

FIREHOUSE BBQ: who's is the best?

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Championship begins around noon on Saturday, with a prize ceremony scheduled for 3 p.m.

At this year's contest, look for famed cooking team John Kearney and Carl Lewis, Jr., who are known as the Big Show cooking team for their work with longtime local radio personalities John Boy and Billy.

There's also a round of non-barbecue cooking competition on Friday evening called "Anything But." There, ambitious cooks and bakers can submit lobster, seafood stews, shrimp and grits, pies and cakes, really anything edible. Top prizes in dessert and non-dessert categories will be \$200 each.

Campers and cooks will start rolling into the BBQ arena, which is located at the Kings Mountain walking track on York Rd., Thursday and Friday morning. The Masons from Fairview Lodge 339 AF&AM of Kings Mountain will be running general food concessions where folks can buy hamburgers, hot-dogs and barbecue offerings. Barbecue from the competition will not be for sale. The Bluegrass Band, "Dirty Grass Souls" will play from 7-10 p.m. Friday. The awards ceremony is the following day at 2:30 p.m. The Kings Mountain BBQ Cook-Off is a part of the Old North State Series that includes big contests in Lexington, Salisbury, Kannapolis and Shelby, which means that it draws some of the best barbecue teams in the region, accord-

Dirty Grass Souls to entertain crowds

Hailing from the musically rich foothills of Cleveland County, North Carolina, Dirty Grass formed in late 2011 when front man Kevin Dedmon (fiddle/guitar/vocals) decided to assemble a band to perform many songs he had written through his early years at NC State. With the addition of Lance Watson (bass/mandolin) and brother Kris Dedmon (banjo) to the group, the individual styles of Watson & Dedmon meshed to form the original high energy sound they are known for.

With a full length original CD "Movin' On" now available, Dirty Grass Soul is earning a reputation as one of Western NC's emerging Southern Rock/Alt. Country bands.

From Dedmon's catchy originals, to their own twist on covers ranging from a variety of artists and styles, Dirty Grass Soul is sure to offer a little something for everyone.

ing to Burns.

The Kansas City Barbecue Society-certified judges are coming from all over, too. Although the majority comes from within a 100-mile radius, this year's field includes experts from Atlanta, Pennsylvania and even Toronto, Canada.

"Ours is one of the first sanctioned events of the year ... so judges come out of the woodwork," Burns said with a laugh. "They haven't eaten barbecue all year." Judges are not paid for their participation and travel.

New to the cook-off this year is the People's Choice Award. Participating teams will submit a pork shoulder or butt to officials at the Red Cross booth. Then, regular tasters can vote for their favorite.

Kings Mountain Mayor Rick Murphrey will also be on hand to do some special judging of his own. His favorite overall team will collect the Mayor's Award.

The cook-off attracts some of the biggest names in barbecue. For many, this

weekend's event will kick off a busy season of traveling and competing.

"Some of these guys have \$10,000 to \$20,000 in their grills," Burns said. "It's a family affair for a lot of the teams."

Still, no last-minute entrant can ever be out of the running. He remembers a Firehouse Cook-Off from just years back where a Washington State man in Charlotte for business heard about the contest on the radio. He was idle that weekend and had some experience with serious barbecue competition, so he rushed over to Wal-Mart and bought some supplies and registered the day of the events. He took home a first place prize in the pork category.

"It's a lot of fun, always is," Burns said. "We always have a big turn out."

To learn more about the Firehouse Cook-Off, including how to register, contact the Kings Mountain Historical Fire Museum at (704) 734-0555.



Coleman Hunt, left, Danny Shirah, Mayor Rick Murphrey and Y Director Kevin Osborne look at the exercise equipment on which Shirah and Hunt begin their morning exercise routine.

Photo by ELLIS NOELL

YMCA: city partnership is a win-win

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recorded and 2,895 interactions. The Y serves 1,120 families and 2,516 people with its membership base. As of December 2013, the Y had 62,000 scans to the facility and these do not include parents on athletic fields, guest who use the facilities and classes at the Senior Center and KMHS Neisler Natatorium.

"We're busy," says Osborne who heads a staff of 58 with some 80 workers in summer plus many volunteers who serve as coaches of sports for youth and adults and wellness programs, among others.

The facility serves citizens of all ages. At 96, Dr. George Plonk, who works out three times a week, is the senior participant.

No child is ever turned down for participation in sports because of inability to pay, said Osborne. The YMCA provides partial and full scholarships depending on the family's financial situation and also offers discounts to senior residents on fixed incomes.

The long-range benefit and most important for young people, said the mayor, is that the YMCA is founded on Christian principles and the values learned in Y sports and support programs greatly enhance their lives and improve the quality of life in the future.

"Our council was a visionary in early 1999 when talks began about turning city recreation over to the YMCA," said the mayor, who was on city council at the time. Scott Neisler was mayor and Jimmy Maney was city manager. In 2000 the board voted to contract with the Y, which falls under the giant umbrella of the YMCA of Cleveland County. Over the years the city saved thousands of dollars in recreation costs because prior to the move the city operated its own recreation department.

Murphrey recalled at the time that Kings Mountain was the only city in the state to contract its recreation services.

Osborne said other cities have followed the city's action, mentioning a partnership between the City of Hickory and Newton-Conover, North Carolina.

"This was a giant step for Kings Mountain but it has increased our recreational programs without additional costs to the city and we're getting more for the money it is now putting into recreation," said the mayor.

Osborne said the city's relationship with the

City of Kings Mountain is superior.

The city's contract with the Y on July 1, 2000 stipulated that the city would pay the YMCA \$25,000 a month to run its recreation program plus \$100,000 for maintenance and contingency fund for repairs of the facility. In 1999 the city spent \$400,000 a year toward recreation, including \$300,000 for running the program and \$100,000 in capital costs. The city currently budgets \$300,000 for its recreation program operated by the Y. The KM Family YMCA operation is funded through member fees for participation in programs and by massive corporate fund-raising programs.

Currently, 600 children play baseball, t-ball, girl's softball and youth soccer — a 12% growth from 2013.

More people are enrolling in a pre-diabetes class underway on Thursdays at 6:30 p. m. taught by Ashley Harris.

Group exercise classes for seniors have enjoyed growth over the year as well as the After School program, and other family programs including summer day camp.

Four wellness classes are offered each week at the Patrick Center and three classes a week at the KMHS swimming pool. Wellness classes are also held for Beach Blast, July 4, and Gateway festivals sponsored by the city. Every December the Jingle Bell Run attracts more than 700 participants. LIVESTRONG is a YMCA program offered to cancer survivors.

Sports programming is one of the largest programs at the local Y, including spring baseball which enrolls 300 in ages 3-18; spring soccer, ages 3-13, more than 150; spring sports camps, 8 children a week for eight weeks; adult softball, 5 teams and 80 adults; Fall ball ages 3-13, more than 150; flag football, ages 6-11, more than 77, youth basketball, ages 3-18, a total of 235; home school PE for two groups of 50 children a week for a total of 1,300 children and adults active in Kings Mountain in 2012-13.

Osborne, who has over 15 years experience running YMCA programs, came to Kings Mountain five years ago from Hickory YMCA. He has seen newcomers come to Shelby and Kings Mountain because they enjoy what a Y provides their family. "The Y and the city are a perfect fit," he said, adding that the Y has an impact on economic development but also promotes a healthy community.

MOSS: using experience from stage and screen to enrich lives

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Greenville, SC to continue his work, writing and research. That move could bring Laura Beth Moss closer home. Dr. Pfeiffer has provided psych educational services to individuals and couples for 25 years and is also a licensed marriage and family therapist.

Launching her new career, Laura works remotely with people by phone and Skype but also is flying all over the world to introduce the program. In September she will make her first trip to Ghana, West Africa as well as The Republic of Georgia with Evan and Dr. Pfeiffer.

Laura's fiancé, also a life coach and Anger Management Specialist, is an experienced yoga teacher and they met at a yoga retreat in Upstate New York. Lozada is originally from Fort Lauderdale, Florida. He says he loves the Kings Mountain area, but he is also curious about Greenville, SC as a possible future home. In the future, the couple plans to combine their talents and go into business together. And a likely stop for anger management groups, classes, programs and trainings will be in the area.

"It's very exciting, I've played all types of characters- on stage, TV, and now, in life," says Laura, who is using her skills as an actress to teach about emotions and help people understand how to express and talk about their emotions, but not be destructive with anger.

Laura said her love of theater began at age six. As a first grader she landed the lead role in "Tillie the Tooth" and was active in junior high, high school and college drama productions.

"I have been blessed my whole life and now I am passionate about this new endeavor because it will enable me to give back to my community at large and help



Laura Moss and her fiancé Evan Lozada are pictured at the home of her parents, Linda and Larry Moss, in Kings Mountain.

Photo by LIB STEWART

people live more fulfilling lives," said Moss, who is helping establish new chapters of the National Anger Management Association in California, Republic of Georgia, Japan and West Africa.

Additionally, she serves as the Director of Communications for NAMA, working with Dr. Pfeiffer whom she calls the "founding father" of anger management in the US and who also founded the National Association. They are hoping to schedule a training seminar in the area this fall.

Laura has resided in New York City since graduating college. She also for-

merly worked for five years in Los Angeles, California. "New York and LA are just too far from Kings Mountain, my parents, and home," she says.

Thirty second "shots" like the recent TV commercial for Walmart take over 12 hours to complete. "We started at 4:30 a.m., finished at 8:30 p.m.," Laura said.

You can follow her success as Co-Director of Growth Central, a supervisor for adults, children and adolescents in in the National Anger Association, on <http://growthcentral.com/people.htm>.

Laura Moss is ready for the new business venture.

SCHOOL BOARD: approves spending

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goals. In other spending approvals, the board OK'd \$15,000 for the purchase of 1,030 algebra textbooks, \$16,000 in robotics supplies for several high schools' robotics teams and competitions planned in the coming year.

Superintendent Dr. Bruce Boyles gave a presentation to the board in which he addressed more than 20 line item expenses that went back six years. School board members had raised questions about some of the expenditures and Boyles

defended and explained the items, including an \$800 bill at New York City's Hard Rock Café that was the result of 80 lunches for Shelby High School Orchestra students on a trip to Carnegie Hall.

Other expenses included a one-night hotel bill that resulted from an out-of-town education seminar in western N.C., and purchases at Wal-Mart and Bed, Bath and Beyond.

In personnel developments, it was reported to the board that 20 Cleveland County School teachers have renewed their certifications, and four became newly certified teachers, including Maegan Boyst and Dustin Morehead of KMHS. The other two were Deanna Pauley, a teacher at Crest Middle School, and Rebecca Sisk, a Crest High School teacher.

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