



Police suspect 'medical problem' caused driver to lose control and crash head-on into a van driven by Teresa Wilson, who was carrying her grandson, Ramsey Stiles, back home.

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Kings Mountain World

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DESMAN THOMPSON

TRAGIC ACCIDENT

Mountaineer sports community mourns death of gentle giant, Desman Thompson

By GARY STEWART
 Sports Editor

The Kings Mountain sports community is mourning the death of a gentle giant this week. Desman Thompson, an All-Conference center on Kings Mountain's 2007 football team, was killed Saturday morning in a head-on collision on East King Street.

Thompson was a three-year starter for the Mountaineers and is given credit by his coaches for providing the leadership and attitude needed to turn the football program

around.

"He was definitely a leader and a big part of turning around our program," said his offensive line coach Kevin Cruise. "When a new coaching staff comes in you have to have players to buy into your system. Our situation here was that we came in very late in the summer. If the seniors had not bought into what we were trying to do it would have been very difficult. Desman was one of the ones that spearheaded the turnaround."

Thompson was one of the captains on the line. He took his role seriously, and the

younger players followed his example.

"He was a big fellow (375 pounds)," Cruise noted, "but no matter how long we made them run he always finished and the younger kids noticed that. He did anything that was asked of him and more. Even if there was nothing going on on the field and I asked him to go to the sideline and snap the football 50 times he'd do it."

Head coach Greg Lloyd echoed Cruise's statements.

"He helped our younger guys quite a bit,"

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PLAY'N AROUND



photo by EMILY WEAVER

Left to right, Linda Nichols, Erika Wood and Ginger Bullock act out a scene in the upcoming production of 'Steel Magnolias' at the Joy Theatre.

'Too twisted for color TV'

'Steel Magnolias' opens Friday

By ELIZABETH STEWART,
 EMILY WEAVER

The curtain goes up Friday night at 7:30 p.m. on opening night of five performances by the Kings Mountain Little Theatre Inc. of the popular "Steel Magnolias" by Robert Harling.

Tickets are selling fast as the theatre readies itself for a play that is sure to make every viewer laugh and cry.

Performances are on Friday and Saturday evenings, Feb. 20, 21, 27, and 28 at 7:30 p.m. and on Sunday, Feb. 22, at 3 p.m. at the Joy Performance Center, 202 S. Railroad Avenue. Ticket prices are \$10 for adults and \$8 for

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ONE FOR THE HISTORY BOOKS

Community gathers to learn history of Margrace Village

By ELIZABETH STEWART
 staff writer

The dramatic changes in the textile economy in the late 20th Century makes the survival of the Margrace Mill Village, remarkably intact for a mill community nearly 90 years old, even more significant for consideration as the Margrace Village Historic District on the National Register of Historic Places.

Members of the Kings Mountain Landmark Commission, who hired architectural historian David Foard Hood to prepare the nomination document, will probably know in May if the district is approved.

Becca Johnson, National Register Coordinator for the North Carolina State of Historic Preservation Office, also attended Thursday's public hearing at City Hall for presentation of the official nomination.

The village's name reflects a combination of the name of Margaret (1907-1995) and Grace (1910-1999) Neisler, the eldest of three daughters born to the Margrace Mill founder, Charles Eugene Neisler, 1868-1931. The 46 one-

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story frame mill houses, the former stone masonry Margrace Mill clubhouse, and the two-story frame brick former Margrace Mill Company Store are distinctive years after the Margrace Mill ceased operation by the Neisler family (1920-55). In Autumn 1956 the mill houses were sold to Margrace employees

During the years since 1984 when businessman Kelly Bunch bought the deteriorated mill complex for salvage value, most of the factory and processing buildings have been demolished. The once-flourishing textile complex is no more although Bunch has put up new construction inside the woven wire fence and de-

See MARGRACE, PG 3A

ME AND MY SHADOW

Shadows fall on city leaders

By EMILY WEAVER
 Editor

Several shadows roamed the halls of city buildings and streets on Friday, studying their assigned targets.

They listened and absorbed what they could from the municipal leaders they followed, starting with interest at the tasks each department has to perform. A peak inside the evidence room at police headquarters, a tour through the power plant and an enlightening romp through the cemetery - the day's adventures had just begun.

Friday was the annual Scout Day in the City of Kings Mountain and the objective for leaders was to broaden the

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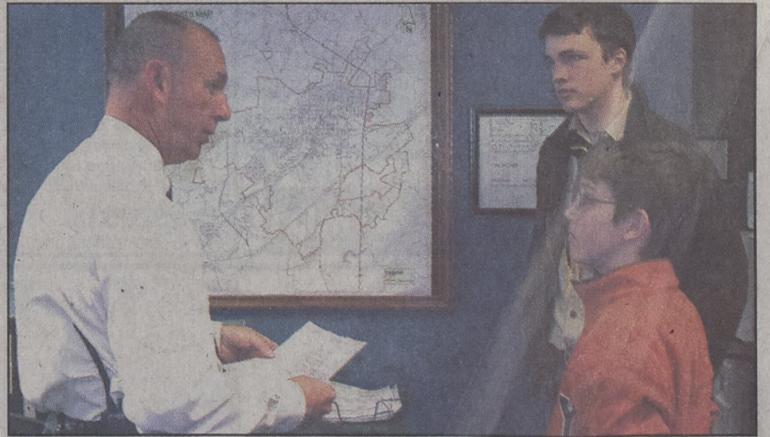


photo by EMILY WEAVER

Capt. Derek Johnson shows Scouts Kirby Hullender, left, and Edward Blackburn an arrest warrant as they toured through the KMPD on Boy Scout Day.

11th annual Business Showcase begins Tuesday

The 11th annual Kings Mountain Business Showcase kicks off Tuesday from 5:30-7 p.m. at Kings Mountain City Hall and Shirley Brutko, director of the Kings Mountain Branch of the Cleveland County Chamber, promises it will be the best ever.

Brutko said that 50 businesses and seven food sponsors will display exhibits on the theme "Historic Revolution" for four weeks Feb. 24-March 20. Last year over 2,000 visitors enjoyed the exhibits during the four week period.

A highlight of this year's event will be recognition of the Outstanding Business Person of 2009.

Exhibits will be judged on how well they are tied into the show theme and ribbons will go to the winners.

"It's fun, food, music See BUSINESS, PG 4A

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