

Opinions

Yours, Ours, Others

Quote of the week

It is one of my sources of happiness never to desire a knowledge of other people's business.

~ Dolley Madison

Kings Mountain Police mourn the death of one of their own



Lib Stewart
Managing Editor

Martha Wright Blanton, 61, who died suddenly September 13, 2014, was Administrative Assistant to Chief Melvin Proctor.

28 years. Through those years we laughed together, cried together, shared together and built our relationship with our Lord together. I can still remember the day I was hired, and Marty already knew about me and my Church life. Her comments were so supportive that I was coming to work here at the Police Department," said Chief Proctor.

He continued, "Marty was so efficient at her work. I could tell her how I wanted something done and she would make it look fabulous on paper. Marty was like a mother to us all. She wanted to make sure we were dressed properly and actually showed many of the officers how to wear their uniforms.

On many an occasion she would make her delicious

sausage balls. As the smell went through the building, everyone would come looking including myself. A real treat was when she would get her mother to make sticky buns. Man those were so good. She would be so excited when she brought a pan of those in.

"When my wife was diagnosed with cancer, I'll never forget how Marty looked after me, listening to my fears and frustrations, of having to watch my wife go through that, without me being able to fix it for her. I felt helpless, but Marty kept me on track, and kept reminding me to pray. When the



Marty Blanton

times got tough, Marty was there, giving me whatever support I needed.

"Through her 36 year career with the Police Department, Marty was the cornerstone, not only for here, but throughout the city. She had watched us grow over the years, and knew so much about how things had been done over the years, that she always had ideas when some project came forth.

"August 25th ended Marty's 36th year and she had begun her 37th year. Words cannot begin to express the loss that we all have nor can words do justice here. Marty was Fabulous! We're really going to miss her!"

No higher compliment can be given a mother than the tribute paid by her son. In a stirring and compassionate message,

the Rev. Steven Blanton compared her life to another Martha, the sister of Mary and Lazarus who were close friends of Jesus the Messiah. Each Martha's attention to detail, comfort of others, providing for each person's needs, and care for "the little things in life" were virtues that he extolled. The parallels were fitting and emotional, bringing laughter, tears, and lumps in the throats of those assembled to pay their respects.

God does not promise us tomorrow. Marty will be missed by her close-knit family, her church and community, the police department and all those lives she touched.

Kings Mountain is a better place because Martha Wright (Mrs. Jerry) Blanton passed our way.

The KMPD Honor Guard stood in tribute and the entire Police Department, 50 members strong, sat in a place of honor at the standing-room-only funeral Sept. 16, 2014 at Oak Grove Baptist Church. Family and friends walked from the church to the cemetery on a pathway lined on each side by Kings Mountain's finest standing tall and proudly displaying their devotion to one of their own.

Atop the church piano, which sat empty for the first time in over 30 years, was a solitary rose in memory of the pianist.

Marty Wright was hired by Chief Jackie Dean Barrett 36 years ago and also served as secretary to Chiefs Warren Gorfth, Bob Hayes, Richard Reynolds, Houston Corn and Melvin Proctor.

No one was more pleased than Marty when the old city hall was torn down and the handsome, new police department went up.

Marty's first job was in the old city hall and she remarked on more than one occasion when we picked up police reports that she was glad she didn't have to climb stairs from the basement. Her sense of humor and her personality, together with strong work ethics, was a perfect fit for her job.

"Marty had been my Administrative Assistant for the past 12 years and 8 months. Through those years we became closest of friends along with her family. Marty had been my friend now for almost

Letters to the Editor

Letter to the Editor,

Casino "Facts" ... Where Are They?

Last week's Herald featured an article by former county manager David Dear continuing his campaign for the proposed Catawba casino. I respect Mr. Dear and the fine work he and his colleagues have done for our county over the years. I have no doubts of the sincerity of his concern for the unemployed in our area.

Mr. Dear refers to a "small but vocal group" who believe that the proposed casino will negatively impact the area. If appearance at public meetings is any indication, it would appear that the numbers on this "small but vocal group" are greater than the numbers of those who are fully convinced that this project is a benefit to the county. They also bring to the public square, in meeting after meeting, not just opinions but documented evidence of the damage that such casinos

has brought to other cities. This "small but vocal group" seems to be the only ones who are doing serious examination of this issue.

Dear summed up: "the facts speak for themselves and the positives outweigh the negatives." But a close read of his article does not reveal any established "fact," just speculations, repetitions of the casino's media packets. We're given no independent survey that was done by the county to evaluate the casino management's statements; no study of how similar third-party run casinos have impacted other cities; no address of the legal quagmire of taking a portion of land out of the domain of North Carolina and relinquishing it to an Indian tribe that operates under authority of South Carolina. "Statements" a'plenty... but no "facts".

By all means, give us facts! Explain to us why the Catawba casino is claiming to employ 4000 people when the casino at Cherokee (when it was the

same size as the proposed Catawba's) employed only 2000 people; explain to us why, if the Catawba casino is such a lucrative boon to local economy, it was turned down twice by South Carolina; give us facts that contradict the proclamation of the National Association of Realtors' conclusion that the impact of such casinos on local property values is "unambiguously" negative.

Give us facts to contradict the numerous studies that show, as CNN contributor David Frum wrote recently, that "Casinos do not revive local economies. They act as parasites upon them. Communities located within 10 miles of a casino exhibit double the rate

of problem gambling. Unsurprisingly, such communities also suffer higher rates of home foreclosure and other forms of economic distress and domestic violence." By all means, give me something to say to the developer in Charlotte that told me "we had plans to bring a restaurant to Kings Mountain, but now they are on hold until we're sure the casino is not coming."

Above all, give us a good sensible fact that explains how the economy in our county is best helped by welcoming an industry whose success depends on people losing money.

REG ALEXANDER
Director, SLG
Regal Ventures Creative Ministries

To the Editor,

Having never met David Dear I cannot attest to nor can I deny his sincerity in his belief that a casino would be good for Cleveland County.

I can state unequivocally that what was in his article of Wednesday, September 17th Kings Mountain Herald was little more than his opinion and the facts that he mentioned more than once were also opinion.

The question is to those who might read his article should be what are his qualifications to offer those opinions? Are they his 37 years in local government business, or are they from his claimed research of the positive and negative impacts of gambling on our community?

From my point of view neither of those make David Dear an expert on casino gambling. Even if his entire 37 years in local government was strictly related to economic development he would not have gained expertise in that field. David Dear

also does not point out the references for the negative impact studies he has done. The group opposing a casino has pages and pages of negative studies by non-partisan groups and has the references to those studies. The County and City initial admitted they only looked at the studies commissioned by the Catawba Indians. Some have since said they have studied more but they too have failed to point out references to those studies.

Les Bernal has 10 years or more studying the impacts of government sponsored or government condoned gambling and almost all of it is negative. Don't you think Les Bernal might be more of an expert on the subject since his time has been totally in that field?

David Dear subtly works into his article that the opposition is a small vocal group. Funny that group has enough signatures on petitions to win any election in Kings Mountain and stir things in the County.

See LTE, 8A

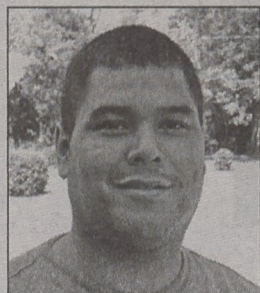
Sidewalk Survey

Folks around Kings Mountain were asked...

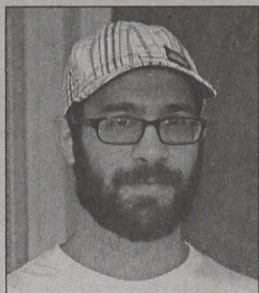
With Wal-Mart opening in December and a casino possibly coming to Kings Mountain in the near future, do you think Kings Mountain is growing too fast?



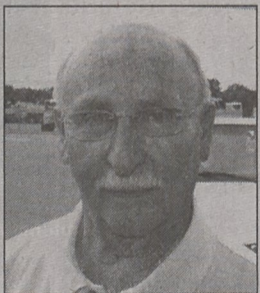
No, I think it's long overdue. With the growth, it brings jobs.
Shaquia Jimson



When big companies come into small cities it's a win-fail. They're ultimately about profit.
Luis Leescano



I guess I'm kind of neutral about (the growth). I don't know why people would protest the casino when we already have a lottery.
Vincent Carnevale



No opinion on Wal-Mart. But I'm not sure the casino would necessarily have a positive impact.
Courtney Madden

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