a hub for our broadcasts to come through."

Danny Fontana purchased the station from previous owner Kevin Geddings earlier this year, finishing the last of the paperwork on April 1, 2006. The plans around the time of purchase were to expand the station's limited signal to 10,000 watts, which is currently underway.

Fontana was reported last October in The Herald as planning to make the station home to his syndicated faith-lifestyle talk show and a lunchtime financial program. He is the host of the Danny Fontana Show, which looks at issues from a political, economic and spiritual perspective. Jonas Bridges started the Kings Mountain station years ago and sold it to Geddings.

'06 big year for Kings Mountain

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2006 was a banner year for Kings Mountain and 2007 promises to be just as bright.

The city landed several new businesses and industries in 2006, had a perfect audit for the sixth year in a row, and increased its general fund balance from 16.2 to 20.2 percent.

"I feel like we've had a good year," said Mayor Rick Murphrey. "We're going to see more industrial and residential growth. We're just in a great location. The

city has worked for many years to position itself with the utilities that have been expanded and planned so that when prospective customers come in we'll be ready to serve them."

The presence of two major highways (I-85 and US 74 Bypass), and business utility rates that are among the lowest of similar size cities in the state, an active downtown and good school system combine to make Kings Mountain very attractive to business and industry and new residents.

"When you're marketing a city you have to have competitive rates," Murphrey said. "When you look at the

overall package Kings Mountain has to offer you will get a tremendous amount of interest."

The top economic news to come out of Kings Mountain in years occurred in July when Chris-Craft Boats and Indian Motorcycle announced they would move part of their operations from Sarasota, FL to the Kings Mountain area. Although both industries are located outside the city - Chris-Craft on Countryside Road and Indian Motorcycle on Battleground Road near Grover - they will be Kings Mountain utility users.

Other industries coming to town in '06

were Lukjam Metals, Kitchen Ventilation Services and STEAG.

Altogether, the new industries will bring over 1,000 jobs and a \$50 million investment. In addition, Johnson Development built a 500,000 square foot spec building on I-85 and a spec building for a call center was constructed in the Cleveland County Industrial Park near Kings Mountain. Murphrey hopes that both will be occupied in '07.

New businesses building on East King Street - one of which is already open - See Big Year, 5A

How to pay 9 grand



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The beginning of a new year, full of exciting possibilities and new beginnings, should be celebrated. But beware. One night of partying with alcohol can turn into a year of suffering. A \$6 six-pack of beer can turn into thousands of dollars in fees and penalties after being caught driving while impaired. In North Carolina the costs of driving after consumption for first-time offenders can be detrimental with fines ranging from \$100 to \$2,000, mandatory jail time ranging from 24 hours to more than 24 months imprisonment, and a mandatory license revocation for a period of one year. Court costs, legal fees, insurance rates, and fines for a DWI total more than \$9,500 for a single, first offense.

According to the NC Department of Motor Vehicles website, a first conviction can carry

a minimum punishment that includes a fine of up to \$100 and not less than 24 hours imprisonment, 24 hours of community service, 30 days without driving privileges, or any combination of these. Maximum punishments can include fines up to \$2,000 and 14 days-over 2 years imprisonment.

Once arrested for a DWI, the offender is taken to the police station or holding center for a night behind bars and his or her license is revoked for a mandatory minimum of 30 days. According to the website of the Raleigh-based counseling firm First Step Services, LLC, the offender can get a limited driving privilege from a judge 10 days after the arrest if the person gets a DWI Assessment. If the driver gets no assessment, he or she can pick up his or her driver's license at the clerk of courts office after 30 days has passed and by paying a \$50 restoration fee.

Refusing to participate in field sobriety

tests and chemical tests, including those given by a breathalyzer or blood test, is a citizen's right and prerogative. But resistance will result in the immediate loss of a license for 13 months if the person is found *not guilty* of DWI and a possible two years or more if the person is found guilty. According to ncdot.org, "A conviction of DWI with a B.A.C. of 0.16 or more, or another conviction within the past seven years, will require an ignition interlock device to be installed on the vehicle." The device is usually attached to the steering wheel or front console of the vehicle and requires the driver to perform a breathalyzer before the vehicle will start and at regular intervals while driving. The vehicle will not start or the engine will lock up if the device detects a specified B.A.C.

DWI Assessments, at a cost of \$50, are required of all that are convicted of DWI in NC. The assessment is a structured interview

See 9 Grand, 5A

SHRINK DOWN

Kick off for weight loss promotion to begin in January

ELIZABETH STEWART

Herald Correspondent

Since New Years Day is the typical time to make resolutions local citizens are being encouraged by promoters of Cleveland County *Shrink Down* to attend a kickoff for the campaign on Jan. 8 from 12:30-7 p.m. at Cleveland Community College.

The program is free to the public and offers citizens a chance to get on the "shrink down" bandwagon without a fad diet program.

David Ozmore, YMCA director in Kings Mountain, presented an update of the program at the recent meeting of City Council. Citizens who start the program will be asked to watch their weight for 10 weeks and weigh in each Friday and privately at sites to be located in town. Progress will be charted without using names of individuals participating in the program.

The program is sponsored by the YMCA, Gardner-Webb University, the Cleveland County Health Department and local hospitals.

Ozmore said that 62 percent of Cleveland County citizens are overweight or obese, a drastic hike in statistics over recent years, and 10 percent of that group fight heart disease and stroke. He suggested that those with computer access to click on www.clevelandcountytshrinkdown.com to find some educational materials.

Priceless Pearl

Dr. Brown, first professional African-American employee of Gaston College, retiring January 1 with 42 years of service

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Gaston College will lose a "pearl of great price" when Kings Mountain's own, Dr. Pearlie Brown, retires from Morris Library on January 1, 2007.

She is retiring after 42 years of library service at the college. She will leave the Dallas campus with the distinction of being the first professional African American hired at Gaston, the first full-time employee outside of the head librarian, and the longest serving professional and administrator at the college and within the NC Community College System.

Although goodbyes are sometimes sad, she looks ahead with a smile.

"I'm calling it quits," she laughed. Brown has toyed with the idea of retiring for some time now, but somehow she always found herself still working.

"I think I'm ready for it now," she said. "I'm going to have to adjust because I've worked all of my life. I've been in education 45 years and you get up and you come to school or you get up and you come to work and that's what I've been used to doing. So I'm going to have to adjust and I don't think that's going to be too hard."

See Pearl, 2A



Dr. Pearlie Brown, of Kings Mountain, stands next to the circulation desk counter at Gaston College's Morris Library, where she is the Public Services Librarian. She is retiring from the college after 42 years of service.

Photo by Emily Weaver