

Hopewell Valley football preview, B1

Former Thunder star leads Yankees, B1

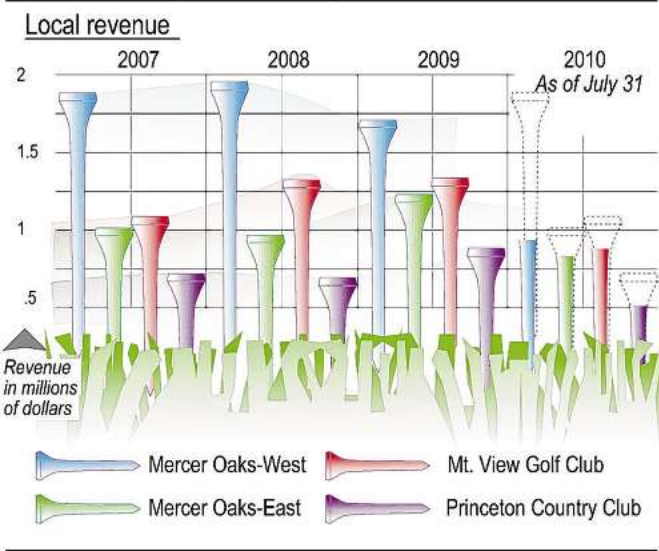
The Times

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Out of the rough, onto the green



In down times, public courses at the fore

By David Karas
STAFF WRITER

For Mercer County golfers, county-owned courses are the key to enjoying the hobby in a down economy. And thanks to golfers' continued patronage, the courses have become nearly "recession-proof."

After three straight years of recession-fueled declines, and adverse weather conditions in 2009, the industry as a whole is making a comeback, according to the National Golf Foundation. It seems that Mercer is no exception. So far this year, the number of rounds played and tournaments booked on its four public courses are up sharply.

"I actually think our courses have really been in good shape, and the popularity

County-owned golf clubs doing especially well

in Mercer County has increased and has been really healthy," said Kevin Bannon, executive director of the Mercer County Park Commission. "Definitely, we did take a small hit last year, but we seem to have bounced back again." He explained that the courses experienced about a 3 percent decline in rounds played last year, but that this year rounds are up the same 3 percent. He attributed the decline to last year's weather.

The county's courses include Mercer Oaks East and West in Princeton Junction, Mountain View in Ewing, and Princeton Country Club in Princeton. County residents can purchase annual ID cards

that offer substantial discounts on rounds, in many cases half of the rate charged for regular players. In the last three to five years, Bannon said, the number of residents who purchase ID cards has risen from about 8,000 to about 10,000.

Members can pay as little as \$8 a round during off peak hours, while prime-time costs can approach \$26 for card-carrying county residents and \$52 for others.

"It's just such a great bargain," said Bannon, "and we've grown every year but last year."

"We're almost recession-proof," he added, explaining that over the past few years, SEE **GOLF**, PAGE A06

Ewing church won't be torn down

Presbyterian board tells leaders stone edifice remains strong

By Lisa Coryell
SPECIAL TO THE TIMES

EWING — The planned demolition of the historic Ewing Presbyterian Church sanctuary has been called off by a review panel that says the 143-year-old house of worship is in better shape and requires far less costly renovations than church leaders have led the congregation to believe.

In a report issued late Friday, a committee of regional religious leaders charged with deciding the fate of the iconic Scotch Road sanctuary overturned the church's 2008 decision to raze the stone edifice, concluding "there were neither structural nor financial grounds to demolish."

The seven-member administrative commission gave Ewing church leaders three options for the sanctuary: Renovate it at cost of about \$500,000, sell or donate it to another organization, or lease it to another organization for restoration.

"The stone sanctuary might someday deteriorate to the point that demolition is appropriate," the administrative commission concluded. "For now the Ewing Administrative Commission has reset the process, with the hope that the church will now unify as one body,

SEE **CHURCH**, PAGE A16



CIE STROUD/FOR THE TIMES

Might as well jump

Dulce Maria Gomez, 5, leaps gleefully as she enjoys spray from an open fire hydrant during the Take It To The Streets program on Home Avenue in Trenton Friday.

N.J. trails nation in vaccination

From fear to finances, parents finding reasons to forgo shots

By Susan K. Livio
STATEHOUSE BUREAU

Call it one of New Jersey's medical mysteries.

One of the most affluent states in the country, home to more than a few giants of the pharmaceutical industry, New Jersey also has one of the lowest rates of immunizing babies and toddlers in the nation.

The state ranked 42nd last year — and 45th in 2008 — in a telephone survey of parents and pediatricians by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

New Jersey's 64 percent rate for giving infants and toddlers recommended shots for polio, hepatitis B, mumps, measles and rubella and other diseases last year was well below the national average of nearly 71 percent, and the lowest in the Northeast. In Pennsylvania, 72 percent of infants and toddlers got their shots. Nearly 71 percent got them in New York City.

Nobody knows for sure why New Jersey's vaccination rate has slipped so low, but public health professionals and



JENNIFER BROWN/NEWHOUSE NEWS

An unhappy Carly Brustein, 2, receives a nasal flu vaccine at a free walk-in clinic in East Brunswick. Even with such events, the child vaccination rate in New Jersey is among the lowest in the nation.

pediatricians say they've seen it building for several years.

In low-income and immigrant communities, many lack health insurance, transportation to the doctor's office, or struggle to understand the complex schedule of up to 28 shots recommended by the time a child is two-and-a-half years old.

SEE **VACCINE**, PAGE A09

Inside the glass booth

Fliers sound off about scanner technology coming to Newark

By Steve Strunsky
NEWHOUSE NEWS SERVICE

ARLINGTON, Va. — Almost by rote, Trevor Michael removed his shoes and his belt, and emptied his wallet, keys, change and other personal effects into a plastic tray to be X-rayed. Like most airline passengers in the post-9/11 era, the 52-year-old Plainsboro man knows the drill.

But then came the unfamiliar part, involving the latest

technology deployed by the Transportation Security Administration to make the skies less friendly to terrorists: the full-body scanner.

Although Michael frequently travels for his real estate investment business, he had never experienced a full-body scan. Flying back to New Jersey from Ronald Reagan Washington National Airport in Arlington, Va., last week, he had his first experience.

He's likely to have many more. Under an accelerated rollout of the technology this year, a slightly different type of full-body scanner than those used at Reagan National are scheduled to arrive at Newark Liberty International, John F. Kennedy and LaGuardia airports next month.

Waiting at the gate in Arlington, Michael and other passengers flying from Reagan SEE **SCANNERS**, PAGE A09

Invasive insects on malodorous march

Experts predict a breakout season for stink bugs

By Erin Duffy
STAFF WRITER

If you haven't yet experienced the pleasure of meeting *Halyomorpha halys*, this could be your year.

Typical meeting places include windowsills, attic vents, possibly a curtain or drape.

You'll know them by their diamond shape, speckled back,



USDA PHOTO

and one more distinctive characteristic — their smell.

Halyomorpha halys, their scientific name, sounds a bit more distinguished than the moniker most people know this insect by — the stink bug.

The population of stink bugs, specifically brown marmorated stink bugs, has exploded across the East Coast since they were first discovered in America in 1996.

In 1999, the first stink bug was recorded in New Jersey. Since then, they've seemingly settled in for the long haul. A native of Asian countries including China, Korea and Japan, the invasive species is predicted to be seen in record numbers this fall as the insect prepares to hole up inside SEE **BUGS**, PAGE A09

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