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Putnam promoted



Ricky Putnam, Jr

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Ricky Putnam Jr., 40, has assumed new duties as Director of Public Works for the City of Kings Mountain.

His promotion was announced this week by City Manager Marilyn Sellers.

Putnam, who has been a supervisor in the Public Works Department for 22 years, succeeds the retiring

See PUTNAM, 3A

Will Jan. 3 see end of Sweeps?

GROVER—January 3 may see the end of business for sweepstakes in neighboring Grover.

Council has been working for months to establish an ordinance regulating sweeps but Town Attorney Mickey Corry said at the recent council meeting that in light of the recent NC Supreme Court ruling that "the issue may take care of itself."

Meantime sweepstakes companies continue to pursue a U.S. Supreme Court appeal to put a hold on the law banning video sweepstakes statewide.

See SWEEPS, 6A

Smith sought for Rite Aid robbery

Kings Mountain Police have identified the main suspect involved in the Rite-Aid armed robbery that occurred on Dec. 15.

Felony warrants were issued on Dec. 19 for Arthur Charles Smith, 57. These warrants are still outstanding and the suspect should be considered armed and dangerous.

Anyone who might come across this individual should contact their local law enforcement agency, said KMPD investigating officer Det. Cpl. K. L. Hamrick.



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Same 'Auld Lang Syne' for KM: Jobs!

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Some forecasters say the economy is showing some signs of healing. But as 2012 draws to a close at midnight Monday it depends on who you talk to.

Kings Mountain's big priority for new year 2013 is the same it has been for the last several years—jobs.

Mayor Rick Murphrey said the city will continue to aggressively seek new business and industry working with the county and state economic development commissions while maintaining competitive rates and infrastructure upgrades.

"We feel very blessed in Kings Mountain," said Murphrey.

A big money item for the city in new year 2013 will be funding major water system upgrades, a project on the city council's drawing board for some time.

The mayor said a new water line into town and treatment plant expansion and upgrades should be shovel ready by May 2013. Spillway repairs at Moss Lake are slated to begin in 2013. Expanding the natural gas systems to 2 to 3 miles each year is another priority of city fathers. Evaluating and implementing a mass emergency notification system where customers can choose various alerts and alert methods is a priority as well

as working a second year on storm water solutions mandated by the EPA.

City officials look back at the old year and remember bad times (the economy) and good times (more jobs becoming available) for Kings Mountain area citizens.

As the strains of 'Auld Lang Syne' ring out Dec. 31, the traditional harbinger of a new year, citizens can look back on a year that was generally productive for the City of Kings Mountain.

Kings Mountain was a jobs powerhouse for economic development during 2012. AT&T's industrial announcement in the early spring was the largest investment ever announced for Cleveland County. There have been other big announcements of expansions and new buildings.

This month Southern Power's new natural gas-fueled plant began operation southwest of the city - revving up equipment capable of providing 350,000 residential customers throughout the region. The new power plant will pump electricity and money into the county.



Photo by LIB STEWART
Mayor Rick Murphrey and City Manager Marilyn Sellers look back at old year 2012 and the work of city council in approving some good news (jobs coming) for citizens in a sluggish economy. More jobs in 2013 will be priority for city leaders.

"The city has had a very progressive year," said Murphrey. "We continue to promote a pro-business climate, working with the county and state to position Kings Mountain to attract new industry and create jobs," he added.

Sellers says the city continues to be a low

See JOBS, 6A

Carrigan plays Santa Saturday

Saturday was what Christmas was all about.

The generosity of one man and the efforts of an entire community brought Christmas to hundreds of families in need.

Kings Mountain businessman Charlie Carrigan never got a bike for Christmas. The ex-Marine said it took him until he was a grown man to realize that it's better to give than receive.

Carrigan played Santa Claus and bought 400 girls and boys bikes and with the help of volunteers from Bethlehem Baptist Church, Grace Christian Academy and the Sheriff's department gave Christmas to many in need. Toys were also collected for children who would not otherwise have Christmas. Volunteers, including Sheriff Alan Norman and deputies from the Sheriff's Department, helped put the bikes together and pump the tires. "It was amazing," said Betty Carrigan. The effort took only three to four hours, she said, because of the number of volunteers from a wide area who came out to help.

The gymnasium at Christian Freedom Baptist Church was overflowing as Sheriff Norman, along with a number of deputies, helped hand out the bikes and wheeled them to waiting cars. The sheriff's office had worked with county schools to help identify the families that needed help. Some families were unable to



PLAYING SANTA - Rev. Mike Chambers, pastor of Christian Freedom Baptist Church, county commissioner Johnny Hutchins, Charlie and Betty Carrigan, Tonya Leatherman and Sheriff Alan Norman, left to right, helped distribute 400 bikes—Christmas gifts to needy children—from Charlie Carrigan.

make it to the church to pick up bikes and deputies went to them instead.

"We can't afford a bicycle for my grandson, his father left us and your gift will make his Christmas," said a tearful grandmother to Charlie Carrigan. Charlie's daughter, Tonya Leatherman, quickly found other gifts for the nine-year-old boy, including a

Bible. All children received Bibles.

Betty Carrigan said her husband told her he wanted to order bikes for needy children from an ex-Marine friend in California. "I had no idea the number."

On Christmas Day bikes were delivered to hospitalized children in county hospitals and at Levine Children's Hospital in Charlotte

where the Carrigan's granddaughter Taylor Rippey is a nurse.

Charlie Carrigan owns and operates Cherokee Auction and Chief Enterprises. He served in the US Marine Corps in 1956-60. He and his family are active in Bethlehem Baptist Church. The Carrigan children - Tonya Leatherman, Sherry Lynn Rippey,

See CARRIGAN, 6A

Justice for Kings as suspects go to trial

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Three suspects in the brutal slaying in September of Michael and Thelma King, son and daughter-in-law of Jerry and Jane King of Kings Mountain, will go to trial in Philipsburg, the capital city of St. Maarten, on Jan. 22.

Jerry and Jane King don't plan to attend.

Thirty people, including family from Mount Pleasant, SC, and friends from Mount Pleasant and St. Maarten, plan to be in the 200-

year-old courtroom as Jamal Jefferson, 20, a Guyanese national; Meyshane Kemar Johnson of Jamaica, and Jeremiah Chevon Mills, 17, a Dutch national of Jamaican descent said to be Johnson's cousin, face a judge who will render a verdict.

No jury is involved and all three suspects will be tried at once in a trial conducted entirely in Dutch and expected to last two days.

Michael and Thelma King of Mount Pleasant, SC, kept a part-



Michael and Thelma King

time home in the tiny Dutch Caribbean territory, had plenty of friends on the island and planned to invest in a rum-export business.

Word that they had been brutally stabbed sparked an intensive investigation. Prosecutors say rob-

See JUSTICE, 6A



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