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and Elaine Marshall to go
head-to-head in two debates.
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MARKED IN HISTORY

BY ERIN WILTGEN
Staff Writer

It stands — regal and stoic — drawing the eyes of passersby and gawking tourists.

It towers — slender yet sturdy — marking and even naming the city, embodying the past, defining the present, projecting the future.

The 30-foot replica of a Duncan Phyfe armchair resides in the center of downtown Thomasville, significant not only as the world's largest chair but also because it represents much of the Chair City's history.

"It's emblematic," said Bill Colonna of the Thomasville Historic Preservation Commission. "Chairs were some of the first products that the community industry dealt with. It's a symbol of the community's early days."

Back in 1922, Thomasville Chair Company — now Thomasville Furniture Industries — made simple, sturdy, straight-back chairs almost exclusively. No one knows who first suggested the idea to erect a big chair to bring attention to the town's principal manufacturer.

The first chair, constructed by Thomasville Chair Company in September 1922, took three men working 10 hours a day for one week with enough wood to build 100 regular-sized chairs. It stood 13 feet and 6 inches tall.

Weather and time eventually wore on the chair, and in 1936 the construction was taken down. In 1948, the Chamber of Commerce formed and talk began of erecting a new chair that could stand the test of time.

Thomas W. Johnson — Thomasville Chair Company's dean of designers — designed a reproduction of the Duncan Phyfe armchair, and James Buford Harvey — who built the concrete lion standing on Main Street — constructed the Big Chair out of concrete. Painted to appear made from wood, the completed chair stood 30 feet high. And it still stands today.

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The Big Chair

First constructed by Thomasville Chair Company in September 1922, the Big Chair was made of wood and was 13 feet 6 inches tall. In 1948, plans for a second chair, built this time of concrete, began. It now towers 30 feet above Main Street.



Man drowns in High Rock Lake

TIMES STAFF REPORT

For the second time in less than month, a man drowned at High Rock Lake while spending time with his family.

According to a Davidson County Sheriff's Office press release, Kenneth Earl Kennedy, 25, of 265 Brown Road in China Grove, drowned Saturday morning at 10:51 a.m. at the boat and swim access area located at the Brown Loflin Bridge on N.C. Highway 8 on High Rock Lake. Kennedy was at the lake with his wife and children when he disappeared under the water near the buoy markers.

Witnesses saw Kennedy swimming one minute, Sheriff David Grice said, but the next minute he was gone.

"He was out swimming with his kids and went under the water," Grice said. "We're just encouraging everyone to use their life jackets and to use good judgment when they're swimming and not go out beyond their capabilities. It's so unnecessary, and I think people just overestimate their own capacities and put their selves in trouble."

The Healing Springs Fire Department's Water

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Council sets public hearing for budget

BY ERIN WILTGEN
Staff Writer

Despite the rough economy, Thomasville's 2010-11 proposed budget doesn't include any layoffs, furloughs or tax increases.

The total recommended budget totaled to about \$33 million.

Property tax — which makes up of 47 percent of the General Fund revenue — will remain at 56 cents per \$100 valuation. Though the city left two positions in the Sanitation Department

unfilled, thus eliminating them, the proposed budget didn't layoff any positions or put any employees on furlough, said Councilman Raleigh York Jr., chairman of the city's personnel/finance committee

"I really appreciate the work of our city manager and finance director in managing the budget and being sure that we protect our jobs," York said. "To me that's the most important thing. From what I've been hearing going

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Crime Stoppers helping solve crimes on tip at a time

BY ELIOT DUKE
Staff Writer

One of the most important tools a police department uses in solving cases is information. Rarely does a crime happen in the presence of police, so information from eyewitness accounts or informants plays a huge role in discovering who did what, where and why.

There are circumstances where concerned citizens wanting to help are afraid to come forward with what they know, fearing repercussions or simply trying to avoid getting involved. That's where Crime Stoppers of Thomasville comes in.

For nearly two decades, Crime Stoppers of Thomasville has given citizens the chance to make a difference in complete anonymity by just picking up the phone and making a call. Since its inception,

Crime Stoppers of Davidson County has received 1,105 tips from callers, leading to 644 arrests and 848 charges against suspects. The organization also has paid out more than \$45,000 through 236 paid rewards. All of it is completely anonymous.

"Detectives and vice officers, even some of the patrol officers, have informants, people who are willing to talk to them and give them information in exchange for money," Thomasville Police Department Capt. Darren Smith said. "It's usually just a few dollars. But Crime Stoppers is a way for people to call in anonymously, and there's no way of tracing who they are. They feel more comfortable about it because not everybody wants to be an informant. We know who informants are, and

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TIMES PHOTO/LARRY MATHIS

ROLLING THE DICE

From left, Janie Shedrick, Lisa Warren and Dawn Blevins play a game of Craps Saturday during the East Davidson Athletic Booster Club's Casino Night. The event helped raise funds for the softball field and a new lawn mower.

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