

Merry Christmas



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# Council talks Ferguson, looks to new year

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At a time when national groups are questioning the action of law enforcement Kings Mountain city council's last meeting of 2014 last Tuesday brought comments from several city councilmen commending Kings Mountain police and Chief Melvin Proctor "for being the best in the country" while suggesting that "although we are good, we keep striving to get better." Ward 1 Councilman

Howard Shipp pointed out in his remarks that "racism is alive and well in the United States and we tend to want to sweep it under the rug and not talk about it," referring to the recent protests across the country.

"I'd like to see police armed with tasers and body cameras," he said. "That would avoid situations like we are hearing about," he added.

Shipp also said he would like to see committees made up of people from all backgrounds talking about issues

dealing with race. "I agree with Commissioner Shipp and I also think our goals can be increased communication and more recreation for youth of our community," said Councilman Pressley

In other business of the meeting:

-Stella Putnam, representing the Kings Mountain Crisis Ministry, presented the mayor and council with a plaque recognizing the contribution the city makes to the ministry which provides fuel, food, clothing and ne-

cessities to needy Kings Mountain and Grover families. The city recently presented a check for \$10,000 to the facility.

- Mayor Rick Murphrey recognized Chris Medlin, sanitation equipment operator for five years service with the city, and Diane Whetstone, administrative assistant in the gas department, 10 years service.

-The mayor recognized Nick Hendricks, Energy Services Director, on his election as one of eight members on the board of

ElectriCities of North Carolina. Hendricks will serve a three-year term.

-Council approved 12 items by consent of the seven member board, including:

-set the regular meeting schedule for the year 2015.

-budget amendment for additional expenditures and grant revenues in the amount of \$4,934 for LSTA EZ Edge Technology Grant to Mauney Memorial Library. The grant has purchased a Smart table for use with all ages.

-budget amendment to cover an additional EPA emissions upgrade to the Peak Generation plants in the amount of \$246,329 not expended in the 2013-2014 budget.

-budgeted additional cost of \$144,689 for repairs to city property, labeled Flume project.

-appointed Jim Burk of the Moss Lake Homeowners Association to fill the unexpired term of Dick Schafer on the John H. Moss Reservoir commission for a term

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Sanctuaries at most Kings Mountain churches are lighted by candles and Christmas trees in celebration of the birth of Jesus. Central United Methodist Church sanctuary is lighted by two Christmas trees. A number of Kings Mountain churches are holding Christmas Eve services tonight, including the Sacrament of Holy Communion. Photo by LIB STEWART

## Christmas events .... lights, luminaries, church services

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Kings Mountain citizens are getting ready for Christmas.

Shoppers will be scurrying around today, Christmas Eve, making last-minute gift purchases and good cooks were already in the kitchen preparing a feast for families and friends.

The Christian celebration of the birth of Jesus Christ was presented from pulpits all over the city.

Christmas Eve and Christmas Day services will be held at some Kings Mountain churches Wednesday and Thursday. Christ the King Catholic Church celebrates Mass on Christmas Day and a number of other churches hold candlelight communion services on Christmas Eve.

From any point inside Mountain Rest Cemetery the annual Christmas Eve luminary service will be impressive. From York Road, travelers can see the entire

cemetery aglow with 5,000 lights. Residents who drive through the cemetery each year on Christmas Eve say the sight is awesome.

Volunteers are needed to light the candles beginning at 2 p.m. this afternoon (Wednesday.) Call Cemetery Supt. Rickey Putnam and Mayor pro tem Mike Butler or meet them at the cemetery if you can help. Cars will enter the cemetery at the West King Street gate.

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## County OKs bids for gun range

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The Cleveland County Board of Commissioners approved construction bids and an updated agreement Tuesday night between the county and the N.C. Wildlife Resources Commission that will pave the way for a

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## City inks gas contract

"It's a win/win situation for the city and our 5,000 natural gas customers," says Nick Hendricks, the city's Energy Services Director, of the city's new contract with Texla Energy of Houston, Texas in an asset management program.

Hendricks said under this new agreement the city will have an opportunity to recover more of its fixed costs to Transcontinental Pipe Line for transportation costs and both the city and customers will profit from the deal.

"We continually look to our city department heads to suggest cost-saving plans

and Nick Hendricks has done that in recommending this agreement which city council approved last week," said Mayor Rick Murphrey.

Hendricks explained how the new agreement will work to save the city money and keep citizens from receiving any rate increases for natural gas.

What the city will be doing is releasing any capacity of gas it has in the winter months and sell off its capacity year round when it's not needed. With natural gas becoming a needed

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## Amtrak mauls SUV left on tracks downtown

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A Dallas woman's SUV was no match for a northbound Amtrak train Friday after she left the roadway and drove it onto train tracks near the intersection of Gold St. and Battleground Ave.

There were no injuries in the early morning accident that left the 2006 Nissan Murano demolished, awoke many in the surrounding neighborhood and now has Jennifer M. Fralick, of 3574 Dallas High Shoals Hwy., facing a handful of charges, including driving while impaired.

An accident report issued by the Kings Mountain Police Dept. says the 36-year-old Fralick was travelling westbound on Gold St. when she reached the intersection of Gold and Battleground. Instead of turning left or right, she continued through the intersection, jumped a curb and climbed the embankment that leads



Firefighters respond to a late-night collision between an SUV and an Amtrak train. The driver of the SUV was uninjured, but faces a number of charges stemming from the incident. Photo courtesy of KM Fire Department

to the railroad tracks. Her orange SUV then became stuck on the tracks, at which point she was able to exit the vehicle to safety. Police did not say how much time elapsed between Fralick's vehicle coming to

rest on the tracks and the train's arrival and noisy collision.

Fralick -- who refused the administration of an intoxication test -- was

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## Police, city, remember longtime employee in bench unveiling



Mayor Rick Murphrey, left, and Jerry Blanton look at the handsome bench in front of Kings Mountain Police Department, a memorial to Blanton's late wife, Martha Wright Blanton, longtime employee of KMPD. Photo by ELLIS NOELL

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Marty Blanton worked hard to make a difference in people's lives and went the extra mile to put a smile on coworkers' faces in her long career with the Kings Mountain Police Department.

She was remembered and honored Wednesday in a sometimes tearful ceremony that saw the dedication of a handsome bench in her honor on the front lawn of the city department where she served for 37 years.

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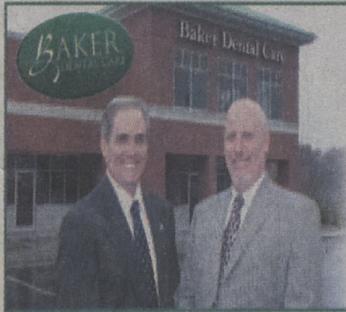
## Withdraw support says church groups

"You still have time to withdraw your support of a casino" was the message of a standing-room-only crowd representing four Kings Mountain area churches at last Tuesday night's city council meeting.

Two of the churches -- Love Valley Baptist Church and Glory Land Baptist Church -- are located in the area where the casino/resort is proposed by the Catawba Indian Nation. Glory Land Church is across the road from the I-85 Truck Stop on Dixon School Road and Love Valley several miles away on Bethlehem Road. Second Baptist and Emmanuel Baptist Churches, Kings Mountain, were also represented.

Speakers Roger Herndon, Iron Station, who has

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