

# LOCAL

## CHERRYVILLE

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development as REPAC and others predicted.

"It's a highly emotional issue. My father was an alcoholic. I've had to live with it," Hefner stated and added, "It's brought a lot of heartache. I don't even think the Chamber of Commerce wanted that image."

Hefner mentioned that the two businesses (both private bars), which did come, haven't helped the persona of Cherryville. According to Hefner, there have been greater incidents of DUIs.

"I think the key is responsibility. It goes back to people serving the alcohol and getting behind the wheel of the car," Hefner stated.

Chief Woody Burgess claims that the two bars caused a stir for a short amount of time, but it wasn't necessarily for drunkenness.

"They had live music outside. We went in and told them they have to keep the music down. We took care of it pretty quick," Burgess said.

Although Hefner believes that the mixed drink's inception hasn't brought progress and could deteriorate Cherryville's image, Randall

claims that the town is trying to regain its local economy.

For example, when REPAC presented LBTD as a means of business progression which would increase restaurants' interest, the group made it clear action wouldn't happen overnight. Randall said that city council members were aware of that.

"Having it in place already is the main point. We knew it was going to take some time because there are other things we are trying to do," Randall said.

### Progress at a price

"I would be interested to see if Cherryville is happy with what they have. I think people have the right to express themselves," Hefner stated. He added, "You have to have that process (of voting) and you have to live with it (the decision). That was their choice."

What perhaps separates Cherryville with their passing of LBTD, as reported by Randall, is when a new restaurant is interested in serving alcohol then they must buy the more expensive full mixed beverage license. The full license is required of all restaurants, which wish to serve alcohol, whether mixed beverages are a part of the equation or

not.

"Milano's (Italian Restaurant) had to get a full mixed beverage license. There was a lot of controversy over that because we knew we might serve ourselves out of a nice, little pizza place that wants to serve just beer," Randall stated.

### What about crime rates?

As for crime rates Burgess said, "We haven't seen any increase in crime. DUIs - I'd have to go back (and study). I don't think there's been much of a change."

"I don't want to see people get hurt. The commercial (for name brand beers) looks great, but I've never been in that commercial," Hefner stated.

### Kings Mountain is not Cherryville

Although Cherryville has and continues to go through the same growing pains as those felt by Kings Mountain, the two municipalities have stark differences.

For one, KM is a town of 11,000 citizens compared to Cherryville's 5,800.

"Kings Mountain has an asset Cherryville doesn't have (I-85 & Business 74). Cherryville is not on an

interstate," Hodgkins said.

"I would draw a distinction between Cherryville and us. We are situated on 74 and I-85. Cherryville is nestled back," Collias said, adding that KM is in a better position location-wise for more growth.

And, right now, Chris Hollis with KM's Citizens for Progress said that the city's prime location is missing something. "You've got about 45,000 cars a day passing Exit 10-B and no reason to take their foot off of the gas," Hollis said, about the city not having any of the larger, finer-scaled restaurants.

Collias said that liquor is available in Kings Mountain now at the ABC store, but it isn't available in a way that would attract restaurants - having the right to sell and serve mixed beverages. She added that for many of the upscale restaurants alcohol sales is an integral part of their profits. When looking for a new community they probably won't decide to come to a town, where profits would be limited, she said.

### Quality of life without mixed beverages

"I would say our Mayor has talked a great deal about

our quality of life. That quality of life can best be preserved by not having more restaurants if they require alcohol. It would not be wise for the people of KM to be led by surprise," stated First Baptist Church of KM Pastor Chip Sloan.

"I'm totally against it," said Rev. John Heath, of East Kings Mountain Church of God, adding the the community already has a big problem with alcohol.

He said that he's seen KM's alcohol problems escalate since Beer and Wine was voted in, in the 80s. "There has been a definite change," Heath said.

Sloan and Heath have both experienced the heartaches caused by alcohol-abuse in and outside of the church. "I think there's a greater acceptance of drinking today," Heath said. "But you won't have a problem if you don't mess with it."

"I don't believe it will benefit the people of KM," Sloan said. "The thief comes to only kill, steal, destroy and one of his primary themes is alcohol!"

But there is at least one idea the opposers and supporters share: that the public does have the right to vote.

## LBTD

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According to that study, "The annual direct impact of a successful relatively upscale restaurant is \$4-5 million and approximately 30 full-time jobs and 55 part-time positions. The consequential annual indirect economic impact of the wages spent by the employees and local purchases is an additional \$2.4-2.6 million."

Another study was conducted by a NC Downtown Association "Technical Assistance Team" and partially financed by the city last year to help Mountaineer Partnership establish a strategy plan for the revitalization of downtown. This study like the one in 2005 also recommends the city approve mixed beverages.

According to the 2007 study, among full service restaurants, including those that serve alcoholic beverages,

consumer expenditures within the 28086 zip code accounted for about \$15.3 million in 2006, although retail sales in the same category only accounted for \$6.8 million. According to the study, that means that about \$8.5 million is being spent by Kings Mountain residents outside of the 28086 zip code. The study also showed that towns (like Gastonia and Shelby) 15 minutes outside of the city, show retail sales higher than consumer expenditures in the category by over \$7.7 million.

In the category of "drinking places - alcoholic beverages", consumers were estimated to have spent \$1.5 million in 2006, all of which were spent outside of the 28086 zip.

Collias said that she personally handed over copies of these studies to the city last week.

### Not a new issue

Kings Mountain became a chartered town on February

11, 1874. The council was set to vote on "license" within 30 days.

The election was not held on schedule, but when the votes were tabulated, it was 13-0 against the sell of spirituous liquor within town limits, according to Bonnie Summers' "Kings Mountain: Her Background and Beginning." Even though the first building in town was said to have been a saloon, the first ordinances were set in place with strict punishments to discourage drunkenness, among other things.

Now, 134 years later, the

issue of "spirituous liquor" is debated again. In the 1980s beer and wine was voted in to ordinance. But it was unknown as of press time, whether or not the third leg

to the issue of alcoholic beverages was kept off of the ballot to get the first two to pass or if liquor was just forgotten.

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