

Maner Urges Ward System Change

By TOM MCINTYRE
Editor, The Mirror

At least one Kings Mountain resident of record wants a change in local election procedure. Bob Maner, an insurance and real estate agent and serving as chairman of the Kings Mountain Planning Board, advocates either abolition of the ward system

or a redrawing of ward boundaries in the city. "The only axe I have to grind is my own," Maner said Tuesday. "I do not represent any group or political faction in this matter." Appearing before the Kings Mountain Chamber of Commerce directors at the board's Tuesday meeting, Maner outlined his proposal and asked if the chamber would

consider accepting the action as a project. "All I want in this matter is for the chamber to consider becoming the official voice of concerned citizens in presenting this proposal to the city commissioners," Maner said. Currently, Attorney Robert Bradley is contacting chamber directors and officers individually to get their

reactions to the proposal. Bradley pointed out the organization can neither take part in nor lend support to any political candidate or party in elections. Chamber President Dr. Francis Sincos said, "at the same time this proposal does not get into political activities as far as candidates or political parties are con-

cerned. If it is beneficial to the community at large, then it does become a matter the chamber should consider as a project." Maner's presentation included facts about the wards at present, of voter registration and the limitations placed on potential candidates. "Ward one is the smallest," Maner said, "and it is dying in

terms of people. The Bonnie Mill village is included in this ward and a lot of people have gone away since their mill-owned homes have been condemned and torn down. "Wards two, three and four are about the same size," he continued, "but ward five is better than twice the size of the others. Ward six is the newest and is between one and two in size, but this ward is on

the west side of town and has the greatest growth potential." Maner cited voter registration figures in each ward to illustrate his point: ward one - 195; ward two - 363; ward three - 435; ward four - 425; ward five - 1,172; and ward six - 229. "These are the registered voter figures," Maner said. "This doesn't mean these

people have all voted. We have almost 3,000 voters in the city, but less than 1,500 voted in the 1972 elections." Maner said he believes if the commissioners would either redraw the ward lines to make each equal in size, or seek legislation to abolish the ward system and make each candidate at large that "more,

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Chief McDevitt Is Reappointed

By JAY ASHLEY
Mirror Staff Writer

School leaders, industrial workers, police officers, large and small businessmen, pastors, girl scouts, black and white attended the Monday night city council meeting to voice support for Chief Tom McDevitt. Their concern was satisfied with a five to one vote to reappoint McDevitt to his post as police chief, but not before a bevy of motions, substitute motions and an executive session.

McDevitt's reappointment was the first item of business on the agenda. Some 60-65 people packed the council chambers while an equal number stood in the corridor straining to hear business being conducted.

Mayor John H. Moss addressed the crowd and noted it "was the largest audience I have ever had during my tenure as mayor."

Moss stated he had received numerous telephone calls during the past few weeks concerning the chief's reappointment and presented the city board with three letters of support. The letters came from the KM Ministerial Association, the Rotary Club and a letter addressed to Ward Five Commissioner James Amos from the Kiwanis Club.

Donald Parker, president of the Kiwanis Club and principal at the Early Childhood Education Center (Compact), was recognized by the board during a discussion. Parker told the members he would "like to submit a petition to the commissioners signed by some 450



CHIEF McDEVITT
...reappointed

persons." Parker added the names were gathered from various churches and other community groups and organizations by Mrs. Orangel Jolley.

Following Parker's remarks, Mayor Moss asked for a motion on the matter and commissioner Amos stated, "I make the motion we reappoint Chief McDevitt as police chief."

Ward Two Commissioner, Lloyd Davis seconded the motion but added the reappointment be "temporary." He said, "we are still conducting an investigation and think we should appoint McDevitt until the investigation is finished. I have personally found nothing on which to base a dismissal but we do need to finish the matter of investigation."

Before the motion could be voted on, Ward Six representative, M. C. Pruette interjected a motion the board "go into executive session with Chief McDevitt."

Attorney for the city, Jack White noted a motion was already on the floor and Pruette's motion was not in order. The matter was finally resolved as Pruette's motion was made into a substitute motion. The executive session was seconded by Ward Four Commissioner Don McAbee.

Before the commissioners left the room, Don Parker told the members that "everyone here in this room supports Chief McDevitt." Parker's remarks were met with applause. Joe Hedden, principal at West School also remarked that there were "just as many people in the corridor that also came to back the chief.

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Peeler Files In County

C. M. Peeler Jr. has broken the political silence in Cleveland County by becoming the first commissioner candidate for one of two at large seats in the 1974 election.

President of Peeler Insurance and Realty, Inc. of Shelby, said in his filing statement, "Cleveland County has been good to me and my family and in return I will do my best to serve the county if elected."

"In deciding to run," he continued, "I consulted only with my wife. I am obligated to no person or group of persons politically. I seek no contributions and will accept no funds from anyone in my campaign. I seek to place good business decisions in our county government and will do so with humility."

The novice candidate attended NC State, graduated from Lenoir-Rhyne with an AB degree in business administration and graduated from the Realtor's Institute, UNC-Chapel Hill.

Professionally he has been a director, and is currently serving as a member of the

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C. M. PEELER JR.



J. Lee Roberts - Magistrate

Judge Learns By Listening

By JAY ASHLEY
Mirror Staff Writer

Buried somewhere in that stack of papers, legal books and letters in the Piedmont Ave. magistrate's office, J. Lee Roberts is working.

J. Lee recently celebrated his seventy-second year on this old globe and has served in the capacity of magistrate for 28 years.

J. Lee, or as he has affectionately been dubbed "Judge" and "Catfish", began his career as a justice of the peace elected in December of 1946 in number four township.

At the time Lee was a barber by trade and continued cutting hair while serving as the local J.P.

Why become a justice of the peace? "When I was coming along", he said, "there was always a need around for someone who could help fill out forms and such. I was lucky enough to have a high school education so I helped a lot of people who couldn't read and write."

Of course, the "Judge" admits, he was probably influenced into the profession by his grandfather, John A. Roberts. John A. served the Confederate cause and ac-

ording to J. Lee's book on the history of the Robert's family, John carried Robert E. Lee's last message to Jackson during the Civil War.

Of John A., Lee said, "he was the justice of the peace in lower Cleveland County and I was always around his files. He had stacks of papers and legal documents and all were in long hand. They were probably filled out with goose quill and ink. I can also remember my grandmother talk about court days. She said the people that were to be tried would come to grandfather's home and camp out in wagons waiting to be tried. Felons and other cases that he couldn't dispose of would be jailed or bond set until the Circuit judge came around. You know, some people might think folks back then were "know nothings" but they were really an intelligent and scholarly bunch."

Lee was born the fourteenth day of December 1901 in Patterson Springs, located some two miles south of Shelby. When you talk about "the good old days" you won't get much reaction from Roberts who says the only thing good about the "good old days" is that they're gone. "It was plenty tough then", he remembered, "I'd have to

get up around 4:30 a.m. and do work around the farm. Then I'd have to help my mother hang out clothes and as soon as she'd say I could leave, I would head for school at a trot."

School for Lee was the elementary facility in Patterson Springs and after that, he finished high school in Earl. Finishing high school in the early part of the century was a feat in itself. Most children, especially farm children, were needed at home. "I was just a farm boy who picked cotton, threshed wheat, worked in the sawmill and things like that", he said. But, Lee honestly admitted, "I stayed in school for two reasons. One was to learn and the other was I knew if I didn't go, I'd have to be working."

As with most males born in this time, Roberts was too young for World War I and a bit too old for World War II. He said he and a cousin had "eaten bananas to try to gain enough weight to join the service during WWI" but failed. The war ended on November 11, just a month before Roberts would have been old enough to join up.

In 1926 the love bug hit and Roberts married his sweetheart Elizabeth.

Later Roberts and his wife moved to Kings Mountain where he barbered at the Phenix Barber Shop which was located near the BVD warehouse that burned down last year. Lee stayed at the shop for 25 years until he took over his J. P. and magistrate duties full-time. The office used to be an elected one but now the magistrate is appointed by a Superior Court judge on recommendations by the clerk of court.

Lee has been in Kings Mountain for 34 years and speaks of the area and people with fond affection. "I have never met nicer folks since I've been here", he says. He also praised the police officers, lawyers and other people who have shown kindness to him these many years.

Roberts is proof that a college education is not an automatic ticket to knowledge as he speaks of the law and traces the office of magistrate to England. With the manner of a professor he relates "the office of magistrate is one of the oldest judicial offices in our civilization, originating in

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KMPO Set Yule Mail Record

Mail moved more rapidly and more efficiently this past Christmas than ever before thanks to the cooperation of the public in mailing their cards and packages earlier than usual, Kings Mountain Postmaster Charles Alexander reported today.

"The Postmaster General, E. T. Klassen, has noted that despite the fuel crisis, cutbacks in some airline flights, and bad weather in some parts

of the country, Christmas mail flowed more smoothly than in any previous year," Alexander said.

"The assistance and cooperation of the public was splendid," the Postmaster continued. "Most holiday mail was in the pipeline well before the normal suggested

deadlines for seasonal mailing."

As an example of how well "Operation Christmas Mail" went nationally, Postmaster Alexander disclosed that the day before Christmas there were approximately 6,500 pieces of mail on hand in the Kings Mountain Post Office,

all of which was delivered by Christmas Day.

Preliminary reports indicate that the postal service moved more than eleven billion pieces of mail during the Christmas holidays, Postmaster Alexander said - 12 per cent of the annual national mail volume.

Rescuers Name New Officers

The Kings Mountain Rescue Squad started off the new year with an election of officers to serve during 1974.

The squad held the election Sun., Jan. 6, in the new rescue squad facility on Parker St.

Those chosen to serve as officers this year were Bob Hope-captain; Keith Bowen-first Lt.; Delbert Dixon-2nd Lt.; Richard Byers-Sergeant;

Johnnie Caldwell-secretary and Charles Peterson-Treasurer. Rev. Frank Shirley will remain as the squad's chaplain.

This conscientious volunteer organization boasts a very active membership. Those current members include Raymond Calloway, James Brackett, Everette Grigg, Gene Champion, Jim Robinson, John London, Earl Hollifield, Barry Dellinger, Mark Hughes, Mike Strickland, Monty Harbin, Steve Belt, Dean Freeman and Jim Anderson.

In announcing the new officers, the rescue squad noted it will "try very hard to help the citizens of Kings Mountain more in 1974 than ever before. If you need us, we are as near as your telephone!" In cases of emergency, the squad number is 739-2141.



Photo by Tom McIntyre

RESCUE OFFICERS - A new slate of officers is now directing the activities of the Kings Mountain Rescue Squad. Pictured here are four of the six. (l. to r.): Richard Byers-sergeant; Johnnie Caldwell-secretary; Keith Bowen-first lieutenant; and Bob Hope-captain. Not pictured, Delbert Dixon and Charles (Pete) Peterson.

Cycle Crash

A Kings Mountain resident suffered injuries Friday morning when the motorcycle he was driving collided head-on with an automobile.

Injured in the mishap was Billy Belk of 113 Linwood Rd. Belk was treated in the Kings Mountain Hospital and later transferred to Charlotte Memorial where he was listed in "unsatisfactory" condition Tuesday afternoon.

The wreck occurred at 7:40 a.m. Friday on N. Piedmont Ave. at Fulton St towards Walker St. KMPD Lt. Bob Hayes investigated the collision and reported Belk was traveling south on Piedmont and did not have his headlight on and was also "apparently traveling at a high rate of speed". A northbound car, operated by Ava Dover Byers of 6440 Margrace Rd., was attempting a left turn onto Fulton, when the auto was hit by the Honda

BOXERS?

All boys ages 10-15 interested in boxing for the police reserve team are urged to be at the community center next Wednesday at 4 p.m.