

The Enquirer-Journal

SUNDAY



SNEAK PEEK

Three hundred Forest Hills High School football fans showed up for the team's midnight practice last week. How many will be at the opener on Aug. 21?

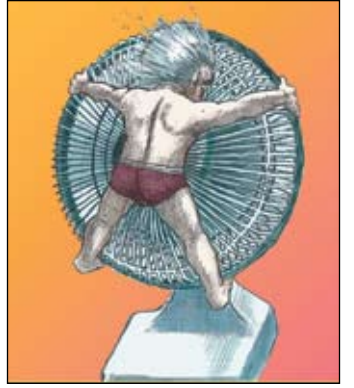
Page 1B

August 9, 2009

www.enquirerjournal.com

\$1.25

SAVE \$1.12 More Than
With coupon magazine inside today!



Sunny and hot

Summer really sets in this week with highs in the mid 90s under sunny skies. T-storms possible at midweek.

Today's temps

High: 96

Low: 70

Full report: Page 14A

State official calls school claims 'bunk'

BY BILLY BALL
Staff Writer

MONROE

A state engineer said "some one is mistaken" in saying North Carolina officials forced Union County Public Schools to undergo expensive renovations at two relatively new Marvin schools.

The comments came days after school administrators said late shifting in state regulations forced UCPS to spend \$380,000 fixing up stormwater retention

ponds at the Marvin Ridge middle school and high school complex.

"That is bunk," said N.C. Division of Water Quality (DWQ) engineer Mike Randall, an official with knowledge of the process. "If they had it approved and they were good to go, they didn't have to" make



Davis

any changes.

The overhaul has some county advisers calling for stricter oversight on how UCPS builds new schools, prompting consternation from angry school leaders.

Marvin Ridge school opened in spring 2007, shortly before the state stormwater regulations took effect in July 2007.

Officials said the school should have been "grandfathered" and allowed to maintain the older restrictions, but

UCPS construction chiefs say they were ordered by the state to accommodate new guidelines.

That's not true, Randall said, if Marvin Ridge schools were open with a building permit before July 2007.

"What is possible is that the state was not aware that they had (a building permit)," Randall said. "If they didn't tell us a building was already built or that they had vested rights then we would have just processed

the application like we do everything else."

UCPS began work on the school complex long before 2007, receiving state water quality certification in November 2005.

In the 2005 notification from the state, school chiefs were told they need an approved stormwater plan before construction, but a final plan wasn't passed until last September.

See BUNK / Page 7A

Eight want board seats

BY TIFFANY LANE
Staff Writer

STALLINGS

Four Stallings Town Council seats are up for grabs and eight people are eyeing them. Many are anxious to bring in new business and broaden the tax base, relieving residents of taxes that, they say, are too high.

Road construction and improvement is a hot topic, and quality schools and parks were also mentioned.

Council members Al Gram and Wyatt Dunn are running for re-election, but Councilman Mark Franza has decided to focus attention elsewhere.



Mark Franza won't run again

"I've served the town of Stallings for eight years almost," Franza said. "I've got a number of other things, projects, that I'm going to be getting involved in and I'm just being pulled in different directions." Franza said he's "still passionate about what's going on in town," but doesn't think he can divide his attention equally among the council and other projects.

Franza serves on the town's Transportation Committee.

Also included in this year's pool is write-in candidate Harry Stokes. "I was not approached about being a candidate by several people until probably a couple of weeks ago, past the deadline," Stokes

See ELECT / Page 15A

CO-OP CUTS COSTS



E-J photo by Ed Cottingham

Christina Nelson uses laundry baskets to sort the produce because they are easily stacked and stored. Participants bring their own containers to take the produce home in.

Members get \$50 of vegetables for just \$17

BY TIFFANY LANE
Staff Writer

INDIAN TRAIL

Jennifer Walston works part time to help support her two boys, 7 and 13. Her husband is a school teacher.

"I have a budget I have to stick to when grocery shopping," said Walston, who clips coupons and browses sale papers to stretch the dollar. When cutting expenses, produce is usually the first to go.

That was before Walston got involved in Your Neighborhood Produce, a produce co-op founded by a local mother of four. She said she saves \$80 to \$100 a month on fresh fruits and vegetables she would otherwise pass up in the grocery store.

"I was tired of paying 68 cents for one orange," co-op founder Christina Nelson said. "That's

over \$3" to feed her kids a snack. Nelson recently moved to York County, S.C., from the West Coast.

Finding there were no produce co-op programs like back home, she started her own in June 2008. There are now a handful of sites in Mecklenburg, Cabarrus and Gaston counties, as well as the newest and first Union County location in Indian Trail.

To participate, individuals register free of charge with Your Neighborhood Produce online and purchase as many produce baskets as they want. Nelson then forwards all orders to a wholesaler in York County who services public schools, restaurants and supermarkets.

On pickup days, the produce is delivered to the designated location and sorted by volunteers. Those who purchased baskets then pick them up at the allotted time.

Baskets are paid for online using PayPal, Visa or MasterCard. There are no obligations.

"People always shop at the grocery stores because that's what they know," Nelson said, but "the moment the produce comes into a supermarket, they're raising the price from 300 to 400 percent."

Thursday was the most recent pickup for Indian Trail. Original baskets contained lettuce, tomatoes, bananas, apples, baby carrots, celery, cucumber, yellow onion, green pepper, Idaho potatoes, broccoli, red grapefruit, lemon, mushrooms and two pounds of white grapes — all for \$17.50.

Using the grapes as an example, she said the same amount would cost about \$6 at a major grocery chain; the entire basket would come to \$52.01.

See CO-OP / Page 14A

Fake e-mail takes in state rep

BY JASON deBRUYN
Staff Writer

MONROE

A state representative said this week that he did not write a list in his newsletter that contained misinformation about the national health care overhaul.

In his newsletter, N.C. Rep. Curtis Blackwood, R-Union, forwarded an e-mail he received that criticized a health care bill under debate in Congress. The problem, according to representatives from the AARP and U.S. Rep. Larry Kissell, D-N.C., is that the e-mail contained several factual errors.

"Folks, while going over some e-mails in the office, I (found) some interesting information on the Democrats' big health care bill," Blackwood wrote. "H.R. 3200, America's Affordable Health Choices Act of 2009. While this is federal legislation and not state, the topic is of enough significance that I thought many of you would be interested in reading it. Please find below page references and direct quotes from the proposed bill."

One highlighted section said, "Page 427: Government mandates program that orders end-of-life treatment; government dictates how your life ends. Page 429: Advance Care Planning Consult will be used to dictate treatment as patient's health deteriorates. This can include an ORDER for end-of-life

See E-MAIL / Page

WHAT'S INSIDE

Brides	8A	Letters	5-6A
Business	13A	Library News	11A
Comics	Insert	Obituaries	2A
Classified	5B	Opinion	4A
Health	12A	School News	10A
		Weather	14A

COMING FRIDAY

Outdoors writer Tony Robinson recalls his first encounter with a Hellbender. The largest salamander in the country was trying to make off with the trout on his stringer.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY!

Best wishes are extended to everyone who is celebrating a birthday today, especially: Patricia Rorie, Joey Burns, Monica Mizzell, Aurelia Marsh, Felicia Thomas, Lekeshia Stafford, Joe "Poppa" Williams, Jadan McGee, Darrell Marsh, Derrick Bennett, Scott Byrum, Amber Grace McGee and Jackie Haywood. Best wishes also are extended to everyone who is celebrating a birthday Monday, especially: Dorothy Greene, Mindy Stegall, Noah Fatih, Teresa Chambers, Skip Richter, Carson Eldridge, Jeanette Duncan and Rick West. Call (704) 261-2278 or e-mail birthdays@theej.com to add your names to the Enquirer-Journal birthday list.

