



**TAKING THE HELM**  
Former Tobs coach Jeff Steele named head coach of HiToms. See **SPORTS, Page 7**

# THOMASVILLE TIMES

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## Voters to decide if felons can run for sheriff

BY ELIOT DUKE  
Staff Writer

LEXINGTON — Whether or not a convicted felon can run for sheriff will finally be up to voters come November.

House Bill 1307, otherwise known as No Felon as Sheriff, is a proposed state constitutional amendment that will appear on the Nov. 2 general election ballot. If passed by voters, the legislative bill would prohibit any convicted felon from running for sheriff in North Carolina. Seven sheriffs from nearby counties expressed solidarity and support for the bill Tuesday in the Davidson County Governmental Center, and also

**'When you have bail bondsmen who are held to a higher credibility than a sheriff, who has 200 deputies under him, there's a problem.'**

— Stan Bingham

recognized Sen. Stan Bingham (R-Davidson) for his efforts in getting the legislation ready for a vote.

"The important issue is professionalism, integrity and respect of the public," Eddie Caldwell,

vice president and general counsel with the North Carolina Sheriff's Association, said. "That's what has motivated us to pursue this legislation. We have regulations in place to keep convicted felons from being law enforcement officers. But because this legislation is in the constitution, a change had to be made. Once this is passed, we can put this issue to rest."

During the May Republican primary, former Davidson County Sheriff Gerald Hege attempted a comeback after he was removed from office in 2004, following a guilty plea to six counts



TIMES PHOTO/ELIOT DUKE

Rockingham County Sheriff Sam Page presents Stan Bingham with an plaque honoring his introduction of House Bill 1307.

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## Holocaust survivor shares tales of terror

BY ERIN WILTGEN  
Staff Writer

LEXINGTON — Nesse Godin lives a fairly quiet life in a Washington D.C. suburb, volunteering at the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum and spending time with her grandchildren.

But the 83-year-old Godin's past wasn't quite as peaceful as her present, and she's not quiet about that fact. Godin is a survivor of the World War II Holocaust. She has spent the years since her freedom shar-



Godin



COURTESY PHOTO

## THE TEMPEST

From left, Jack Wetherall (Prospero), Warren Jackson (Ariel) and Nikki Coble (Miranda) perform during dress rehearsal for the N.C. Shakespeare Festival's presentation of 'The Tempest.' The play will run Sept. 18 - Oct. 3. To purchase tickets, visit [www.highpointtheatre.com](http://www.highpointtheatre.com) or call 336-887-3001.

## Thomasville Ford closes, falls victim to economy

BY ELIOT DUKE  
Staff Writer

Thomasville Ford Inc. closed its doors Wednesday, adding another company to the long list of local businesses who have been hit hard by the national recession.

Kim Cecil, general manager of Thomasville Ford Inc., said employees were informed of the decision on Monday and the reaction was sorrow as many of the people had been with the car dealership for more than a decade. Declining sales and the current national recession proved too much to overcome for Thomasville Ford, Cecil said, despite all the efforts made to keep the doors open.

"Ford didn't do it, this was our decision," Cecil said. "We did not get a letter. We made the decision to close based on the business we had. We just weren't getting enough business to function. Between service and sales, we just didn't have enough revenue to operate. There's businesses closing all over the place and we're not any different. We are a for-profit business and it just wasn't there. Business has been slow so I don't think anyone was really shocked. The fact that it's actually here has been hard for us. It has been very emotional."

Wednesday's closing leaves 19 people out of work and marks the second major auto manufacturer to leave Thomasville in 2010. Thomasville GM Superstore, a staple in the Chair City for generations, became a casualty of the struggling auto industry earlier this year.

"Customers go to where there's a lot of choices," said Cecil. "It's not far to drive to surrounding communities and shop around. It's not just the Ford and Chevrolet competition, there are a lot of brands. As sad as it is for us, it should be sad for the entire community because there's going to be less people who are going to buy, shop and live around here."

Cecil feels more people are simply holding on to their money right

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### Today's Weather



Mostly Sunny, 91/66



## Wil-Cox Bridge cosmetic repairs approved

BY ERIN WILTGEN  
Staff Writer

LEXINGTON — Wil-Cox Bridge cosmetic repairs will tag-team with the bridge's structural repairs under the same contractor that's leading the Interstate-85 bridge project, though the decision just squeaked by Davidson County Board of Commissioners at their meeting Tuesday.

Flatiron-Lane Construction, the contractor leading work on the Interstate-85 project and chosen by the N.C. Department of Transportation to provide \$3 million in structural repairs to Wil-Cox Bridge, also will do about \$1.1 million in cosmetic repairs. Cosmetic repairs include a pedestrian handrail and sealing cracks deemed not crucial to the bridge's structure.

The board voted 4-3 to accept the bid, with

Commissioners Larry Potts, Don Truell and Sam Watford opposing. Davidson County will be responsible for only the cosmetic repairs, with the DOT paying the \$3 million.

"In my opinion, this is an excellent deal for the county," said DOT Division 9 Engineer Pat Ivey. "One of the reasons that it's as low as it is, is because the contractor is out there already. If you all took that cost yourself, it would probably be significantly higher."

Commissioners requested the DOT discuss with Flatiron-Lane Construction the possibility and cost estimate of doing cosmetic repairs along with structural repairs after the last bridge update in May.

The board accepted ownership of the bridge

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