

National

James Brown's Got a Brand New Bridge

▲ Bridge dedication brings bucks - and controversy - to western town

STEAMBOAT SPRINGS, Colo. (AP) — Everything's turning up Brown in this western ski resort.

Since the dedication of the James Brown Soul Center of the Universe Bridge, local merchants have cashed in with James Brown Roast coffee, James Brown Ale, James Brown T-shirts and even chewy James Brownies.

"I'm interested in seeing if there's going to be a pilgrimage to the bridge," said Brandt Vogt, wholesale manager at Mocha Molly's Coffee Saloon, "so people can stop in for a cup of James Brown coffee."

Despite the controversy over naming the bridge for Brown, a convicted felon who had never been in Steamboat Springs before the Sept. 15 dedication, his appearance

charmed many townspeople, inspiring food spirits in a receptive segment of the community.

"Much of the controversy has died down, and people are having fun with it," said Sharon Roman, who serves up the James Brownies at what she now calls Sharon's Soul Center of the Universe Cafe.

"The name just stuck," she said. "At first, it was just a fun thing for that day, but I've left the name up. The response has been good — even from a lot of cowboys."

The bridge was built to replace an old span across the Yampa River used to drive cattle from ranches west of town to stockyards along the Rio Grand Railroad. Many old-timers wanted the replacement to be called the New Stockbridge — or at least a name

that honors the community's ranching and mining heritage. The name James Brown Soul Center of the Universe Bridge was proposed as a joke, but it caught on and outpolled other names in a community vote.

Historically, the economy of the town, named for the chugging rhythm of steam escaping from a geyser, was based on coal and cattle. But since the opening of the ski mountain 30 years ago, Routt County has transformed itself from Old West to New West, with tourism generating 80 percent of the economic base.

"My father was instrumental in having the original bridge built," said William May, 65, a rancher. "This has always been my hometown, and I guess it always will be, but I certainly miss the old ranch

neighbors I used to have. Things like this James Brown bridge don't seem to belong here."

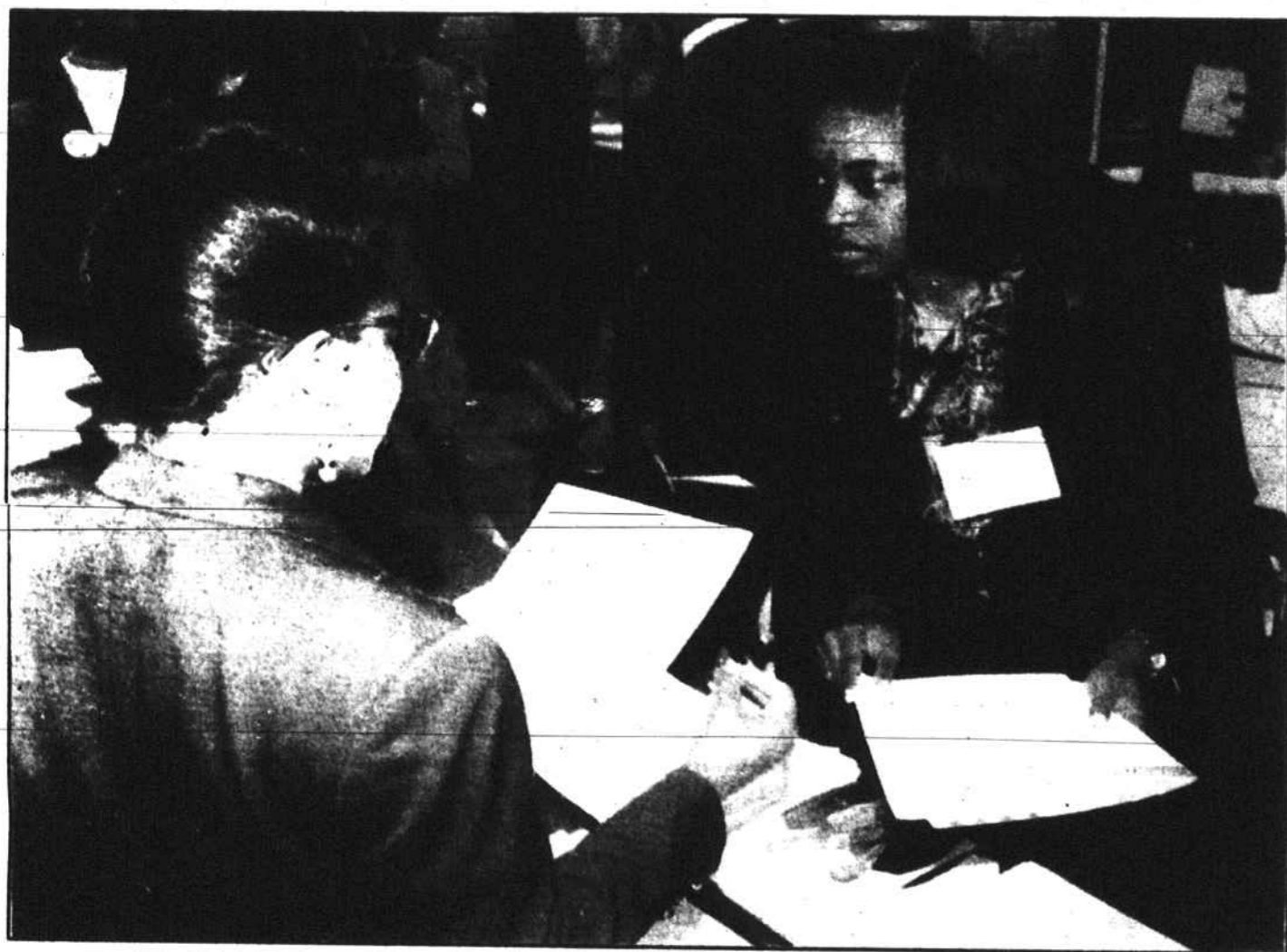
With Brown's announcement that he wants to perform annually in Steamboat Springs, fans envision a soul-music festival of the already-crowded calendar of summer events.

"It's an unlikely place for a soul festival, but what does that matter?" said David Brereton of the Steamboat Brewery & Tavern, which brews Brown Ale — and can't keep up with demand for James Brown T-shirts.

"I think this will play into something big, like the Telluride festivals," Brereton said. "It's turning out that there are more James Brown fans than anyone dreamed of."



James Brown



Tammi Teague, of Nashville, right, talks with recruiter Jill Townsend during a job fair that was part of the 15th Annual National Black MBA Association Convention in Atlanta last Friday. Attendees say they are encouraged by corporate America's gradual recognition of the importance of diversity, but worry that downsizing by once-reliable employers will keep the barriers to the highest levels of management firmly in place.

Florida Faces Cultural Powderkeg

TALLAHASSEE, Fla. (AP) — Some parts of Florida are as unsafe as many Third World nations and are sometimes more dangerous — a problem black leaders say won't disappear without big and expensive changes.

"Across the nation in every metropolitan area there is a Third World community," said state Sen. James Hargrett, D-Tampa.

The ghettos, Hargrett said, resemble "a little Somalia, with people running around in the street with guns — and people afraid to report the violence for fear of their lives."

The threat of armed, roaming violent youths can't be fenced off. And that threat will continue to spread from inner-city ghettos if not checked by society.

"Florida is going to be the place where we learn to make it work," Lt. Gov. Buddy MacKay said last week at Florida A&M University, addressing the first meeting of the Conference of Black Elected Officials.

The slayings of a German tourist in urban Miami and an English tourist near rural Monticello within a week focused attention on the problem, said Rep. Al Lawson, D-Tallahassee. "But what happens every day out on the street?"

More and more youths lack stable homes to teach discipline and

"We have packs of stray animals that are running around growing themselves up, without benefit of families," Hargrett said.

Dade County Commission Chairman Arthur Teele Jr. said leaders must look at the big picture, not focus only on one solution such as education, jobs, or law enforcement.

"Crime is a symptom of the problem, which I would suggest education, family values, lack of discipline and lack of self esteem all are part of," Teele said.

Hargrett said change will take massive investment in the black communities, and a redefinition of heroes as people who work hard and invest in the well-being of the community rather than simply accumulating fast wealth.

Delinquent youths aren't deviants, but conformists to the ghetto world, said Dade County Juvenile Court Judge Tom Peterson, one of the few non-black participants in the meeting. Haitian children moved to Miami's inner-city neighborhoods quickly adopt the same habits, Peterson said.

"Had we taken these people and put them in Iowa, they'd be acting like people in Iowa. It's learned behavior," he said. "The tragedy is the ghetto. The tragedy is the places where kids learn that behavior."

Social programs lack role

woman Anita Davis said. "Most of the funds go to white folks to tell black folks what's wrong with you."

Gov. Lawton Chiles has gotten more members of minority groups involved in government and the courts through appointments he's made, MacKay said.

But he said, "Leadership in the black community has got to be black. I cannot be the role model for children in your community, it's got to be you."

"I think we need to have more African-American people sitting around the table," Willie Johnson, an administrator at Miami's Family Health Center, told one conference workshop. "In Dade County we are beginning to invite ourselves to meetings. We are beginning to tell what we need in our communities, as opposed to them telling us."

"Nobody can save our children but us," said Georgia Ayers, founder and executive director of The Alternative Program Inc. in Dade County, which tries to involve families in rehabilitating delinquents.

Peterson said a 50-pupil school he's launched at Dade County's Juvenile Justice Center proves children from the ghetto can favorably influence one another.

Man Who Said He Was Set Afire Dies

CINCINNATI (AP) — A man who told police he was set afire by stranded motorists after he tried to help them has died, authorities said.

Milton Metcalfe, 30, of Loveland died Sunday at University of Cincinnati Hospital, the hospital said. Metcalfe had been in critical condition after being burned over 75 percent of his body Sept. 21.

He said he was attacked when he tried to help two men and a

woman whose pickup truck ran out of gasoline. He said he brought them some gasoline, and they splashed it on him and set him afire.

Loveland police have not been able to find any such assailants. Chief Howard Espelage said last week that it was possible Metcalfe accidentally set himself on fire, then lied about what happened.

Metcalfe was convicted in April in Hamilton County Common

Pleas Court of making a false report after he told police that two men kidnapped him at knifepoint. He was sentenced to 30 days in jail.

Earlier this month, two white men in Florida were convicted of setting a black man afire. The man was seriously injured. One of Metcalfe's friends said Metcalfe, who was black, might have been the victim of a copycat crime. Metcalfe said his assailants were white.

One Month After Eruption of Violence, County Ponders Future

WAYNESBORO, Ga. (AP) — One month after the death of a black man set off two nights of violence, residents of Burke County in east Georgia are trying to determine how to avoid similar unrest in the future.

On Aug. 15, a fight between a white man and three black men at a service station downtown escalated until a crowd of about 50 people broke store windows, fired shots in the air and hurled rocks at passersby.

The next night, the violence moved to Sardis, about 15 miles southeast of Waynesboro, where a beauty shop and a city garbage truck were set afire. About 20 people were arrested, including four who are charged with arson.

Burke County NAACP officials said the death of Curtis Boyd, killed when his motorcycle slid under a police car during a chase, reinforced the feeling among black

residents that young blacks are treated unfairly by the police. Police officials said Boyd's death was an accident and deny bias against blacks.

Boyd's death "was the straw that broke the camel's back" in a community divided by race and socioeconomic status, said Leon Bynes, president of the Burke County National Association for the Advancement of Colored People.

"There's not a quick fix for it, but we're going to have to come up with some kind of Band-Aid to all the problems we have right now," Bynes said.

For the past month, the civil rights group has been holding weekly meetings to listen to residents' concerns. Bynes said one problem is the lack of activities for young people. Waynesboro has no movie theater, and few recreation facilities.

Several business owners have started staying open later to give teen-agers a place to hang out, said Waynesboro Police Chief H.L. Ivey.

Many residents of Burke County — one of the poorest counties in Georgia — can't find good-paying jobs because they are uneducated, local officials said.

"Over 50 percent of our residents haven't finished high school," said Jack Willis, principal of Burke County High School.

The lack of economic opportunity increases tension between the races, Bynes said.

"I don't foresee an end to this because we're not only talking about educating the child, we're talking about educating the parents, and trying to enlighten other members of the community to be sensitive to the plight of others."

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