

## LOCAL

# Truck drivers here's your sign

## 'Do not cross Oak and Gold street railroad tracks'

EMILY WEAVER

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After four train collisions in four years, involving trucks stuck on the railroad tracks at the Oak Street crossing, the city has said "no more." New signs and new fines are paving the way for truck and train safety.

Mayor Rick Murphrey said that they put up additional signage to discourage trucks from crossing the tracks at Oak Street several months ago. Signs have also been added to the Gold Street crossing.

Over a month ago, a truck attempted to cross the tracks at Gold Street and, like so many before on Oak, its undercarriage became stuck. While workers tried to free the truck, the shrill sound of a Norfolk Southern train's whistle announced its coming from the south. Luckily, the train was stopped in time and the truck was freed. No collision.

But the sight of rescue workers scrambling to free a truck before a train rips through it or cleaning up the wreckage afterwards has usually been at the Oak Street crossing, not Gold Street. Perhaps that is why the

same signs posted at the corner of Oak Street and Railroad Avenue can now be seen on its neighboring intersection.

The original orange diagonal sign, which illustrates the fate of trucks, which attempt to use the crossing, with lightning bolts signaling "danger" is stationed at both crossings. Murphrey said that drivers are supposed to learn about these "broken truck" signals before they get their licenses.

If that sign is too confusing, though, there is another one at both crossings, which spells out in plain English and in large red letters "ABSOLUTELY NO TRUCK CROSSING." If plain English is hard for some drivers to understand, another sign will soon be at the crossings explaining "NO" in Spanish.

But, just in case, there is another sign stationed beneath the red, octagonal Stop signs at both crossings, which offer a way for drivers to avoid all confusion. It simply reads: "TRUCK ROUTE TO BUS. 74." The directional signs lead truck drivers down Gold Street to Cansler Street, where they will then turn right and, at the sec-

ond stop light, make a final, safe right onto U.S. Hwy. 74.

The driver of the last truck that was stuck and struck at the Oak Street crossing said that he was only going by what his GPS (Global Positioning Satellite) navigational system told him. It told him to turn right over the crossing. It didn't tell him that a train would meet him there. The mayor said that they are working with the map-makers for GPS systems in motor vehicles to remove the crossings from their register.

If all else fails, the city council voted Tuesday night to increase the fines for truck drivers, who take the crossings and become stuck, from \$50, as ordained by North Carolina general statutes to \$500 - now ordained by city statutes.

"We don't want to close (the crossings) down for our citizens. It's still safe for them to use, it's just the trucks and their landing gear that is going to get stuck, especially when they are loaded and even when they are not," Murphrey said. "We hope to prevent future accidents and still keep it open for the citizens to use."

# Bethware Fair runs through Saturday at Bethware School

The 2008 Bethware Fair continues on the grounds of Bethware Elementary until Saturday. Gates open each night at 6 p.m. and close at 11 p.m.

On Thursday, July 31, 2008, midway riders can purchase an arm band for \$15 each, which will allow them to ride as much as they like. Entertainment will be provided by the Brandon McSwain Band on the midway.

On Friday, August 1, 2008,

arm bands will also be sold for \$15 each for unlimited rides. Entertainment will be provided on the midway by DJ Tracy Stewart and local churches.

On closing night, Saturday, August 2, 2008, prizes will be given away. Prizes, in the past have included \$100 and bicycles. Rides and shows will be on the midway. Entertainment will be provided by DJ Tracy Stewart and local churches.

Parking costs \$3. There is no admission fee to enter the fair.

Rides are provided by Smokey Mountain Amusements. The 2008 Fair Queen is Sara Nicole Mayes, daughter of Craig and Kaye Mayes of Kings Mountain.

The Bethware Community Fair is sponsored each year by the Bethware Progressive Club. This year marks the 61st annual fair.

## LETTER OF APOLOGY

Dear Herald Readers:

There was a serious error made during the printing of the Thursday, July 24, 2008 edition of The Kings Mountain Herald.

The Herald and The Cherryville Eagle are both printed at The Shelby Star. During the production process, four pages from The Eagle got mixed into The Herald's press run. As a result, copies of The Herald contained pages 15, 16, 17 and 20 from The Eagle - making an incomplete and thoroughly confusing edition of the paper.

The Star sincerely apologizes for the error and any inconvenience it has caused readers and advertisers.

**The Herald is in no way responsible for this error.**

Michael Sewell

New Media Director, The Star

## NEWS BRIEFS

## Basile graduates Basic

Army National Guard Pvt. Jeffery A. Basile has graduated from basic combat training at Fort Jackson, Columbia, S.C.

During the nine weeks of training, the soldier studied the Army mission, history, tradition and core values, physical fitness, and received instruction and practice in basic combat skills, military weapons, chemical warfare and bayonet training, drill and ceremony, marching, rifle marksmanship, armed and unarmed combat, map reading, field tactics, military courtesy, military justice system, basic first aid, foot marches, and field training exercises.

He is the son of Deborah Conway of Scism Farm Road, Kings Mountain.

Basile is a 2008 graduate of Kings Mountain High School.

## Bennett presents two original plays in Hendersonville

Two plays written by Kings Mountain Playwright Tom Bennett were presented as part of an "Evening of Shorts" performance July 26-27th at Crazy Lady Café in downtown Hendersonville.

"The American Dream" and "Side Effects" were both written and performed by Bennett at the

"Evening of Shorts." A playwright, actor and musician from Kings Mountain, he has performed with the Kings Mountain Little Theatre and Greater Shelby Community Theatre. His short plays have been produced in Charlotte and Rock Hill, S.C., as well as in Hendersonville. Bennett is an active member of Lost Playwrights of Western North Carolina, which produces the short plays each month.

## CBC blood drive slated August 6 at KMH

Community Blood Center of the Carolinas will be conducting a blood drive at Kings Mountain Hospital on Wednesday, August 6, 2008 from 9:30-12:30 p.m.

The Community Blood Center of the Carolinas, is a 501(C)(3) non-profit group, formed through the combined efforts of the four hospital systems serving the Charlotte metro region. It provides more than 90% of the blood to 14 area hospitals including: Gaston Memorial Hospital, Piedmont Medical Center and all of the Carolinas HealthCare and Presbyterian Hospitals in Mecklenburg County. All the blood CBCC collects in the community is returned to the community at the lowest possible cost consistent with the highest required quality, according to CBCC.

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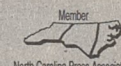
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