



Remembering 9/11

Beginning on today's front page and continuing inside the A section and the front page of the C section, Columbus County residents and *The News Reporter* staff recall the Sept. 11, 2001 terrorists attacks.

•Gators, Pack to battle in 20th meeting Friday. •Stallions facing big challenge against 4A Hoggard squad. •Vikes hope to gain first win Friday. [See page 1-B.](#)

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50 Cents

Next Issue



Monday's *American Profile* features "Hints from Heloise." Fifty years of household advice.

DIDYOB?

Did you observe ...

Cornfields in the area being harvested, much to the joy of dove hunters. In most areas of the county, this year's corn crop was one of the worst in recent years. ... Four-year-old Gavin Niven hearing the announcer at the SCHS jayvee football game saying "time-out Stallions" and asking his dad who got in "time out?" ... Kelly Johnson moving the port-a-potty down Bella Coola Road? ...

County Deaths

- Whiteville
- Cathleen Blackwell Nealy
- Bertha Bright Price
- Tabor City
- Solomon Chestnut
- Brunswick
- Lois Powell Gaskins
- Riegelwood
- William Guilford Hilburn
- Chadbourn
- Dollie Fairfax Williamson
- Bolton
- Beulah Hall

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City schools make good on promise to keep pre-K program going

By FULLER ROYAL
Staff Writer

In the wake of record cuts by lawmakers in Raleigh in the state's education budget, the Whiteville City Schools Board of Education kept its promise to Whiteville Primary School Principal Lynn Spaulding to make sure those cuts did not affect his school's ability to serve its population of 4-year-olds.

Thanks to some redirection of state Low Wealth and At-Risk funds, Whiteville Primary is operating with four N.C. Pre-K classrooms. Pre-K is the new name for More-at-Four, the program that was gutted by the General Assembly.

Spaulding said Wednesday that is serving more pre-K students this year - 57 - than in previous years.

There are four N.C. Pre-K teachers at Primary - Karen Clark, Anne Benton, Julie Graves and Sarai Cannon, the newest teacher.

"We are really ecstatic to be able to do this," Spaulding said. "Every parent with a child enrolled is appreciative that their children are being served."

See N.C. Pre-K, page 7-A

Emergency services goes 'social'

■'Keep eye on hurricane.'

By NICOLE CARTRETTE
Staff Writer

Out of sight, out of mind. Not so, when it comes to possible hurricanes brewing over the Atlantic Ocean, according to Columbus County Emergency Services Director Jeremy Jernigan.

"At this time all forecasts are showing the storm (Katia) turning to the north and east over the next couple of days. With this turn the forecasters are very confident that we will not have any impacts from the storm," Jernigan said.

Another hurricane, Maria, is brewing in the Atlantic and by Monday it could be in the vicinity of Puerto Rico.

"It could be something that we need to also keep our eye on," Jernigan warned in

See Social, page 2-A



Staff photo by Mark Gilchrist

Triumph

Madelyn McCullen, 15, of Whiteville holds up her shoes at the finish line of the Take the Lake Walk/Run Saturday, after removing them late in the event because of blisters. She continued participating through the weekend to be the youngest person to complete all four Personal Endurance Challenges. See story on page 1-B.

Tennis courts honor native of Hallsboro

A Hallsboro native who won numerous championships in amateur tennis in the South recently received a new honor when Wake Forest University named a tennis court in honor of her and her husband.

Mildred Formyduval Southern, a graduate of the old Hallsboro High School and of Appalachian State University, lives with her husband Harold in Winston-Salem and Florida.

Southern, 90, is the daughter of the late Lily and Joy Formyduval.

Wake Forest named the largest of the 13 tennis courts in the Family Stadium complex the Southern Family Stadium Court.

Harold Southern is an alumnus of Wake Forest.

Mildred Southern won more than 120 tournaments and has been ranked third in her age group in national rankings. At age 80, she won U.S. Tennis Association senior titles in singles and doubles clay court competition.

Southern has been active in promoting tennis in the south, having served two terms as president of the Southern Tennis Association and is a winner of the National Tennis Association National Community Service Award.

Big cuts coming at Aging for nurse assistants

■Worley was center of closed session.

By NICOLE CARTRETTE
Staff Writer

With little discussion Tuesday night commissioners unanimously agreed to about \$400,000 in cuts to various line items at the Columbus County Department of Aging. One coordinator will lose her job, a few positions will be phased out as employees retire, and hours at the county's satellite senior centers will remain the same.

Those who will feel the pinch are at the lower end of the department's pay scale - part-time certified nurse assistants and nurse aides who earn in some instances minimum wage and will have to begin to completely foot the bill for travel expenses from one disabled patient's home to another.

While a closed session had been planned and called under attorney-client privilege to discuss possible legal issues, County Attorney Mike Stephens saw no need as the agenda dwindled to the last item.

"We've got issues with contract workers," Commissioner Ricky Bullard said.

"All except two or three signed contract forms initially," Stephens said of workers who are paid an hourly wage, received some vacation pay and sick leave prior to Tuesday's vote but do not receive retirement or health

See Aging, page 7-A

Riegelwood Sanitary District residents want better water

■County water is an option but sanitary board not interested.

By NICOLE CARTRETTE
Staff Writer

Earl Brown says drinking water from his tap in the Riegelwood Sanitary District is color of "Coca-Cola" some days.

"I can live with it but my wife can't," Brown said. "It's just unbelievable the clothes she has had to throw away."

Brown held up two plastic bottles of tap water drawn from his faucet that morning. One was a dark brown color the other was just a little less brown and labeled with a sticky note "after running water for 20 minutes."

Brown said the incidents of dirty water are sporadic.

"Sometimes it is every week or so and other times in may be every other month or so," Brown said.

Brown suspects that old pipes contribute to the water problems in the district that routinely sends out water quality reports.

"We get notices about the water and sometimes there is something in there about things that can cause cancer," Brown said. "You always wonder what's in the water. You read

See Water, page 6-A

Youth to announce mother's name at 9/11 service

By JEFFERSON WEAVER
Staff Writer

Xavier White doesn't remember his mother, but he knows how to correctly pronounce her name.

"They always get it wrong on the television," the boy grinned.

The 10-year-old will read Tamitha Freeman's name Sunday at the Sept. 11 memorial service at Ground Zero. Tamitha Freeman, 35, died in the South Tower of the World Trade Center when she went back to retrieve her pocketbook, which had all her photos of the then-18-month-old "joy of her life," as she called Xavier.

"She told the other girls she wasn't leaving those pictures," said Juanita Freeman, Tamitha's mother, "and she went back up. She never came back."

"Every time they read the victims' names, Xavier gets upset that they don't say his momma's name right," said Randolph Freeman,

Tamitha's father. "This time it will be right."

Roots at home

Juanita and Randolph Freeman left the Sandyfield/East Arcadia area in 1960 and 1961, respectively, to head for new opportunities in New York City. Like many African-Americans, they found few opportunities in the rural South, and went north for jobs.

"There just wasn't any work here," Freeman said.

Freeman went to work for a dispatch firm, while his wife had an office job. They raised their two daughters, Tamitha and Carla, in New York, but never let them forget their roots in North Carolina.

In a *New York Times* story profiling Tamitha after 9/11, the writer notes that Tamitha was the founder of a loosely organized social group that met regularly at a nightclub in the city to drink out of Mason jars, eat "down home" food and

See Xavier, page 9-A



Xavier White holds a portrait of his mother, Tamitha Freeman, who died on Sept. 11, 2001 in the World Trade Center. Randolph and Juanita Freeman spent days wondering what had happened to their daughter.