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Kings Mountain

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Note

Get breaking news from The Herald on the Internet

The Kings Mountain Herald is pleased to announce the launch of a new Twitter site at www.twitter.com/kmherald

Similar to blogging, Twitter is a free online service that allows its users to post and receive news, updates and events at the click of a button. Its goal, as is The Herald's, is to keep you informed.

Set up a Twitter account to get updates as they are posted or simply type www.twitter.com/kmherald into your web browser to see the latest news from Kings Mountain. You do not have to set up an account to access the site.

Find Kings Mountain's latest breaking news stories, high school sports scores, weather emergencies and more at www.twitter.com/kmherald

Get daily updates between issues of The Kings Mountain Herald and find out what you can expect to see in each week's paper for free at www.twitter.com/kmherald

Sneezing fit causes \$14K in damages

By LIB STEWART
staff writer

Police say a Gastonia driver's "sneezing fit" on York Road (Hwy. 161) Sunday resulted in a freak accident with high property damages, but luckily no injuries and no tickets.

Cpl. Mark Butler said that John Ward, 65, of 925 N. Highland St., was driving his 2004 Ford north on 161 (York Road) and started sneezing. His vehicle left the road, hit a NCDOT speed limit sign, then a chain link fence at Patrick Yarn Mills, 501 York Rd., and two City of Kings Mountain street signs.

After the collision, the car crossed Bennett Street and slid through the parking lot of C&C Heating and Cooling, 502 York Road.

Damages totaled \$13,000 to the vehicle, \$1,000 to the fence, \$100 to the driveway of C&C Heating, and \$300 to the signs.

Rain didn't stop yule light show

Rain on Christmas Eve didn't keep traffic from moving briskly through Mountain Rest Cemetery for thousands of people to view the beautiful display of luminaries.

"We didn't have a counter but we estimated 4,000 cars and with two people in a car that's 8,000 people," said Jim Belt, who with his wife Brenda, initiated the luminary show 15 years ago with one candle on his mother's grave, then added more candles the next year for relatives and friends and the idea caught on big and quickly.

Belt said the turnout was not as big as in previous years "but it was a good turnout," he said. He said numerous people commented on how pretty the lights were and were impressed with the bell-tower from which music played as the procession of cars moved through the cemetery.

Looking back at top 10 stories of 2008 Economy, gas prices, historic election top list

By EMILY WEAVER
Editor

There have been a lot of note-worthy headlines in 2008 so finding the top 10 stories has not been easy. Some of the stories were controversial, but all were important to our town.

The economy wanes, Kings Mountain pains
The top story from 2008 revolves around a subject that has weighed heavily in the minds of folks across the nation and especially in Kings Mountain - the economy.

Earlier this year, the very mention of the word "recession" seemed to plague the markets. An economic stimulus bill, geared at "priming the pump", put a few hundred dollars back into the pockets of the American public. But recession remained.

The Dow Jones Industrial plummeted 777 points and NASDAQ dropped 199 points in one day, causing some to fear the eminence of another great depression. The financial markets cried for help.

And after some debate and pre-presidential-election political ploys, Congress answered with a \$700 billion bailout earmarked to shore up the financial institutions. The plans and/or whereabouts of that taxpayer money received

by those institutions have yet to be publicly accounted for.

But America wasn't done paying yet. The automobile industry began to suffer. They too cried for help. To avoid bankruptcy and mass layoffs in the sector, the president announced a \$17.4 billion loan program for the auto industry with strings attached in December. General Motors (set to receive \$9.4 billion), Chrysler (\$4 billion) and other automakers would have immediate access to money through January; drawn from the \$700 billion bailout of financial institutions. But the money will be offered in a short-term financing agreement with the date of March 31, 2009 set for auto-makers to "prove viability" less the money be repaid.

It was Christmastime. Consumers, in survival mode, were spending less. While the nation was bobbing in this sea of economic uncertainty, it became clear that what happens on Wall Street is reflected on Main streets - everywhere.

Wade Ford, the last franchised car dealership in Kings Mountain, closed its doors on May 21, after 38 years of service to the community.

Chris*Craft let 40 workers go in August, trimming the staff at its new KM plant to less than 10 current employees today.

But another big hit for the city came when



President-elect Obama

Spectrum Dyed Yarns closed its KM plant at the end of September, leaving 145 jobsless.

Ultra Machine and Fabrication, which experienced growth last year with expansions in Kings Mountain and Shelby, was forced to lay-off 38 employees in October. Management was optimistic for a "turn-around in the first quarter of the new year."

EDC (Entertainment Distribution Company) announced the closing of its plant, lo-

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Old year 2008 marked by challenges, change

By ELIZABETH STEWART
Staff Writer

As the strains of Auld Lang Syne, harbinger of a brand new year ring out Wednesday night, Kings Mountain citizens could look back at a year marked by challenge and change.

New Year 2009 is just around the corner and Mayor Rick Murphrey predicts that in spite of plant closings and heavy layoffs that Kings Mountain citizens can look back on an old year that was generally good with major accomplishments and a bright new year that will bring progress.

Although it is difficult to pick out top stories that reflect the city accomplishments, these are some of the reports from city department heads that reflect some of them.

No. 1

The early Christmas present in December that Southern Power Company would begin construction near Grover in 2010 of a natural gas fueled electric generating plant was good news for a fledgling economy that has resulted in plant shutdowns and 900 layoffs in the last few months. The town made history

with the signing of a 20 year contract to supply raw water to the new industry which in full production in 2012 could become the county's largest taxpayer with what officials predict will be a billion dollar business.

No. 2

Ingles, the Asheville-based food chain, opened a brand new super store on Shelby Road Sept. 20 bringing in not only tax revenue for the city with annexation but increasing the number of grocery markets to the community. Over 1,000 attended the store's Job Fair expecting to hire 200 workers.

No. 3

The city lost its biggest water and sewer customer (1.0 million gallons daily) with the closing of Spectrum Dyed Yarns on Sept. 30 and more bad news followed with the announcement of closing of EDC, (the compact disk plant on Grover Road) and the Grover plant AGI, all customers of the city utility departments. Water Resources Director Dennis Wells reported that the city pumped 859,898,000 gallons in 2008, down from 1,113,199,000 in 2007 and treated 687,827,000 gallons of waste-

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Caring town rallies to help injured mother Other 2008 top stories from Grover

By ELIZABETH STEWART
Staff Writer

GROVER- Being the caring town it is, this community in 2008 rallied to help a young mother traumatized by brain injuries. Cheryl Green, 32, is obviously living proof of the power of prayer.

Green gave chase to two shoplifters Christmas Day 2007, jumped on the hood of their getaway car to avoid being hit, but was thrown from the vehicle and suffered injuries. The prayer chains started and Green regained consciousness but it was mid February before she went home. Benefits sponsored by Grover Rescue Squad, friends in the community, and a big pro wrestling match at Grover School all helped the family and the mother during a long recovery before she returned to work.

"Grover is a generous community," says Mayor Robert Sides.

Other top news stories in 2008 in Grover:

■Kings Mountain resident Scott Grigg opened a new business, Wood Wise Pallets, in the old Minette Mills and it was a major job cleaning up the building after fires believed to be set intentionally in 2005 caused major damage. It took many loads of debris to the landfill before the major restoration effort was completed.

■A new dentist, Dr. William Weathers, was welcomed and is enjoying a brisk business.

■A new tax office was opened by Eugene Hart of Kings Mountain across from Wilco Travel Plaza.

■Grover's second annual Fall Festival brought hundreds

See GROVER, Page 3A



Lib Stewart Photo

Mayor Rick Murphrey, far right, accepts for the city the Garden of Rest presented by Brad Ellis and Eric Wright at Mountain Rest Cemetery. L-R, Cemetery Supt. Jackie Barnette, Ellis, Wright and Murphrey.

'Garden of Rest' dedicated at cemetery

by ELIZABETH STEWART
staff writer

"The Garden of Rest" was dedicated last Tuesday afternoon at Mountain Rest Cemetery in a solemn and impressive ceremony conducted by Harris Funeral Home staffers Eric Wright and Brad Ellis who presented the statue of Jesus which centers the garden in memory and honor of loved ones.

Appropriately, the Rev. James Lockridge, pastor of Second Baptist Church, opened the ceremony by singing "Come Unto Me and I will Give You Rest," his own rendition from a CD of scripture songs he released in Italy.

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