

Weather: Plenty of sunshine
Details/Page B6

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LEE BRADSHAW
Sylvan Elementary School

Grade 2

5

MINUTE
TIMES

City looks for more budget cuts

Manager: No tax hike expected this year

By Michael D. Abernethy
Times-News
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The city of Burlington will continue to make cuts to balance its budget in 2010-11, says City Man-

ager Harold Owen. Though detailed figures won't be released until Monday — when Owen and city staff will present the annual budget to the Burlington City Council for the first time — Owen said the city's operating budget will be about \$250,000 lower than the 2009-10 budget, or about \$47.2 million, compared to the current \$47.5 million budget. He doesn't anticipate a tax in-

crease and has not budgeted for one. The city's tax rate is 59 cents per \$100 valuation. The proposed budget for water and sewer is up \$1.2 million, from \$21.7 million to \$22.9 million. Owen said Wednesday that the city's 2010-11 water and sewer budget would have been about \$85,000 below this

year's, but anticipated spending for several capital projects inflated it. A 7 percent increase in water and sewer rates is proposed to cover \$22.5 million in construction at the city's waste treatment plants and about \$9 million in dam repairs at Stoney Creek and Lake Cammack. Those projects are required by state law to meet nutrient-concentration

See BUDGET CUTS / Page A2

► NATION

Companies that do everything from making appliances to selling cruises are reporting strong first-quarter profits — not because of the layoffs many of them used to dress up last year's earnings reports but because people are spending more. A6

LOUISIANA RESCUE

Crews were poised to begin setting fire to oil leaking from the site of an exploded drilling rig in the Gulf of Mexico on Wednesday, a last-ditch effort to get rid of it before it reaches environmentally sensitive marshlands on the coast. A7

► WORLD

The front-runner in Iraq's recent parliamentary elections on Wednesday called for the formation of an internationally supervised caretaker government to prevent the country from sliding into violence. A9

► STATE

A Continental Express flight from Houston to the Washington, D.C., area was diverted Wednesday morning when someone discovered the word "bomb" written on a bathroom mirror inside the plane, U.S. officials said. C2

TIMBER!

Massive tree crashes to earth

Above, Todd Fogleman of Alamance Grading examines an enormous white oak tree after knocking it down Wednesday. The tree had been struck by lightning and was not salvageable; the land will be developed for homes. Below, Fogleman examines the roots after taking down the oak.

Colossal white oak estimated to be well over 100 years old

Think you can top this one?

Got information about a tree in Alamance County larger than this one? Call reporter Roselee Papandrea at 506-3045 or e-mail her at rpapandrea@thetimesnews.com

By Roselee Papandrea
Times-News
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HAWFIELDS — Todd Fogleman spent about 35 minutes digging around the base of an oak tree with a track hoe Wednesday morning, hoping his plan would work. Fogleman, of Alamance Grading in Burlington, decided that once he dug around the roots of the tree, he could just push it over. In his more than 20 years of experience, Fogleman has used the method before, but the job located just east of the intersection of Jim Minor Road and N.C. 119 was different. "This is my biggest tree right here," said Fogleman, pointing at the white oak that stood out

Log on to watch video of Todd Fogleman knocking down the huge oak tree.

See MASSIVE TREE / Page A2

Forged ID cards lead to arrests

By Roselee Papandrea
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Several people were charged Wednesday for their alleged involvement in producing false identification cards. The arrests resulted from an undercover operation involving multiple law enforcement agencies and were part of an initiative the Alamance County Sheriff's Department named "Operation Green Card." The investigation was initiated last month after a drive-by shooting took place at 918 E. Main St. in Haw River. Haw River police determined there were "other illegal activities" going on at that address and asked for help from the Sheriff's Department, according to a Haw River Police Department news release. "The Haw River Police Department had requested the assistance of the Alamance County Sheriff's office with the case in part due to indications of possible gang and drug involvement," the Sheriff's Department release states. The Sheriff's Department conducted an undercover operation with the help of the Asheboro Police Department and sought the assistance of the N.C. Department of Motor Vehicles Bureau of License and Theft, the investigative branch of U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement and the Social Security Administration. Search warrants were served at three different locations early Wednesday. Several items were seized and six people were arrested. During the search, authorities seized computer and camera equipment, a half-gram of cocaine, more than 742 grams of marijuana, including 24 small marijuana



Gonzalez



Martinez



Matias



Sebastian



Jac. Sosa



Jose Sosa

► PEOPLE

Sandra Bullock has filed for divorce from her husband, Jesse James, citing discord and conflict of personalities without "any reasonable expectations of reconciliation." A2

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Schools scrap race-based attendance

By Mike Wilder
Times-News
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The Alamance-Burlington Board of Education has eliminated the use of some students' race to determine what school they attend. Board members voted Monday night to change the policy following a 2009 ruling by a federal judge that the school system has met its obligations to address the remains

of racial segregation. As a result, school board members eliminated race-based attendance at some schools that were part of the former Alamance County system. The plan had been designed to achieve balance in terms of the number of white and black students at the schools. Under the previous plan:

■ Black students who live on the boundary of the Pleasant Grove Elementary and E.M. Yoder Elementary attendance zones went to E.M. Yoder, while white students on the boundary went to Pleasant Grove. ■ Black students who live on the boundary of the Pleasant Grove Elementary and Haw River Elementary attendance zones went to Haw River, while white students

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