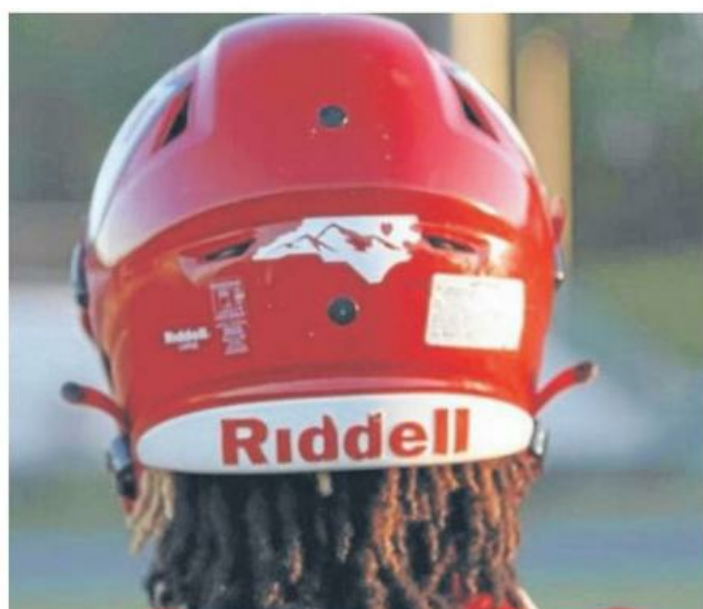


Burke seeking
advice on FEMA
reimbursement
for Hurricane
Helene expenses.

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Key numbers
from Freedom's
NWC-opening
loss to Alexander
Central.

PAGE B1

THE NEWS HERALD

Tuesday, October 15, 2024

WHERE **YOUR** STORY LIVES

morganton.com

\$7 BILLION LOSS?



XAVIER MARTIN

Delmar Perez, left, speaks with Javier Lopes, right front, and Vicente Ramirez, right back, at Fitzgerald Nursery on Oct. 4. Nursery owner Mike Fitzgerald has 50 workers at the nursery, all of whom he hopes to keep on despite the significant financial loss from the storm.

Western NC farms were hit by Hurricane Helene. Burke County is no exception.

CHRISSEY MURPHY
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Jeff Houk is a third-generation farmer. His family has lived on land around Morningstar Church Road in Morganton since his grandfather bought it in 1920.

In the 60 years Houk has farmed the land, he's never seen flooding like what came during Hurricane Helene's onslaught.

"The other day when I was down here, I was crying and stuff," Houk said.

Flooding carved wider banks for the nearby Silver Creek, taking a chunk out of the land where Houk plants his corn. Of the 7 acres planted, Houk thinks he lost about 2 acres of the crop. Some of his soybean crop was damaged, but not as much as the corn.

In his cow pastures, trees toppled onto

the fencing. Houk had to put down one of his cows after he believed she broke her hip or back trying to get over a fallen log.

But looking at the damage Wednesday, nearly two weeks after the storm, Houk said he now feels grateful the damage to his farm was limited.

Please see **FARMING**, Page A3

Burke voters to answer sales tax question on ballot

SHARON MCBRAYER
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In this year's general election, along with the U.S. presidential race and the North Carolina governor's race, Burke County voters will also weigh in on an in-

crease in sales tax.

On the ballot for Burke is a quarter-percent local sales and use tax.

In July, the Burke County Board of Commissioners approved putting the question before voters this year.

If approved, the county's sales tax would increase from 6.75% to 7%. It would not be applied when buying food or gas.

In 2007, the North Carolina General Assembly approved this increase in sales and use tax as an option for counties. The

last time Burke County held a referendum on the sales tax was Nov. 4, 2008. That's when voters said no to the measure, with 25,385 people (72.85%) voting against it

Please see **TAX**, Page A3

Tamarind's sweet-sour profile adds *oomph* in everything from sauces to cocktails. **LIVELY, D1**

Inside

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Classifieds	B7-8	Sports	B1-6
Opinion	A6	What to Watch	D4

Weather

Partial sunshine
High 62
Low 38
FORECAST • A8



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