

Fired Up
Female firefighters discuss demands, challenges, fun of job



Business Directory
Special insert offers extensive listing of city's minority businesses

64 Pages This Week

** SUBSCRIPTION HOTLINE -- 722-8624 **

Thursday, March 2, 1989

Winston-Salem Chronicle

50 cents

"The Twin City's Award-Winning Weekly"

VOL. XV, No. 27

Girl reunited with her mom after kidnapping 15 years ago

By ROBIN BARKSDALE
Chronicle Staff Writer

Margaret Sanders used to dress her baby girl in pretty pink dresses that matched her own and cart her off to sing in the church choir. Few Sundays passed that Sanders, her daughter, and her two young sons, decked out in identical blue three-piece suits, were not seen at their church in Washington, D.C. But then tragedy struck and a huge piece was cut from the family portrait.

Without any notice, Sanders' husband, who had been incarcerated for rape, re-entered the family's lives. When he was released from jail, Sanders said, he broke into her new apartment and began to verbally and physically abuse her. That was bad enough, she said, but what he did next was the worst thing that could have happened to her.

"He had always told me that if I ever tried to leave him he would hurt me. I figured he would hit me or beat me or something, but I never thought he would take my baby

from me," she said. "He was hitting me and he threw me against the wall. I fought him until I couldn't fight him anymore. The baby was crying and screaming and he just jerked her up. I tried to pull her away. We were both pulling on her and then I just let go. He took her and ran away with her."

Later that same day, Sanders' husband, John K. Steadman III, returned to the apartment without the couple's daughter and left again. Thinking that her problems would be solved once the authorities were involved, Sanders contacted the police for help in retrieving her daughter. But she was told that because the couple was not legally divorced, her husband had just as much right to the child as she did. There was, they said, "nothing they could do." The best she could do, she was told, would be to take out a warrant for her husband's arrest. But while she was away from home a few days later, her husband returned and took her youngest son, John, from the apartment. He later returned John but kept his daughter



Photo by Sonja J. Covington
Hope Steadman recently was reunited with her mother and brother in Winston-Salem after a 15-year separation.

with him. Sanders took out a second warrant and the waiting process began. She occasionally saw her husband roaming the streets, but he would disappear whenever she approached. Neighbors frequently reported seeing him but he never came back to the apartment or brought the baby home.

The baby, Hope, was only nine months old, and Sanders felt certain her daughter would be returned once her husband had calmed him-

self. But it turned out to be more than she could hope for. It has been 15 years since her father ran from her mother's home with his infant daughter in his arms. Hope saw her mother for the first time in her life - that she can remember -- one week ago, when the two were reunited after years of separation, searching and prayer.

"When he took my baby. I just didn't know what to do. People kept

Please see page A9

School Board wants term limits removed

By TONYA V. SMITH
Chronicle Staff Writer

Seeking to serve limitless terms as members, the city-county Board of Education will ask local delegates to the state legislature to support a bill that would lift the limit on terms.

If passed, the law would allow board members to serve indefinite successive terms. Presently, board members can serve no more than three successive terms.

Board members Beaufort O. Bailey, Jane D. Goins, Mary Margaret Lohr, Candy Wood and Nancy L. Wooten all stand to benefit from the bill if it becomes law because their terms end in 1990 and they are presently serving out their third, four-year term.

"This is our third or fourth year asking for it," said Bailey, who made the motion for the resolution. "We're the only county left that has a limit on the number of terms we can serve."

High level positions at national board of education conventions can't be obtained unless you're a long-termer, Bailey said. Because we have a cap on the number of terms we can serve, we never get in high positions because there's always someone that's been on a board longer.

Dr. Barbara K. Phillips, assistant superintendent of the Winston-Salem-Forsyth County Schools, agreed.

"I can just offer what they (board members) are offering as a rationale and that is that in the school board association they have had a hard time getting peer support for becoming an officer in the school board association because by the time they are known, their terms of office are up," Phillips said.

There are only five city school systems in the state that have limits on

Please see page A8

The Declining State of Black Health Part III

Coronary heart disease is No. 1 killer of Afro-Americans

By TONYA V. SMITH
Chronicle Staff Writer

This is the third in a series of articles examining the declining state of Afro-American health. Future articles will address causes of, treatment for and survival rates of leading diseases that cause death among Afro-Americans.

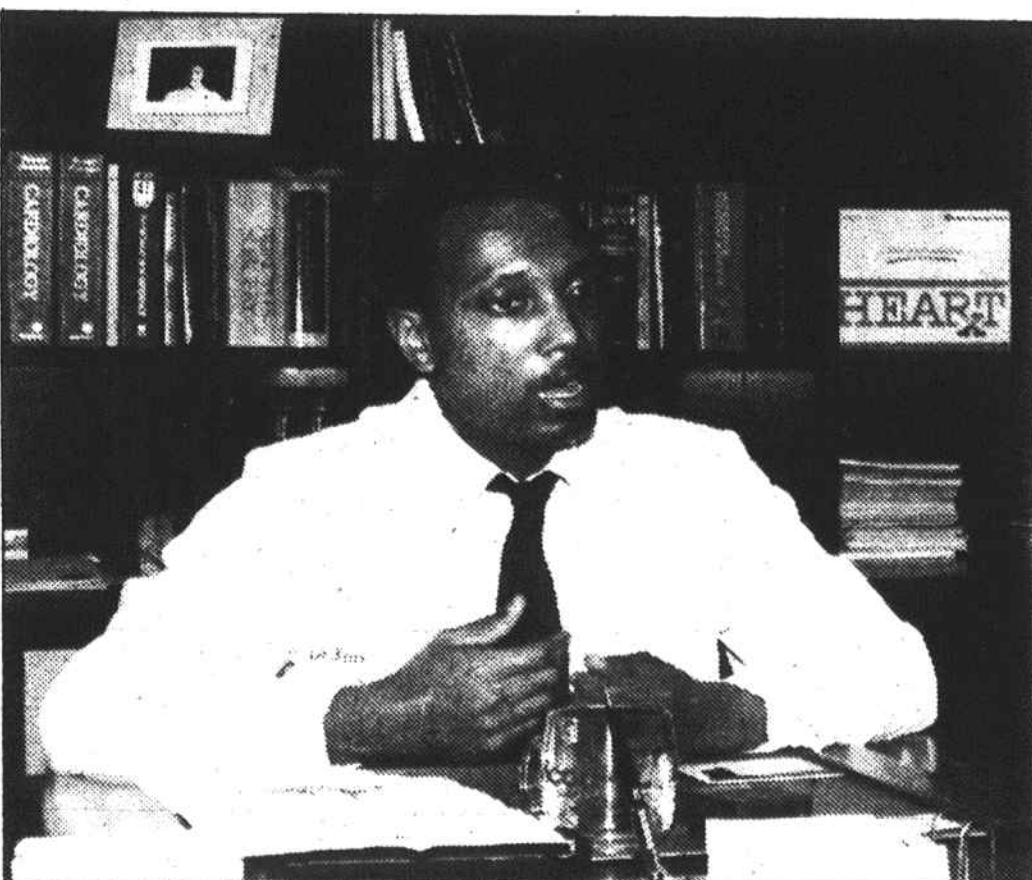


Photo by Sonja J. Covington

Recognition of the symptoms of heart attack is vital to saving life, says cardiologist Dr. Kenneth Rhinehart.

The number one killer of Afro-Americans sneaks into the body like a thief in the night, but it can steal and snuff out a life with the

precision of a carefully aimed bullet. That killer is coronary heart disease or CHD.

"The development of CHD is a silent process generally lasting decades before the onset of symptoms," said Dr. C. Everett Koop, U.S. Surgeon General, in his 1988 "Report on Nutrition and Health."

CHD is the catch-all term for several cardiac disorders resulting from inadequate circulation of the blood in two areas of the heart muscle. Muscle is the operative word in any discussion about heart disease, although many often mistake it for a body organ.

Leonardo da Vinci described it best in his notebook. "The heart in itself is not the beginning of life, but it is a vessel formed of thick muscle, vivified and nourished by the artery and vein as are the other muscles," wrote the scientist, engineer, painter, sculptor and architect.

Koop listed the death rate, per 100,000 persons, among Afro-American men as 164.9 compared to 180.8 among white men. The death rate for Afro-American women was 100.8 and 82.9 for white women. Although the figures may appear to be relatively close, one must factor into the calculations that Afro-Americans only make up 12 percent of the country's population. When that factor is calculated, one can see the increasingly higher death rate of Afro-Americans from CHD, said Koop.

However, the number of deaths from coronary heart disease have declined in recent years, said Dr. Kenneth Rhinehart, an Afro-American cardiologist in the Twin City.

"There have been some studies looking at coronary disease rates and what they've found is that in a comparison between black and white patients, the rates in the last 15-20 years have been the same," said Rhinehart. "But in the mid-1970s, the rates of whites with coronary heart disease started coming down mostly because of better risk-factor management. The rates for blacks also started coming down but not as fast."

The key to heading off and controlling CHD is risk-factor management, he said. That has been the main factor dictating the differences between disease occurrence and death rates among Afro-Americans and whites, he added.

"The causes of coronary heart disease are multifactorial," said Koop.

The most common are high blood cholesterol, high blood pressure and cigarette smoking.

"(The preceding) play casual roles in the development of atherosclerosis, which leads to narrowing of the arteries and the development of CHD," said Koop.

Smoking major factor in heart disease

By TONYA V. SMITH
Chronicle Staff Writer

compared to 32 percent of all the men in the country.

A cigarette, or more, a day could bring death your way, particularly if you're a young, Afro-American blue-collar worker, according to statistics compiled by the American Lung Association of North Carolina.

Not only are Afro-Americans more likely to smoke than whites, they also have the highest rates of lung cancer and heart disease of any population group, according to the statistics. About 39 percent of Afro-American men smoke,

Afro-American women also have higher rates of smoking than their white female counterparts. According to recent figures, the percentage of Afro-American women aged 20 to 44 who smoke is about 36 percent, compared to 34 percent of white women in the same age group. At age 45 and over, the percentage is 28 percent for Afro-American women versus nearly 24 percent for white women.

Please see page A8

Atherosclerosis is a disease that often begins at childhood, with the earliest signs detectable at ages 10-15.

"The result of progressive narrowing of the vessels may be heart attack or sudden death," Koop said. "Elsewhere in the body the same process may lead to a serious decrease of blood to the brain, resulting in a stroke."

Please see page A8

City gives Little Creek contract to Hilton despite initial rejection

By TONYA V. SMITH
Chronicle Staff Writer

Backing down from its original stance and taking the bite out of what some call an already watered down city policy, the Board of Aldermen reversed its rejection of all bids on a \$307,766 project and awarded the contract to a white contractor who could not secure minority subcontractors.

On Feb. 6, city aldermen voted 5-1 to reject all bids for the Little Creek Recreation Center project and start the bidding over again. However, Chris D. Hilton, owner of Chris D. Hilton Construction Co. and the project's low bidder, threatened to sue the city for rejecting his bid on the Little Creek Recreation Center. Hilton said the city couldn't deny him the contract based on the lack of minority participation because he had proved that he had made a

"good-faith effort", as stipulated by the city's minority set-asides program, in hiring Afro-American and women contractors for the project.

Nearly two weeks after Hilton said he was conferring with his attorneys to determine what legal action he would take, city aldermen had a two and one-half hour, closed door meeting with him. Then aldermen called a special meeting a week ago where they immediately adjourned to an executive session. Nearly an hour later, members emerged and Alderman Martha S. Wood moved that the city award the project to Hilton if he would agree to try to hire out at least 1 percent of the project to an Afro-American or woman-owned business.

"The offer was this, that we would make every reasonable effort to get the 1 percent, we made no obligation, no commitment to the one percent," Hilton said.

In the 4-2 decision, aldermen Vivian H. Burke and Larry W. Womble voted against awarding the contract to Hilton.

"If we are to get minority contractors and females into the economic mainstream, the city must send a clear message to initiate this plan," said Burke. "However, she said, the city's plan is not worth much."

"It's not worth a grain of salt and it's not doing that much," Burke said. "Maybe it is for vendors, but, as far as for contractors, it's doing nothing."

The purpose of the program is to give Afro-Americans and women a share in city projects. However, it is based on voluntary participation, and because of the recent U.S. Supreme Court ruling, it's doubtful that any specific mandatory quotas will ever be enacted, said Betty J. Hanes, director of the city's Minority/Women Business Enterprise program. In

the preceding case, the court ruled against a Richmond, Va., ordinance that set specific quotas for participation by Afro-American owned businesses in city contracts.

Womble had moved that the city reject all bids again as opposed to accepting Hilton's bid. But his motion wasn't seconded.

"A minimum of one percent, one percent is next to zero," Womble said. "If the best he can do is \$3,000 for minorities out of a one-third of a million dollar project, to me that's making a mockery of our program. I don't think that he has made a good enough effort in trying to reach an acceptable level of minorities and women, and also he has a track record of not hiring blacks and women."

Womble was referring to a city project Hilton is

Please see page A8