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# Casino talk continues

## Pritchard speaks out as businesswoman

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Connie Pritchard, whose residence at 506 Dixon School Road is a neighbor to the much talked about prospective casino project, spoke up for the project at last Tuesday's city council meeting and admitted she was "the odd ball out" after four men spoke against.

"I am first a Christian, second the mother of four daughters, and third a businesswoman," Pritchard said. Her perspective was different from other speakers during the public comment portion of the meeting.

"Sin is a choice and adding a casino won't increase

prostitution, it's already here," said Pritchard. She said she supports a casino because the community would benefit and one of the benefits would be more law enforcement. "I don't understand why people think that when you put sin in front of people they'll go toward it. Sin is a choice." Pritchard, who has operated a business in Matthews for 22 years, said the town is similar to Kings Mountain. She said a railroad runs through the town with shops and a successful downtown. "That could happen here and I think it will with jobs."

For several months members of the Kings Mountain

See **CASINO/PRITCHARD, 7A**



Beautiful beds of wildflowers are blooming along the medians of Hwy. 74 thanks to spring plantings by the NCDOT.

Photo by Sheree Spivey

# Smart meters coming for electric, gas and water

## Public invited to citizen fair on new technology

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The City of Kings Mountain is set to install smart meters for all of its electricity, water and gas customers, making it the first municipality in the country to install the new technology for all of the utilities services it offers.

A pilot program was tested over the fall, winter and spring on about 400 households, and workers will begin upgrading all customers' utility readers beginning June 9. The installation phase is expected to be completed in September. The



Mayor Rick Murphrey, right, discusses information on the city's new Smart Meters with Kings Mountain resident Larry Hamrick Jr.

Photo by ELLIS NOELL

smart meters will come in as of three utilities' usage equipment upgrades to each See **SMART METERS, 2A**

# Miller issues public apology for comments

**ELIZABETH STEWART**  
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At-Large city commissioner Keith Miller publicly apologized last Tuesday night to officials in the city and county for statements he made in a 75-page "white paper" opposing the Catawba Indian Nation resort and casino eying Kings Mountain.

Miller said some of the statements were "misleading" and "poorly worded" and he is sorry for the tension and strife that resulted.

Miller was the only city councilman who refused to sign a letter to the US Bureau of Indian Affairs supporting a proposed economic development project that would be expected to bring jobs to the area. The "white paper" was circulated over the Internet and portions of its content were published in two daily newspapers as well as on the newspaper web sites.

Miller made the apology at the beginning of the May 27 council meeting, saying part of his statement was "poorly worded and the paper only speaks for him and not for the city council. He also apologized to county officials for statements he made that "seemed to imply some offensive things."

In a letter to the editor in The Herald May 21, Miller said that he had prayed for wisdom concerning a casino and had posted an impact

statement on <https://sites.google.com/site/kmwhitepapers/>. He wrote, "I fear the casino could gain control of the city council in ways that may lead to a darkening of the city."



Miller

Last week Miller wrote a letter of apology in the Herald saying that some of his statements in his white paper were misleading and that he had removed or revised many of those statements. In the letter to the editor he also clarified that when he was stating spiritual interpretations and applications that he was not attacking anyone's faith, saying what he himself believed, and "failing to do that adequately well."

"I think it is a testimony to the unity of our county governments that we can weather a storm of strife like the last few days and emerge as united as we were before to work together for the good of all our citizens," he said in the written statement he read to city council last Tuesday.

The full text of his apology comments May 27:

"I need to clear something up and make some public apologies. "Over the last few months I organized my thoughts about the casino project into a paper. Some people have asked, does the paper speak for the city or council or just Keith? It only speaks for me. The council can only speak as a body with an agenda item, a

See **CASINO/MILLER, 7A**

# New CC HealthCare offices open in KM



The front desk staff are joined by clinical assistants on their first day of business at the new Cleveland County Healthcare location Monday. From left to right are Crissy Thomas, Samantha Williams, Jennifer Monroe, Laura Bridges, Patti Miller, Amanda Daly, Sharon Collins, Tammy Truett, Nikki Mayhew and Linda Pendleton.

Cleveland County HealthCare System has opened a new care location at 2202 Carolinas Place, next door to Ingles Market on Shelby Road, and doctors from Kings Mountain Medical Center and Cleveland Endocrinology, started seeing patients Monday.

A grand opening and ribbon cutting was held at the site Tuesday at 6 p.m. with open house continuing until 8 p.m. Participating on the program were Brian Gwyn, president and CEO, Cleveland County HealthCare System, Dr. Neeraj Ashri of Cleveland Endocrinology and Kings Mountain Mayor

Rick Murphrey.

Kings Mountain Internal Medicine relocated from its King Street offices to the newly constructed building and provides adult primary care including routine exams and physicals, preventive care, women's health and same day sick.

The medical professionals at Cleveland Endocrinology, the only endocrinology practice in Cleveland County, provide specialty care for adults with diabetes, thyroid and other disorders. The office offers services that include laboratory testing, diabetes education and thyroid biopsies.

# Grover Board to meet on proposed budget

GROVER – The town board of five members and Mayor J. D. Ledford will not take monthly pay in fiscal year 2014-15 and the Pumpkin Festival, one of the biggest community events in recent years, will not be held this October.

"We want to hold the line on expenses and not increase fees to citizens," said Mayor pro tem Bill Willis.

The other council members Jackie Bennett, Angelia Early, Rodney Ross and Bobby Wooten were all in agreement last Tuesday on a proposed budget for the new fiscal year of \$681,820. The board's contribution is \$8,100 and last year the town spent over \$20,000 sponsoring the community

See **GROVER, 3A**

# Estridge takes top teacher honor

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Cindy Estridge, a chemistry teacher at KMHS, was recently named the Teacher of the Year at the school. She's also a National Honor Society advisor and a member of the high school's School Improvement Team. We wanted to find out her thoughts about her profession, her school and her story.



**KM HERALD:** You were named Kings Mountain High School's Teacher of the Year in April. What did you think when you heard the news?

**ESTRIDGE:** Surprised. We have a faculty full of extraordinary teachers, so it's an honor to be selected from a distinguished group like ours. I don't feel like I am the only teacher of the year at our school. Everyone works hard and goes way above and beyond to help students be successful.

**KMH:** You teach chemistry and have also taught physical science. Were you a strong science and math student when you were in school? Did you have other subjects that you liked so

See **ESTRIDGE, 7A**



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