

# Business Briefs

## BUSINESS PROFILE

### Sledge prepares to start new business venture

By YVETTE N. FREEMAN  
Community News Editor

For nine years, John Sledge has successfully operated the seafood market, The 47th Pier, in the East Winston shopping center.

He is now ready to sell the business and move on to other things, particularly, the healthcare field. "It's time for me to go on and do something else," said Sledge during a recent interview.

"I've done this business. It has proven itself and I'd like to get into the healthcare

business now; go to people who choose to age in place, meaning, aging in their homes. I'd like to have people working for me doing that."

Sledge said that he hopes to have his new business venture, named United People Works Inc., in operation within the next three months; and is currently interviewing qualified healthcare professionals to join him in providing the elderly with health, social, and home maintenance services.

He explained why he chose the name United People Works Inc. "It's just putting folks to work who need work," he said.

"There's a lot of talent here, but people just don't know how to market it."

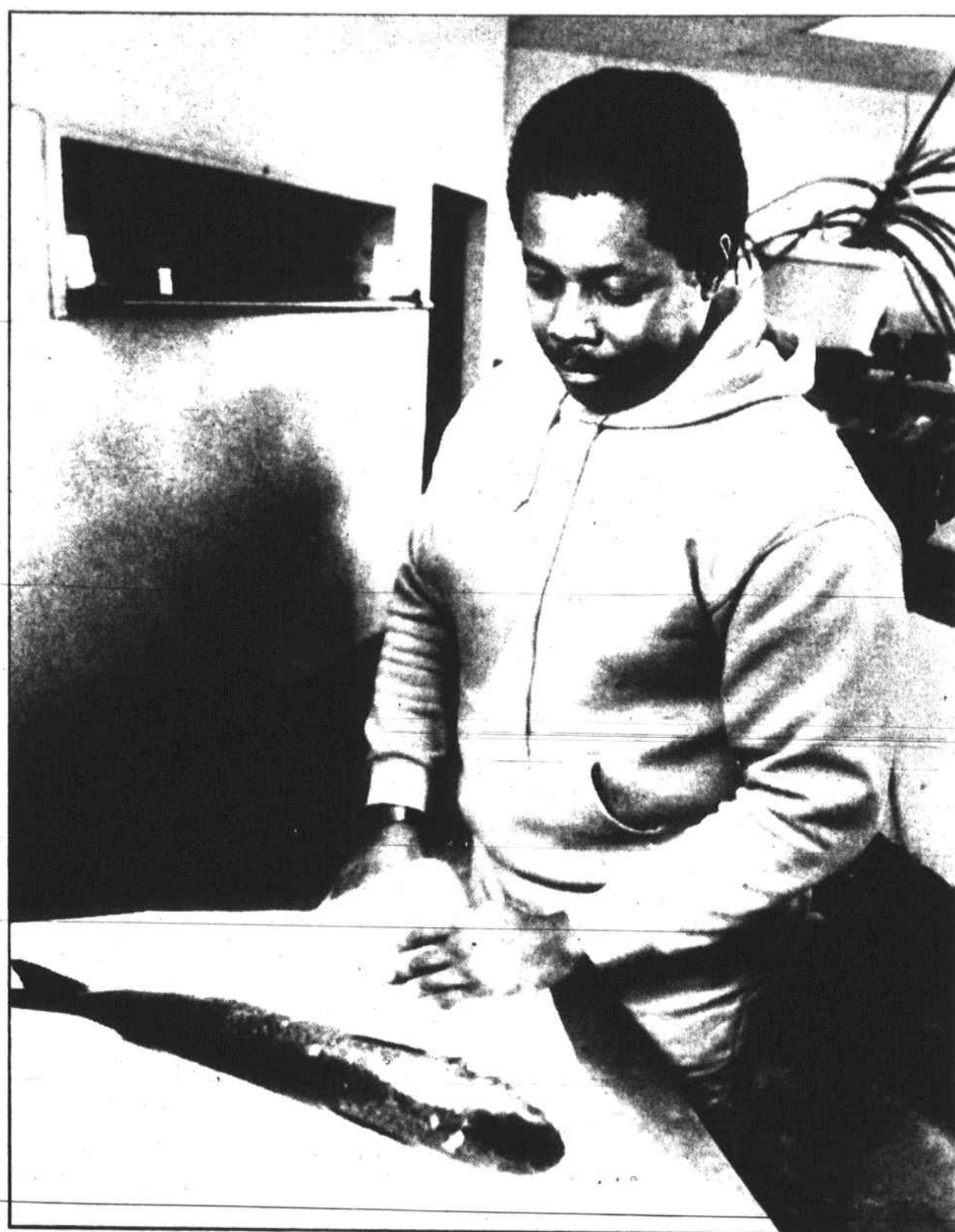
Sledge, who is a former commercial banker, added that the new business will service the entire Triad area, and eventually the entire state. He explained that he decided to enter the healthcare industry because of the need for services to help the elderly. "I do some of that just on a voluntary basis now. I feed the homeless (every Wednesday, for nearly two years now, Sledge has cooked and served fish not sold during that day to the homeless). And I take care of some people in the neighborhood just because it's there to do. It's needed," he explained.

Once United People Works Inc. is in business, it will be run from Sledge's home, and eventually expanded into a commercial office space. Sledge, who is the sole financial backer of the project, says he looks forward to experiencing the same kind of success that he has had with The 47th Pier.

He credits that success to "hanging in there. Staying with it. Not quitting. Trust in God and a lot of prayers. I've said before that you give people the best quality at a fair price. That has been what kept this business going and it's still keeping this business going."



John Sledge already helps out in the community by feeding the homeless on Wednesdays at his store.



John Sledge plans to sell his seafood market and open a healthcare business.

## MONEY WATCH

By THEODORE R. DANIELS



### Funeral costs

The average cost of a funeral is approximately \$3,000. Yet, many people pay more because they find themselves caught up in their grief or feelings that this is the last opportunity to do something for a loved one.

This is a period in life where many people can be taken advantage of by dishonest funeral providers who will suggest the most expensive funeral arrangements available, if they think that you have the money to pay for them.

To deal with such dishonesty the Federal Trade Commission developed a regulation which became effective on April 30, 1984. This regulation called the "Funeral Rule" enables consumers to obtain information about funeral arrangements. In general, the rule makes it easier for people to select only those goods and services they want or need and to pay for only those they select. When arranging a funeral, you can purchase individual items or buy an entire package of goods and services. If you want to purchase a casket, the funeral provider must supply you with a list that describes all the available selections and their prices.

When you are arranging a funeral you should shop for the best prices offered for the goods and services needed. You may call or visit a funeral provider to get a price list which reflects information on embalming, caskets, cremation, flowers and newspaper notices. Keep in mind that you do not have to purchase unwanted goods or services as a condition of obtaining those you do want unless you are required to do so by state law. Under the "Funeral Rule":

- You have the right to choose only the funeral goods and services you want.
- The funeral provider must disclose this right in writing on the price list.
- The funeral provider must disclose on your itemized statement of goods and services selected the specific state law that requires you to purchase any particular item.

Since many funeral arrangements are made under tight time constraints be careful and do not pay more than what is necessary. Thinking ahead may help you make informed and thoughtful decisions about funeral arrangements. In this way, you can carefully choose the specific items you want and need and can compare prices offered by one or more funeral providers.

If you decide to make advance plans about funeral arrangements, you can choose among several types of dispositions and ceremonies. This type of disposition you choose may affect the cost. Some people prefer a ceremonial service, religious or memorial or other ceremony with no body present. Another service is cremation which may be performed either directly or after a ceremony. In addition, the deceased body may be donated to a medical or educational institution.

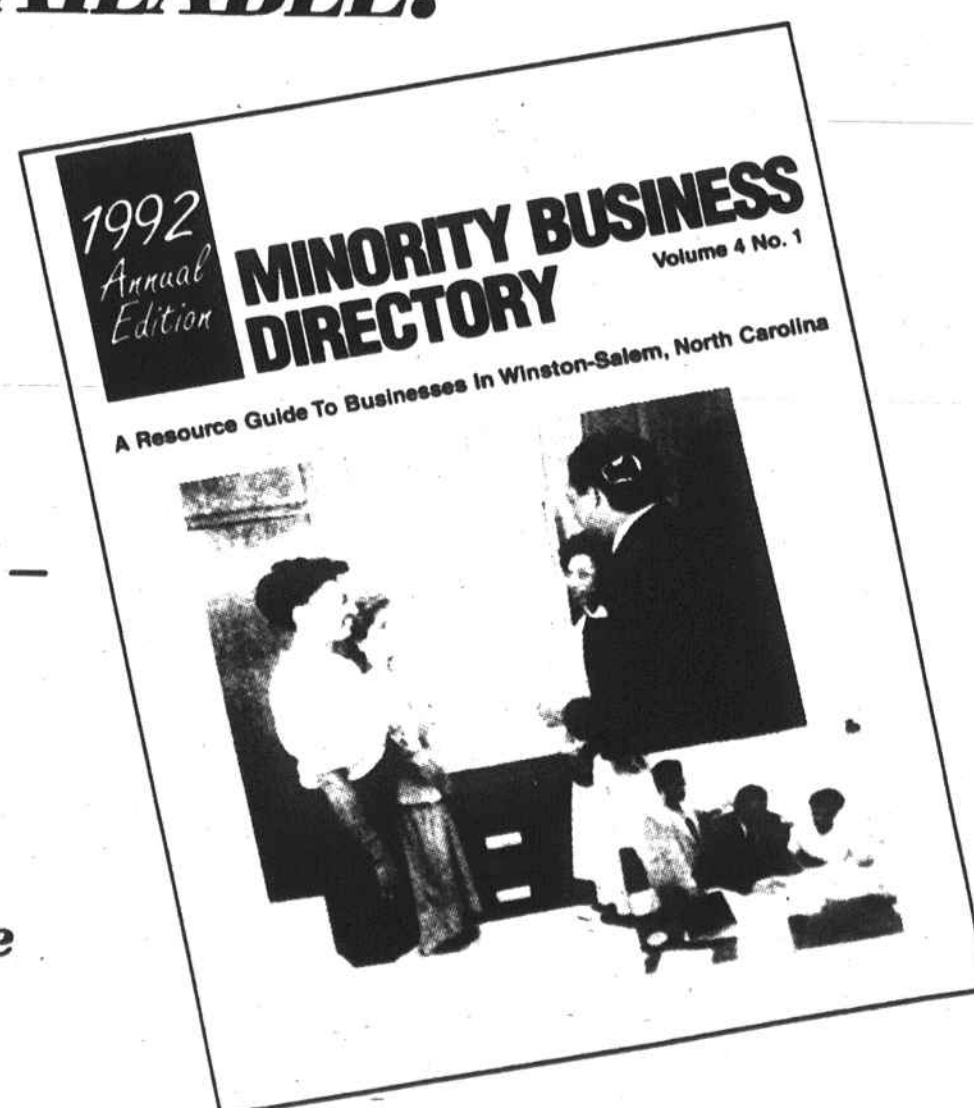
By planning ahead, you can greatly reduce the anxiety that your family will face at the time of your death.

If you have a problem concerning funeral matters contact your state or local consumer protection agencies or write to the Federal Trade Commission, Bureau of Consumer Protection, Division of Marketing Practices, Washington, D.C. 20580.

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