

Q&A

Allen Tate



Chairman and Founder of the Allen Tate Company

Q. What is your history with Mint Hill?

A. I watched Mint Hill for quite some time. I've been in business for 50 years, I started in 1957, and the thing that really made me focus on the communities in our county was in 1965 I was put on the Charlotte Mecklenburg Planning Commission. Then from 1970-1979 I was chairman of the Charlotte Mecklenburg Planning Commission at that time. One of the things we were doing was looking at comprehensive plans for the county, and we got into things like extraterritorial jurisdiction, and water sewer facilities. I was dealing with Mr. [John] McEwen down there at that house where [the former] Harris Teeter is now. He was on the County Commission at that time, and I'd go down there to talk to him about Mint Hill and the future. Why, I had to pack a lunch to go down there—it was like a day trip. Now it's almost in the city. But that's a part of my history with Mint Hill. We watched it develop. Mickey Ellington is quite a close friend of mine, I love that family and he's such a good citizen. He keeps me up to date on what the commissioners are doing down there.

Q. You started your company in 1957. What is the most significant change in the business since then?

A. I think the one that is having a lot of effect now is the sharing of information. With the Internet the information is getting into the hands of the consumer much faster and more broadly than ever before in history and that's a significant change in our business. For example, a lot of people we talk to about housing now come in with a list of five or six houses they've been looking at on the Internet and they say, "I want to see these houses."

See Q&A page 4

Index

- News.....3A
- Sports.....10A
- Happenings.....11A
- Classifieds.....12A
- Real Estate.....1B

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Bond debate includes area schools

By Joshua Spurlock
The Mint Hill Times

A once relatively clear-cut school bond process that was more or less non-political is looking more and more like a fight, which could include fighting for Mint Hill projects to make the bond. The County Commissioners vote on the figure for the bond on July 10 and the Board of Education will later decide which projects actually make the package.

The original bond figure proposed by the School Building Solutions Committee was a \$400 million limit. The figure was expanded all the way to \$616 million, counting inflation, by the Board of Education, but the

Citizens Capital Budget Advisory Committee is advising the Commissioners to pass a \$486 million bond, counting inflation.

The Board of Education bond would include several area projects, such as a new high school and renovations for Bain Elementary School as part of a priority list the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools staff formed. The figure suggested by the CCBAC, however, would not be enough to include Bain, assuming the same priority list is used to determine projects on the bond.

A \$486 million bond would cover 39 projects on the priority list, and

See BAIN page 5



Bain Elementary School is due for renovations and could get funding for that project in the 2007 bond. However, a lower figure has been suggested to the County Commissioners that could remove Bain from that bond. PHOTO BY JOSHUA SPURLOCK

Brush Fire



Members of the Flowes Store Fire Department use their brush truck to help put out a wheat fire in Mint Hill last Friday. Eight departments responded to the fire at the intersection of Williams Road and Arlington Church Road. It was controlled in about two hours. Turn to page 6A to read more about the efforts of the fire-fighters and view more photos. PHOTO BY TIM LONG

NEWSbriefs

June Tunes enters final week

The June Tunes program at Town Hall is wrapping up with two more concerts. On Saturday, the Dave Moody Band will be entertaining with their brand of popular music, beach music and more. On Tuesday, July 3, June Tunes finishes with a patriotic flourish as the Queen City Brass Band returns. The instrumental group will perform patriotic music and Jazz-oriented music, among other styles. The concerts get underway at 7:30 pm on the lawn at Town Hall. Admission is free.

Deadline approaches for school transfers

Parents who want to transfer their child from one school to another for the 2007-2008 school year have until Monday, July 16, to submit a request for reassignment/transfer. A transfer form received on or before the deadline will be processed by the first day of school, Monday, August 27. Requests submitted after July 16 will be processed for the beginning of the second academic quarter.

Families may pick up a form from any CMS school or the Student Placement office located at the Family Application Center (700 Marsh Road) or download it on the CMS Web site. The form must be submitted to the Student Placement office to be processed.

If you have additional questions about the transfer process, call the Student Placement office at 980-343-5335 or e-mail them at student.placement@cms.k12.nc.us.

Summer reading

This summer, The Public Library of Charlotte & Mecklenburg County (PLCMC) offers an array of fun, free events in conjunction with its annual Summer Reading Clubs for kids. Children can sign up at any of the 24 branches of the public library for a Summer Reading Club that best fits their age. There are programs for children of all ages, from reading detectives to "Wee Read" to online clubs for teens and adults. For details, visit www.plcmc.org/summerread. The library will also offer children who participate in "Get a Clue" or "Wee Read" an opportunity to remove or reduce up to \$40 in fines and fees from their library cards. Summer reading clubs officially end Saturday, August 4.

See BUDGET page 5

N.C. Legislature

Goodall, Gulley reflect on budget and bills of 2007 session

By Tim Long
The Mint Hill Times

With the 2007 state legislative session coming to a close, there is still a lot of work left to be done. The proposed \$20 billion budget, which has hit some snags and is now in conference, could take another month to get passed. The House on Monday began the process of securing funding for one month if the budget is not finished by July 1.

There are two main sticking points holding up the budget process: One is the continuation of temporary sales and income taxes enacted in 2001 that the House wants to continue but the Senate doesn't. The other sticking point is Medicaid relief for the counties. The Senate's version of the budget calls for swapping funds with counties to pay for Medicaid while the House proposed \$100 million for temporary relief. Both the House and Senate do agree that in the future the state should take over funding of Medicaid. How soon is the question.



Sen. Eddie Goodall



Rep. Jim Gulley

Sen. Eddie Goodall said that because Democrats make up the majority of the conferees, the budget will probably lean towards the Democrats' needs. Rep. Jim Gulley said that the conferees claim to be open to the rest of the members, but are actually a closed-door vote with the Democrat leaders taking charge.

Goodall was just one of two Senators who voted no on the first passing of the budget that he sent it back to the House. He cited several reasons for his no vote. First he said, he didn't

of the political process and handed over to judges to decide.

Transportation was also an area of concern for Goodall in the budget process because the highway trust fund formula is not helpful for populated areas.

"It was that combination of things that made it an easy vote for me," Goodall said.

Gulley said he felt like the budget the House offered was acceptable to him.

"You're never going to get what you want," he said. "This year we agreed to go along [with the Democrats] because the good outweighed the bad."

Other bills

In the 2007 legislative session, over 3,000 bills combined were introduced in the House and Senate, 300-500 of which were voted on. Gulley, who has Parkinson's disease, said one bill he's worked on the most is the Stem Cell Health and Wellness Act.

"Let's not waste stem cells leftover from helping a couple

feel like he had the amount of time necessary to go through a budget the size of a book.

"If I am a reasonable and careful person," Goodall said, "I can't send a \$20 billion budget by looking at a 300-page document in 24 hours."

Goodall said he also disapproved of the lack of emphasis on education reform in the budget, as well as negotiating points such as an amendment defining marriage, malpractice reform, and gerrymandering and redistricting, which he says he would like taken out