

## What's Up

### Jobless rate rises

Iredell County's unemployment rate, traditionally lower than most of the North Carolina's 100 counties, equaled the state average in July. During that month, 5.4 percent of Iredell's eligible work force was without a job, up from 4.8 percent in June.

However, while Iredell's July percentage matched the N.C. average, 57 counties fared worse. The highest jobless rate in the state during July was in Cleveland County (12.2 percent), triggered in large part by massive layoffs at Freightliner Corp. Nine other counties, including unemployment leader Yancey County (12.4 percent) reached double-digits in their jobless rates.

### Meet lawmakers

Mayor Al Jones will hold a town hall meeting with N.C. Rep. Mitchell Setzer and State Senators Cal Cunningham and James Forrester on Thursday, Sept. 6 from 7:30 to 9 p.m. at the Mooresville Citizens Center auditorium. The public is invited.

### Balloon Rally tickets

Advance tickets are still being sold for the 28th annual National Balloon Rally, to be held Sept. 14-16 at the Iredell County Fairgrounds in Troutman. Balloon launches and live music are featured throughout the weekend. Advance tickets are \$5 for each day, or \$10 at the gate. Children 5 and under are free. For more information, or for advance ticket sales locations, call 704-873-2892.

### Auction for Habitat

A silent auction to benefit Our Towns Habitat for Humanity is underway at the Habitat Thrift Store, 30210 N. Main St., Cornelius. Fifty-five items will be available to bid on until noon on Sept. 5. For details, call 704-896-8822.

### Church benefit

New Cambridge Christian Church will host an all-day sale on Sunday, Sept. 8. Baked goods, crafts, NASCAR collectibles and more will be available. Proceeds will benefit church projects.

### Safe boating class

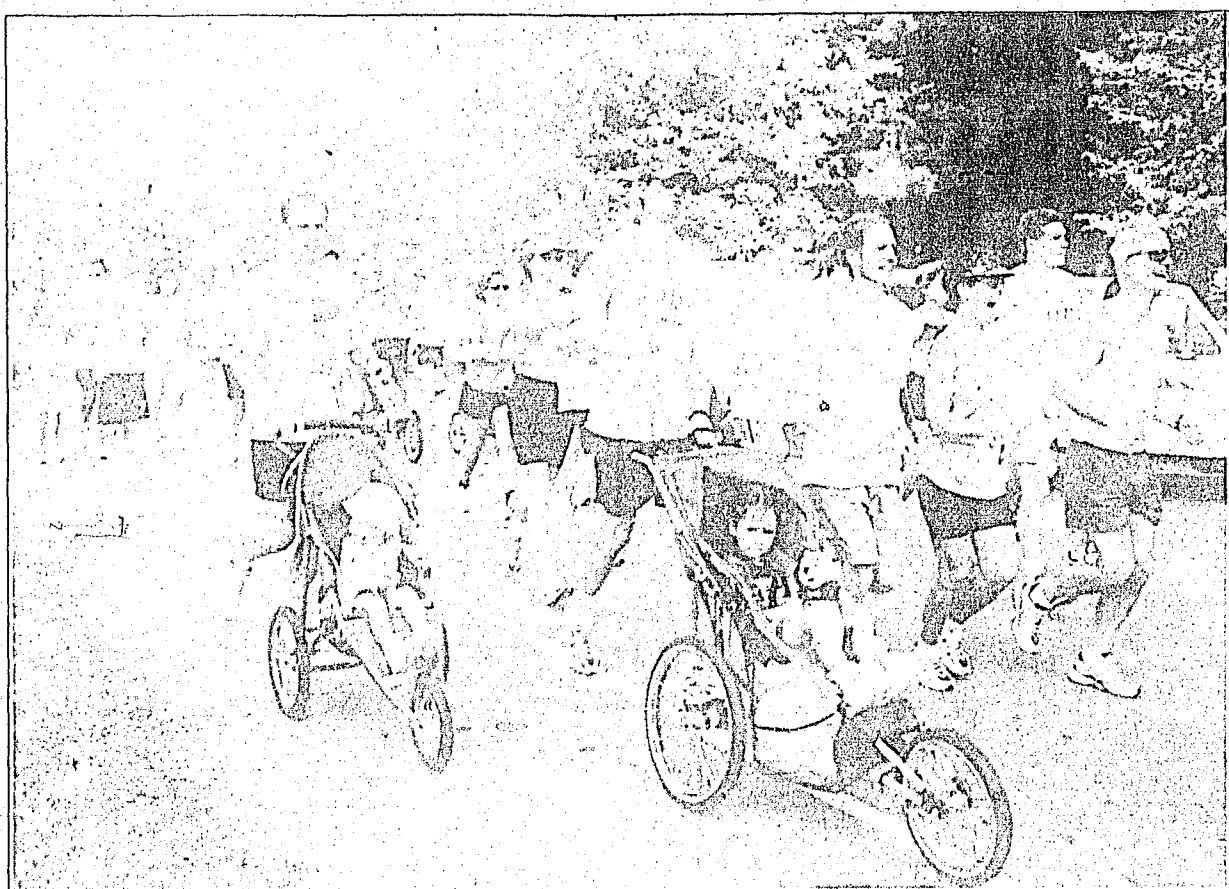
The U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary next week will begin its annual Fall Boating Skills and Seamanship Course at Central Piedmont Community College's North Campus in Huntersville. The course, from Sept. 5 through Dec. 5, is a NAS-BLA approved and will meet the qualification for any boating education requirement for insurance purposes and operator licensing. Details: Call 704-330-4102.

### McClain fundraiser

A car wash and sunglasses sale will be held Saturday at the All Mart Texaco at the corner of Brawley School and Williamson roads. Money raised will go to the family of Michael McClain, a South Iredell High student who suffered severe head injuries in June while playing American Legion baseball. The fundraiser will be from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. Volunteers are needed. For details, call 704-660-1308.

### Office closings

Mooresville and Iredell County governmental offices, plus all solid waste facilities, will be closed on Monday, Sept. 3 for Memorial Day. All emergency services will operate on a regular schedule.



## Running for others' health

Participants in last Saturday's Transplant Trotters races do double-duty with "child care" as they run through Jetton Park on Lake Norman. Some 200 runners competed in the event that raised funds and awareness for organ donations in general and lung transplantation specifically. The key beneficiaries of the event were the Lungs-4-Life Support Group and LifeShare of the Carolinas, the region's non-profit organ and tissue donor program which serves as a link between patients and donors. Race awards were presented to top overall male and female 5K runners, and top winners in 12 age categories with a top award to the runner raising the most money. (Photo by Travis Corriher)

## Football opens

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High Jaguars — a team Mooresville beat 35-19 in the first round of last season's playoffs — at Forestview tonight at 7:30 p.m. (More coverage on Page 1B.)

Dot Phillips, labeled by football coach Mike Carter as "the ultimate Blue Devil fan," will be there — beginning her 41st season of attending every game, home and away. She was supposed to "retire" from the grandstand after last season, but she says she just couldn't imagine having to go without blue-and-white on Friday night.

This season, "as long as

the good Lord's willin' and the creek don't rise," Phillips says she'll once again make an appearance at every game. And she doesn't see that changing anytime soon. "I'll probably go 'til my toes turn up," she says, laughing.

And, she adds, she can't wait for the season to start. "I start watching preseason games on TV, and it gets me all hyped up," she says. "I've been reading about all the (Mooresville) boys practicing and well, I'm ready when they are."

Mooresville's home season begins next Friday (Sept. 7), at 7:30 p.m. against Alexander Central, a date

local folks have been anxiously awaiting.

Downtown businesses are ready, too. Tim Whitener, owner of Pie in the Sky Pizza, says football "makes for good conversations during the season, especially when rivalries come up."

He says several of his customers have children involved in the sport, and coaches can often be spotted in the pizza joint, where football this time of year "is definitely a topic of conversation."

The only unfortunate thing for Whitener: "I have to work every Friday night," he says.

Frank Fields, chairman of

Mooresville's school board, says he can't wait for the excitement of Friday nights.

"We're all having withdrawal pains, waiting on football to begin," he says. "We're craving hot dogs and Cheerwine and that great Mooresville spirit of win, win, win."

"How depressing it would be if we had a losing season," he says, jokingly. "The flags would be flown at half-mast."

Boyles says it's that kind of support for the Blue Devils that makes Mooresville a great place to live. "That's what makes a small town special," he says.

## SATs

Continued from page 1A

slide from 1999-2000. "We have consistently scored well on the SAT," said Supt. Bruce Boyles. "In 1999, we were the sixth highest district in the state."

"With the high percentage of participation and the small population in our district, we come to expect some change from year to year."

And according to the N.C. Department of Public Instruction, generally the higher the percentage of students taking the SAT, the lower the score.

"While our scores are down from last year, we are still in the top third in North Carolina," Boyles said. "Our new administration at the high school has already begun working on some activities to help us bring these scores up."

In Iredell-Statesville, Julia Williams warned against comparing the two systems. "The SAT score is a personal measure of a student's readiness for college and shouldn't be used to compare school systems," she said.

"However, the academic improvements in our local schools over the past few years, along with higher expectations from teachers and parents, undoubtedly has a positive effect on student achievement."

"We're very proud of our students' success and of our staff's hard work and dedication in contributing to their achievement."

All of the I-S schools reported scores over the state average of 992, but Statesville High led the efforts, with an average score of 1033. South Iredell was close behind with 1031, North Iredell followed at 1009 and West Iredell seniors averaged 997.

Here's how other area school systems fared with the SATs: Charlotte-Mecklenburg's total score was 997; Alexander County, 959; Cabarrus County, 1006; Kannapolis, 988; Hickory, 1028; and Rowan-Salisbury, 976.

As a whole, North Carolina topped other states in SAT gains from 1991-2001. In fact, the state's 40-point gain over the past decade is larger than any other state that tested more than 12 percent of its students during the same time period.

Washington came in second, with a 39-point gain, and South Carolina was third, with a gain of 34 points.

The national gain from 1991-2001 was 21 points.

Compared to scores a year earlier, the nation gained only one point in average SAT scores for 2001, but the state's average moved up four points, continuing the upward trend that N.C. has experienced since 1989.

Also, N.C. tied with Maryland for the 12th largest participation rate of SAT takers in the nation. In 2000-01, approximately 44,200 students in N.C. took the SAT — up about 3 percent from the previous year.

However, North Carolina and Texas tied for 48th place in overall 2001 SAT scores.

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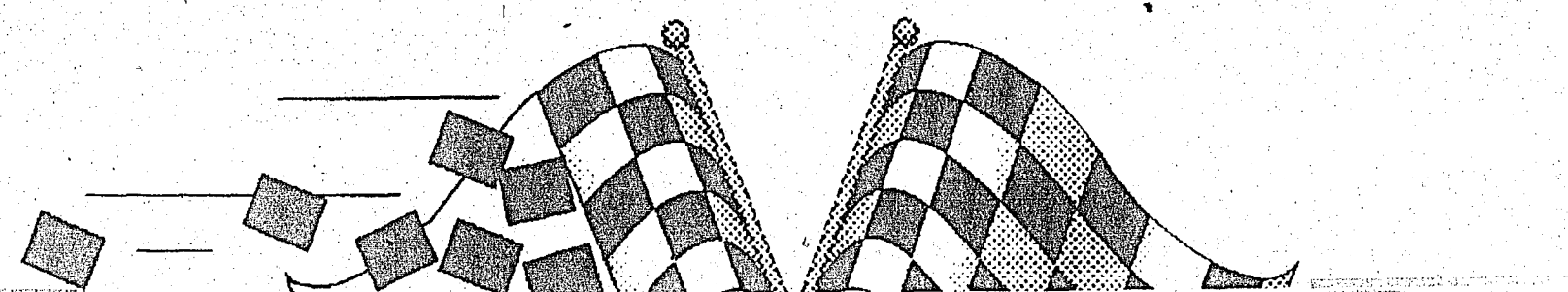
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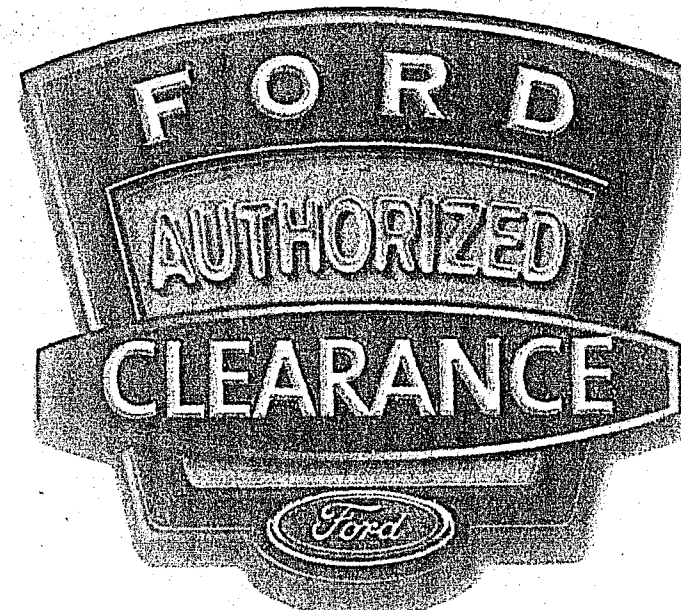
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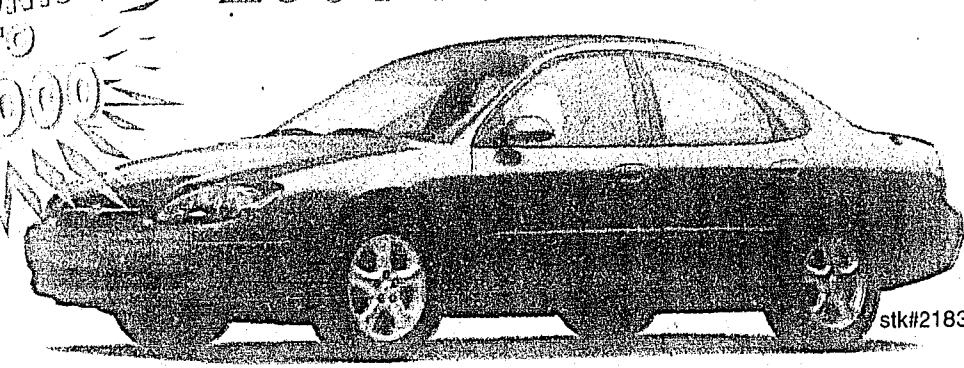
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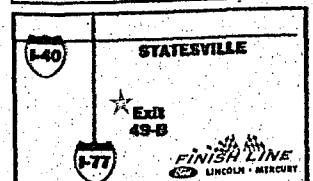
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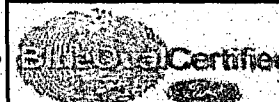
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