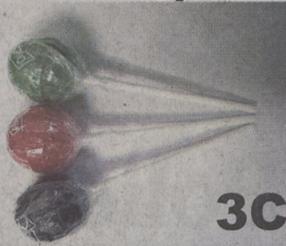




## Suckers for Hospice

Home school fun  
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# Kings Mountain Herald

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## State probes fatality involving patrolman

### Smith 'gone but not forgotten'

### Investigation continues into death of Larry Smith, Jr.

By ELIZABETH STEWART  
Staff writer

Crockett said that her brother and Kings Mountain police officer Thomas Bell, driving the patrol car that struck Smith, were acquaintances. "My brother knew a lot of people," she said.



LARRY SMITH, JR.

By ELIZABETH STEWART  
Staff writer

The State Highway Patrol is continuing its investigation into the death of Larry Bernard Smith Jr., 30, who died Friday morning of injuries sustained when, according to authorities, he was thrown from the open bed of a moving pickup truck and struck by a Kings Mountain police car.

Ptl. Thomas Bell, a part time officer, was driving the patrol car.

First Sgt. Steve Greene of the State Highway Patrol Public Information Office in Raleigh, said the pickup truck was driven by Julius Keith Pagan, 40, of 209 Waco Road. Other passengers in the truck, two of whom were riding in the bed of the truck with Smith, were Sterling Bess, 33, of 204 W. King St., Apt. B, Steve Bernard Hamrick, 20, of 1006 N. Cansler St. and Gerald Anthony Smith, 30, of 523 Cleveland Avenue.

Greene said that once the investigation is complete that Cleveland County District At-

torney Rick Shafer will determine if any charges will be filed. Also pending is an autopsy report from the Mecklenburg County Medical Examiner's Office ordered by Cleveland County Coroner Dwight Tessner.

Funeral services for Smith will be held Wednesday, May 26, 2010 at 1:30 p.m. at People's Baptist Church with visitation 30 minutes prior to the service. Interment will be in Mountain Rest Cemetery.

Blood stains and orange spray paint mark the scene on Barnette Drive where an ambulance was called at 1:55 a.m. May 21 and arrived at 2:04 a.m.

Information provided by First Sgt. Greene stated "on Friday morning, May 21, 2010 at approximately 2:30 a.m. the North Carolina Highway Patrol was contacted by the Kings Mountain Police Department to assist with a collision investigation involving a pedestrian and possibly a Kings Mountain police vehicle on Parrish Drive at the intersection of Barnette Drive.

See INVESTIGATION, 3A

"Gone but not forgotten" are some of the memories on the wall at 204-B West King St., the home Larry Smith Jr. shared with his family.

"I remember my brother as 'Little Larry,'" said his sister, Michelle Crockett, adding, "He was people oriented, made a lot of friends over the years and will always be loved and missed."

Other relatives and friends wrote "You will always be in our hearts."

Several others wrote, "We'll see you in Heaven," on a large white poster board.

As Smith's wife, Temika Springs Smith, and his parents, Sheila and Richard Bess, made arrangements for the 1:30 p.m. funeral today at People's Baptist Church, they spoke little of the early morning fatality Friday that took the 30-year-old man's life.

Crockett said law enforcement officers have told the family that an investigation into the fatality and the results of an autopsy should be completed in about two weeks.

News of the accident brought family members to the scene quickly, said Crockett, who added, relatives in the truck in which Smith was riding said that he was able to speak as rescue workers transported him to the hospital. Crockett said her mother followed the ambulance to the hospital.

See SMITH, 3A

### MEMORIAL DAY OBSERVANCE

## City to remember fallen soldiers



Flags and crosses fill the cemetery.

Kings Mountain's community-wide Memorial Day service will be held Monday, May 31, at 10 a.m. in Veterans Park of Mountain Rest Cemetery.

Speakers will honor the sacrifices of the nation's fallen heroes from all wars and the KMPD Honor Guard, under the direction of Sgt. Bob Myers, special music by Shana Adams and Piper Jane Gulden and address by a National Guardsman will feature the service, to which the public is invited. Mayor Rick Murphrey will give the welcome and assist in laying a memorial wreath courtesy of Harris Funeral Home.

### CITY BUDGET

## City to take first look at budget tonight

By ELIZABETH STEWART  
Staff writer

Kings Mountain City Council will take its first look Wednesday (tonight) at the 2010-2011 budget proposed by City Manager Marilyn Sellers.

The work session will begin at 5:30 p.m. in the H. Lawrence Patrick Senior Life & Conference Center.

Last year's city budget totaled \$32.9 million.

After council makes recommendations on the city manager's proposals, the proposed budget will be available for review at city hall prior to a public hearing June 15 at 6 p.m. at which time council is expected to adopt the budget for the new fiscal

year.

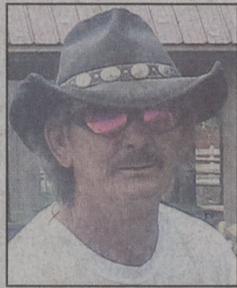
Effective May 1, the city council raised water and sewer rates, a hike of 15% for water and 35% for sewer. Sellers said at the time that she "regrets" that she had to recommend it but it was necessary because the current rate structure leaves nothing for emergencies. She said water sales are down with a big drop in water/sewer usage since the departure of textile plants that once were big water/sewer customers. With the downturn in the economy, residential and commercial customers are also conserving more water.

Sellers said her budget proposal will be "lean."

## Butch Bridges finds home on the range

By ELIZABETH STEWART  
Staff writer

Even before an automatic counter was in place at the popular Gateway Trails, Kings Mountain nature lover Butch Bridges—the unofficial guardian of the trail—could tell that thousands of people had walked the 2.27 miles since opening day November 7, 2009.



BUTCH BRIDGES

Bridges, who lives nearby on Wells Street, has been at the trail every day. In fact, he's adopted the trail. He picks up trash, cuts grass, weed eats and welcomes visitors. He walks with his mother, Dora Bridges, and offers to walk with others who may need company. He tells everyone to carry along a cell phone and a water bottle.

Shirley Brutko, president of Gateway Trails, said 8,000 visits were documented from early April until May 12. She said approximately 4,000 visitors walked the trail from opening day Nov. 7, 2009 until the end of the year.

"I've walked so many miles I can't remember but I love

See TRAIL, 7A

### 11th ANNUAL OVER THE MOUNTAIN TRIATHLON

## Lisska takes second OTM triathlon victory



Kevin Lisska crosses the finish line first in Saturday's Over the Mountain Triathlon. This was his second overall victory in the OTM.

### Local economic development leader runs first triathlon, wins first in division, gets inside look at economic attraction

By EMILY WEAVER  
Editor

Kevin Lisska, 31, of Tega Cay, SC, secured another first place finish in the city's 11th annual Over the Mountain Triathlon Saturday.

In the five years he has competed in this three-leg point-to-point race, Saturday's finish marked his second first place victory. He finished first in 2007 with an overall time of 2:11:05 (two hours: 11 minutes: five seconds). He beat his own record last year finishing second with a time of 2:08:37. On Saturday, he finished in 2:08:40.

"It was great. Same great course it is every other year. I come back and do it every year because I like it," Lis-

**INSIDE**  
Local athletes mark a great race in 11th OTM triathlon  
PAGE 3A

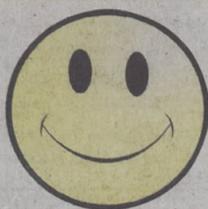
ska said, after the victory.

Contestants no. 2 and no. 3 finished second and third, respectively. Contestant no. 2, Tom Clifford, 27, of Wrightsville Beach, finished in 2:08:54, beating his second place finish time in 2008 of 2:18:31. This was his second year competing in Over the Mountain.

Contestant no. 3, David Sokolofsky, 29, of Wilmington-  
See TRIATHLON, 5A



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