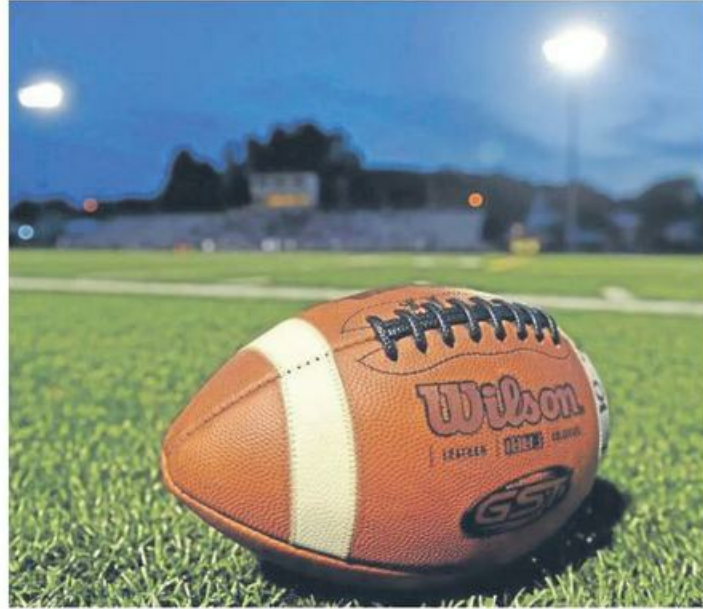


Burke County
OKs \$13M
for EMS,
animal
shelter

LOCAL, A2



Draughn hits
field after
monthlong
hiatus for
homecoming

SPORTS, B1

THE NEWS HERALD

Thursday, October 17, 2024

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HELENE AFTERMATH

MILLIONS TO REPAIR



XAVIER MARTIN

A section of the bridge along the Catawba River Greenway was lifted up and mangled by fast-moving floodwaters during Hurricane Helene.

Morganton's parks, ball fields, greenway damaged

CHRISSEY MURPHY
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As Hurricane Helene approached, Morganton parks and recreation officials moved equipment like mowers and golf carts to higher ground at Catawba Meadows Park.

Andrew Tallent, assistant director of Morganton's parks and recreation department, said staff expected flooding similar

to Hurricane Frances in 2004. Flood water was about 2 feet deep in the field house near the ball fields in 2004.

Flood waters ended up being more than 7 feet deep after Hurricane Helene swept through as a tropical storm. The flooding filled the concessions stand with water and ruined the room where brand new baseball and softball equipment was stored. Mowers, golf carts, Gator utility vehicles and

maintenance machines were flooded and now won't start. The ball fields were left covered in silt.

Bleachers were thrown on top of dug-outs. Fencing around the fields was mangled by the water and debris. Sinkholes swallowed some of the ground around the fields.

Please see **REPAIR**, Page A3

Hildebran planning \$1.4 million park

FROM STAFF REPORTS
news@morganton.com

Hildebran started work on a new park that is expected to open next fall. The town is fundraising for the effort.

The town broke ground on Royal Park in July. The park is being built on the site of

the former Hildebran High School, located on South Center Street.

The cost of the park is estimated at \$1.4 million and the town has \$1.1 million in grants toward the cost, said Beth Heile, executive director of the Burke River Trail Association. Of the \$1.1 million, the town

received a \$289,700 North Carolina Parks and Recreation Trust Fund grant in January 2022. In addition, the town got \$146,000 from the State Capital and Infrastructure Fund and \$640,000 from the State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds, Heile said.

The town is trying to raise \$300,000 to

help pay for the rest of the park. If more than that is donated, it will be applied to a future pavilion at the park, Heile said. The pavilion is not part of the first phase of the park, she said.

Please see **HILDEBRAN**, Page A3

Tips for creating
enchancing fall
tablescapes. **LIVELY, D1**

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Weather

Plenty of sunshine

High 66

Low 33

FORECAST • A8



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