

Opinions...

Yours,
Ours,
Others

Quote of the week...

All that I am, or hope to be, I owe to my angel mother.

~ Abraham Lincoln



Wendy Isbell
Publisher

Public notices should be available to the public

As a regular reader of the Herald, you've seen advertisements in the paper from time to time that carry the City of Kings Mountain's name. These are public notices about local government functions — meetings, hearings, overdue tax listings and the like. The state has long required that

such matters be advertised in local newspapers to make sure local government lets citizens know what's going on.

Some legislators believe the need to inform the public in this manner has gone away. I disagree.

Recently, a committee of the state Senate approved a bill to allow local governments in some areas to post information on their own websites rather than publish it in the local paper. As amended, the bill applies only to Guilford, Mecklenburg and Burke counties, the cities of Greensboro and High Point, and the town of Morrisville. But citizens across the state should be concerned about this change of direction.

When Senator Tucker was approached by a publisher and asked why there was only a voice vote and not a roll-call, he replied, "I am the senator, you are the citizen, you need to be quiet." This is the beginning of the fox watching the henhouse, and publishers fear that this bill is a mechanism for governmental misbehavior.

Public information should be posted where the public is most likely to see it. That's in newspapers and on newspaper websites. Not on seldom-visited government websites. Newspapers are willing to absorb the extra expense of web postings because we are committed to open government, and this is one more service we can provide to make government more open and more transparent. To give more people the opportunity to see public notices, we are willing to take on that cost.

The committee approved the bill on a vote that did not indicate a majority supporting the bill, in the view of publishers present in Raleigh.

Many publishers believe these legislators have an ax to grind with local newspapers because we as a whole watch them as closely as we can and report on things they don't like sometimes or we don't write the story the way they would write it. This type of legislation is a way to inflict revenge.

Using an independent agency—the local newspaper—builds integrity in the process. To even give the appearance of manipulating mandatory public notices tarnishes the reputation of government because it undermines the concept of independence and transparency.

Backers say this is a local bill that only offers the option and does not require ads move out of newspapers. We feel that this will give governments the option of threatening newspapers—if we don't offer favorable coverage, they will take notices out of newspapers.

Bad government, bad public policy.

Governments legislated these advertising rules themselves years ago to avoid suggestions of back room deals and sweetheart bidding. They need to remember that.

But a larger issue is what removing these notices from the newspaper would mean for the general public.

Though this is the age of the Internet, there are still a great many people—particularly low-income people—who do not have computer access at home. More still nominally have access but are not "web-savvy"—they have a hard time finding their way around websites.

Adding things to websites, taking them down, making sure the

See PUBLIC NOTICES, 8A



Beth Brock
Staff Writer

Mother's Day a blessing for all

Looking back at Mother's Day as a child, I remember always going with my parents to buy flowers for my grandmothers, and later on, as they passed away, putting flowers on their graves.

Mother's Day was a big deal to me, making gifts for my mother, grandmothers, and even the lady who kept me while my mother was teaching.

As an adult, I have come to realize that Mother's Day isn't just a day for children to pay respect to their mothers, but also a day for mothers to sit back and think of the blessings which have been bestowed upon them in the form of children.

I think I can remember every little gift and card that my boys made me as small children, even back to daycare and preschool. In fact, I still have most of them!

But one of the biggest surprises I ever received on Mother's Day came several years ago when I was surfing around on my computer, home alone on Mother's Day, and discovered "A tribute to my mother on Mother's Day," written by one of my sons on his personal blog.

He recalled a day when he was very young, sitting on his bed crying. (He couldn't remember why but said it was probably something his brother had done.)

I came into his room and saw him crying, and without saying a word, went to his closet, reached up high on a shelf, and pulled down a little red metal tool box with real child-size tools inside. The box was still sealed in cellophane.

See MOTHER'S DAY, 8A



Sharon Stack
Mauney Memorial Librarian

It's survey time!

Talk to the library, because it's survey time. We want to know: how are we doing? We want to hear from you, library users! We are looking for thoughtful responses and we are COOL if the responses are positive or negative. Really. Because we know, the more we understand your thoughts, the better we can serve you.

We want to know if:

Our BOOKSHELVES are filled with the books you are looking for?

Our PROGRAMS are the ones you are excited to attend?

Our SERVICES are the ones that meet your needs?

Our TECHNOLOGY includes resources that help you connect?

Later this summer in July, the library will convene a group of community stakeholders and plan our services for the next five years, 2013 to 2018. The results of the survey will guide the planning work.

Completing our survey is easy, just check out our website, www.mauneylibrary.org and click on the survey tab or ask any staff member for a paper copy. Our survey period will run through May 31. Our statistical target is to reach 300 quality responses as a representative sample of our 11,000 Kings Mountain residents.

Tradition of planning.

Since 2005, the library has used the citizen-based Public Library Association's Planning for Results process. This process begins with strategic

See LIBRARY, 8A

Letters to the Editor

To the Editor:

My name is Anna Hughes and I am a First Grade Teacher Assistant at North Elementary School in Kings Mountain. I am writing you to tell you how important Teacher Assistants are in the school. We do not just grade and file papers all day. We actually serve as another teacher in the classroom. The students read their homework reading books to me daily. I also administer Accelerated Reader tests while our students are in Literacy Stations. Four days a week for an hour a day I work with three students during Title One. This program helps students who struggle with reading. I have noticed growth with these students. If Teacher Assistants are no longer in the schools these

children will fall through the cracks. One person cannot do the one on one work that needs to be done with these students.

I also drive the Activity Bus for field trips that my class goes on. This year I drive one of our school buses two afternoons a week. The other three afternoons I help with afternoon car duty. If Teacher Assistants are no longer in the school teachers would have to do these jobs. Who would be instructing the students while the teachers are doing our jobs?

Please consider these points as you make decisions that impact the future of our students and the future of North Carolina.

ANNA HUGHES
Kings Mountain, NC

To the Editor:

As President of the Kings Mountain Ministerial Association, I would like to express my heartfelt gratitude to all those who shared a time of prayer for our nation with me at City Hall on May 2.

We were reminded in the prayer of Brother Degree that we need to pray for our nation every day and I heartily agree.

I would also like to thank Dr. Jeff Hensley for his years of service to our community while he pastored Kings Mountain Baptist Church and for his weekly devotional articles in the Kings Mountain Herald, I have been blessed. Jeff, you will be sorely missed. May the Lord bless you and your dear wife in this new chapter of your life.

JAMES T. LOCHRIDGE Jr.
Pastor, Second Baptist Church

Sidewalk Survey

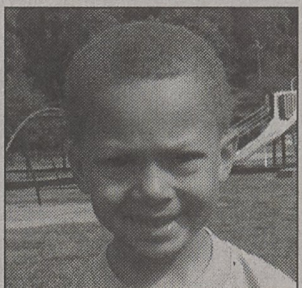
In honor of Mother's Day, we asked a few students in Mrs. Herndon's and Ms. Jackson's Pre-K class at West Elementary School, "What makes your mommy special?"



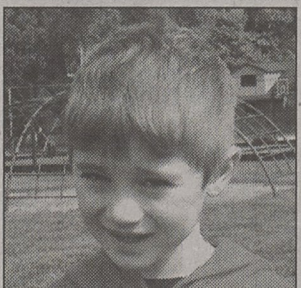
Ta'Niya C. — "She gives me and my brothers food. She gives me a bath and puts my clothes on me and puts my mawmaw's make-up on me."



Axel A. — "She gives me money when I'm good. She found my other pair of gloves."



Josiah G. — "She's great! She gives me some treats."



Caleb M. — "She makes me chicken, peas, and corn. She makes pancakes, waffles, and French toast for breakfast."



Mollie N. — "She's nice. She cooks my breakfast."



Kallie H. — "My mommy made a cake with purple on it."

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