

BUSINESS FOCUS

Briefs

Wachovia news

Wachovia Corporation announced the following last week:

• Garcelia F. Brannon has been elected a vice president. She is an employee relations specialist in the Human Resources Group in Winston-Salem. Brannon joined Wachovia in 1971 as a management reporting analyst in Wachovia Mortgage. She also has held positions as an equal employment opportunity analyst and specialist. She assumed her current position in 1989. Brannon received a bachelor's degree from Livingstone College. She and her husband, James, have one child and reside in Rural Hall.



Brannon



Leak

• C. Lynn Leak, a Winston-Salem native, has been elected a vice president. She is a business systems analyst in the finance and treasury group. Leak is a daughter of Josephine Jones of Winston-Salem. Her stepfather is Robert Jones of Winston-Salem. Leak lives in the city also.

• Lisa G. Jones, a Winston-Salem native, has been elected an assistant vice president of Wachovia Operational Services Corp. She is a supervisor in credit operations. Jones joined Wachovia in 1984 as a dealer credit manager in sales finance. She also has held the position of supervisor in lock-box services. She assumed her current position in 1995. Jones received a bachelor's degree in business administration from the University of North Carolina at Charlotte. She is the daughter of Johnny and Mattie Glenn of Winston-Salem. She and her husband, Ben, have one child and side here in Winston-Salem.



Jones

New millennium entrepreneur

Cha'Reka Scales, 11, hopes to be a catalyst for young kids in thinking big and making it happen while they are fresh, innovative and creative. The grand opening of Silent Flower and Diva's Closet was Jan. 6 at Cook's Flea Market, booth C25.

Silent Flower is a T-shirt designed by Cha'Reka herself. The T-shirt depicts a flower standing firm and tall in the midst of others. She believes the picture was a gift from God. Along with the T-shirt are a myriad of messages that the Holy Spirit gave to Cha'Reka and her mother, Erika Scales.

Divet's Closet is the other sector of her business. It consists of items enhanced by Cha'Reka. She likes to think of herself as a DIVA, meaning D=destined to succeed, I=intelligent individual, V=validated by God, therefore A=affluent in everything. This definition was inspired by the Holy Spirit as well. It's our mission to ensure that we leave a legacy of godly, positive women of results for other young women to emulate, starting with the kids.



Scales

Womble Carlyle announces addition of a new lawyer

Womble Carlyle Sandridge & Rice, PLLC, is pleased to announce the addition of a new lawyer in the Raleigh office: Eric M. Braun.

Braun joins Womble Carlyle as an associate in the banking, finance and property group, focusing on land use regulation, zoning, and municipal law. Before joining Womble Carlyle, Braun was an associate with Schell Bray Aycock & Livingston, PLLC in Greensboro. He also practiced with Holt York McDarris, LLP in Raleigh.

He earned his J.D. from Wake Forest University School of Law, an M.P.A. from the University of Georgia and a B.S. in political science, cum laude, from James Madison University.

In addition to its Raleigh location, the firm has offices in Atlanta, Greenville, S.C., Charlotte, Research Triangle Park, Washington, D.C., and Winston-Salem.

Local woman named to Who's Who

Virginia Bradley Moore, a native of Winston-Salem who attended Atkins High School, was recently included in the 55th edition of Who's Who In America. Moore no longer lives in the city, but has many family members and friends still here. She grew up as a member of United Metropolitan Church in Winston-Salem.



Nelson Mandela

Company helps to expand museum

SPECIAL TO THE CHRONICLE

TORRANCE, Calif. - At the 10th annual Freedom Award Banquet honoring Nelson Mandela, Michael Annis of Cordova, Tenn., won a Lexus IS 300 compact sports sedan. The proceeds from the banquet and the donated Lexus benefit the National Civil Rights Museum's (Memphis, Tenn.) expansion project.

"Lexus is delighted to be involved with such a deserving organization," said Lexus Group Vice President and General Manager Denny Clements. "The National Civil Rights Museum is a vital component in preserving the history of

the Civil Rights Movement."

The National Civil Rights Museum is located in the Lorraine Motel, where Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. was assassinated April 4, 1968. The museum helps the public to understand the civil rights movement and its impact and influence on human rights movements worldwide. It was opened on Sept. 28, 1991, and features collections, exhibitions, research and educational programs.

Each year, the National Civil Rights Museum presents a Freedom Award to an individual whose achievements in the struggle for civil rights have laid the foundation for achieving global freedom. For 2001, Nelson Mandela was the honored

recipient. Former president of South Africa and Nobel Peace Prize winner, Mandela is known worldwide for his efforts to end apartheid in South Africa and was imprisoned for the cause of freedom for 32 years. He also became the first black president of his country.

Money raised through the donation of the 2001 Lexus IS 300 will support the museum's \$9 million facilities and program expansion. Development includes the renovation of the boarding house where the fatal shot that killed King was fired. It will also include exhibitions that reflect human civil rights worldwide, which will include artifacts from the James Earl Ray trial.

Local Taco Bell employees win \$10,000



Employees at Taco Bell store #2347 on Peter's Creek Parkway celebrate the store's recent perfect score in a Taco Bell Corp. program that awards employees and stores that provide top-notch service. The employees will split a check for \$10,000 for their efforts.

BY T. KEVIN WALKER
THE CHRONICLE

Employees at a local Taco Bell restaurant got a treat of their own before serving up hot burritos and nachos to the lunch crowd.

Restaurant #2347 on Peter's Creek Parkway was recently notified that it had received a perfect 100 score in Taco Bell Corp.'s CHAMPS program, which rates restaurants on a variety of factors, including cleanliness.

The payoff for the perfect score was sweet for the restaurant's staff: a check was presented to manager Aaron Cody for \$10,000 by officials from Taco Bell Corp. The money will be divided among the staff.

"We were very shocked," Cody said, describing his staff's feelings after being notified of the prize.

The restaurant is the first in this region to garner the award. At least 12 of the checks are given to restaurants around the country each year. A so-called secret shopper is sent

into various stores to monitor service. Those that receive a perfect score, are eligible to receive the money, but only one store is selected each month.

"This says a lot about you guys," Mike Coccia, territory coach for Taco Bell Corp., said to Cody and his staff before presenting the check and a plaque.

Coccia said that since the restaurant is the only one in the area to win the prize, it has set a standard that other Taco Bells must now try to follow.

"You have started something very good in this area," he said.

The Peter's Creek restaurant is one of the oldest in the city, but Cody said the employees bring new life to the building. He says he tries to motivate his staff every day, hammering away at the golden rule of the service industry - "make the customer satisfied."

Employee Jermaine Greer already has plans to spend his share of the money on clothes and other items for



Clyde Caudle, district manager for Taco Bell, from left; Chris Paphites, owner of Taco Bell #2347; and restaurant manager Aaron Cody pose with a certificate presented to the restaurant by Taco Bell Corp.

his young child. When asked to comment about his new fortune, Greer said it was all in a day's work.

"We just do our job here by treating the customers the way they want to be treated," he said.

Hotel seeks dismissal of discrimination lawsuit

FROM STAFF REPORTS

ST. LOUIS - After settling suits with the NAACP and the U.S. Justice Department last year, the Adam's Mark Hotels & Resorts will ask a federal court to throw out a discrimination lawsuit that the hotel chain says is groundless.

Attorneys for the 24-luxury hotel chain plan to submit a motion to dismiss the class action suit, which was filed last month in U.S. District Court in Philadelphia by a group of current and former African-American hotel employees claiming they were discriminated against.

"Not only are the allegations totally unfounded, but this same group of plaintiffs alleging the same facts were unsuccessful in a previous attempt to certify a class, which is why

they have filed this lawsuit," said Fred S. Kummer III, executive vice president of Adam's Mark. "As a diversity leader in the hospitality industry, Adam's Mark is absolutely committed to the principles of fair employment practices and guest services procedures."

Late in 1999 the hotel came under fire after several African-American guests claimed that they were discriminated against by the chain's Ft. Lauderdale site. The chain quickly moved to settle those allegations, especially after the U.S. Justice Department launched an extensive investigation into allegations of discrimination at other Adam's Mark locations.

To illustrate why the suit is unfounded, Kummer cited one plaintiff - a former employee of the St.

Louis Adam's Mark - who alleged that she was transferred from her job in the hotel data processing department to work on the loading dock because of race. In fact, he said, the employee had never worked in the data processing department.

Kummer said several of the other plaintiffs joined the suit only after unsuccessfully pursuing discrimination claims with the U.S. Equal Opportunity Commission.

"Frivolous class action suits are unfortunately on the increase in our legal system, but we are determined to defend ourselves aggressively against these malicious allegations. It is my hope that if we and other companies refuse to settle groundless lawsuits, we will discourage class action attorneys from filing suits without investigating

the underlying facts, as happened here," Kummer said.

Kummer noted that a recent audit of the hotel chain by Project Equality, a national civil rights organization, found "no signs of intent to discriminate" in the hotel's employment procedures and practices. The 3-month independent study also praised Adam's Mark for its "inclusiveness of women and persons of color." Minorities make up 14.1 percent of the hotel's upper management, 28.4 percent of officials and managers, and 65.5 percent of hourly employees, which Project Equality said exceeds industry and general U.S. business averages.

The chain brought in Project Equality as part of the settlement last year.