

**FORUM: candidates appeal to voters**

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"I'm a single mother of college age girls. I'm a public school teacher," said Emily B. Church, who is making her first run for public office. "Both of those jobs have led me to seek this office. As a teacher I decided I could no longer be silent."

Church also said she will work to raise the minimum wage to \$10 an hour.

There are two candidates for Cleveland County Sheriff in the 2014 election. Carl Jensen, who touted himself as a career investigator with an extensive background in security, anti-fraud work and a former FBI agent is challenging incumbent Alan Norman.

Norman described himself as a "working sheriff" with 31 years of law enforcement experience who also served five years as a Charlotte-Mecklenburg police officer.

Robin Smith, who is the president of the Cleveland County Democratic Party, spoke on behalf of U.S. Senator Kay Hagan, who could not be present. Smith told the audience that their incumbent senator is pushing for a \$10 minimum wage, equal pay for women and is working to turn around low-performing schools across the country.

"Outside interests have spent a lot to defeat Senator Hagan," Smith said.

Hagan faces N.C. House of Representatives speaker Thom Tillis in the November race. Tillis' campaign did not send a representative to the forum.

Joe Falls acted as spokesperson for U.S. Rep. Patrick McHenry, who recently became a father for the first time. He reminded the audience that this district needs leaders that represent western N.C. sensibilities.

"Congressman McHenry is that leadership and he wants to remain in that position for you," he said. "He appreciates your vote in November."

Tate MacQueen, who was not present at Monday's forum, is running against McHenry.

Also present at the forum were Michael Wayne Miller, a lawyer running for district attorney in district 27B. He currently serves as the assistant district attorney in that district. Miller characterized himself as a "career prosecutor."

He faces John Bridges, a former Shelby police officer and current Shelby attorney who works for a private law firm. Bridges said his past work in law enforcement shows that he has "stood up against the bad guys who want to terrorize our neighborhood."

Ali Paksoy, a judge for District 27B, is running unopposed in the fall election. He nevertheless appeared to talk briefly about his background and credentials and to thank the audience for their vote.

Tott Griffin appeared at the forum to tell audience members why he was running for Cleveland County Coroner. Griffin, who works in the funeral home business, was appointed to serve as the Cleveland County Medical Examiner from 2004-2007. He also said that if elected he would be the first African-American coroner in Cleveland County. His opponent in the race, Robert Morgan, was not at the forum.

In other election news, N.C. Rep. Tim Moore is running unopposed in this election after an earlier opponent dropped out of the race. No seats on the Kings Mountain City Council are up for grabs in 2014 election cycle.

**LEAK: council approves**

**\$175k for Moss Lake repairs**

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the earth dam." He said the main leak was coming from a valve that had been put in back in the 1980s, and the problem happened when the valve broke loose.

Heyward Baker, a premier geotechnical remediation contractor, has been providing the city with guidance along with the North Carolina Department Environmental & Natural Resources. The repair cost is expected to be \$175,000, which Council unanimously approved.

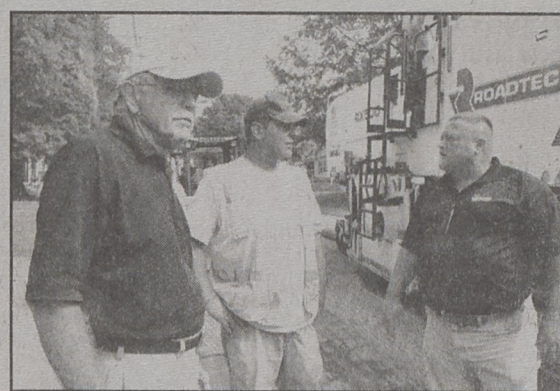
"This is highly specialized work and the lake will not be drained to do the work," said Mayor Rick Murphrey.

He said the state agency is going over the city's scope of work to correct the problem and the repairs will be done as soon as the state gives the go ahead.

"We are relieved that this emergency situation was not as bad as we feared," said the mayor. He says there is no risk to the public and the repair to the dam will be a permanent fix.

Wells said the worst-case scenario was that the pipe would be found with a hole in it.

A diver in a wet suit harnessed up, according to Wells, and with a camera, dived 500 plus feet in 59 degree water last Saturday and found no deterioration of the dam itself.



**Repaving set to start today**

Mayor Rick Murphrey, left, talks with Don Dedmon Jr., Vice President of Shelby Asphalt and Shane Woodard, city street supervisor, about a schedule of repaving of streets. Weather permitting, the repaving of W. Mountain and Gold streets will start today (Wednesday) with Railroad Avenue to follow next week.

Photo by ELLIS NOELL

**WALMART: new KM Neighborhood Market hiring**

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officials. Minutes after that, the 40,000 sq. ft. store will be open to the public for the first time.

The Neighborhood Market will offer groceries, other consumables such as pet supplies, cosmetics and paper products, and a full pharmacy. Walmart's hours are 6 a.m. to midnight every day of the year except Christmas.

At the professional building, a steady stream of job candidates looking for a new start or even a first job have been filing in to fill out applications for months.

"Last week we were busy all week long," Jones said on Monday. "There have been a lot of days when the (application room) was full.

Candidates can complete the initial application steps online or in person, Jones said.

After completing an application, job seekers must take an aptitude test. They are then sorted into two categories: "competitive" or "non-competitive." Competitive applicants will then be interviewed. Jones said that in most cases multiple people are being interviewed for the same position.

For more information about applying for a job at the Kings Mountain Walmart, contact the local hiring office at (704) 732-5587. The office is open 8 a.m to 5 p.m. Monday-Friday.

Meanwhile, at the construction site, the big rectangular building that has come to dominate the former parking lot of a long-closed Winn

Dixie has taken on the familiar profile of a Walmart Neighborhood Market with its trademark green, beige and yellow coloring.

Barricades still surround the area, where crews of sub-contractors are working to put the finishing touches on the big project. Those familiar with the construction said site managers can't say for sure when the Wells Fargo ATM that has at times been closed to the public will be available again. The ATM is set to open once the Walmart opens.

Many are seeing Walmart's arrival as a sure boost to the jobs scene in Kings Mountain.

"We're excited about the job opportunities this brings," said Murphrey. "We need that in this time of continued high unemployment."

**THE SAVVY SENIOR**

By JIM MILLER  
Editor



**Generic Drugs Offer Seniors Big Savings**

Dear Savvy Senior,

Are brand-name medications better than generic, and if not, why is there such a price difference? Also, how can I find out which medicines are available in generic form.

Leery Senior

Dear Leery,

No. Brand-name medications are not better, safer or more effective than their generic alternative because they're virtually the same.

To gain approval from the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA), generic drugs are required to the same active ingredient, strength, dosage form and route of administration as their brand-name counterpart. The generic manufacturer must also demonstrate that people absorb the drug at the same rate.

The only difference between a brand-name drug and its generic is the name (generics are usually called by their chemical name), shape and color of the drug (U.S. trademark laws

don't allow generics to look exactly like the their brand-name counterparts) and price. Generic drugs are often 10 to 30 percent cheaper when they first become available, but by the end of the first year the price can drop in half. And by the second and third year it can drop 70 to 90 percent.

**Cost Difference**

The reason generic drugs are so much cheaper is because their manufacturers don't have the hefty start-up costs that the original creators of the drug do. When a pharmaceutical company creates a new drug, it spends millions of dollars on the research, development and clinical testing phase. Then, if it gets FDA approval, it has to turn around and spend even more money to market the drug to the health care industry and the public.

The total cost can rise into the hundreds of millions by the time the drug is in the hands of consumers.

In an effort to recoup their investment, the brand-name drug makers

charge a premium price, and are given a 20-year patent protection, which means that no other company can make or sell the drug during that period of time.

After those 20 years are up, however, other companies can apply to the FDA to sell generic versions. But because generic manufacturers don't have the same research, development and marketing costs, they can sell their product much cheaper.

Also, once generic drugs are approved, there's greater competition, which drives the price down. Today, nearly 8 in 10 prescriptions filled in the United States are for generic, which saves U.S. consumers around \$3 billion every week.

**New Generics**

You should also know that in 2014 and 2015, patents on a wide variety of popular brand-name drugs will expire and become available in generic, including Celebrex, Copaxone, Actonel, Nexium, Exforge, Cymbalta, Lunesta,

Avodart, Abilify, Evista, Maxalt, Maxalt MPT, Micardis, Micardis HCT, Reneagel, Twynata and Xeloda.

For a more information, Community Catalyst, a national, nonprofit consumer advocacy organization provides a list on their website of the top 50 brand-name drugs and the dates they should become available as generics. Go to [communitycatalyst.org](http://communitycatalyst.org), and type "Drugs Going Generic 2014 - 2015" in their search bar to find it.

You can also find out if a brand-name drug has a generic alternative by simply asking your doctor or pharmacist. Or, visit [GoodRX.com](http://GoodRX.com), a Web tool that provides prices on brand-name drugs and their generic alternatives (if available) at virtually every pharmacy in the U.S. so you can find the best deals in your area.

Send your senior questions to: Savvy Senior, P.O. Box 5443, Norman, OK 73070, or visit [SavvySenior.org](http://SavvySenior.org). Jim Miller is a contributor to the NBC



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