



KM Little Theatre opens "The Dining Room" Friday night - **6A**

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## HOMEFRONT

# 13th Relay for Life kicks off Friday 13th

Everyone's reason to Relay for Life is as unique as their own personal story of cancer.

Kings Mountain's annual Relay for Life for the benefit of the American Cancer Society kicks off Friday at 6 p.m. at the Kings Mountain Walking Track. It's the city's 13th annual event and this year, organizers are hoping that having the 13th on the 13th will bring them a little extra luck, albeit Friday the 13th.

There's something for everyone to enjoy in night-long fun-filled events, to which the public is invited, led by 36 teams that will relay until a 7 a.m. breakfast and 8 a.m. closing/awards ceremony.

"Our goal is to beat the \$64,000 raised last year and to put Cleveland County back in the top 10 Relays for per capita giving in the nation," said Chairman Frank Burns.

Relay starts with a Survivors lap, an inspirational time when survivors circle the track together and help everyone celebrate the victories they achieved over cancer. After dark, the luminary ceremony honors people who have been touched by cancer and remembers loved ones lost to the disease.

Burns said that El Bethel United Methodist Church's relay team led by Lois and Howard Blanton is already a "platinum" team, exceeding its goal of \$5,000. He anticipates that other teams will top their goals. Teams will be honored at the closing ceremony and Burns says to all 36 relay teams "if you leave, come back at 7 a.m. for breakfast and awards at 8 a.m."

All the teams will be setting up campsites around the track Friday, decorating and offering yummy food items to the public. At the back of the campsites yard sale areas will be roped off and anyone wanting to sell their wares can donate \$10 and set up their site at 6 a.m. Saturday morning. Call the fire department, 704-734-0555 or 704-739-5010 to book your spot.

Another addition this year is a silent auction by the Southern Arts Society. "Bras for a cause," artist-decorated bras, feature unique undergarment personality in honor of loved ones who have battled breast cancer.

The tricycle race is always popular, among others like the hillybilly fashion show, the womanless beauty pageant, the Disney character lap and the animal lap where your pets can also get in the fun. The popular Preston Long Band from Cherryville and Aaron Morrison Band, in addition to dance groups and other fun events are on tap.

The complete schedule of events for Friday's big Relay:

6 p.m.- Opening ceremonies followed by the Survivors lap at 6:30 and team laps at 6:45 p.m.

7 p.m.- La Petite Dance Studio followed by La Petite Zumba at 7:30 p.m.

8 p.m.- Aaron Morrison Band followed at 9 p.m. by the luminary (Hush Angels) and at 9:15 p.m. by solo and group singing.

10 p.m.- The Preston Long Band performs for an hour and then the big tricycle race gets on tap at 11 p.m. followed by the Hillbilly fashion show at 11:30 p.m.

Midnight- You don't want to miss

See RELAY, 3A



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## Soldier treks country for veterans



Troy Yocum, left, Army veteran of the Iraq War, walks with fellow veterans SFC Castle, right, and Army veteran of Desert Storm Michael Mills. Not pictured, Marti Mongiello Navy veteran and innkeeper walks with the soldiers.

EMILY WEAVER

Editor

On April 17, 2010, Army veteran Troy Yocum stepped off from the Louisville Slugger Museum in Louisville, Ky., on a nearly 7,800-mile walk across America. He walks for the love of his fellow soldiers, raising money for veterans along the way.

On Tuesday, he stepped into Grover on his way to Charlotte, Raleigh, and Washington, D.C. He plans to go as far north as Boston before turning around and heading back to the museum where he started...and where he'll stop.

His journey has taken him through mountain ranges, long deserts, in small towns and big cities, and even "down the aisle".

"I proposed (to her) at

mile 100. We got married at mile 256. And yesterday (May 2) we had our first wedding anniversary at mile 5,400," he said, with the smile of a newly wed.

His wife, Mareike Yocum, giggled.

She has been with him, literally, almost every step of the way. Until Mareike, of Germany, could get her green card and driver's license, she walked with him — nearly 4,000 miles. Now, she drives their support vehicle, a Hummer wrapped in the logo of "Wish Upon a Hero" (a charitable organization that is sponsoring the journey).

Joining the cross-country newlyweds are their two dogs — "Emmie the Super Dog", a Shiba Inu who has walked over 2,400 miles,

See SOLDIER, 7A

## Help is on the way



photo and story by TERRIE ARMSTRONG

Left to right, Spencer Kellstrom, Jacob Korch and Chandler Summers, in the boys class at Family Worship Center, lend a helping hand in loading a truck headed for Alabama's tornado victims.

## FWC sends relief to tornado victims

Family Worship Center's Pastor Roger Woodard and wife Margaret just returned from their second trip to Cullman, Ala., where they delivered food, water and supplies to assist the many victims that are beginning to rebuild their lives after devastating tornados.

Family Worship along with Operation Compassion has delivered two semi trucks, one box truck and one pick up truck packed with supplies. Family Worship's Rocky Smith and crew spent five days in Alabama clearing property for the victims. The church hopes to send two more semi trucks with supplies this week. If anyone in the community would like to support this much needed relief effort, contact Family Worship at 704-739-7206.

## The difference a year makes

Prayer, faith and brother's kidney gives Shearra Miller a fresh look at life

ELIZABETH STEWART

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Kings Mountain's Shearra Miller counts her blessings.

Faith in God, her brother's kidney, and a family and community who supported her with their prayers sustained her during a life-threatening illness.

Shearra was on a dialysis machine that kept her alive, and, in spite of her health challenges, didn't miss a day of work at the Cleveland County Arts Council of which she is director.

"I would have given a kidney to Charlie (her brother Charlie Beachum) but I would have never asked him to be tested for my transplant donor," said a very grateful sister. She said Charlie is 48, has a wife and two small children. Shearra, 52, is the wife of Tim Miller and they have two daughters, Rebecca, who is married to Ben Hopkins, and Kathleen, who teaches third

"...I just wanted to live."



**SHEARRA MILLER**

See MILLER, 3A

## City digs in to fight hunger

### Preparing Patriot's Park for sweet potatoes

One out of every four Cleveland County residents are dealing with hunger and several concerned citizens are fighting to change it.

The City of Kings Mountain has donated an acre of land next to Patriot's Park to the Cleveland County Potato Project - a county-wide, volunteer effort to plant potatoes to feed the county's hungry. Tractors tilled the land on Monday, loosening the soil for sweet potatoes as a group of volunteers gathered at the park.

"I thought, hopefully, we wouldn't have a lot of deer problems at the park," Gordon said.

Doug Sharp, founder of the Cleveland County Potato Project, agreed that Patriot's Park might

be planting to feed the hungry.



Glenn Hicks plows the land at Patriot's Park Monday, loosening the soil for a new sweet potato crop city volunteers

will be planting to feed the hungry.

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