



Legally blind woman learns new trade, finds new vision

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Kings Mountain

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WWII hero Sydney Dixon rides as Grand Marshall in 2007 Christmas Parade.

Rotary seeks help in sending WWII vets on 'Flight of Honor'

By EMILY WEAVER
Editor

World War II veterans sacrificed their lives for our nation and for our way of life. Many of them watched their brothers fall on the battlefields.

The ones who survived to tell the tale seemed to remain mostly silent for many years. They wanted to live in peace and to not have to think about the war that changed them. Even though a grand monument was erected in their honor on the National Mall in 2004, many WWII veterans have yet to even see it. Those heroes are dying now. An estimated 1,200-1,500 pass away every day.

With that in mind efforts have been made to let the remaining heroes know how much America appreciated their bravery. Kings Mountain Rotarians hope to send at least three of those local heroes to Washington, D.C., on Saturday, April 18, in what has been coined a "flight of honor."

In April, 100 veterans from mid-western North Carolina will be on a chartered U.S. Air "Flight of Honor." The flight will depart Charlotte and land at Reagan National Airport. The group will be transported by bus to the WWII Memorial.

E. Wilson Griffin and Sidney Dixon, both of Kings Mountain, and one veteran from Waco are planned to be among those 100. But the Rotary Club needs public support to help pay the way.

For Griffin, this will be a second trip. But for Dixon, this will be the first time he has seen the monument.

Griffin, the last remaining charter member of the KM Rotary Club, joined the U.S. Navy and worked at the Norfolk Naval Hospital as a surgical hospital corpsman and special duty nurse before being sent in 1943 to the Mediterranean. He spent time in northern Africa at Casablanca, Morocco, Oran and Arzeu, Algeria," according to information compiled by the club.

"He helped open the Navy hospital at Marseille, France. Toward the end of the war, Griffin was sent back to Oran, Algeria, and retrained for duty at the Naval Hospital in Palermo, Sicily. One of his final duties there was to help identify 24 civilians who died in a plane crash near Palermo. The cemetery is located behind the mountain where Gen. George Patton's famous battle took place. When VE

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Stimulus hopefuls City wants piece of the pie

By ELIZABETH STEWART
staff writer

As the US Senate debates this week the \$819 billion Economic Recovery and Reinvestment (Stimulus) Package, the most expensive pieces of legislation to move through Congress, city of Kings Mountain leaders are working hard to get a piece of the pie.

Mayor Rick Murphrey said the city is forwarding letters and project information to the North Carolina Department of Public Water Supply which, in turn, would send the requests on to the Federal Government. Kings Mountain's three big projects would

cost big bucks: \$19 million for a new water line from Moss Lake to town; \$7 million to repair the spillway at Moss Lake; and \$25 million, at today's prices, for a proposed new lake - a total of \$51 million.

Said the mayor, "If that bill should pass and we could get some help with funding grants the city could put people to work."

The Stimulus Plan is breathtaking in size and scope that President Obama hopes to make the cornerstone of his efforts to resuscitate the staggering economy. Obama engaged in an all-out lobbying push for the bill and marked a big victory for his presidency little more than a week into his term. He turned his attention to the Senate

Monday, where Democrats began debate on the measure. The price tag is likely to reach \$900 billion.

Larger than the combined costs of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan so far, the two-year stimulus plan would provide up to \$1,000 per year in tax relief for most families, dramatically increase funding for alternative energy production and direct more than \$300 billion in aid to states to help rebuild schools, provide health care to the poor and reconstruct highways and bridges.

The plan, passed on a 244 to 188 vote in the US House. Obama's personal salesmanship effort failed to secure a single Republican supporter for the spending plan.

Breaking new ground



Robbie Reynolds, chairman of the board of Cleveland County Hospice, Kings Mountain Mayor Rick Murphrey, Myra McGinnis, Executive Director of Cleveland County Hospice, Jay Rhodes, chairman of the capital fund campaign, and Joseph Tysinger, chairman of the Strategic Planning Committee, break ground for the new Kings Mountain Hospice on Kings Mountain Boulevard.

Building a future

KM Hospice breaks ground for new site off Phifer Road

By ELIZABETH STEWART
staff writer

Becky Cook's plea for a Kings Mountain Home for Hospice swayed the panel that officials of Cleveland County Hospice appeared before in the application process three or four years ago that led to Friday's noon groundbreaking ceremonies for a Hospice of Kings Mountain.

Myra McGinnis, Kings Mountain native and daughter of Margaret McGinnis and the late Dick McGinnis, prefaced these remarks about Hospice as she and other leaders shoveled the first dirt to officially start the construction process which will take about a year.

Cook's daughter, the late Terri Cook, had been on the waiting list at Wendover, the 14-bed Kathleen Dover Hamrick Hospice House located in

Shelby.

The new 8-bed facility will be located on five acres of land on Kings Mountain Boulevard, the beautiful five acre site which belonged to the Cameron Ware family Jay Rhodes of Kings Mountain, chairman of the capital campaign fund drive to build the new Hospice, fell in love with the site with its picturesquely view of the mountains and started the ball rolling to purchase it. Holland & Hamrick are architects for the new construction and contractor is Lawson Construction Co.

"Teamwork is what has brought us to this point," said McGinnis, who signaled out volunteers, board members, capital campaign committee members, Kings Mountain city officials and city staff and the small number of people who started the ball rolling for the first Hospice House in Shelby in the 1980s.

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Back to work,

State legislature looks at ways to balance budget, discusses priorities for session

By EMILY WEAVER

Editor

Lawmakers headed back to Raleigh last Wednesday for the first of a long and sure-to-be tough legislative session. The economy and jobs are number one priorities for local representatives.

After the swearing-in ceremonies and welcome back festivities, many smiling faces melted into a somber countenance as eyes focused on the budget. Balancing the state's checkbook will be one of the

legislature's first and most important chores to tackle this session. And it won't be easy.

The Office of State Budget and Management anticipates a \$2 billion shortfall in this year's budget, which, according to state law must be balanced before it expires June 30.

Gov. Bev Perdue has asked state agencies to cut 7 percent of their budgets to bridge the gap. Further executive orders require state agencies to "stop the purchase of all goods or services, unless specifically

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Suspected homicide

Man returns home to find house robbed, girlfriend dead

By EMILY WEAVER

Editor

Robert Deshawn Odums returned home Friday night to find his house burglarized and his girlfriend dead, according to information released by the Cleveland County Sheriff's Department.

Emergency communications received a 911 call at 11:40 p.m. Friday, Jan. 30, from Odums who said he

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Fugitive caught

Runaway fugitive arrested in traffic stop

By EMILY WEAVER

Editor

A seemingly routine traffic stop on Jan. 25, led to the arrest of a run-away fugitive, according to Kings Mountain police reports.

Doris Ann Worley, 36, of 611 Floyd Street, was pulled over for a traffic offense on Sunday. When the officer asked for her identification she reportedly gave

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Unemployment rate reaches 12 percent

By EMILY WEAVER

Editor

Cleveland County's unemployment rate rests at 12 percent - the highest in the piedmont region and the eighth highest among counties in North Carolina, according to recent figures released by the state Employment Security Commission.

The rate increased from 10.6 percent in November and has more

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