



# Northern Vance hires football coach

Page 1B

# THE DAILY



# DISPATCH

FRIDAY, July 16, 2010

Serving Henderson, Vance County and surrounding areas

Volume XCVI, No. 169

(252) 436-2700

www.hendersondispatch.com

75 cents

## EXPENSIVE ELECTION

# Second primary cost \$15,578

### Vance spent \$13.18 per voter for contest

By TONY THARP  
DAILY DISPATCH WRITER

Vance County's runoff election between Secretary of State Elaine Marshall and former Sen. Cal Cunningham cost local taxpayers \$13.18 per vote — \$15,578 in total, based on figures compiled by the county's Board of Elections.

Just 1,182 people cast ballots in the election, slightly less than 5 percent of the county's 24,824 eligible voters.

The runoff election required the county to open and staff all of its 16 precincts. Director of Elections Faye M. Gill was able to save some money by not staffing precincts as heavily as she would have in a regular election.

Damon Circoستا, executive director of the North Carolina Center for Voter Education, suggests the savings probably wasn't significant, and added that the runoff election highlights a shortcoming in state election law.

"The problem with a runoff election is you have to rev up the entire election apparatus for what is going to be a relatively small number of people participating," he said. "Very few people show up for a second

PLEASE SEE COST, PAGE 10A

# In NSP effort, property rehab OK'd by board

### Demolition, construction bids approved for several properties

By MEGAN REAVIS  
DAILY DISPATCH WRITER

The Vance County Board of Commissioners took steps Thursday to decrease housing blight and stimulate property values.

The board OK'd the demolition of several houses and the construction of another using Neighborhood Stabilization Program funds.

Chairman Danny Wright called the meeting to address housing matters before Monday's deadline to apply for \$2.1 million in NSP funds passed.

The funding enables Vance County to purchase foreclosed property as well as dilapidated structures. With dilapidated structures, the county demolishes them and then rebuilds on the property. The county then sells the improved property and uses the money to purchase other properties that can be rehabilitated.

PLEASE SEE REHAB, PAGE 3A

## MOTHER MOURNS LOSS OF SON

# Teens 'killing each other'

By TONY THARP  
DAILY DISPATCH WRITER

A mother whose son was released from prison in March and then fatally shot last weekend said his past crimes had nothing to do with his death, but acknowledged mothers need to get involved in efforts to curb Henderson's black-on-black crime.

"It's not like it use to be for the simple fact that they don't fight like we used to fight back in the days ... (when people

would fist fight) and in a couple of days it would be over with. But now it's violent, it's guns, and our black teens are killing each other," said Brenda Clack, the mother of 19-year-old shooting victim Dante Montrell Champion.

Clack said she and a sister plan to get together after her



Clack



Champion

son's funeral Saturday at the Henderson Middle School to discuss ways they might involve other mothers in a movement to rid Henderson of guns.

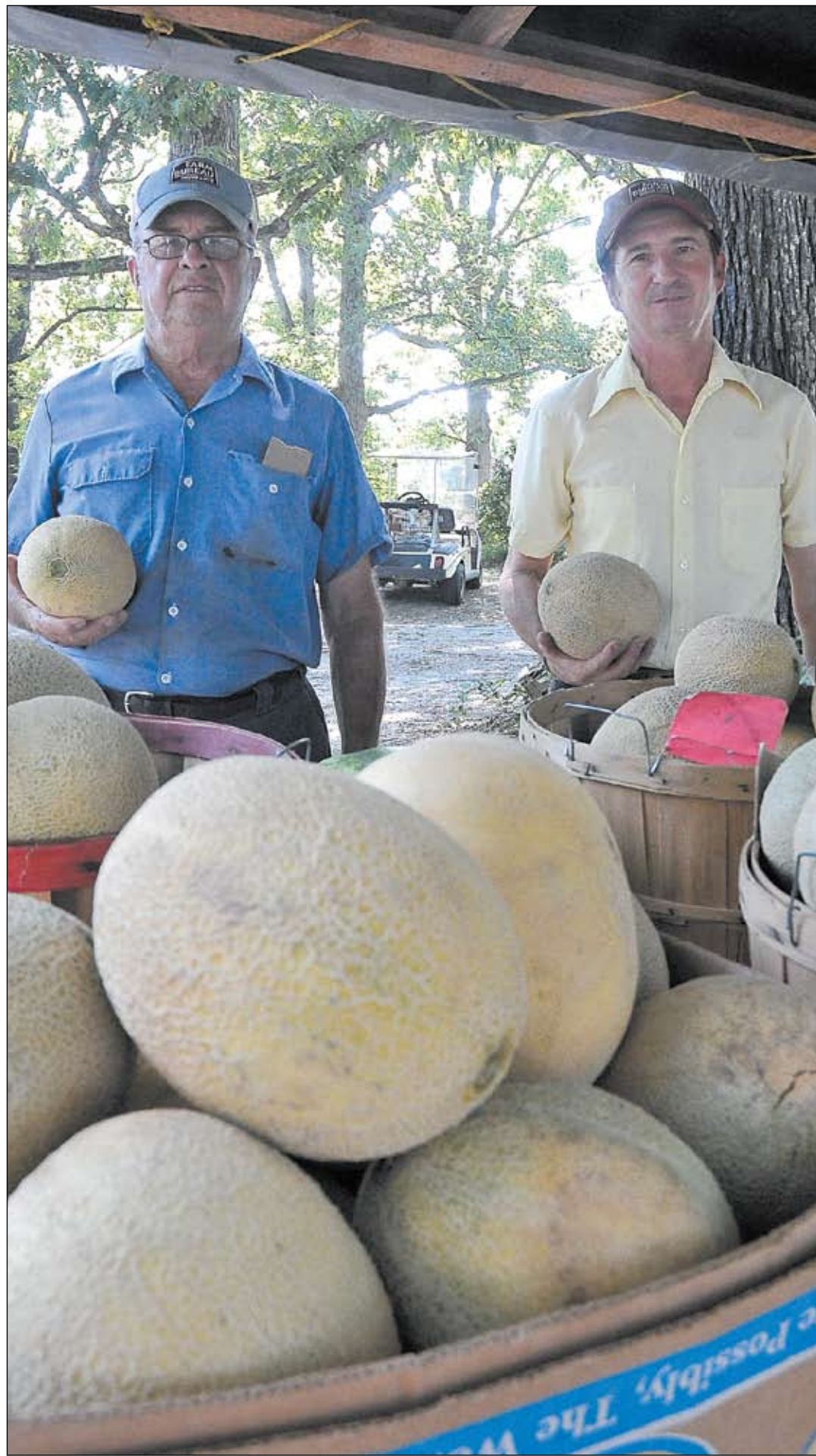
Clack was critical of The Dispatch for publishing accounts of her son's previous brushes with the law in an article on his death, saying

charges — including one of felony possession of a firearm by a felon — were irrelevant to the shooting early Saturday morning at Pearl Street near Lone Street.

"My baby didn't do guns," she said, insisting his arrest for possession was irresponsible or wrong. "He got caught with a gun in my car, but he wasn't responsible for my car. No, I didn't have a gun in my car. I loaned my car to my son

PLEASE SEE TEENS, PAGE 10A

# Cantaloupes reason for festival



### Holtzmanns say Ridgeway soil makes difference

By MEGAN REAVIS  
DAILY DISPATCH WRITER

"It's something in the soil" isn't just an expression to Richard Holtzmann and his son, Richard Holtzmann Jr. — it's the truth.

As two of the last of a handful of genuine Ridgeway cantaloupe growers, the Holtzmanns say the red, gravel-like soil makes all the difference in developing the famous crop.

While they won't be at the sixth annual Ridgeway Cantaloupe Festival on Saturday due to selling cantaloupes at their stand, this father and son encompass what the festival is all about: the history of the well known melons.

The Holtzmanns opened their roadside stand around 1974 and stopped shipping cantaloupes to vendors across the country soon after. Holtzmann Sr. said the cost of developing and shipping a large number of cantaloupes "made us go broke." He explains that was the scenario for many other Ridgeway cantaloupe farmers as well in the 1960s and 70s.

As a result, many farmers switched to more dependable crops, like tobacco, according to Holtzmann Jr. He said there are only about five to 10 acres of cantaloupe farm remaining of the 1,000 or so that were around 40 to 50 years ago.

Still, "you won't find them no better than Ridgeway's," Holtzmann Sr. said. "And that's not a sales pitch."

The Holtzmanns have no need for sales tactics, as their customers are proof. Many are at least second time buyers and keep coming back.

Holtzmann Jr. said most of their customers are local, but have some from Southern Pines and Elizabeth City.

People from across the

DAILY DISPATCH/ASHLEY STEVEN AYSUCUE

Richard Holtzmann (left) and his son, Richard Holtzmann Jr., stand behind an old tobacco wagon converted into their cantaloupe and watermelon stand Thursday morning. The pair are two of the last of a handful of growers of genuine Ridgeway cantaloupes. They operate a stand under a pecan tree off U.S. 1 between Ridgeway and Norlina.

PLEASE SEE FESTIVAL, PAGE 6A

## >> INSIDE TODAY <<

### Index

- Our Hometown.....2A
- Quick Take .....5A
- Opinion .....8A
- Light Side .....9A
- Sports .....1-4B
- Comics .....5B
- Classifieds .....6-7B

### Weather

**TODAY**  
Partly cloudy  
High: 94, Low: 73

**SATURDAY**  
T-storms  
High: 92, Low: 72



Details, 3A

### Deaths

- Baltimore, Md.**  
Tremayne K. Jones, 34
- Henderson**  
Myrtle Barnes, 72  
Dant'e M. Champion Jr., 19  
Willie B. Jones, 65
- Kittrell**  
Lorraine B. Goode, 54

- Lexington, Ky.**  
Willie J. Elam, 47
- Oxford**  
Diane C. Baird, 57
- Waverly, Va.**  
Ola M. Thorpe, 97

Obituaries, 3A, 4A

### CITY APPEARANCE COMMISSION'S 25TH

The Henderson Community Appearance Commission is inviting all of its former members, as well as several city officials and staffers to a party celebrating its 25th anniversary. **Page 5A**

