

Coming Next Week:

For two days this week, more than 800 people met in Raleigh to discuss and plan for North Carolina's future. People in the discussions range from politicians to business people, professionals and just ordinary citizens. The Carolina Times was there and next week will give you an in-depth, comprehensive and hard-hitting look at N.C. 2000: The Future and You. Don't miss it!

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Words Of Wisdom

Decision and determination are the engineer and fireman of our train to opportunity and success.

—Burt Lawlor

It takes hard work to make easy living.

—Anonymous

Consumer Fraud is a Con Game Don't Be Marked

By Milton Jordan
Executive Editor

Part III

Con games don't happen on street corners, all con artists aren't fast talkers. Some con artists are slick writers, and they get through the mail, and through advertisements, some of your favorite publications, or often on television and radio.

Consumer con artists have turned the current recession into an economic boom. According to a survey of Better Business Bureaus, conducted by U.S. News & World Report Magazine, there is a rash of schemes in the marketplace, all designed to cheat consumers, caught in the grips of recession.

In New York, a company offers consumers credit without credit checks, provided you pay them a non-refundable fee of \$100 to \$150. You pay the fee and they send you information on a company that does in fact provide credit cards without credit checks, if you put the credit limit in escrow in the bank. The company with the cards doesn't charge a fee.

The "company" that charges the fee has run ads in many major newspapers around the country. There is no way to determine how many people they have bilked out of how much money.

Your credit rating is on the downside, and you are in the market for a major appliance purchase, be careful, because there is a consumer fraud scheme going around with just you in mind.

In this scam, a "company" promises to sell you an appliance at a good discount price for cash, in three installments. The merchandise is to be delivered when you finish paying.

In a letter to a New York state Better Business Bureau, a consumer bitten by this scam, writes: "I was contacted by a New York firm) \$1020 in cash for the purchase of one General Electric refrigerator and one washer. The condition was that these items would not be delivered unless full sum was paid. The amount was paid toward the end of December.

By January, 1982, when the consumer check after the appliances had not arrived, the address was not located at the address it had given. The phone was disconnected, and there was no sign of the business or the money.

Another hard times scam, often advertised in circulation magazines, offers you big money easy work at home. The "companies" offering these deals charge you \$10 or \$15 for a kit that shows you how to make the money. In one instance, an envelope stuffing business, the "kit" explains how you can place an ad, and bilk other unsuspecting and often desperate folks with the same scheme.

In the Triangle area, one of the biggest consumer fraud schemes is solicitations, particularly during the season of "giving", according to Joe Bowling, director of the Triangle Better Business Bureau. For the next 30 days or so, we will be bombarded with calls about solicitations," Bowling said. "We encourage that, because it's too late to stop once you've given your money away."

These solicitations, according to Bowling, come from a consumer from a lot of different directions. Sometimes it's a person, complete with I.D. badge and license standing in front of a store, collecting

money for "missionary" work. In most instances, according to consumer fraud specialists around the country, the only benefactor of the missionary zeal is the person collecting the money.

Mail order fraud is also big in the Triangle area. Bowling said, not unlike most urban areas where people make better than average salaries.

Mail order frauds will offer you everything from get rich quick schemes to vacations and mail order courses in non-existent computer and other high technology industry schools.

"What consumers have to realize when they pick up these letters, flyers or whatever," Bowling explained, "is that they have a responsibility to 'sleep on it.'"

Bowling warns that the consumer should never be rushed into a decision about spending money. The more the push to buy now, the greater the possibility that you're being conned.

"Generally speaking," said Bowling, "people should be extremely careful of any deal that requires you to send the money first."

But this holiday season is not the only time of the year that consumer fraud proliferates in this area. During the Spring and Summer months, consumers can be ripped off by vacation scams.

In some of these scams, you'll get a newspaper or magazine ad offering you an outstanding vacation — three days and two night — in some exotic place such as Reno, Las Vegas or Los Angeles for an amazingly low price. According to the scheme, the low price is made possible because the airlines and the hotels are cooperating. Well, you send off your \$50 or so, and find out when you get to the airport that they don't know anything about you. And if you grit your teeth and take the trip anyway, you'll find that the hotel people don't know you either, and the promoter has your "fee" and is long gone.

So believe it or not, just because you appear to be making a legitimate purchase or taking advantage of a deal, doesn't mean that you aren't being conned.

It is just as Bowling said: "Any time you hear about a deal, just remember, you're only going to get exactly what you pay for, and you owe it to yourself to sleep on the decision."

NAACP Election Will

Bring No Surprises, Few Changes

By Donald Alderman

Almost nothing in the local NAACP hierarchy will change following elections here next week.

According to insiders, practically everyone currently holding official positions in the local branch of the nation's oldest and largest civil rights organization will continue to hold them. There will be, however, some minor shifts in titles, and a few new names will join the upper echelon.

Elections will be held December 19 from 1-6 p.m., at the NAACP office, 3019 Fayetteville St. Installation ceremonies will be held on January 24 at Ebenezer Baptist Church, 2200 S. Alston Avenue.

In current action, a NAACP nominating committee recommended last Sunday that all current officers be reelected. There were no nominations from the floor.

About 60 people attended the meeting.

"Without opposition they're basically in," noted George Frazier, Durham NAACP branch president, "but someone has to go vote because we have to send a report to the national office in New York."

What this all means, in a nutshell, is that Frazier and the branch's other officers will lead the local group for two more years.

Frazier, 54, who was recently described as "reckless in his freedom fighting," weathered a couple of self-made storms during the past year before apparently securing his third two-year term as Durham branch president.

Frazier's controversial endorsement of the civic center bond referendum, a tactic which many saw as being manipulative, plus his efforts to "confuse" voters during the

sheriff's runoff election in July, had appeared to jeopardize his presidency.

But no opposition surfaced, and so following an election that is little more now than a formality, Frazier and his slate will sweep into office for another two years.

On balance, many NAACP'ers believe Frazier has been a good president, noting the long, hard hours he works on behalf of the organization, the fact that the group's books are balanced, and Durham is one of the few branches in the state with a full-time office. Frazier supporters also cite improvement in the annual Freedom Fund dinner, one of the organization's two major annual fundraisers.

So Frazier not only will retain his office, barring unforeseen circumstances, but he will

also retain most of his team, though there will be some minor shifts in positions worth noting.

Ms. Alice Wilson, for example, current chairman of the Freedom Fund Committee, will be the group's new secretary. The current secretary, Mrs. Louise Weeks, will be the organization's third vice president. This position has been vacant for the past two years.

The coming elections will also bring a new member to the organization's executive committee, the policy-making group, expanding the committee from 23 to 24 members. The new member is Theodore Mitchell. This is the highest number of executive committee members who can be elected. Others must be appointed by the president, and he can appoint up to 19 additional

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Howard Law School's Graduate

Louis Rothschild Mehlinger, center, the oldest living graduate of the Howard University School of Law, was honored recently at his alma mater. The first black lawyer admitted to the Federal Bar Association, who will be 100 years old on December 20, was graduated from the school in Washington,

D.C., in 1921. Joining in the honors are Howard law school Dean Wiley A. Branton, left, and Professor J. Clay Smith, who has written an article about Mehlinger that will be published in the dedicatory issue of the Howard Law Journal in late December

Photo by Harlee Little

The Correct Times

In this space every week, The Carolina Times will correct errors of fact, typographical mistakes and misuses that appear in the newspaper. If you notice that we miss, drop us a line and we will correct them.

In a front page headline in the December 4 issue, we substituted the word "black" for "black".

On Page 13 in the Dec. 4 issue, we ran the picture of four St. Augustine's students with a story about the Black Child Development Institute.

In a headline on Page 16 in the Dec. 4 issue, we used the word "Run" out of the headline for the Power bus system story.

The Carolina Times regrets these errors.

In 30 Years, Howard McAllister Has Seen Schools' Ups and Downs

By Pamela Banks

For more than 30 years, Howard McAllister has watched three things happen in Durham City Schools that he believes have had significant impact on education here. They are:

The improved ability of the schools to educate children with learning problems.

The diminishing level of parental guidance, which has also decreased the level of involvement, that parents have with the schools.

The ever-growing level of peer pressure which makes students themselves harder to reach.

In essence, McAllister, recently appointed Assistant Superintendent for Personnel, believes the schools must accept and meet today's challenges in education just as they meet the challenge of how to teach students with learning disabilities.

On the first point — teaching students with learning problems — McAllister believes the city schools are much more responsive to these students than when he started his teaching career in Durham 33 years ago.

"We do more individualized in-

struction now than we did years ago in order to meet their needs," said McAllister. "We pay more attention to students who have various (problems) than we did years ago."

A major reason for this improvement, according to McAllister, is the schools' testing program that allows teachers and administrators to identify "exceptional students" early and tailor programs matched to their abilities.

As educators use the term, "exceptional students" range from those who are well above average to students who are educably retarded. Though so-called gifted children were always special in the schools, McAllister recalls that in the early years of his career, mentally retarded children, or youngsters with serious learning problems were not allowed to attend school.

He is glad to see that change.

"Every child should have a right to an appropriate education," McAllister said. "Therefore, we are addressing that in the system now."

Despite federal and local budget cuts, McAllister believes the schools would be remiss if they reduced the level of services to exceptional



McALLISTER

students. But other changes McAllister has watched in the Durham City Schools over the past 30 years have not been so encouraging.

"In my judgement, I feel as though the climate for teaching in the 1950's and 1960's was much more conducive," he said. "For one thing, I feel as though students didn't have the peer pressure that they have now in the communities."

Calling teaching a pleasant experience during the past two decades, McAllister notes that students have many more outside pressures buffeting them today than they had then. In his conclusion, this has seriously affected the learning process, and the ability of the schools to produce top students.

Decreasing parental guidance has added to the problem, McAllister believes.

"I feel as though youngsters are permitted to stay out later at a younger age than in the past," McAllister said. "I feel as though with the parents working more they don't have the time to really check on their children as in past years."

In analyzing the problems, and suggesting possible strategies for

solutions, McAllister pinpoints two chief components.

One would be a return to the home visitation program that was a mainstay of local schools two decades or more ago. According to McAllister, the visitation program enhanced parental cooperation and involvement with the schools.

School integration, along with the end of the neighborhood school concept, killed the home visitation program. But McAllister believes that the climate might be right to reinstitute it, since Durham's elementary schools in the city system are going back to the neighborhood school concept.

The other weapon to fight outside peer pressure, and a general decreasing interest in education from today's students, is topnotch teachers. According to McAllister, good teachers possess four basic characteristics, in addition to other skills. They are:

- * A very good educational background.
- * The ability to be compassionate toward students.
- * Outstanding teaching abilities.
- * The ability to communicate ef-

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