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Incentives set to land 'Cardinal'

City, county leaders set sights on top secret Project Cardinal; announcement today

EMILY WEAVER
 Editor

The deal is done. The nest is set. But will Kings Mountain and Cleveland County land Project Cardinal? And who is the industry, set to bring 106 jobs and invest over \$851 million, behind this red-feathered curtain? An industrial announcement is set for 11 a.m. today at

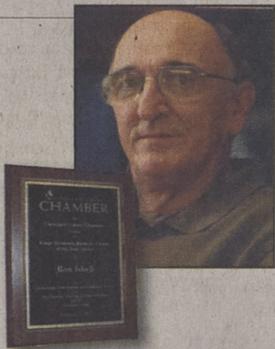
Cleveland Country Club, where the first phase of "Project Cardinal" and the company behind it is set to be revealed.

Kings Mountain City Council and Cleveland County commissioners unanimously approved incentives for a new "big" data center in a joint session inside room 1139 at Cleveland Community College Tuesday afternoon.

See CITY, COUNTY, 3A



City councilmen eye incentives for "Project Cardinal" at a joint meeting with the Cleveland County Board of Commissioners Tuesday. From left, City Manager Marilyn Sellers, Howard Shipp, Mike Butler, Tommy Hawkins, Rodney Gordon, Mayor Rick Murphrey, Rick Moore, Keith Miller, Dean Spears and city Attorney Mickey Corry.



Herald's Isbell honored with 'BOY'

Business Showcase on through March 16

Ron Isbell's community-first approach, giving to local charities, supporting Kings Mountain schools, small businesses and downtown revitalization earned The Herald's leader recognition Tuesday night as the Chamber's 2012 Business Person of the Year.

Isbell was presented the prestigious award at the opening of the 14th annual Business Showcase, underway at city hall through March 16. It recognizes Isbell for

See ISBELL, 7A

City eyes grants for 'Merlot'

More new jobs could be coming to Kings Mountain.

Kings Mountain City Council has set a public hearing for Tuesday at 6 p.m. to consider applying for an incentive grant for an industrial project code-named "Project Merlot".

Completion of the project could result in 62 new jobs and total taxable new eligible investment of \$4,919,500.

Planning Director Steve Killian said in a memorandum to city council that Cleveland County will be offering an industrial incentive grant also and in addition will apply for the One North Carolina Fund. Other state credits may be

See MERLOT, 7A

Contraception Mandate vs. Freedom of Religion

'WAR ON CHRISTIANITY'

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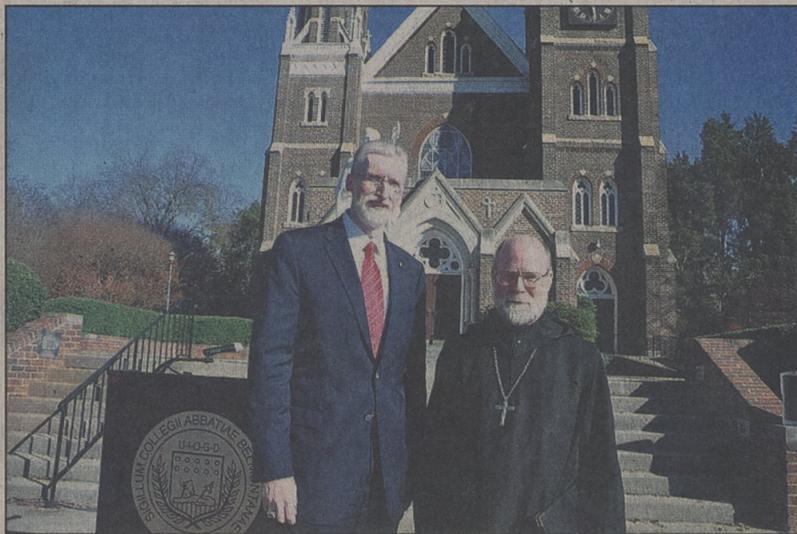
A move from President Barack Obama, that on the surface seems sympathetic to women's rights, has initiated a firestorm of protests by those who fear the increasing loss of religious liberty in America. Arming their sheaths with the points of Freedom of Speech and Freedom of Religion, Christian organizations are battling the government in court.

Belmont Abbey College is a local leader in the charge. They've filed a lawsuit, standing on the principle of the First Amendment of the Bill of Rights: "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof..."

In August 2011 the federal government issued a regulation requiring that all group health plans must cover "(FDA-) approved contraceptive methods, sterilization procedures, and patient education and counseling for all women with reproductive capacity."

This mandate, a provision of the "Affordable Care Act", goes into effect August 1.

After this mandate was issued, chaos erupted from the religious community. Two lawsuits were filed through The Becket Fund for Religious Liberty, which is the first and only law firm to legally challenge the Obama Administration's contraceptive mandate. The



Photos by Emily Hardman
 President of Belmont Abbey College, Dr. William Thierfelder, (left) is seen with Abbot Placid Solari, in front of Belmont Abbey.

Becket Fund quickly raised alarm by suing on behalf of Belmont Abbey College, a nearby Catholic liberal arts college on Nov. 10, 2011, and Colorado Christian University, an evangelical college located outside Denver on Dec. 21, 2011.

Belmont Abbey is suing Kathleen Sebelius, Secretary of the US Department of Health and Human Services; the US Department of Health and Human Services; Hilda Solis, Secretary of the US Department of Labor; US Department of Labor; Timothy Geithner, Secretary of the US Department of the Treasury; and the US Department of the Treasury.

Belmont Abbey argued that it could not be true to both the government mandate and its church teachings. The Catholic church stands opposed to all forms of artificial contraceptives.

The President faced flack over requiring companies to provide contraceptive coverage in insurance. The mandate was later altered to require insurance companies provide the coverage instead of employers. The Catholic church has argued that the change changes nothing.

Students rally for religious freedom at Belmont Abbey College.

"The Diocese of Charlotte is self-insured and would still have to pay for this," said David Hains, communications director for the Diocese of Charlotte, the local Catholic district under Bishop Peter Jugis. He added that they stand behind Belmont Abbey in its lawsuit. "The United States Department of Health and Human Services is threatening religious liberty."

The contraceptive mandate includes a number of drugs Belmont Abbey and many scientists consider to be abortifacients, most notably Plan B, Ella and sterilization services.

Plan B One-Step, also known as the "morning after pill", is a backup plan that helps prevent pregnancy after birth control failure. Ella, the "week after pill", is an emergency contraceptive product shown to be safe and effective to reduce the risk of pregnancy up to five days after unprotected intercourse or contraceptive failure.

Were Belmont Abbey to choose not to cover contraception and sterilization as required by the government mandate, it would be penalized with a hefty fine and forced to terminate its

See CLERGY, 7A



Volunteers dig in to feed the hungry

Volunteers with the Cleveland County Potato Project planted the seeds of 2,800 pounds of potatoes last week in the first three 2012 plantings of the three-year-old mission to grow tubers to curb local hunger. In the Project's first two years, the cause has spread throughout the county with plots of potatoes sprouting food and hope.

In 2010, a volunteer labor force produced 30,000 pounds of potatoes and delivered them to the Kings Mountain Crisis Ministry, Greater Cleveland County Baptist Association, U-Can and the Salvation Army for distribution. Last year, the project raised 84,000 pounds of potatoes. This year the goal is set at 100,000 pounds.

The next planting, weather permitting, will be Saturday, Feb. 25, at Glenn Williams property in Boiling Springs, starting at 9 a.m. Volunteers are needed.

See POTATO, 7A

Bill McMurray plants a row of potatoes.

INSIDE
 'PROUD TO BE AN AMERICAN' - Memorial honors servicemen. 3A

FIRE PROBE - A fire that damaged a Lake Montonia home is under investigation. 3A

REALIGNMENT - New draft puts KMHS in conference with Cleveland, Rutherford teams. 3B



NASCAR® Fans... Start your engines!

Sprint Cup races start this weekend. See the full season schedule & more on page 5A of this edition. Don't miss a minute of this seasons action - stop by the Kings Mountain Herald office for a poster sized copy of the schedule - only \$2! Sponsored by Fox Distributing