

## Black Business Support Day Brings Thousands of Dollars To Black-owned Bank

By John Raye

Concerned consumer and business owners in the Dudley-Lee Shopping Center will make history by "marching their dollars" to Greensboro's only Black-owned bank, Mutual Community Savings Bank at 12 Noon, Saturday, May 1st as part of a continuing effort to support the need for more Black-owned businesses at the local, state and national level, and to create more employment in the African-American community.

Dubbed "Black Business Support Day", the day long program which includes demonstrations, vendor displays, seminars and workshops on finance, economics, business development and Black entrepreneurship is focused on re-directing and impacting the \$ 650 Billion dollar Black economy.

The march is expected to generate thousand of dollars in new deposits for Mutual, one of only 38 Black banks still in existence in the nation, and also call attention to the critical need to support the establishment of more Black owned businesses and other financial institutions.

"We're not a poor community. Not at all. The problem is that we spend and spend, and support every other business, except those in our community", says event organizer, John Raye, regional director for ComproTax and the MATAH Network, primary sponsors of the "Black Business Support Day" program.

ComproTax, a national franchise now in its 23 year, is located in the Dudley-Lee Shopping Center, 710 East Market Street. It is the nation's largest Black-owned income tax preparation service with offices in Winston-Salem, Lexington and Raleigh. The MATAH Network is a nationwide distribution channel for products manufactured by small business owners and aspiring entrepreneurs.

The march to the bank will begin at 11:30 am from the ComproTax office complex, 710 East Market Street, and will feature prominent business leaders including Jackie Mayfield, President and founder of ComproTax.

"Our community is hurting. Our young people cannot find jobs, the Black unemployment rate continues to rise, the crime rate is too high, and far too many of our youth are locked away in jails and prison, so it makes good sense to me to get busy re-directing some of our hard-earned dollars back to where we can create some jobs, some work for our youth," Raye said.

ComproTax and the MATAH Network have created a college internship program for young college students where they can earn as they learn about sales and marketing, business planning and business entrepreneurship. Applications are now being accepted for the program.

"We want our young people to graduate and to be clear about their role in society. If there are no jobs waiting for them, they must realize they already possess the capacity to create their own jobs...their own source of employment", said Raye. "This is also a great opportunity to gain valuable sales and marketing experience before graduation", he said.

Organizers are currently conducting monthly seminars on the fourth Thursday of each month to promote the concept of Black entrepreneurship and to advance a philosophy of self-help and self-reliance.

"This is the best time to be in business for yourself. It's an exciting time. Look at the economic impact this "Support Black Business Day" will have on the community. This shows what can be accomplished when self is moved out of the way and we come together on one accord", Raye said.

"Action speaks louder than words. And today, our dollars are talking real good for us!"

## Plant Practices

# Think Before Pruning

Pruning is one of the most common horticultural practices. Yet plants are often pruned with little understanding of why it's being done or what affect the pruning will have on the plant. There are a variety of reasons a plant needs to be pruned. It may be to control size, improve flowering or fruiting, remove dead or diseased growth, or to achieve a unique appearance.

Most shrub pruning will involve two basic techniques. Thinning involves the removal of an entire branch back to the main trunk or stem. Heading back is simply shortening the length of a branch. Both techniques can be utilized in reducing the size of shrubs.

Many flowering plants are pruned to help insure a good flower display. Roses are an excellent example. Although many flowering plants are pruned at one time or another, don't fall into the trap of thinking that every plant that flowers has to be pruned. For instance, once flowering trees achieve a certain size, they need little if any pruning.

Plants grown for their edible fruit usually receive an annual pruning. Grapes are a good example of plants, which must be pruned properly if they are to be productive.

Removing dead, diseased, or damaged growth is an easy type of pruning because you know exactly what needs to be removed.

Pruning a plant to achieve a unique appearance is illustrated when shrubs are pruned into formal shapes such as a squared-off hedge because this is deemed to fit into a certain type of landscape. An extreme example of this type of pruning is the art of topiary where plants are pruned into any number of shapes including animals. Keep in mind that most ornamental plants will look better if they are pruned in accordance with their natural habit of growth.

Try to use good quality tools when you prune. The basic pruning tools for a homeowner would be a small pruning saw, a pair of hand shears, and a long-handled pair of shears, which are usually called loppers. Hedge shears, are a quick way to prune some shrubs but usually don't leave the best appearance. When shrubs are repeatedly sheared, they tend to have all their foliage on the outside of the plant because the light can't penetrate into the interior. Shearing is sometimes the only practical way to prune something like a large hedge because it saves time. But try not to let that be the predominant method of pruning you use.

Proper pruning can help maintain a good-looking landscape. But pruning without understanding why you're doing it can lead to undesirable results.

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