

The sound that sells!

Zoltan Thornburg takes his auctioneer's gavel far and wide for a sale

By ELIZABETH STEWART
Staff writer

Zoltan Thornburg, 34, aims to be "the sound that sells."

The Kings Mountain man is an auctioneer who loves declaring rhythmically and in fast fashion "going once, going twice, three times and sold."

Thornburg grew up on the family farm in the Oak Grove Community where he operates Thornburg Auction Company at 928-2 Oak Grove Road. As a youngster in the 1980's, it was rare if a week went by that he and his father, Dwan, didn't attend at least one auction. As a toddler he listened to Joe Stockton sell cows at a cattle barn and mimicked him with his young voice as he entertained the large crowds.

"I guess I was about two years old when I told my Dad that I wanted to be an auctioneer," said Thornburg. In the '90's he copied the rhythmic and excited deep throat sound of Aaron Green who called livestock auctions at Dedmon Cattle Barns and as a high school senior called a few barn auctions where livestock was sold to the highest bidder.

Zoltan, named after an Hungarian co-worker of his father at Foote Mineral, graduated from KM High in 1995 and worked at Vulcan Materials and then followed his father and grandfather Ray Thornburg in the mining business at Martin-Marietta where Zoltan worked 15 years.

"My dream came true when I became licensed in both Carolinas as an auctioneer," said Thornburg who offers his service free to fundraising events and most recently was auctioneer at the successful Relay for Life cancer benefit at the Patrick Senior Center.

Thornburg auctions feature big spring sales of farm equipment and machinery and even consignment-type sales from the family farm. He posts an auction sign and the people come. "It's fun," he says.

"Have gavel, will travel," could be Zoltan's motto, as he travels near and far to preside at sales of everything from antiques to houses, estate and farm equipment sales. Last weekend he presided at a sale in Hilton Head, SC, where \$400,000 worth of machinery was on the auction block. Recently, he was auctioneer for a big antique sale at Charlton Hall galleries in West Columbia, SC.

Thornburg said his goal as an auctioneer is to get the customer "the best price" for their goods. The starting bid is usually the fair market price.

Another goal is to win the bid calling contest in a state-wide competition coming up in Indian Trail, NC, which offers auctioneers a chance to witness skills of others in the profession as entertainers and top salesmen, both qualities to emulate.

A fun auction recently was at White Oak Manor where activity director Amy Mayes Biggerstaff conducted a "pig in the poke" type auction for the residents in which they had fun bidding on little crocheted items and bird houses.

"I like to do those things," he added.

Thornburg invites the public to check out auctionzip.com on the Internet. His mailing list is increas-

ing and he puts out flyers in local and area stores and one of his best sales in the Oak Grove community last year was a farm equipment auction that attracted more than 150 people.

He holds an auction firm license that means he can auction real property and has conducted house

auctions for Gateway Properties. Nothing is too small or big to sell.

Active in Kings Mountain Rescue Squad, he runs the crash truck with the Jaws of Life and like all squad members is working on a fundraiser for furniture for the new squad home on Shelby Road. Last week at a home auction in Shelby, Thornburg lucked up and found at marked down prices some of the appliances needed to stock the squad's kitchen.

Craig Mayes, Kings Mountain High agriculture teacher, serves as auction clerk and cashier with Josh Bridges.

Zoltan was active in the Oak Grove Fire Department 13 years. His auctioneering hobby turned into a business but he also enjoys hunting and fishing.

Son of Dwan and Sue Thornburg and grandson of the late Gladys and Ray Thornburg, he has a six-year-old son, Aaron Matthew Thornburg, a first grader at Bethware School.

Zoltan says it's too soon to tell if his son will follow in Dad's footsteps.



Tanguay leads local GOP

The Cleveland County Republican Party met in convention on Saturday March 12. The following officers were elected for the 2011-2012 election cycle:

Tom Tanguay, chairman, Neal Hodges, vice-chair, Josh Bridges, second vice-chair, Pam Keller, treasurer, Steve Roderick, assistant treasurer, Sasha Beam, secretary, Carole Allen, assistant secretary.

Chairman Tanguay graduated from the University of Massachusetts, served in both the Navy and the Army, and then began a 40 year career in the paper industry, associated with Weyerhaeuser and other international paper makers in sales and marketing.

Tom and his wife Jan, married 45 years, retired to

Cleveland County in 2005 and became active in the Cleveland County Republican Party.

Tom continues collecting and restoring antique shotguns as well as improving their home and land. Jan, who is retired from nursing after 35 years, is active in book clubs and the Carolina Singers of the Senior Center.

In addition to officers, a new Executive Committee was elected, as well as delegates to the North Carolina Republican Convention.

Following the convention, the GOP held its annual Reagan Day Dinner. The keynote speaker for the evening was the Speaker of the NC House of Representatives, Thom Tillis. At this event, Janet Jau and Lonnie LeClair were recognized as



Tom Tanguay

the "Volunteers of the Year" for the party.

More information and meeting times of the Cleveland County Republican Party can be found at online at cegop.com.



KYRA ALEXANDER/HERALD

Southern Experience - (left to right) Ron Humphries, bass guitar; J. T. Fitch, lead guitar and backup vocals, Kings Mountain High School senior; Jon Humphries, drums, Kings Mountain High School senior; and Scott Sanders, lead vocals, keys, and guitar, Kings Mountain High School senior.

Music provides real therapy for local Burkitt's lymphoma patient

By KYRA ALEXANDER
Staff writer

J.T. Fitch has never met Jimmy Baucom, a local 15-year-old recently diagnosed with Burkitt's lymphoma, but wanted to help out a fellow Mountaineer.

Fitch chose to do a benefit concert for Baucom, featuring his band Southern Experience, for his senior project on music therapy. It's his way to get this strong issue out to others of how important childhood cancer is and to raise money for his medical care.

"Even if this benefit was not a part of my senior project, I would have done this

anyways," Fitch said.

Opening up for Southern Experience March 14 at J. Oliver's coffee shop in Kings Mountain was Jack Pearson, singing and playing guitar and piano; and Drew Denton, Will Stone, Mackenzie Wray, Kyle Den-

ton and Curtis Brooks of the band Moral Duty.

In front of a crowd of over 30 people Fitch explained, "Every note I play and every word I sing tonight is dedicated to Jimmy."



This accident photo by Herald Editor Emily Weaver shows the position of one vehicle under the other on East King Street Friday. Eight passengers were in the two cars involved in the accident. Cleveland County EMS transported the injured to Cleveland Regional Medical Center for observation and treatment. KMPD Officer Bryan McGinnis said Debbie Brittain Hedrick of Claremont, operating the Ford, pulled from the parking lot at Mauney Memorial Library and hit the Pontiac operated by Verilinda McMillan, 507 W. Gold St. Property damages totaled \$2200.

Food-handling ratings from Health Department

Five Kings Mountain food handling businesses were inspected Feb. 24-March 4 by the Cleveland County Health Department and include:

BIG E'S BBQ, York Rd., 101.0, Lil's Grill, N. Piedmont Ave., 99.0; and Woodbridge Handy Mart, 99.0, all with two extra points added to the final score when an employee working at the facility has attended an approved food handling course;

Food Lion Deli, Shelby Rd., 97.0 and Food Lion 230 Meat Market, Shelby Road, 97.0.

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