

**TOP 10**  
From Page 1

By December, nearly all of the buildings in Grover's main business district housed the games. In what law enforcement have said is a "loophole" in the state's gaming laws, the shops were able to flourish offering sweepstakes to customers.

The machines popped up in businesses and convenience stores across the state, including over 10 locations in Kings Mountain and six in Grover.

The games were offered for free to customers, who either purchased internet time on computers or phone time on cards that were credited to consoles resembling the old video poker machines. Keno, eight-liner, pot of gold - all games once played on illegal machines were being offered again. But these machines seem to pass the legality test, at least for now.

Superior court judges and justices in other counties have prohibited law enforcement and state officers from raiding, arresting or prosecuting these types of establishments until their legality is officially declared.

Without arrests or raids the county and municipalities like Grover and Kings Mountain have tried other ways to control the growth of these establishments - through zoning.

In Grover, which operates under county zoning ordinances, proprietors are required to obtain a conditional use permit to offer sweepstakes in their stores. The permit must be approved by the Grover Board of Adjustment.

Although six establishments are in operation, the board has approved only one permit. Those continuing to operate without a permit, under county laws, are set to face a \$25-a-day fine. But Mayor Robert Sides said that businesses, like The Trading Post which has been operating without a permit for three months, seem to be unscathed by the penalties since no money has been collected.

Sides has asked the county to increase the fine to \$200 a day.

At the last council meeting, he said that he is prepared to file injunctions with the courts on the businesses that refuse to come into compliance or cease operations.

Kings Mountain City Council adopted a six-month moratorium on sweepstakes at its last meeting, Dec. 15. From now until June 15, no new sweepstakes businesses will be allowed to set up shop in city limits. City fathers plan to use the time to revamp current zoning ordinances dealing with the use of land for sweeps operations.

Grover leaders have asked the county to initiate a moratorium for their town as well.

None has yet to be issued.

**3**  
**Three seats contested in KM, Hawkins upsets Mullinax, No one files for election in Grover**

Three seats were up for grabs in Kings Mountain and in Grover this election. Seven candidates ran in Kings Mountain. No one filed in Grover.

The Kings Mountain race heated up as councilmen Mark Butler, Jerry Mullinax and Dean Spears filed for reelection. Each incumbent was faced with opposition. Brenda McFalls Ross challenged Butler, Tommy Hawkins took on Mullinax and Spears faced opposition from Gina Collias and Curtis Pressley. After a heated race with advertisements, campaign signs and even a few radio and television ads, Mullinax, who had served on the council for 10 years, lost his seat to Hawkins (by 54 votes).

Spears and Butler were reelected, but with small margins. Spears beat Collias with only 26 votes. Butler beat Ross with a mere 16 votes.

Although Grover council members J.D. Ledford, Brent White and Cynthia O'Brien were reelected this November, neither had filed to run for office with the board of elections. They were turned off from signing up when they saw the thick stack of filing forms candidates are now required to fill out, but each said they would continue to serve if reelected.

**4**  
**The rise and fall of unemployment**

Cleveland County has been plagued with historically high unemployment rates this year as factories have closed or trimmed their staff. But hope remains for a turn-around in the Kings Mountain economy with the announcement of new businesses and jobs on the horizon.

In January, the jobless rate in Cleveland County was calculated at 14.5%, inching closer to 14.8% - the highest rate in 1983. A month later, the rate had jumped to 15.8%. In March, the figure was down to 15.7% and then 15.1 in April. But in May, the rate jumped back up to 15.6% and Cleveland tied with two other counties for having the fourth highest unemployment record in the state. In Oct., the rate was back to 15.1%.

But aside from the bobbing jobless rate the real and personal impact was seen on

the faces of thousands who turned out for job fairs in Kings Mountain.

Over 1,000 people attended a dual-county job fair held at the KM YMCA in January, where dozens of companies set up to accept applications and resumes.

Nearly 1,200 people applied for one of the 400 prospective positions announced by a new trucking company coming to Kings Mountain, in a December job fair at the YMCA.

Bell Lines, LLC, announced that they would be looking for two drivers for each of their 200 trucks and other positions will be available in administration and clerical offices once they are in full gear in 2010.

**5**  
**Former mayor, baseball legend John Henry Moss dies after stroke**

The Kings Mountain community and the world of minor league baseball was saddened to hear the passing of a great leader - John Henry Moss.

Moss, 90, died July 1, 2009 after suffering a stroke. Flags flew at half-mast across the city and citizens stopped to remember the man they called mayor for 22 1/2 years. He was Kings Mountain's longest serving mayor and chief executive officer; coined by Newsweek magazine as the "mayor with the midas touch" for the millions of dollars in grants he was able to obtain for the city.

One of the most influential men in all of professional baseball, he was the founder of the South Atlantic League and in December 2007 stepped down as president after 50 years. Under his leadership the SAL grew into one of the largest and most successful minor leagues in affiliated baseball with 16 clubs in eight states.

To recognize Moss' contribution to baseball, the SAL retired No. 50 throughout the league, an honor previously accorded only to Jackie Robinson. Stadiums across the Southeast erected bronze plaques to honor Moss's successful efforts.

Prior to his death, Moss was still actively attending meetings and was leading the Cleveland County Sports Commission in planning a 300-acre \$15 million Southern Exposition Sports and Entertainment Center. He also recently presented a handsome donation to Gardner-Webb University, which will name a new baseball stadium complex in his honor.

**6**  
**Gateway Trails opens phase 1**

Gateway Trails, six years in the making, officially opened Nov. 7 with the completion of phase 1, which includes a trailhead park and two miles of traversable paths, about a mile south of downtown on Battleground Avenue.

Another four miles will be started in the near future that will continue the trail to the south side of I-85. The final goal is to connect downtown Kings Mountain to area parks: Crowders Mountain, Kings Mountain State Park and Kings Mountain National Military Park.

It will hook up with the Overmountain Victory Trail once trekked by overmountain men, who fought a victorious battle that scholars have said "changed the tide" of the Revolutionary War.

The grand opening was a momentous day for Gateway Trails, Inc., and the city that will benefit from this attraction. President of Gateway Trails, Inc., Shirley Brutko, thanked all who took part in this

first leg of the trail's creation.

Phase 1, complete with a mountain path and a loop trail, allows for a very interesting walk with beautiful views of the nearby mountain ridge to the south.

**7**  
**One of the worst storms in years**

Trees were snapped like toothpicks. Trailers were peeled like cans of tuna. And baseball-size hail broke out windows, smashed through sidings on homes and dented automobiles.

Kings Mountain citizens were hit by one of the most powerful storms in years on June 16. Tornadoes tore through the eerily darkened skies and touched down in parts of the county, wreaking havoc. Wind, rain, hail and lightning added their own punches to the area.

The major destruction amounted to thousands of dollars in damages.

But in the aftermath, it was the acts of kindness and bravery that appeared to be the rainbow of this storm. Local businesses, like Tom's Family Mart, offered shelter to those stranded in vehicles. Neighbors helped each other in clean-up efforts. And several others, including construction companies, offered help at no charge.

**8**  
**Miracles, second chances**

A few local stories of miraculous recoveries have made the headlines this year.

Gary Lowery, of Kings Mountain, dropped dead after a sudden heart attack while walking with buddies on the walking track on April 17. Some of the cooking groups in the annual Firehouse Cook-off were already at the track, preparing for the competition that was to start that weekend, when he fell.

One of the cooks had an AED in his truck. He and another cooker, who happened to be a nurse, raced to action and revived Lowery before the medical helicopter arrived. After several surgeries, including a quadruple bypass, Lowery survived and now has a new lease on life.

Carolyn Robinson became increasingly ill in February. A few days after Valentine's she was rushed to the hospital, where she suffered total renal failure and heart failure. She was without oxygen 15 minutes and then was intubated. Doctors gave her little to no hope of survival.

But after hundreds of prayers, she pulled through. Her recovery and survival has been a true miracle and with each step she takes today, she walks witness to the power of prayer and of faith.

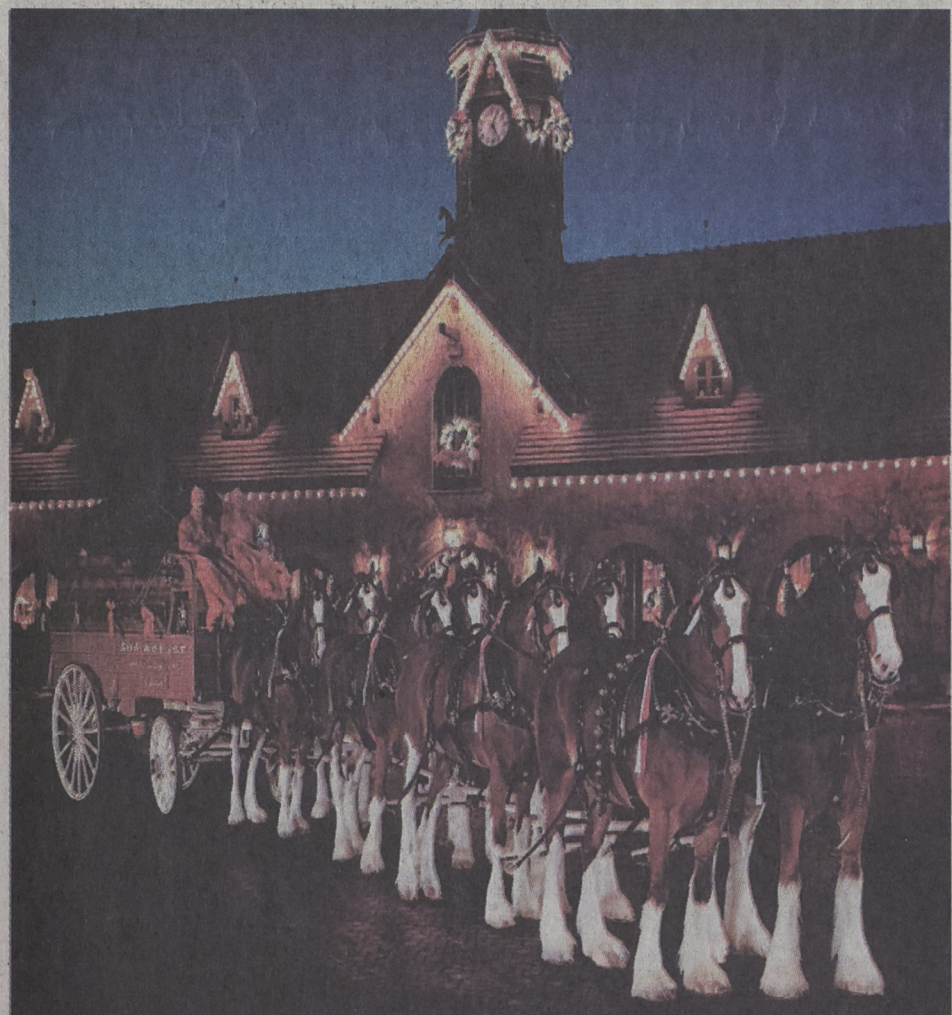
Julie Miller, who had been waiting for a kidney transplant for three years, got an answer to her prayers this fall. Although a rare antibody in her blood made the search for a kidney extremely difficult, one was found and she underwent a successful transplant.

With her new kidney, she now has a new outlook on life...another chance, another miracle.

**9**  
**Serial killer plagues Gaffney, puts Grover and KM on alert**

A serial killer claimed the headlines in local and national media outlets after claiming the lives of five people during a week-

See TOP 10, Page 5A



**Get Home Without a Hitch.**

**Designate a Driver.**

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