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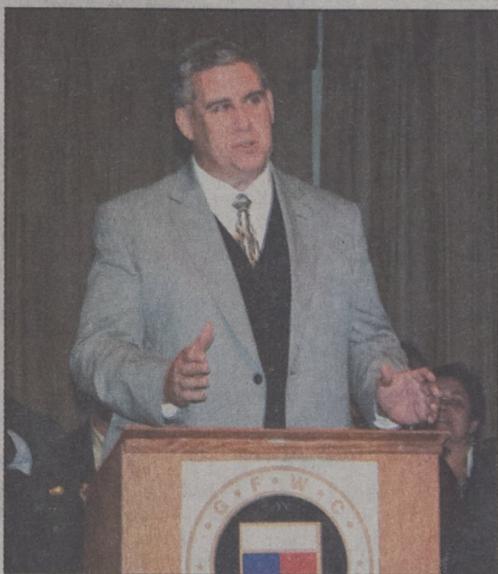


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Incumbent Cleveland County Board of Commissioners member Jason Falls speaks to the audience at Monday evening's candidate forum.

Candidates appeal to voters at forum

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A dozen candidates running for offices small and large in the November election came together for a candidate forum held at the Kings Mountain Woman's Club in downtown Kings Mountain Monday night.

If there was one common thread running through most of the three-minute presentations before an audience of about 35 it was economic development.

From those running for a spot on the board of county commissioners to incumbent state senators, the message was how to resurrect a struggling local economy that has been beset by job loss and the loss of manufacturing prowess.

Willie B. McIntosh told the forum audience that he is ready to return to work for the county as a member of the Cleveland County Board of Commissioners after serving two terms in years past.

Like other members of the forum, he said the most important thing to voters in the November election is jobs and the economy.

"Without jobs there will be crime," said McIntosh, a former Shelby police officer. "What I bring to you is transparency and caring."

Jason Falls, who is currently serving as the chairman of the Cleveland County Board of Commissioners, is seeking his third term. He also said that, should he win, it would be his last.

He touted the board of commissioners' work on

economic development.

"I don't have an agenda — just passion," he said. "I want to do what's right for Cleveland County."

Running alongside Falls is Eddie Holbrook, also an incumbent candidate on the county board.

He emphasized his work toward economic development and said that the county has imposed no new taxes in recent years.

The forum, an annual event put on by the Woman's Club, was presided over by the club's president Betty Gamble. Anne Gamble served as moderator.

The actual forum, which didn't allow for questions from the audience, got in full gear after brief business of the longstanding Kings Mountain club was conducted. After all candidates were finished speaking, the candidates mingled with audience members over refreshments.

Warren Daniel, the incumbent N.C. Senator representing the state's 46th district, said that these are not easy times for the region, the state or the country.

"It's been a tough few years for North Carolina and Cleveland County but the (N.C. General Assembly) has tackled a tough budget that makes sense for North Carolinians," Daniel said. "We've also helped move the unemployment numbers — from 11 percent a few years ago to 6.8 percent now."

Daniel used the podium to trumpet free enterprise and less government.

"We've seen that the private sector, not the government, is the answer," he said.

Daniel's Democratic opponent in the race is a Burke County teacher who happily labeled herself "not a politician."

See FORUM, 7A

Now Hiring!

Job seekers file applications with Walmart

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While men in hard hats did fine grading work at the site of the future Walmart Neighborhood Market this week, hiring managers and other human resources professionals in a temporary office nearby on King Street were busy vetting hundreds of candidates to work at the large retail store in time for its December opening.

"We'll be hiring up until the time the doors (to the new store) open if we need to," said Sue Jones, the store manager for Walmart store no. 7146. Jones, a 10-year veteran of the world's largest retailer, said she and other employees have been giving aptitude tests, conducting interviews and finding the right person for the dozens

of positions it requires to operate the new store.

They're hiring for positions in the deli department and frozen-food sections while also looking for cashiers and workers to perform stocking duties, among others. In all, the store is expected to hire between 95-100 people for the Kings Mountain location.

The temporary office that was set up in July to hire workers for the new Kings Mountain store is located at the corner of Watterson and King streets in the two-story professional building. Job seekers can also use the King St. location to apply for jobs at other area Walmart locations.

Those familiar with the months-long construction project say the site finish goal is Dec. 3. Meanwhile,



Walmart has announced a grand opening of December 10, during the height of Christmas shopping. Jones said Kings Mountain Mayor Rick Murphrey has been in-

vited to speak at the 7:30 a.m. grand opening, and an invitation has been extended to members of the city council and other elected

See WALMART, 7A

Addition to Children's Park to be disability-friendly

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A partnership with the City of Kings Mountain and the Cleveland County Board of Commissioners will bring a \$81K disability-friendly playground to Kings Mountain, adjacent to the Mayor Rick Murphrey Children's Playground on Cleveland Avenue.

"We are anticipating that the new playground will open by the end of November," said Mayor Rick Murphrey, adding, "We want all our children to build fun memories in a safe and fun

playground, it's the heart beat of a community."

The mayor presided at ground-breaking ceremonies Friday morning attended by city and county officials and students from North Shelby School.

Jason Falls, chairman of the county commission who headed up the project, said there is not another disability-friendly playground in the county open to the public. "This is a playground where any child can come and play. This is an exciting day, this site is a good fit."

He said the partnership with the city satisfies one of

the county's strategic goals for 2014 and is a win/win for both the city and county.

"My late uncle Dale Ledbetter, a paraplegic, dreamed of a place like this and told me 'imagine what you can do in life if you build partnerships,'" said Falls. He described the facility as a completely boundless playground. Any child who uses a wheelchair will be able to access every feature on the elevated decks and all the ground-level components. The swing set will also have two accessible seats.

He said the beauty of this playground will be that a lot of kids with special needs will have siblings that want to play too.

Ginger Poteat, whose grandson Jacob was in the

group of North Shelby students bused to the ceremonies, said the new playground is "a dream come true." She said North Shelby students and Boundless Miracles, both of Shelby, as well as other challenged kids, will enjoy a place where they can play safely, a "haven" for all to enjoy.

The city provides the property (the northern area of the YMCA beside the parking space and in front of the entrance to the Murphrey playground) and site preparation, a pad, fencing, and continued maintenance.

The county will buy and install the equipment, a Play Craft Play Structure, and it will be installed by a local contractor Greg Taylor.



Miranda Easter was pleased to be a part of the groundbreaking for the first disability-friendly public playground in the county to open here in November.

Council approves \$175k to fix leak at Moss Lake

A leaking pipe under the dam at Moss Lake sent city workers and technical engineers scurrying last week-end.

City officials and technical engineers breathed a sigh of relief after they found that the main source of a leak under the dam at Moss Lake was from a valve in the end plate in the front toe of the dam and under 80 feet of water.

Workers, technical engineers, a diver and a camera

crew were fearing the worst but Chris Wood, technical engineer with Progressive Engineering, told city council at a special meeting last Wednesday night that the only way to stop the leak was to grout the pipe full and eliminate the potential for water flow.

The city's Water Resources Director Dennis Wells said no sedimentation was "coming through the pipe and no deterioration in

See LEAK, 7A



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