

SPORTSWEEK

Work of WSSU's Blount being lauded
Mt. Tabor senior is playing big



See B1



See A2



See C1

COMMUNITY

Church passes out hundreds of turkeys
Atkins Middle is enjoying new center

75 cents

WINSTON-SALEM GREENSBORO HIGH POINT

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Partnership program is not popular with some

Teachers say regular VIP progress reports are tedious

BY FELECIA P. MCMILLAN
COMMUNITY CORRESPONDENT

More than 65 parents of elementary students in the Winston-Salem/Forsyth County school system met with Schools Superintendent Donald Martin and Addie Hymes, Victory in Partnership (VIP) program coordinator, last Thursday at the school system administration building to discuss the format and frequency of distribution for the VIP progress reports. Currently the elementary school forms address attendance/tardies, work habits, behavior and academic progress on a weekly basis in all elementary schools for all students.

Schools came into the VIP program, which strives to keep parents in touch with their children's progress through regular contact through progress reports issued by teachers, on a staggered basis. During this school year, the final group of elementary schools has come aboard.

Martin outlined some of the pressing concerns of elementary educators that impact them during the 2001-2002 school year. This year the elementary students take the K-2 assessment four times during the year. The school system adopted a new reading series which requires more training for teachers. The school system introduced a new report card. The state has mandated the Gateways program, which

See Partnership on A9

Hearing to be held on plans for downtown

BY PAUL COLLINS
THE CHRONICLE

At a town hall meeting for the East and North wards Saturday, John Allen of the city economic development program presented a draft comprehensive development plan for downtown. The primary objectives of the plan are: 1) to make downtown a destination by creating a core of vibrant, mixed uses in a pedestrian-friendly environment with major employment centers; restaurants and shops; entertainment and arts functions; and places to live, gather and meet; and 2) to put in place a variety of transportation linkages, green spaces and attractive transitions to surrounding neighborhoods so that downtown is easily accessible by everyone.

Areas proposed by the plan:
• Complimentary use areas in the plan are close to each other so visitors and residents can meet and socialize.

• The major use areas would consist of the Civic Plaza area, a new "superblock" that would connect the financial district to Fourth Street, downtown's "living room." The Civic Plaza would be a well-landscaped and sculptured public plaza area where people could meet, relax, exercise and enjoy the amenities of a park area. Underneath the plaza would be parking for employees and visitors. The plaza and parking would connect to new high-

See Downtown on A3

History-making judge visits city



Roger Gregory stands beside Bill Clinton as the then-president names Gregory to the 4th Circuit Court.

BY T. KEVIN WALKER
THE CHRONICLE

Earlier this year - at a time when his historic status as the first African American on the 4th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals was in limbo - Judge Roger Gregory had a conversation with a young boy that he'll never forget.

The youngster was impressed with the fact that Gregory had recently stood side by side with then-President Bill Clinton at the White House as the president announced to the world that he was appointing Gregory to one of the highest courts in the land.

Gregory can vividly remember the excitement in the boy's voice as he questioned him about the White House visit. "He said, 'Did you really see the president? Did you really see the president?'"

The boy's awe, coupled with the prayers and kind words of people across the nation, helped to sustain Gregory during those uncertain times.

"I thought no matter what happens, it's well worth the journey because this fellow gets to see someone who looks like him and came from the same neighborhood aspire to (be a federal judge). That

makes the journey worth it," Gregory said over the weekend during a visit to Winston-Salem. "That's the key, not so much being the first, but being there to say, 'You can do it too. I am not an anomaly.'"

Gregory was in town to judge a moot trial competition featuring law students from Wake Forest University. Although spare time has been few and far between since he joined the 4th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals - which hears appeals from trial courts in the Carolinas, Maryland, Virginia and West Virginia - in January,

See Gregory on A4

Their Stories

GED graduates overcome obstacles, setbacks to complete education

BY T. KEVIN WALKER
THE CHRONICLE

It was a week before Thanksgiving, but several hundred Forsyth Technical Community College General Education Development (GED) and adult high school students already had a lot to be thankful for.

They graduated during a commencement ceremony held at Wait Chapel on the campus of Wake Forest University. The graduates' moments in the spotlight were made even more special by the cheers and other acknowledgments they received from friends and family members in the crowd.

The GED and adult high school programs at FTCC, both housed at the school's West Campus, have been often called a second, or sometimes third or fourth, chance for students who left traditional schools long ago for many reasons.

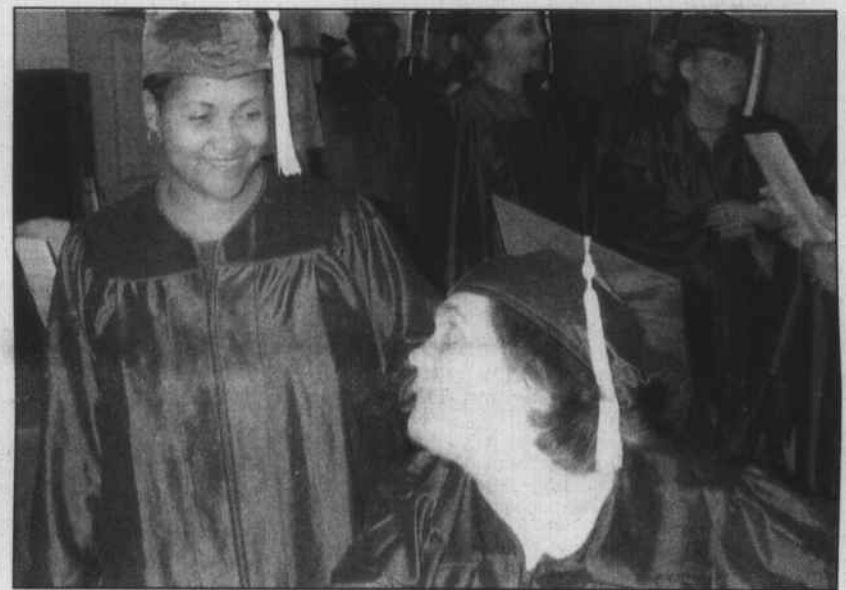
The graduating class was a diverse bunch. Some recently immigrated to this country; others let decades of raising families and bad decisions stand between them and completing their education. Others were held back by circumstances beyond their control.

But there are constants in their experiences. All the graduates' stories are dived with themes of hope, renewal and redemption. Here are a few of them.

Seasoned students

Judy Strickland has home movies chronicling her family's milestones. They include her four children's graduations, family get-togethers and the first steps and first birthdays of her six grandchildren.

Strickland found herself on the other side of the camera last week as she walked across a stage to receive her GED. Her children manned the video camera and cheered their mother as she fulfilled a lifelong dream.



Faye Anderson jokes around with Tanisha Ashe-Wilkins before last week's commencement. Both received GEDs. Ashe-Wilkins graduated with honors.

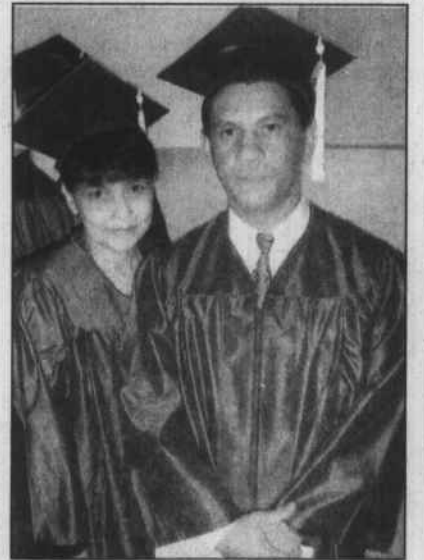
"I had a birthday in July," Strickland said. "I turned 55 and I set out some goals. I wrote down exactly what I wanted to do and one of the main things was to go back and get my GED."

When Strickland began studying for her GED this summer, it had been nearly four decades since she left school to care for her burgeoning family.

"I had to really raise children and work constantly," the single mom said. "I had to do other things at the time besides going to school."

But now going to school is one Strickland's top priorities. She passed her GED test with flying colors. She did so well that she was invited to apply for a scholarship to take college classes at Forsyth Tech. She was one of the students who won \$1,000 scholarships. In January she'll begin taking college classes. After two years at FTCC she plans to transfer to a four-year school to work on her bachelor's degree. Strickland could not stop smiling during the ceremony.

See FTCC on A11



Wilfredo, right, and Xiomara Infante took the GED test in Spanish.

Petree revels in recent ABCs success



Petree students and staff parade around the school.

BY COURTNEY GAILLARD
THE CHRONICLE

If you happened to be driving down Old Greensboro Road last Friday afternoon, you probably heard the sounds of drums beating and children chanting. No, it was not some pre-Thanksgiving Day ritual, but instead a very special celebration.

The students at David L. Petree Elementary School paraded around the school campus to celebrate their academic progress. Since the school opened its doors in 1999, the students have drastically increased their performance on the ABCs of Public Education end-of-grade test. One year, the school, which has a student body that is mostly African American,

was rated "low performing" under ABCs guidelines, which measure the performance of students at schools from year to year.

This year the school rebounded, achieving exemplary growth, one of the highest distinctions under the program.

Principal Denny Rutledge thought that was an achievement worth acknowledging.

See Petree on A4