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New fees?

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City Council was expected to bite the bullet Tuesday night on assessing a \$2.50 monthly fee across the board to the city's 4500 residential and all utility customers following state and federal mandates handed down to municipalities on storm water.

For business and commercial customers, the monthly rate is expected to be \$2.50 every 2,000 feet of impervious surface based on measurements of parking lots and driveways.

Tax-exempt organizations, such as churches, are not exempt from paying the utility fee.

All councilmen at the work session last week say they

See FEES, 7A

Santa to visit museum

Santa Claus will be stopping in Kings Mountain on his "Fire Truck Express" for a couple of last minute stops to see the children before Christmas and to get an update on their Christmas lists.

On Thursday and Friday mornings, Santa will visit local daycare centers.

On Saturday, December 14, Santa and his helpers will arrive on his "Fire Truck Express" for a visit to the Kings Mountain Historical Museum, during the Toys, Games & Trains Exhibit, from 1-3PM. During Santa's visit, the annual model train display will be traveling around the tracks for children and their families to enjoy. This interactive and highly popular display was built and is maintained by the Piedmont "S" Gaugers, a group of model train enthusiasts. Museum visitors can also step back in time on Saturday and enjoy the growing exhibits of unique antique toys and games.

The event is free and open to the public. Donations are welcome to support the Museum's mission of informing visitors the history of Kings Mountain by preserving and exhibiting this 19th and early 20th century collection. The annual "Toys, Games and Trains" exhibit is on display and will run through January 4, 2014.

The Gift Shop at the Main Exhibit Hall will also be open and a perfect place for those last minute ideas for unique Christmas gifts. Old Salem Cookies and Cheese Stars will also be available for purchase



Crowds gather for parade

Sunny weather boosts Christmas parade attendance

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Relatively warm temperatures and clear skies brought out one of the biggest crowds in memory for the city's annual Christmas Parade on Saturday, which featured more than 80 entries and hundreds of participants.

From the Kings Mountain High School marching band and dance companies to local businesses, car clubs and

course pageant winners and beauty queens, there was a little something for everyone at the parade. Police estimates put the crowd size at around 6,000.

And much to the delight of young children (and some adults) hundreds of pounds of candy could be seen flying through the air from the parade's start at 3 p.m. to its conclusion a little more than an hour later.

Police blocked off main streets

See PARADE, 7A

Community rallies around Haraszkiwicz

2011 KMHS graduate Taylor (Faris) Haraszkiwicz has recently been diagnosed with a very rare and acute form of leukemia and since then doctors locally and in Winston Salem have been racing to prescribe a life-saving treatment. Meanwhile, family and friends have rallied around the 20-year-old, who just this June married her high school sweetheart, Josh. Haraszkiwicz works as a pharmacy technician at Walgreens in Kings Mountain.

Doctors moved swiftly to put her on an intense round of chemotherapy. Her first treatment was Thursday at Baptist Memorial Hospital, a teaching and research facility affiliated with Wake Forest University. The first round of chemo is expected to last four weeks, according to family members.

Haraszkiwicz will be spending Christmas at the Wake Forest Comprehensive Cancer Center. You can add a little cheer to her room with a simple ribbon with a message of hope or encouragement or perhaps your favorite scripture written on it. The ribbons should be cut



Taylor (Faris) Haraszkiwicz (with husband Josh) was diagnosed last week with a rare form of leukemia. Since that time the Kings Mountain community has rallied around the young newlywed.

Photo submitted

approximately 8 inches in length. A Sharpie or gel marker usually works best for writing. The ribbons will be linked together and used to decorate her room at the Cancer Center.

Cards and ribbons can be mailed to: Taylor Haraszkiwicz, Wake Forest Baptist Medical Center, Comprehensive Cancer Center, Medical Center Boulevard, Winston-Salem, N.C. 27157.

The young woman's family is asking for prayers from the community. They've also established a fundraising drive, which includes T-shirts and a bake sale, to help

pay for the medical costs associated with her treatment.

To learn more about Haraszkiwicz's fight against leukemia or to make a donation, visit www.caring-bridge.org/visit/taylorharaszkiwicz or www.gofundme.com/Taylorfund.

Mountain View Family Restaurant is also hosting several Santa Claus picture days to raise money for Haraszkiwicz. Children of all ages can have their photo taken with Santa for \$10 this Friday and Saturday from 5 to 9 p.m. Santa is returning on Friday, Dec. 20, and Saturday, Dec. 21, from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. and 5 to 9 p.m.

How is your health coverage?

New health insurance laws a 'game-changer' for local providers

The Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act is expected to have a complicated influence on the relationship between the insured and insurer. Still in its early days, consumers and providers alike are still sorting through a host of new rules, a web site that didn't launch smoothly and the extent to which Medicare funding is affected.

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The prolonged political battle that eventually pressed into law an overhaul of the health insurance industry seemed to come to an end on March 23, 2010, when President Obama signed a contentious bill called the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act.

But the struggle to change the way Americans get access to health care and pay for treatment wasn't over then and is still a moving target now, nearly six years after the president and Congress began drafting and re-drafting legislation that sought to reduce the number of uninsured while at the same time lowering ever-rising health care costs.

After the law passed, the legislation still had to overcome a number of political hurdles that risked killing—or at least stalling—what Obama has called the most important act of his time in the Oval Office. Among other lawsuits related to the new law, the one with the most momentum was one brought by an association of hospital and insurance companies that sought to strike down the new health care law on the grounds that it was unconstitutional. That suit wound its way through the federal courts and ultimately landed in the U.S. Supreme Court, which ruled, essentially, that Congress did, in fact, have the power to mandate that individuals carry health insurance as prescribed by rules set forth in Afford-

able Care Act.

Later, as a budget fight roiled Washington in September, the new health care law was in the spotlight again as Republicans, who have been the fiercest opponents of the Affordable Care Act, sought to withhold funding for it. That resulted in a 16-day shutdown of the federal government, which shuttered most federal government offices and sent more than 800,000 federal workers nationwide home, unsure of when they would be able to return to work. Members of Congress eventually worked out a budget deal that preserved funding for the new health care law's provisions.

At the same time, another problem—not a political one but a technical one—was surfacing. The web site maintained by the government to help marry the insured with the insurer was having catastrophic problems. The site crashed repeatedly in its debut week. Tens of thousands of would-be customers were reporting problems establishing an account.

There were also doubts that the site, which had been designed and built chiefly by a menagerie of non-government sub-contractors, was stable enough to withstand cyber attacks, and whether it was secure enough to be entrusted with individual's personal information. After more than six weeks of prolonged glitches and uncertainty, confidence in

See HEALTH CARE, 7A

Orange barricades here for a while longer

It will be Spring before the orange barricades are removed from the downtown railroad tracks but city manager Marilyn Sellers said last week that the Department of Transportation will handle the improvements and pay for the costs at both crossings.

She said a meeting is scheduled Thursday with DOT officials.

"The improvements will be for much more than the upgrades at the railroad

crossings; the traffic and truck route will run more smoothly," she said during a work session with the full board of commissioners.

Sellers has called special meetings with commissioners for Dec. 16 at 5:30 p.m. to approve bids for generators and on Jan. 7 for a two hour work session which will include an update on the SMART Meters pilot program. The meeting is set for 5:30 p.m.



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