

# Currents

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# AIMING HIGH

## Cadets compete for top honors

STORY AND PHOTOS BY  
WILLIAM R. TOLER  
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VANCEBORO — Puddled drill pads from the previous night's rain didn't stop cadets from giving their all at West Craven High School's fourth annual Coastal Classic Drill Meet Oct. 22.

Sixteen Air Force JROTC units competed in the competition, including Surrattsville High School from Clinton, Md. While other schools didn't have to drive as far, cadets came from Cumberland, Montgomery, Nash and Wayne counties.

Teams competed in regulation drill maneuvers and exhibition events. Regulation events were pre-designed by West Craven students. Drill cards containing the routine were sent to the schools prior to the competition. Exhibition events, however, are created by the individual teams and are judged on creativity.

Senior Master Sgt. Jake Jacobs from Pinecrest High School in Southern Pines has been impressed with his freshman cadets this year. Of the 24 cadets on the drill team, Jacobs said about half of them are freshmen.

"Our freshmen this year are better than last year," he said. "I use my freshmen as

an example to my AS IIs and AS IIIs [sophomores and juniors]."

Jacobs was optimistic about this meet. "We've been here every year," he said. "We've walked away with at least 10 trophies." He added that Pinecrest had not yet won overall, but intended to change that, if not this year, next year.

With fellow instructor Col. Cecil Eason away, Chief Master Sgt. Alden Hargett held down the fort with the help of cadets from the Eagle Squadron and parent supporters.

With one of the main goals of the unit being to be "cadet-run," student leaders have been preparing for this since the beginning of the

school year. Tom Meutsch, current squadron commander, said that he and spring semester commander Ashley Scott led preparation for the event.

Meutsch said that cadets did "everything you can imagine as far as administration goes." That included developing the drill routines and testing them out to make sure they fit within the marked off areas, known as drill pads. Students were also responsible for contacting the competing schools and judges from Seymour Johnson Air Force Base, and ordering trophies for the winners.

"It's pretty challenging," said Scott. She and Meutsch are both seniors this year.

Jonathan Carte from Seventy-First High School in Fayetteville spins an M-1 rifle in the individual exhibition armed event at West Craven's Coastal Classic Drill Meet.



Cadets from Southern Wayne High School in Dudley splash through their exhibition routine after rain left puddles in the parking lot.



Cadet Senior Airman Ariel Hubbard from Seventy-First High School delivers her exhibition performance.

## Flying High JROTC sets pace for life

WILLIAM R. TOLER  
CURRENTS EDITOR



As I stood in the ROTC room Saturday, staring at the trophies on the wall before leaving the drill meet, I began reflecting on my four years of leadership training.

All through high school, I was part of a great organization: the NC-959 Eagle Squadron of Air Force Junior ROTC at West Craven High School. What made it great was the students and the instructors. My group was the first graduating class of cadets in the program. We got it started and made it what it is today.

Col. Cecil Eason and Chief Master Sgt. Alden Hargett are the fearless leaders who put in countless hours both inside and outside of the classroom to provide cadets with the leadership opportunities and team and confidence building activities that change their lives forever. (Note: Chief Hargett replaced Chief Master Sgt. Bill Mann in the fall of '97.)

Here comes the part where I brag about myself.

The roots of my journalism career began in early 1996 when I became squadron photographer. I was responsible for recording chapter history through photographs and video. The following year I was appointed public affairs NCO and the next step after that was public affairs officer my junior year. My big project that year was the recruitment drive at the middle school. (Note to Col. Eason: If I had the skills then that I do now, I would have gotten the newsletter off the ground.)

Though I have been regarded as a student leader for the past 10 years, I have chosen the "lead by example" style. Not being one to boss people around, I chose to stay busy and do an excellent job in everything I did. Even though I never officially held a position for logistics/supply, I became more familiar with the job than anyone, only to be outdone by Chief Hargett.

Just before my senior year I was interviewed for squadron commander. Being honored for the consideration, I declined modestly, feeling I wasn't fully qualified for the job. (Margaret, you deserved it more.) I was, however, appointed deputy squadron commander.

Space limits me from listing every activity I was involved in, so I'll sum it up. In addition to the co-curricular activities, I also spent many hours each week participating in after-school projects including Adopt-A-Highway, car parking and various other service projects.

I was also a member of the Strike Eagles Drill Team, an award-winning group of precision drillers that continues to spread West Craven's name across the state. I served as Color Guard commander and later as the right rifle position for an award-winning team.

I had the opportunity to attend two summer leadership camps that put my leadership and drilling skills to the test.

To use the cliché "to make a long story short," I don't think I would be who I am today without the experiences I had as a cadet. Thank you Col. Eason, Chief Mann, Chief Hargett and all of the students I shared those four years with. It was a ride I will never forget.

### Overall Winners

**First Place**  
Surrattsville High School, Clinton, Md.

**Second Place**  
Riverside High School, Durham

**Third Place**  
Sanderson High School, Raleigh



The drill team from Surrattsville High School in Maryland presents an innovative rifle exhibition.

# GHOSTS, GOBLINS AND GOODIES

## Hal I loween happenings scheduled across county

STAFF REPORTS  
THE INDEPENDENT REGISTER

Several trick-or-treating alternatives are planned this weekend, in case you're still trying to figure out what your boys and ghouls are going to do this Halloween.

Sigma Phi Sigma Sigma, a fraternal organization at Craven Community College, will host a Halloween party on CCC's campus from 6 to 9 p.m. Saturday, Oct. 29. Games and concessions will be available along with a haunted house.

Local band Nickel Wound Poets will be providing entertainment. Admission is \$3 without a costume and \$1.50 for those who come dressed up.

The Twin Rivers YMCA is

presenting its annual Halloween at the Y children's party from 6 to 7:30 p.m. Thursday, Oct. 27. Admission is \$6 and includes a commemorative T-shirt.

Halloween at the Y will feature arts and crafts, a beanbag toss, a fishing pond and a haunted house that YMCA Director Tom Braaten calls ideal for young children.

"We have what we call a kid-friendly haunted house," he said. "It's a little scary but not too macabre, there's no blood and guts. It's a nice place to get the kids in here as opposed to being on the street."

New Bern's annual Parade of Preschoolers, presented by the Craven County Cooperative Extension and

the New Bern Recreation and Parks Department, is scheduled for 9:30 a.m. Friday, Oct. 28.

The event features costumed children parading down Middle Street in New Bern's historic downtown district. The parade concludes at Union Point Park, where Halloween treats await children and parents. For more information, call (252) 633-1477 or (252) 639-2902.

For a Halloween day trick-or-treating alternative, Twin Rivers Mall is inviting children to trick-or-treat indoors from 5 to 7 p.m. Monday, Oct. 21.

Candy, treats and small gifts will be available at participating stores.



INDEPENDENT REGISTER PHOTO ILLUSTRATION / JESSICA SIMPSON



INDEPENDENT REGISTER / ERIC VOLIVA

## A fairly good time

As the ferris wheel turns at the Craven County Fairgrounds in James City, the week-long Coastal Carolina Fair and Expo came to a close Oct. 21. The fair served Craven, Pamlico, Jones and Carteret counties.



## Band-Aid

Oct. 29

**Black Sky Radius**  
**Snatchapple**  
**Omega Agency**  
**Widow**

The Salty Dawg, New Bern  
8 p.m.

\$5

**Pamalee**

Pantana Bob's, Greenville  
9 p.m.

**Nickel Wound Poets**

Craven Community College,  
New Bern

**Sycamore Sighting**

Fall Festival, Aurora

9 p.m.

Free

Oct. 29 (cont.)

**Two Weeks Notice**  
Bootleggers, Havelock  
9:30 p.m.

**Black Ice**

Nikki's, Newport  
9 p.m.

**Tuesday Nights**

**Stretch**

Open-mic Night  
Harvey Mansion,  
New Bern

Free

Bands:

Send your gig announcements to  
william@indieregister.com

## Community Events

### International Film Series to show Britain's 'Billy Elliot'

Craven Community College's International Film Series will present "Billy Elliot" Nov. 4. The British film, set during the miners' strike in 1984, is a tale about a young man who makes the transition from boxing to ballet. For more information, contact Charlene White at 638-7295.

### 'The King and I' comes to town

The New Bern Civic Theatre will present the Rodgers and Hammerstein classic "The King and I" at the Saax Bradbury Playhouse. Show dates are the first three weekends in November. For more information, contact the New Bern Civic Theatre at 634-9057 or 633-0567 or visit [www.newberncivictheatre.org](http://www.newberncivictheatre.org).

### ECU to screen professor's film

There will be a screening of the film "Chicks 101" Oct. 28 at East Carolina University. The film was written, produced and directed by Lovinder S. Gill and was produced by Geoff Thompson, who also acted in the movie. Gill and Thompson are both professors at ECU in the School of Communication.

Recently, "Chicks 101" was awarded Best Feature Film at the Reel Backwoods Film Festival. The screening will take place 8 p.m. in the Science and Technology Building in room C307 and admission is free. For more information, visit [www.chicks101movie.com](http://www.chicks101movie.com).

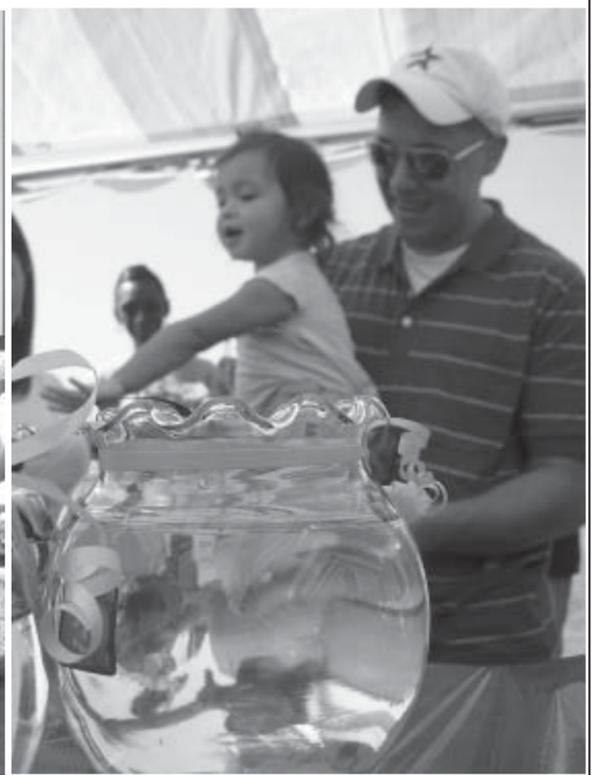
## A warm day for chili

PHOTOS BY  
WILLIAM R. TOLER  
THE INDEPENDENT REGISTER

Right: Luetta Felton serves up Jerone Horn's chili Oct. 15 at the 24th annual Havelock Chili Fest. Horn was the People's Choice winner for 2003 and 2004.

Far Right: Two-year-old Melanie Barber, held by her dad Wayne, tosses a ball into a fish bowl to win a fish at the Craven Community College Accounting Club's booth.

Below: Lance Cpl. Paul Payne from the Crash, Fire and Rescue division at Cherry Point demonstrates the functions of a fire truck to children.



Filmed in  
Glorious  
Black & White

Independent Register