

LIFESTYLES

Coupons offered for digital broadcasting switchover

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In exactly 354 days if you do not have a digital-tuning television set, your favorite over-the-air shows will fade to gray. The sounds of commercials and all programs will be reduced to white noise.

Come February 17, 2009, all non-digital viewers are going to have to switch to a new frequency. At midnight on that date, "all full-power television stations in the United States will stop broadcasting in analog and switch to 100% digital broadcasting," according to dtv2009.gov.

To continue to watch the

shows you love, consumers will have to purchase and plug their sets into a converter box. If you currently use a roof-top antenna or "rabbit ears" to receive free over-the-air television programming, you will need a digital-to-analog converter box to continue viewing. Converter boxes are estimated to sell for a one-time price of between \$40 and \$70 apiece.

The government established the Digital-to-Analog Converter Box Coupon Program to help consumers through the transition. Through this program, "every U.S. household is eligible to receive up to two coupons, worth \$40 each,

toward the purchase of eligible digital-to-analog converter boxes," according to dtv.gov.

Coupons are available now and will continue to be available until March 2009. The program is administered through the National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA), a part of the Department of Commerce.

For more information on the Digital-to-Analog Converter Box Coupon Program or to get a coupon, visit www.ntia.doc.gov/dtvcoupon or call 1-888-388-2009 or 1-877-530-2634 (TTY).

If you do not want to pur-

chase a converter box, other options to receive broadcast signals include: connecting to cable, satellite or another pay service; or purchasing a digital-tuning television.

According to dtv.gov, "An important benefit of the switch to all-digital broadcasting is that it will free up parts of the valuable broadcast spectrum for public safety communications (such as police, fire departments and rescue squads). Also, some of the spectrum will be auctioned to companies that will be able to provide consumers with more advanced wireless services (such as wireless broadband). Consumers

also benefit because digital broadcasting allows stations to offer improved picture and sound quality."

Digital broadcasting will also offer the feature of multi-casting, allowing stations to broadcast multiple programs on several channels, while still using the same frequency. In other words, instead of channel 7 just offering "The Andy Griffith Show" at a certain time, they could be offering "Andy Griffith" on channel 7-1, "The Beverly Hillbillies" on channel 7-2, "LOST" on 7-3, etc.

For more information about the digital switchover, visit www.dtv.gov.

SOCIAL BRIEFS

1940's Radio Hour continues at KMLT

Kings Mountain Little Theater's production of Walton Jones' "1940's Radio Hour" continues at the Joy Performance Center with two final performances on February 29 and March 1 at 7:30 p.m.

Tickets for \$10 (general admission) and \$8 (seniors and students) will be available at the box office before each show. To make a reservation, call 704-730-9408. Tickets will be held at the box office for reservations until about 7:10 p.m. on show nights.

KMLT is also calling for used cell phones. A collection bin will be available at the theatre. Each donated phone gives an hour of call time to a soldier overseas.

Relay fund raiser set at Mt. Zion Baptist

A Kings Mountain Relay for Life fund raiser luncheon will be held at Mt. Zion Baptist Church at 10:45 a.m. on March 8. The luncheon is hosted by the Sassy Red Delights.

Proceeds will go towards Kings Mountain's fight for a cancer cure.

For more information, contact Betty Eaker at 704-435-5398 or at 704-868-5427.

Minerals and Gems at KM History Museum

The Kings Mountain Historical Museum, 100 E. Mountain St., is hosting "Minerals and Gems of North Carolina" through April 26. The exhibit features private collections of minerals and gems from local "rock hounds" and Kings Mountain Mining, Inc.

Hours are Tuesday through Saturday from 10 a.m.-4 p.m. For more information call 704-739-1019.

Shelby MS Walk slated for April 5

The Shelby Multiple Sclerosis Walk will take place at 10 a.m. April 5 at Uptown Shelby Court Square, with check-in at 9 a.m.

Corporate sponsorships are available, and the chapter is seeking volunteers to help with festivities, food, route marking, and medic stations. There is no cost to walk, but participants are encouraged to raise money prior to the walk.

All monies raised go to support programs for local clients living with MS, and MS research. For details on walking or volunteering, contact Janet Coggins at janet.coggins@nmss.org or (704) 525-5906.

Ongoing events at KM Senior Center

Monday - Ceramics 9-12, Senior Chorus 10:30, Sit for Fitness 10:30-11:30, quilting 12:30.

Tuesday - Line dancing 10

a.m., Bible history 10, knitting 9-10:30, knife sharpening 10:30 second Tuesday, inspirational words by Wray Canipe 11 a.m. second Tuesday, veterans meeting 3 p.m. first Tuesday, volunteer meeting 12:15 third Tuesday, AARP meeting, 1:30 third Tuesday.

Wednesday - Sit for Fitness 10:30-11:30, Fit for a King exer-

cise 2 p.m., duplicate bridge 1:30, personal care by appointment only second Wednesday, Depression Support Group 10:30 a.m. first Wednesday, blood pressure clinic third Wednesday 10-11:30.

Thursday - Bingo 10:45, shopping 12-2 p.m., quilting 1 p.m., duplicate bridge 1:30 first and third Wednesdays.

Friday - Legal services by appointment only first Friday, Sit for Fitness 10:30-11:30, men's coffee and women's tea 10 a.m., Popcorn and a movie 12 noon second Friday.

*Senior Shuttle every week day 9 a.m.-1 p.m., nutrition every week day 11 a.m. (program) and 11:30 (meal).

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