

**SPORTSWEEK**

**Lady Rams still having struggles**

**Woodbury ready for action with Jets**



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**COMMUNITY**

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# THE CHRONICLE

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## New group being touted as chamber tries to mend fences

Meeting planned to discuss idea of forming independent business group for blacks

BY T. KEVIN WALKER  
THE CHRONICLE

Fallout from the decision by the Winston-Salem Chamber of Commerce to replace the East Area Council with another group with similar aims has led to the scheduling of two meetings next week.

Chamber President Gayle Anderson plans to meet with disgruntled former members of the East Area Council — which was a subgroup of the chamber for black businesspeople — to smooth ruffled feathers and halt a mass exodus of African Americans from the chamber.

The other meeting is being spearheaded by Ed and Miriam McCarter. It is being held in order to bring black businesspeople together to discuss the idea of forming a business group of their own — separate and independent of the cham-

ber. "I see this as an opportunity for black businesses to take their destinies into their own hands," said Miriam McCarter, who owns and operates Special Occasions, a book and gift shop, with her husband. "It will give us an opportunity to act in what will be our own best interests."

McCarter said the idea sprang from feedback she got from a letter to the editor published in The Chronicle last week. In the letter she advocated that African Americans start their own business networking group. Miriam McCarter said she received calls of support from several people, including members of the former East Area Council, which the chamber decided to replace with the Minority Business Council in early December. The Minority Business Council will reach out more to Hispanics, Asians and other nonblack



Anderson

See EAC on A4

## Talks about the future of Diggs coming to a close

Parties expected to decide within the next two weeks the fate of the elementary school

BY SAM DAVIS  
THE CHRONICLE

It won't be long now before parents, teachers and students find out whether Diggs Elementary will become an arts-based charter school for the 2002-2003 school year.

Within the next two weeks, parents of current Diggs students will vote on whether they support the local system merging with the Arts-Based Elementary charter school to form the arts-based charter school. Parents of the Arts-Based Elementary charter school are expected to vote early next week on whether they support the plan. That vote will determine whether the arts-based charter board proceeds with its plans. If the two factions of parents vote in favor of proceeding with the plan, teachers at Diggs are expected to vote on whether they support it. That vote is scheduled for Jan. 25. In order for the proposal to work, both groups of parents and the teachers must all cast their support for it.

Since the plan was proposed in October, many Diggs parents and teachers



Martin

have expressed reservations about it. School officials and members of the arts-based charter school board have met with parents to discuss their concerns. School board officials scheduled a trip to an arts-based school in Charlotte and have gone door to door in the Happy Hill community to inform parents of the details of the plan.

On Tuesday night the Arts-Based Elementary charter school board met with officials from the Winston-Salem/Forsyth County School System to iron out details of the proposal and to answer several other issues. The first is getting past the

See Diggs on A4

## The Big Chill

Populations increase at local shelters as temps spiral down

BY COURTNEY GAILLARD  
THE CHRONICLE

Thomas Gwyn made his way from the Bethesda Center on Patterson Avenue to the Labor Ready office on Liberty Street as snow fell on already covered streets last Thursday.

He hoped that showing a willingness to work, even in the worst of conditions, would garner him a day's work and wages at the temporary agency.

"I am trying to find work. Things are kind of rough right now," he said as he waited, sat, and hoped that work would become available. "With the weather like this maybe someone will see that I am really out here trying and will give me chance."

Gwyn found his living quarters at the Bethesda Center a lot more cramped after temperatures dipped below freezing last week and snow and ice began to form.

"It has been pretty much crowded since the snow has fallen and since the weather has been cold," he said.

The rush was on for many as



Thomas Gwyn, seen here waiting in the lobby of a temporary job agency, has been staying at the Bethesda Center, a local homeless shelter. Shelters were filled to capacity last week.

snow fell across the state — the rush to the grocery store for last-minute food items, the rush to home-improvement stores for shovels and salt, and the rush to the closest shelter for the homeless.

Shelter volunteers and staff workers watch the weather like everyone else. The only difference is they can't stay home from work or count on a delay to arrive

to the office on a snow day because their office is a temporary home for the poor and the homeless.

Homeless shelters such as Samaritan Ministries and Soup Kitchen on Patterson Avenue are open 365 days a year come rain, snow or sunshine. Sonjia Kurosky, executive director of the shelter, says it is business as usual when it snows. According

to Kurosky, the numbers of shelter clients at this temporary men's shelter does increase when the weather changes, but it is inevitable because no one wants to spend the day out in the cold, let alone in the snow.

"The increase (in clients) is nothing new. It just brings (poverty) to the forefront of people's minds," Kurosky said.

See Shelters on A4



A man makes it easier for downtown pedestrians by shoveling snow from a Fourth Street sidewalk.

## A snow day is just another day at work for many people

BY T. KEVIN WALKER  
THE CHRONICLE

On most days, Kirk Mack drives his Merita Bread truck up and down city streets to little fanfare. But last Thursday, as snow flakes danced around with the help of glacier winds and touched down on slippery earth, Mack may as well have been hauling around free color television sets — that's how happy folks were to see him.

"The bread has to go. We have got to get it out there," Mack said as he made a stop at a CVS Pharmacy.

The CVS and many stores throughout the city reported that bread and milk were selling briskly as residents, bracing for a frosty start to the new year, stocked up on staples.

The debut of winter weather meant a day off for many. Schoolchildren had their holiday vacations extended by a couple of days. Many students were joined by their parents on living room sofas as a result of many businesses giving their employ-

ees a day off rather than having them risk life, limb and car attempting to make it to the office.

That luxury, however, was not extended to all. Mack and many others are a testament to the fact that the credo "neither rain, sleet nor snow" no longer applies just to the men and women of the U.S. Postal Service.

Officer Tom Peterson walked his beat downtown as normal last Thursday, his steps more careful than usual as he traversed icy sidewalks and roadways. While Peterson's wife was at home enjoying a mini-vacation because of the conditions, he showed up for work at the normal time.

"I don't get out of work just because it snows," the city police officer said with a broad smile. "We have to be here."

Although pedestrian traffic downtown was substantially lower, Peterson still made his rounds, checking in on the businesses that decided to open and

See Workers on A10

## Lots to do in the city on MLK Day

FROM STAFF REPORTS

A full day of activities is being planned in the city Jan. 21, the day set aside for the nation to remember the life and legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

King would have turned 73 Tuesday, the actual birthday of the civil rights giant, had he not been struck down by an assassin's bullet in 1968. Local events being held to honor King will focus on keeping alive his dream of racial tolerance and cross-racial unity.

The events will start bright and early with the first annual Martin Luther King Jr. Prayer Breakfast, an event sponsored

by The Chronicle. The breakfast, which is free and open to members of the public who call and reserve space ahead of time, is being billed as a multicultural celebration of King's legacy and will aim to move the city forward in a positive, upbeat way. The breakfast will feature a number of community and city leaders, including Winston-Salem State University Chancellor Harold Martin, Mayor Allen Joines and Winston-Salem/Forsyth County Schools Superintendent Donald Martin.

The breakfast will be held at the Anderson Center, on the campus of Winston-Salem

See MLK events on A10



King delivers a fiery speech at a 1960s rally.