

## Bill comes due for heat wave

City says hot weather, not Smart Meters, to blame

The worst of this summer's scorching heat is likely over, but paying for it isn't as many Kings Mountain residents are now grappling with higher-than-usual bills for the months of June and July.

A July heat wave sent the mercury rising: there were 17 days where the high hit 90 degrees and above. For four- and five-day stretches during that month, residents sweltered through windless, sunny days.

June was slightly less cruel, with 15 days where the thermometer topped 90. But that month saw a record 14-day stretch of weather that had 90-plus daily highs. From June 13 to June 26, the high

temp bounced around from between 90 and 96, but never going lower.

Officials with the City of Kings Mountain, which supplies residents with electricity, gas and water and sewer, say they have heard some theorize that the recent implementation of Smart Meters is related to the summer's higher-than-average bills.

"Bills are up, but that's a reflection of the fact that we've had a record hot summer," said Kings Mountain Mayor Rick Murphrey. "Compared to last summer we've had double the days over 90."

Murphrey said the Smart Meters are working as planned and actually save the system about \$500,000 every year because they require less maintenance and manpower.

"They also give customers the ability to monitor their usage in real time," Murphrey

said. The city began to implement a Smart Meter program last year. Now, all of the city's gas and electric customers, both commercial and residential, are on the program. About 75 percent of the water customers are using the new technology. Officials say all water customers will be online by next year.

For residents looking to cut their heating and cooling expenses, the city's Electric Services Department will provide inspections to see what steps could be made to make a home or a business more energy efficient," Murphrey said.

"We researched the concept very thoroughly," Murphrey said about Smart Meter implementation. "We went to other cities like us that were using the new technology. It's already made us more efficient."

## Donations pour in for history museum's big raffle

Kings Mountain Historical Museum's 12th Annual Reverse Raffle & Auctions will be held next Saturday, September 12, at the Patrick Senior Center starting at 5:30 pm. Each \$125 ticket provides dinner for two and a 1 in 300 chance to win the \$10,000 Grand Prize, in addition to many great raffle prizes. Tickets may be sold out by the time of this publication, call the museum at 704-739-1019 to check availability.

Museum staff and Board Members have once again been blown away by the outpouring of support from the community for the annual fundraiser. It seems that everyone has something to contribute. Local artists like Jerry Depew, Peggy Sanders, Susan Gibbs, and Shirley

Brutko generously donate their hand-crafted wares such as wood sculptures, photography, jewelry, and other fine art. Local bakers like Josh & Lindsay Romesberg, Katherine Hicks, and Linda Dixon offer made-from-scratch cakes and other baked goods. Judy Falls of Flowers by the Falls donates unique seasonal wreaths and Mary Ann Hendricks offers distinctive pheasant feather wreaths.

Dilling "heats up" the Museum's Live Auction: the new owners of Dilling Heating Company, Michael Gullede and Ed Kijewski, continue Dilling's long-standing tradition of support for the Museum; they just announced that they will donate a Lennox high-efficiency gas furnace, which will be a fantastic addition to the Live Auction this year.

This year's Live Auction will also include two tickets for the January 3 Carolina Panthers game, a stunning white sapphire bracelet from Dellinger's Jewel Shop, and two fantastic vacation offerings: four one-day Hopper Passes for Walt Disney World Florida Theme Parks, and a two-night stay in the Monet Garden Room at The Inn at Ragged Gardens, in Historic Blowing Rock, NC. Other new Live Auction items include a luxury in-home surf & turf dinner for two by Chef Nancy Pinkerton, and a private wine tasting for 20 people at Total Wine & More.

Individuals representing local businesses also donate a wide variety of specialty goods and services to make the event distinctive. Gifted



The new owners of Dilling Heating Company, Michael Gullede and Ed Kijewski, stopped by the Museum this week to announce a generous donation to the annual fundraiser.

florist Susan Patterson of In-Season Florals donates all of the gorgeous floral arrangements and centerpiece designs for the evening, and her son, Brandon Patterson of Design 1:26, provides professional graphic design work to create polished event brochures. The fundraiser requires dozens of committed volunteers, some who work various jobs for the evening to help the event run smoothly, and others who volunteer year-round to help in the ongoing planning process.

The folks who contribute help refine the theme for the event as well. Each year the fundraiser is themed after the Museum's current exhibit. This year's exhibit "Pig Pickin' and Finger Lickin': Kings Mountain's Food History" focuses on the home cooks, restaurants, farms, and grocery stores that have fed the people of this region through the generations. Beekeeping is prominently featured in the exhibit, so Brushy Mountain Bee Farm donated honey candy to be used as party favors — one of the ways the Museum makes sure that everyone takes home something from the event. The food history exhibit also highlights canning and other methods of food preservation, so many home cooks have donated freshly prepared canned goods from their home gardens for this year's event, connecting to the history and heritage of this region.

The Museum is deeply grateful for this year's event sponsors: Founder Level: Harris Funeral Home, IM-ERYS. Patriot Level:

Brinkley Financial Group, Cleveland County Health-Care System, Kings Mountain Animal Hospital, Dr. Jeff Mauney, Neisler Brothers, Inc., Oakland Plantation, Inc. Friend Level: Alliance Bank & Trust, Bank of the Ozarks, Bridges True Value Hardware Inc., Dr. Jeff Carley, Carolina Cotton Company, Kings Mountain Kiwanis Club Inc., Tracksider Trader, Warlick and Hamrick Insurance Agency (Evelyn & Larry Hamrick, Sr. and Florrie & Larry Hamrick, Jr.). Event sponsorships help defray the costs of the event for the Museum, including the \$10,000 Grand Prize.

No matter what their assets or talents, the Kings Mountain community continues to contribute what they can to support the Museum, which in turn allows the Museum to support the community by preserving local history and offering free educational opportunities. "We are so grateful for the patronage we receive. Each one of these sponsors, donors, and volunteers is essential to keeping our Museum operational. It is wonderful to know that so many people believe in the importance of their local history museum and are willing to support it however they can," said Museum President Susan Champion.

To find out more, please visit the event page: www.kingsmountainmuseum.org/annual-fundraiser or call (704) 739-1019. You can also follow us on Facebook, Twitter, & Pinterest.

Submitted by Adria L. Focht, Director & Curator

## Roberts new pastor of El Bethel and Grace UMC

ELIZABETH STEWART  
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The new pastor of El Bethel and Grace United Methodist Churches, Julie Ann Roberts, likes calling Kings Mountain home.

Roberts comes to Kings Mountain from Caldwell County and in six weeks time she has bonded with members in a two-church field and made new friends.

The local churches are her fifth pastorate in 13 years of ministry. Her first pastorate was in 2003 as associate pastor of Aldersgate Methodist Church in Shelby. She served Mount Airy Methodist for three years, Sandy Ridge in Stokes County for three years, and Cedar Valley Church in Caldwell County three years. For two years she was Christian Education director in Kannapolis.

Growing up in a rural Methodist Church, she feels right at home at El Bethel and at Grace United. She graduated from Hibriten High School in Hudson and Appalachian State University and earned her Master's in Christian Education from Pfeiffer College. Her seminary training was at Hood Theological Seminary in Salisbury.

Roberts loves to work with children and older adults and she wants to begin an



JULIE ANN ROBERTS

outreach program for youth and older adults with plays and other activities. Christian Education, one of her strong suits, will be featured in her ministry as well as pastoral care, visiting shut ins and those in hospitals.

"No matter happens Jesus still loves me," is the motto that Roberts says she lives by and her favorite book in the Bible is Paul's Letter to the Romans.

"I always preach my first sermon on Matthew's scripture of the Great Commission," says Julie Ann. That scripture tells us to love God first and our neighbor as ourselves.

"All churches need to pull together in order to become more effective and if we fall back on the Great Commandment the world would

be a much better place," adds Roberts, who said Christians need to be better stewards and churches need to stop being competitive.

Roberts likes to write and she's working on a Christmas Eve play that will take grown-ups back to their childhood. "I am really excited about this production," she said.

Julie Ann is the daughter of Basil and Linda Roberts of Hudson. She has one brother, Philip Roberts of Concord.

Sunday worship at El Bethel Methodist is 9:45 a.m. with Sunday School at 11 a.m.

Sunday worship at Grace United Methodist is 11 a.m. with Sunday School at 9:45 a.m. Julie and retired minister Rev. Dean Smith, co-teach a Bible Study at Grace Church every Wednesday night and Jeanine Fisher leads a Bible study on the Book of Luke on Thursday nights at 6:30 p.m.

Roberts has moved into the El Bethel Parsonage and is still unpacking boxes. Her parents came to see her and attended the recent Saturday morning breakfast at El Bethel and were amazed at how the members were "so organized."

Roberts shares her home with three felines: Grace, Gloria and Gladys. The cats have the run of the house.

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## Awards night at City Council

Two Kings Mountain firemen — Bobby King and Ernie Camp — have racked up a total of 64 years service in the Kings Mountain Fire Department.

They were honored by Mayor Rick Murphrey and the full city council last Tuesday night with official proclamations and plaques recognizing their long tenure with the City of Kings Mountain. They both received standing ovations as the mayor presented the awards.

The mayor also recog-

nized Fire Engineer Willard Yarborough Jr. for 30 years service with the city and Electric Lineman First Class Chris Welch for 10 years service with the city.

Both Camp and King started off as volunteers in the Kings Mountain Fire Department and continuously progressed through the ranks. King was promoted to Captain in 1999. Camp was a training officer and Lieutenant.

Bobby King marked 40 years of service and Ernie Camp marked 24 years of service. Ernie also worked full time for Lithium Corporation for 39 1/2 years and was responsible for their fire brigades equipment including their fire truck. Ernie completed 215 hours of training as a Rescue technician on Oct. 14, 2015 and completed 80 hours of training as a Rescue Technician-Ropes, Nov. 3, 2006.

Bobby was a behind-the-scenes leader to help the

Department embrace a customer service philosophy. He worked with Toys for Tots repairing toys and distributing them to needy children at Christmas time and worked countless hours helping with the Junior Firefighter program training Junior Firemen in pumps and preventative maintenance on fire department equipment.

After the council meeting families and friends of both firemen enjoyed barbecue with all the trimming in the fire department training room.



BOBBY KING



ERNIE CAMP



WILLARD YARBOROUGH JR.



CHRIS WELCH

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