



Open Options

WSSU graduate has plenty of choices in pursuing career. A4

Passing a Baton

Local track team founder retires after decades of coaching. B1



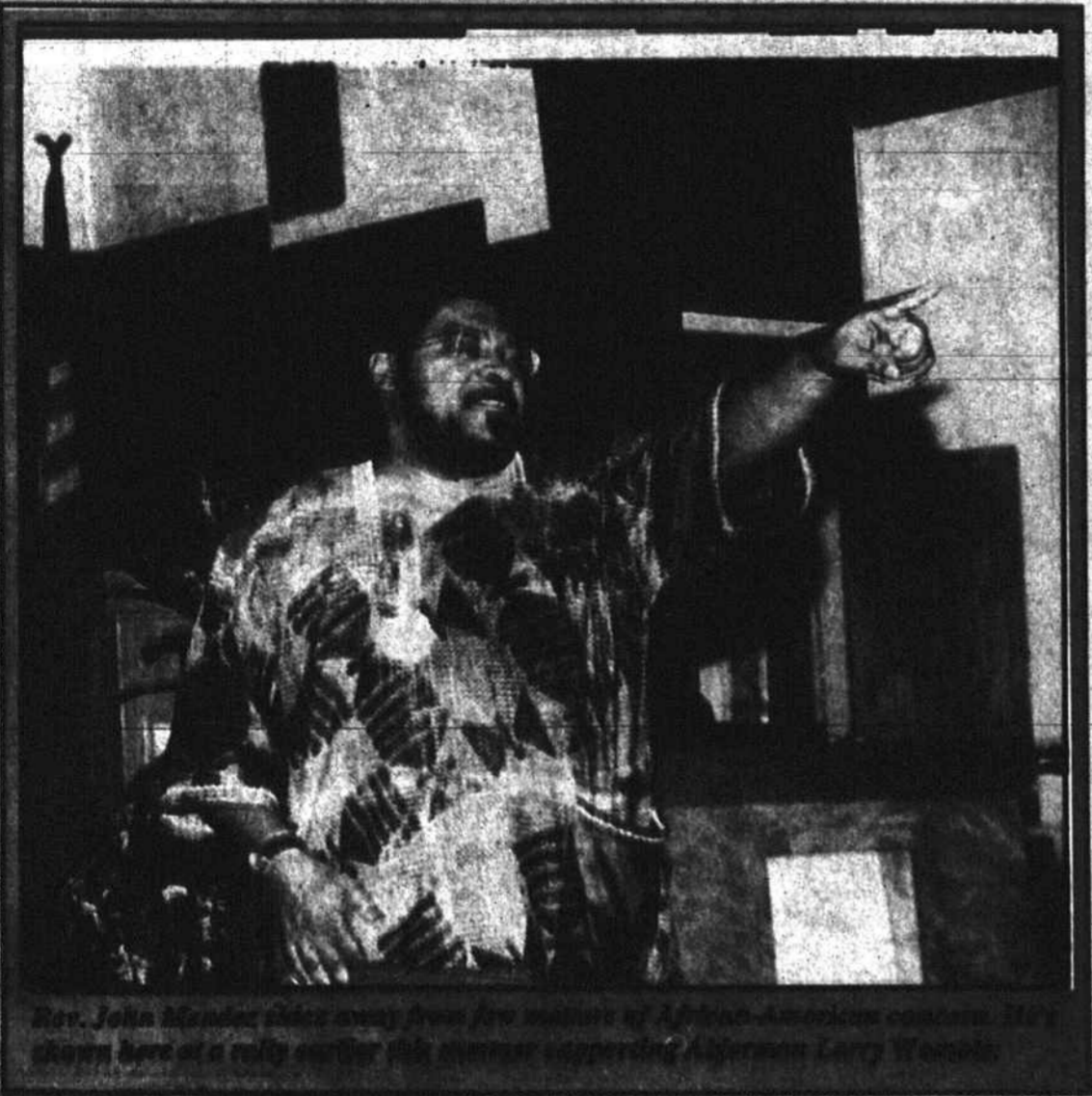
Winston-Salem Chronicle

THURSDAY, AUGUST 19, 1993

"Power concedes nothing without a struggle." — Frederick Douglass

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Rev. John Mendez:



A Controversial, Maligned, "Misunderstood" Leader

▲ Alternately called a soldier and an agitator

By SABRINA JONES
Chronicle Staff Writer

Portraits of Mahatma Gandhi, Martin Luther King and Malcolm X dot the walls of the Rev. John Mendez's spacious office at Emmanuel Baptist Church.

Wall-to-wall, plush-blue carpet lines the floor. A large, mahogany desk sits in the middle, decorated with disheveled stacks of papers and books ranging from philosophy to poetry. A small statuette of Rodin's

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Black Lawmakers Wield Power During '93 Session

By DAVID L. DILLARD
Chronicle Staff Writer

A possible state lottery, veto power for Gov. Jim Hunt and other major issues brought before the 1993 N.C. legislature heavily rested in the hands of the state's black lawmakers.

Many black legislators were instrumental during the session that ended in July, because they were key factors influencing not only issues of interest to African Americans, but also major legislation for the state.

Rep. Annie Brown Kennedy, D-Forsyth, said one big difference in African Americans wielding an unprecedented amount of power was the commitment of House Speaker Dan Blue, North Carolina's first black speaker.

"He appointed every African American with more than one term of experience (17) to chairmanship of a committee — a very influential committee," said Kennedy, who chaired the House Courts and Justice Committee. "The speaker sets the tone for the House, and the chair sets the tone for the committee. Black legislators are holding the power."

Blue flexed his muscles and got his way as the House voted against giving veto powers to the governor and having a state lottery. He said black legislators were crucial because of their positions.

"I put them where I thought they could make a difference," Blue said. "We looked at things that had an adverse impact on others to make sure things were fair and equitable to all citizens."

Blue said he was personally pleased with the health-care reform, efforts to reduce the infant mortality rate, and helping to develop "a sense of responsibility among local school districts to truly edu-



"We got a lot of people to understand things that were important to the black community."

— Rep. Warren "Pete" Oldham



"The chair sets the tone for the committee. Black legislators are holding the power."

— Rep. Annie Brown Kennedy

cate their entire student body." "I want to make sure this state is moving forward, and that we're creating jobs for everybody, and all citizens have the opportunity to try to reach their God-given potential," he said.

Blue said his duties as speaker are very broad, but he has not severed ties with the black caucus and attends meetings when possible.

Rep. Frank W. Ballance, D-Warren, and chairman of the state Congressional Black Caucus, said Blue didn't turn his back on the black community after becoming speaker.

"Although he has a broad agenda to

deal with, he does not ignore issues that impact heavily upon the black community," he said.

Redistricting two years ago boosted the number of African-American legislators from 19 to 25. Seventeen of the 18 blacks with more than one-term of experience were appointed to head committees. The increased number of blacks also enabled them to have a stronger push for issues they supported through the black caucus.

"I think we got a lot of things done this session," said Rep. Warren C. "Pete"

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NEWS WEEK NEWS AT A GLANCE

Getting a Big Break

Randy Johnson has added several new books to his reading list — books on Malcolm X. But Johnson is familiar with the slain human rights activist — he's trying to get better acquainted with Malcolm X's daughter, Attallah Shabazz.

Complete story A4

Black Asst. Superintendent

Joseph Flanner Johnson said it was ego that drove him into the field of education. Not ego of the kind that's associated with vanity, selfishness and conceit. But the kind, Johnson explained, that makes a man think that he can make a difference.

Complete story A7

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THIS WEEK IN BLACK HISTORY

On August 21, 1831, the Nat Turner rebellion began in Southampton County, Va. Some 60 whites were killed.

Financial Woes Plague School for Troubled Youths

▲ At-risk students to suffer most from cutbacks

By MARK R. MOSS
Chronicle Staff Writer

LIFT Academy, a school for troubled youths in Forsyth County, will start the new school year with a budget less than half of what it needs to operate.

As a result, two teachers were laid off and some students who may turn to LIFT as the school year gets underway may have to be turned away.

"If we don't have a staff aboard, trained and ready to go to work now," said Earline Parmon, the academy's director, LIFT won't be able to accommodate them.

Parmon explained that when a school year begins, enrollment at the academy is low. When schools opens countywide on Monday, she will only

LIFT's enrollment was close to 50 students.

The goal of LIFT, which stands for Learning Is Fun Too, is to "mainstream"

School Board Member Walter Marshall says the school system should help fund LIFT Academy.

have a handful of students. But that number will likely increase dramatically as the school year proceeds. Last April, three months before summer break,

students back into the educational system after they have been expelled from the regular schools, Parmon said.

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Walter Marshall

Youth Shot to Death After Dispute Over Gold Chain

By SABRINA JONES
Chronicle Staff Writer

Rainal Devon Williamson was an active teen-ager. He frequently left his home to hang out with his friends from other neighborhoods. Last week he did not return home.

Williamson, 17, was fatally shot on a poison-ivy-covered path between Pendleton Drive and Ansonia Street early last Thursday morning when a man began firing on the teen-ager and his three friends, as they sat on a porch of one of the apartments on Pendleton Drive, said police. There have been no arrests.

Williamson's companion, Antonio Lamont Abrams, 16, of Ansonia Street was shot in the right leg and was treated and released from Baptist Hospital. The other two young men were uninjured. The shooting reportedly followed an earlier dispute over a gold chain between the four teen-agers and another man.

A woman who lives on Fairchild Road said that she saw the altercation between the youths and a man who wanted to exchange drugs for a gold chain.

"All of them ran up to the car — the boys wanted to get the chain first but the man said no," she said. "They started

beating him up — you could hear the punches."

The woman, who asked not to be identified, said that before the fight Abrams suggested that the young men instigate an argument. She said that the necklace Williamson was wearing when he was killed was stolen off his body and is being worn by one of the youths who was with him that night.

"Something crazy happens every night," she said. "They need to ban this whole place. I can't deal with raising my son in this kind of environment."

Dead Over a Necklace

Yvonne Fair, 30, said she talked to the young men as they walked back from the altercation.

"I asked, 'Why did you do that to the man,' and one of them said, 'Why should we buy it if we can take it,'" she said. "I said, 'That's wrong. What if he had a gun,' and one of them said 'That's the way we live.'"

"It was senseless. I thought the man went about his business," she said.

"He (Rainal) was real sweet," Fair said. "I couldn't believe he was the one

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