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THOMASVILLE TIMES

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Course to cover early childhood parenting

BY ERIN WILTGEN
Staff Writer

Parents usually remember those first-time jitters, the moment the little baby, newly wrapped, is placed into waiting arms and the realization strikes — now comes the hard part.

Parenting children of any age can present a daunting task, but new parents often face a seemingly more terrifying prospect of raising a baby for the first time. To help allay these fears, Fairgrove Family Resource Center will offer its first parenting class focusing on early childhood, Early Childhood STEP — Systematic Training for Effective Parenting of Children Under Six.

“I have had parents who are brand new, and they’re concerned, they’re nervous,” said Fairgrove Executive Director Terri Nelson. “They want to make sure they raise their children in the right way. I just felt like we had a hole in our services — this helped fill that gap.”

The class, which looks at children from birth to age 6, will begin Thursday, March 4, and lasts seven weeks, ending on the eighth week with a celebration night. Each lesson will include a free meal at 6 p.m. and child-care. The actual class begins at 6:45 p.m.

In a video-style learning environment, parents will follow along with a study guide to lessons designed to teach about misbehavior, how to deal with misbehavior and how to handle childhood challenges like temper tantrums and potty training.

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TIMES PHOTO/ELIOT DUKE

From left, Ron Jones and Nancy Whitman do their best ‘Black-eyed Peas’ impression when announcing Sparkplug winner Martha Burrow at the 38th annual Tom A. Finch YMCA awards banquet Thursday.

YMCA honors one of founders

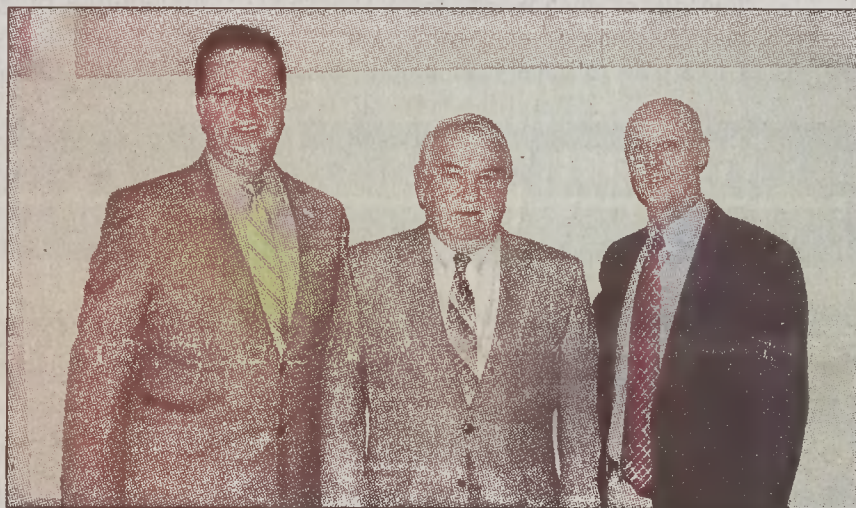
BY ELIOT DUKE
Staff Writer

On a night when the Tom A. Finch Community YMCA named its yearly award winners, the organization honored one of its founding fathers.

Johnny Thomason received the YMCA’s Honorary Lifetime Membership award for helping bring the non-profit community service organization to Thomasville nearly 40 years ago. Thomason not only played a key role in getting the Chair City its own YMCA location, but he also was a driving force in the construction of the home office at 1010 Mendenhall St.

“[Thomason] has helped us in many ways that most people are not aware of,” said Stan Styers, former executive director of the Tom A. Finch YMCA. “What I appreciate more than anything is that he has always been a sounding board for all of us. His input from day one has always been highly valued.”

Thomason said the vision for



TIMES PHOTO/ELIOT DUKE

From left, Tom A. Finch YMCA award winners Tony Hyde and Johnny Thomason stand with YMCA Director Tommy Hodges.

a local YMCA started back in the 1960s with Brown Finch. Several years passed before a charter was granted and when it finally happened, Thomason said “we didn’t have a wall to hang it on.” The YMCA started out in a vacant office on the second floor of the state commercial bank building downtown. Eventually,

the YMCA moved to the national armory building as plans for constructing a new facility took shape.

“We didn’t need money, we need facilities,” Thomason said. “We used the armory’s parking lot for little league baseball. It

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Filing ends for 2010 election

BY ERIN WILTGEN
Staff Writer

With candidacy filings finally at an end, County Commissioner hopefuls are gearing up for the May primaries.

As of Friday afternoon, 11 Republican and four Democrat candidates had filed for the four vacant County Commissioner seats, each with the hope to better serve the community.

For Lexington resident Jason Hedrick — who filed as a Democrat — that community aspect forms the basis for his motivation to run. Owner of Hedrick Creative Building, the contractor just finished working on the extreme home for Extreme Make-over — Home Edition.

“It was great to see the community come together,” he said. “I just wanted to be able to continue to help and maybe spur some growth in the Davidson County area.”

Though never before involved in politics, Hedrick said his work in commercial building has given him experience working with other people to make decisions and strike compromises.

“I’ve had to deal with a lot of people in a lot of different committees,” he said.

With a fair and honest approach to government in mind, Hedrick said he hopes to not only continue infrastructure growth in terms of education and sewer lines, but also bring more businesses into the county.

“The county commissioners are a key element in promoting Davidson County and promoting business and growth in

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Academy Eye Center named February Business of the Month

BY ERIN WILTGEN
Staff Writer

As February draws to a close, Academy Eye Center in Thomasville celebrates its final days as the City Beautification Committee’s Business of the Month.

Business of the Month, a City Beautification Committee tradition since the ‘90s, hinges on a company’s work to increase the aesthetics of its property, such as landscaping or structural renovations.

“We try to pick one that has done

at least some type of improvement to its place,” said Carol Brown, chair of the committee.

Academy Eye Center caught the committee’s attention because it remodeled an office at Southgate Shopping Center, converting it into a more modernized facility.

“It’s very open and everything,” Brown said. “It’s a nice feel.”

Christi Stevenson, secretary for Academy Eye Center, said the old center had an ‘80s and ‘90’s style to the decor, while the new facility is much more up-to-date.

“Dr. Pope’s office — it was old, it

was outdated,” Stevenson said. “So was the other office that we had. Here, it’s a whole lot fresher-looking.”

Part of the motivation for the renovation was Academy Eye Center’s merger with a partner company, Eye Care Clinic of Thomasville. Both businesses decided to start fresh with a brand new location.

“We kind of grew as a family for two years before we came together as one,” Stevenson said.

Though pleasantly taken aback

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TIMES PHOTO/ERIN WILTGEN

Academy Eye Center recently moved its operation to Southgate Shopping Center.

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