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# THOMASVILLE TIMES

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Thursday, September 23, 2010

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Virgil Morris sits on the lot where her home once stood as Habitat for Humanity volunteers work to build the foundation to her new house.

TIMES PHOTO/ERIN WILTGEN

## Rising from the ashes

*Habitat for Humanity rebuilding woman's home lost to fire*

BY ERIN WILTGEN  
Staff Writer

Despite an all-but-empty lot and debris-strewn yard, the family still finds comfort at the remains of Virgil Morris' home. Children and grandchildren alike have wandered to the gravel driveway to just sit and mull over life's problems.

"It was home to them, too. When they get down and out, they come over here and sit," said Morris, who admitted even she has come over to the old lot in the past few weeks for a bit of pondering. "I thought how peaceful it is. It feels like home, even to just sit here in the driveway."

'When you live somewhere that long, it's home ... I guess nowhere else feels like home.'

—Virgil Morris

And the property, located on Foster Street in Thomasville, used to be, in fact, home — before it burnt to the ground in an electrical fire in January 2009. With no homeowners insurance to speak of, Morris found herself at a loss. Her church originally took up the project, but found the financial burden too difficult to tackle.

That's when Habitat for Humanity stepped in, working to raise money

and rebuild a home for Morris and her partner, Harold Prince, who are currently renting on Boyles Street.

"We knew the need was there," said Greg Rice of Habitat. "We're not an extreme makeover, but we're right here every day, working trying to help with these situations."

The day of the fire dawned like any other, though a bit colder than

average, it's true. Morris says she had two electric heaters, a furnace and an electric fireplace running. She woke up to cook breakfast for her mother, who was staying for the weekend. The oven and coffee maker started without a jolt, but when Morris turned on the microwave, the system blew a fuse.

"It was bad about blowing fuses," Morris said. "The wiring in the house was old. The home was old."

After trying a few new fuses — all of which blew — Morris called for an electrician. After trying a fourth fuse to no avail, the electrician went to

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## Tdap vaccine deadline for sixth graders today

BY ELIOT DUKE  
Staff Writer

Hundreds of sixth graders across Davidson County may be held out of school Friday if they don't receive a Tdap vaccination by the end of today.

Today is the deadline for all sixth graders to provide documentation that they received the state required Tdap vaccination or they will not be allowed to attend school. As of Wednesday evening, more than 450 students in Davidson County either hadn't gotten the shot yet or have not provided proper documentation to their school that they had. A 2008 state law required all sixth graders who had not received a Tdap vaccination since July, 2005, to get a booster shot by the time school started.

"The number I've got is approximately 480 children have not provided documentation yet," Jen Hames, public information officer with Davidson County Health Department, said. "That is for all three school systems combined — Thomasville City Schools, Lexington City Schools and Davidson County Schools. That's 480 children who have

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21 RANDOLPH STREET  
THOMASVILLE, NC 27486

## Competition heats up for annual Chili Cook-off

BY ELIOT DUKE  
Staff Writer

Thomasville's annual chili cook-off is returning this year and the field is wide open.

First Presbyterian Church at 21 Randolph St. is hosting its Fifth annual Chili Cook-off on Oct. 2 from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m., where area chefs will compete for bragging rights while helping raise money for local community-assistance agencies. Two-time defending champion Double D's will not be competing this year, opening the door for a new Grand Chili Pepper to be crowned.

"We've got a lot of new entries this year," Phil Griffin, event organizer with First Presbyterian Church, said. "It's always a fun time."

Nine teams vied for the title in 2009, and Griffin said at least that many will participate this year. Some of the early entries include Waffle House, Calvary United Church of Christ, Hospice of Da-

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## HIGH FLYERS

Kings BMX Stunt Show will perform at 10:30 a.m. and 12:30 and 2 p.m. Saturday during the Everybody's Festival. This is the high-flying stunt show's first appearance at the annual festival, but sure to be crowd favorite. The festival runs from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

COURTESY PHOTO



## Circle of Parents allows child rearers chance to share ideas

BY ERIN WILTGEN  
Staff Writer

Fairgrove Family Resource Center seeks to expand resources offered to community child rearers through its Circle of Parents, an extension of parenting classes designed to give adults more freedom to touch on topics they're experiencing right now.

Formatted more as an open discussion, circle of parents is endorsed by Prevent Child Abuse North Carolina and led by trained facilitators. The free sessions follow parenting classes, spanning from 7 to 8 p.m. at Fair Grove United Methodist Church. Refreshments and

child care are provided.

"Circle of Parents is a support group where the parents pick the topics they want to discuss," said Terri Nelson, executive director of Fairgrove Family Resource Center. "It's not instruction-based, it's support group-based. It's truly a group of people that get together to talk and support each other."

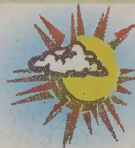
While parenting classes have a particular focus, with materials and goals each week, Circle of Parents ebbs and flows more with whatever issues the participants are currently facing. The support group also doesn't require weekly attendance to

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### Today's Weather



Mostly sunny, 91/65



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