

INSIDE



Laura Bingham ends 12-year tenure as third longest serving private college president in state

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Page 5A 20 years after Hugo

Mountaineers face South Point Friday for first Big 3A game

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Warlick & Hamrick Insurance advertisement with contact info and slogan 'We can save you money!'

Kings Mountain Herald

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'I'll never forget her'



Ayanna Strong, 10, shares the light of her candle with Bridget Hatten, left, while nine-year-old Nijah Ellis, right, looks forward during Monday's vigil for Tiffany Wright.

EMILY WEAVER/HERALD

Death of teen and baby bring neighbors together

By EMILY WEAVER Editor

"She was a good friend and a loving friend," choked nine-year-old Nija Ellis in between tears at Monday night's candlelight vigil in Kings Mountain. "I'll never forget her."

Dozens came out to Carolina Garden Apartments off of Northwoods Drive at 7 p.m. to remember a pregnant 15-year-old whose life was cut short on the morning of Sept. 14, while she waited for a school bus in Charlotte.

"She was a kind friend. She had a giving nature," said Ayanna Strong, 10. "She never liked violence."

But, sadly, it was violence that ended the life of Tiffany Wright.

Wright, nearly eight months pregnant, was waiting for her bus in Charlotte last Monday morning, when authorities say she was shot in the

"How could somebody do something to my sister?" - Chantika Pompey

head. She was rushed to the hospital, but the wound proved fatal.

Her baby was delivered prematurely. The infant girl, named Aliyah Faye Wright, passed away Sunday night.

"How could somebody do something to my sister?" cried 17-year-old Chantika Pompey at the vigil. "When I heard she was dead, something in me just tore up."

Pompey, a close friend of Tiffany's,

See VIGIL, 3A



EMILY WEAVER/HERALD Fifteen-year-old Marissa Conner, left, and Chantika Pompey release balloons in honor of Tiffany Wright and her infant daughter Aliyah, who recently passed away.

DOWNTOWN

City added to Main St. Program

By EMILY WEAVER Editor

It's official! Mountaineer Partnership has been awarded inclusion in the North Carolina Main Street Program.

The Main Street program will help MPI breathe new life into downtown through technical assistance, training, program guidance, networking, advocacy and leadership. Crafted by the National Trust for Historic Preservation, the program has helped revitalize over 1,200 downtowns across the country.

The NC Main Street program will pump about \$150,000 into downtown revitalization efforts in Kings Mountain over the next three years.

"After the initial three-year start-up phase, the state annually invests approximately \$5,000 in each Main Street community to provide ongoing town-specific technical assistance, and statewide and on-site training for (downtown) managers and board members," according to the North Carolina Main Street Center.

The plan is for communities to "recognize and preserve their historic fabric, and, using local resources, build on

See PROGRAM, 4A

COUNTRYSIDE

Neighbors question annexation

By ELIZABETH STEWART Staff writer

An informational meeting on the city's plans for annexation of nearly 500 acres in two areas of Kings Mountain was attended by two dozen Countryside Road residents Thursday.

"I want to be on the record that I am totally opposed to annexation," said Mike Bumgardner, of 124 Countryside Road.

None of the other property owners gave their names as they spoke informally to city planners Steve Killian and Steve Austin, who, along with city councilman Mike Butler, responded to questions and distributed packets of information. Several other residents of the Countryside area visited with city planners and several council members and the mayor earlier in the day.

All 330 residents in Area H, Countryside Road/Kings Pointe, and Area I, Crocker Ridge, will have their chance to speak at a public hearing Oct. 20 at 6 p.m. before city council and letters will go out to all property owners prior to that date. City council will vote on the annexation plan

See PROTEST, 3A

Miss KM Pageant Saturday at Joy

Kings Mountain Little Theatre will sponsor the 8th annual Miss Kings Mountain Beauty Pageant Saturday at 6 p.m. at Joy Theatre, Railroad Ave.

Brenda Lovelace, co-director with Laura Mancuso and Todd Frady, said that deadline for entries is Thursday at 5 p.m. at First National Bank. The entry fee in each of the seven divisions of the show is \$25 and Cindi Wood and Mrs. Lovelace will receive entries at the bank.

"This is really a fun pageant for all age groups," said Lovelace. Trophies will be awarded to the winner and first and second runners-up in each division. Miss Kings Mountain 2009 will receive a \$250 scholarship from the Little Theatre.

The seven categories in the show are Baby Miss, ages 0-1; Tiny Miss, ages 2-3; Wee Miss, ages 4-6; Little Miss, ages 7-9; Junior Miss, ages 10-12; Teen Miss, ages 13-15;

See PAGEANT, 3A

SCHOOLS

Schools need help to prevent flu

By EMILY WEAVER Editor

Rumors of children attending school with swine flu across the county seem to have spread almost quicker than the illness itself lately. But not all of the rumors are false.

Cleveland County Schools Director of Administrative Services Stephen Fisher said that they have had a few students at the schools that have been sick with the flu.

"But their symptoms have been diagnosed at this point as just the flu," he said.

School officials are not sure exactly what strain of the flu, whether the regular seasonal type or the 2009 H1N1 (swine flu), the children may have contracted. But letters have been sent home to parents across the county, asking for their help to prevent the flu from spreading.

Reportedly, there have been at least two small children in the Kings Moun-

tain area afflicted with swine flu. But testing for the specific strains is not being done by the school system or county health department.

Linda Kiser, school health supervisor for Cleveland County Schools, said that hospitals are the ones more likely to send out samples to be tested.

The more severe cases, fitting certain criteria, are the ones primarily analyzed. Samples are sent to "sentinel sites" to determine the exact strain of

See FLU, 3A

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

City has special visit with secretary

The City of Kings Mountain had a special visit recently with state Secretary of Commerce Keith Crisco.

On the morning of Sept. 10, the secretary was welcomed by Cleveland 20/20, the Shelby-based economic development commission of the chamber of commerce. After touring sites in Shelby, Crisco toured Kings Mountain with Mayor Rick Murphrey.

For the mayor, the tours with Crisco were more like a walk down memory lane.

"Keith and I go way back," Murphrey said. "We had a great visit."

Crisco, president and chairman of Asheboro Elastics Corp. for over 20 years, was a regular customer of the mayor's when he was employed as a salesman with Patrick Yarn.

Murphrey was pleased to learn that the governor had appointed Crisco in January to head the state commerce de-

See SECRETARY, 3A

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