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DEBATE

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have to understand that everyone feels differently about different items. It's true there is pressure to spend what you collect. We keep a rainy day fund and we've had to go to that fund in the past to keep things running. It's important that we keep an eye on the fact that every year is not the same."

Brown pointed out that North Carolina currently has the second highest tax rate in the southeast and trails only Florida when it comes to a gas tax. Brown doesn't feel that this extra revenue is being spent in the right places. Just how this money is spent is often based on politics and not need, Brown said, referring to the fact that North Carolina is divided into seven regions with each region receiving a certain amount of money. Brown wants to see state money being spent on needs and not wants.

"We have the same amount of money going to regions who don't nearly have the same amount of road traffic compared to other places in the state," Brown said. "That's just one way to save money

— fund your top priorities first and safety is number one. We've got to establish priorities."

Holliman countered by saying North Carolina maintains more roads than any state besides Texas, and if not for the gas tax, the money would come from property taxes, like it is in other states where the counties pay for road maintenance.

"I'm taking my opponent to task on this," said Holliman. "Our gas tax is probably the highest in the southeast, but when you compare taxes, you have to make sure you're comparing apples to apples. In this case, it's oranges to apples."

Both candidates were asked about whether they supported merging Davidson County's three school systems into one — a motion that is gaining steam in Raleigh. Holliman said there are 115 school systems in the state's 100 counties and some representatives are pushing for a 1-to-1 ration. Holliman added that transportation and cafeteria services already have been merged in the county, but whether it's a good idea or not, remains to be seen.

"The main thing to me is how well our schools are performing," Holliman said. "We have some troubled

schools who have improved and gotten better. We've got to make sure everyone understands that we need to educate our students no matter what the economy is. We're not going to tolerate poor school systems. We have to make sure that our administration understands that we want schools to grow and improve. If we can best do that with three school systems, that's fine."

Brown is worried that a larger school system will not be as efficient as students tend to perform better in smaller settings.

"The state is looking at merging school systems because of financial considerations," said Brown. "They feel efficiency is the main focus and this is what I'm concerned about. Studies have shown that small school districts are where students learn the best. Is it going to be more efficient? Perhaps, perhaps not. That's not the general line of thinking. We need to look at the fiscal part of it versus the well-being and the education of our children."

The general election is Nov. 2.

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OBITUARIES

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Connie T. Allgood

ASHEBORO — Connie Thomas Allgood, of Asheboro, passed away on Friday, Sept. 17, 2010.

Funeral service will be held Sunday at 2 p.m. at First Presbyterian Church with the Rev. Brian Gawf and the Rev. Connie Weaver officiating. The family will receive friends following the service at the church and other times at the home of Timothy Allgood, 960 Edge Court, in Asheboro. Family burial will be held at Floral Garden Park Cemetery in High Point on Monday at 10 a.m.



Allgood

Mrs. Allgood was born on June 25, 1928, in High Point, the daughter of William Yates Thomas. She was a longtime employee of the Baptist Children's Home, where she cared for hundreds of children ranging in age from infant to 5 years. Mrs. Allgood was a member of First Presbyterian Church in Asheboro and a former member of First Baptist Church in Thomasville, where she was a choir member and Sunday school teacher. She was preceded in death by her husband of 55 years, Elmo Sanford Allgood, and a brother Bill Thom-

as, of High Point.

She is survived by sons, David L. Allgood and his wife, Cheryl, of Wilson, Timothy R. Allgood and his wife, Kim, of Asheboro, John T. Allgood, of Greensboro; grandchildren, Lynn and Laura Allgood, of Wilson, Bailey and Carter Allgood, of Asheboro; sister, Daphne Jones and her husband, Lonnie, of High Point; 8 nieces and nephews.

The family would like to acknowledge its appreciation to Carillon Assisted Living, Crossroad Retirement Center, Clapps Convalescent Nursing Home and Hospice of Randolph.

Memorials may be made to Baptist Children's Homes of North Carolina, P.O. Box 338.

Arrangements by Pugh Funeral Home, Asheboro, and online condolences may be made at www.pughfuneralhome.com.

Marie Link

LEXINGTON — Marie Cecelia Tremblay Link, 79, of Fairview Drive, Lexington, died Friday, Sept. 17, 2010, at Hinkle Hospice House.

Memorial service will be held at 3 p.m. Sunday at Piedmont Funeral Home Chapel.

Woody White

LEXINGTON — William Woodrow "Woody" White Jr., 68, died Wednesday, Sept. 15, 2010, at his home in Butner after a long battle with cancer.

Funeral service will be held at 1 p.m. today at the Davidson Funeral Home Chapel with burial in Forest Hill Memorial Park. The family will receive friends 11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. prior to the service at the funeral home.

In lieu of flowers, donations to the Palliative Care Program at Durham Regional Hospital are appreciated. Online condolences may be made at www.davidsonfuneralhome.net.

BOARD

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to get 400. Our number one priority has to be job creation."

Yates said a good way to spur job growth is using what the county already has, specifically Interstate 85. He also complimented Hedrick on "reading his website" when it comes to improving infrastructure.

"Interstate 85 has 100,000 cars on it every day," said Yates. "We need 25,000 of those to stop in Lexington. We do need infrastructure. Davidson

CANDIDATE'S FORUM

Find more information from Thursday's forum, including sheriff and register of deeds candidates, in Tuesday's Times.

County needs sewer to our major intersections to get some retail businesses there. We can do that, and I think the citizens want us to do that."

Kepley feels small businesses are vital to Davidson County's economy and supporting them will be a big step to economic recovery. Kepley said he is a hay farmer who uses his 100-acre plot of land for a variety of purposes

that all go toward helping the local economy, whether it's by sawing lumber or selling trees.

"The backbone of our economy is small business," Kepley said. "Agriculture is the number one ranking business in North Carolina, tourism is second. I think agriculture will be the predominant faction of the local economy in the years to come."

Watford responded by saying that whenever any business comes to the area, even if it's not directly in Davidson County, the local economy benefits.

"Any new business that comes in or around us is good for Davidson County," said Watford. "Forty percent of our workforce leaves the county every day to go to work."

All four candidates opposed merging the county's three school districts. Candidates Don Trueil, Jeff Switzer, Kevin Williams and Ronald Swicegood did not attend the forum.

SURVEY

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knowledge the county has never participated in a study like this before.

NHANES studies 5,000 people nationwide each year. The survey chooses individuals who best represent the U.S. population, oversampling people over 60 years old as well as African Americans and Hispanics to give an accurate representation.

"Staff will go out and do the surveys at people's homes," Hames said. "Then, when they do that, they'll ask them to participate in the screenings. Everything combined will be done by the middle of November."

The interview process includes questions on demographics, socioeconomic status, dietary patterns and health. Touch-screen computers allow respondents to answer more sensitive questions in private.

The examination component — performed in mobile centers by a team of a physician, medical and health technicians, and dietary and health interviewers — includes medical, dental and physiological components. Many staff members speak both English and Spanish.

Since NHANES encourages study participation, the organization offers transportation to the examination sites if necessary and provides compensation and a medical report to each participant.

The information collected from

Davidson County participants will be combined with that of the other 14 counties to help determine prevalence of major diseases, risk factors for diseases and nutritional status and its association with health and disease prevention. Data also is used to form national height, weight and blood pressure standards.

Hames says that, according to the study, each person surveyed stands for about 66,000 people across the country.

"If one person represents 66,000 people, it is kind of a neat thing to go through and to be a part of," she said. "I know how people are with surveys. You don't want people asking personal questions. But we do encourage anyone who is contacted to go through with it."

ABUSE

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they can recover from this."

According to a national survey conducted by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), the use of illicit drugs increased between 2008 and 2009, rising from 8 percent of the population ages 12 and older to 8.7 percent. As far as alcohol is concerned, the number of adults consuming more than five drinks a day reached 23 percent in 2009, the highest level in a decade, according to the Centers for Disease Control.

But despite the high number of individuals suffering from drug and alcohol addictions, very few receive help. In 2009, about 9.3 percent of Americans ages 12 or older — or around 23.5 million people — needed substance abuse treatment. Only 2.6 million individuals received it.

"It's important for all of our community —

young people, their families, adults — to be aware of the resources that are available and to celebrate success," said Mary Jane Akerman, Thomasville City Schools (TCS) wellness coordinator who also is involved in the Thomasville Coalition on Drug and Alcohol Abuse. "It's important for us as a community to support recovery."

Path of Hope celebrated Recovery Month with an open house on Sept. 3. The United Way organization also took clients to a kickoff in Greensboro at the end of August and the event in Winston-Salem.

An in-patient substance abuse treatment center not affiliated with a hospital or medical facility, Path of Hope offers a 28-day program following the 12 steps of Alcoholics Anonymous. House says the organization sticks with a 28-day program as opposed to the more common seven-to 14-day program because it gives patients more time to come to terms with their condition.

"In seven to 14 days, their heads are not in

treatment," House said. "After the first few weeks, they start hearing."

In that 28 days, patients undergo group sessions, Alcohol Anonymous meetings, optional spiritual counseling and recreation activities such as volleyball, softball or walks around Fink Park.

"It's just to get them off the property as a group to see that there is something out there worthwhile," House said.

On the flip side of the coin, Thomasville Coalition on Drug and Alcohol Abuse focuses on prevention, educating the community about the effects of substance abuse.

"It's part of the normal, adolescent process to explore boundaries," Akerman said. "There's a natural tendency toward risk-taking in adolescent years. If kids understand the risks of drug addiction and the negative consequences and how drug addiction works, I think they're better armed to make better decisions."

Other than the prevention programs, TCS also has partnerships with treatment facilities to re-

fer students in case of an addiction situation.

"It's part of good prevention planning to know who to contact and what to do and have those partnerships in place," Akerman said. "But I'm not aware of a single incident where we've identified a young person with an addiction issue, which is terrific, and I hope that means that the prevention education is working."

But whether prevention or recovery, turning away from substance abuse requires an act of will.

"Recovery won't work if you don't want it to — you have to want it," House said. "We put our heart and soul in what we do here. We believe in it. I think that every month should be Recovery Month. They should keep making people aware of recovery, that there is something else out there besides drinking and using."

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