

# BUSINESS FOCUS

## Briefs

### Ehlinger elected president of Estate Planning Council

Timothy "Tim" J. Ehlinger, a partner with the Vaughn Perkinson Ehlinger Moxley & Stogner, LLP law firm in Winston-Salem, has been elected president of the Winston-Salem Estate Planning Council.



Ehlinger

Ehlinger focuses his practice in the areas of tax law, estate planning and probate, general business, tax controversy and tax litigation. He has written a number of articles on taxation issues and is active in legislation regarding tax and estate issues.

Ehlinger is a member of the N.C. Bar Association's tax, estate and fiduciary law and business law sections and serves on the legislative committee of its estate and fiduciary law section. He is a member of the bars in North Carolina and New York and practices before the U.S. Tax Court.

He is active in community and civic affairs, serving on the N.C. Citizens for Business and Industry's Tax and Fiscal Policy Committee and Forsyth Medical Center Foundation's Planned Giving Committee. He also served on the Winston-Salem Economic Development Loan Committee from 1990-96 and has been a volunteer with Young Life for the past 16 years.

He received a B.S. degree with honors in accounting from the State University of New York at Albany in 1981 and a J.D. degree from the University of North Carolina School of Law in 1984.

### Fyock & Associates, Novant Health win public relations awards

Fyock & Associates, in conjunction with Novant Health Inc., recently earned three "Wallie" Awards from the Carolinas Healthcare Public Relations and Marketing Society (CHPRMS). Fyock and Novant Health shared Wallies in the audiovisual category for three separate video news stories that Fyock produced. The awards were presented at the annual CHPRMS conference at the Grove Park in Asheville.

CHPRMS is a professional association serving health-care institutions, HMOs, physician groups and consulting firms in the Carolinas and neighboring states. The Wallie Awards, which are open to all members, recognize excellence in health-care public relations and marketing in more than a dozen categories.

Fyock and Novant Health won a Wallie Award for the video news story "Pediatric Oncology." This news story was produced at Presbyterian Healthcare in Charlotte to inform the public about its newly-opened outpatient oncology clinic specifically for children.

Another Wallie Award was given for Fyock's "Nucleoplasty" story. This story showcased nucleoplasty, the minimally invasive surgery that relieves back pain. Dr. Brian Blue of Thomasville Medical Center (a Novant Health member hospital) was the first orthopedic surgeon on the East Coast to perform the surgery.

Fyock's third Wallie Award recognized the video news story "S.A.N.E." (Sexual Assault Nurse Examiners). This news story was produced at Forsyth Medical Center and featured S.A.N.E., a service the medical center provides to support victims of sexual assault through medical treatment, recovery and the search for justice.

Fyock & Associates is a full-service communication solutions company in Winston-Salem. Fyock's core competencies include public relations, marketing, video/multimedia production and communication skills training. In addition to Novant Health, Fyock's list of clients includes the Piedmont Triad Partnership, Federal Express, Sara Lee Corp. and Eastman Chemical Co.

### Sara Lee Intimate Apparel to consolidate business units

To further strengthen its competitive position by taking advantage of synergies across product lines, Sara Lee Intimate Apparel (SLIA) is consolidating offices for its three intimate apparel units into one location. Playtex Apparel Inc. will relocate its headquarters from Stamford, Conn., to Winston-Salem, where offices for the company's Bali Intimates and Hanes Her Way Intimates are based. About 50 employees in the Stamford offices will be affected by the move. The company will create 40 new positions in Winston-Salem to support the Playtex business.

In addition, the company will close Playtex packaging and distribution centers in Dover, Del., consolidating those functions with Bali operations in Kings Mountain, N.C. The move will affect about 385 employees at the two Dover facilities. The company expects to add 250 employees in Kings Mountain to process the additional volume.

"Sara Lee's portfolio includes some of the strongest brands in the intimate apparel market - Bali, Wonderbra, Playtex, barely there, Hanes Her Way, Lovable and Just My Size - and bringing them together under 'one roof' will allow us to leverage the best practices across all of our businesses," said Charles L. Nesbit Jr., president and chief executive officer of Sara Lee Intimate Apparel. "This move is consistent with Sara Lee's reshaping program, which we launched in May 2000 to strengthen the category positions of our leadership brands."

Design studios, and sales showrooms for three of SLIA's operations - Playtex, Bali and Liberty Fabrics - will remain in New York, but will be located at a single site. "We are particularly excited about the possibilities that come with bringing technical and material resources together in one world-class design center location," Nesbit said. "While each of the design groups will remain discrete units focused on their own projects, having a broader range of resources available to each team will greatly enhance their creative potential."

No changes will be made in Playtex's sales organization.

The Stamford transition is expected to be completed by May 1 and the Dover closure by Dec. 31. All affected employees will be eligible to receive salary and benefits continuation, and outplacement services.

## Despite settlement, questions still linger

BY THOMAS C. TOBIN  
ST. PETERSBURG TIMES

DAYTONA BEACH, Fla. - For the first two days, Maurice Rizzo, his wife and three children were having a great vacation at the Adam's Mark hotel in Daytona Beach.

Then, he said, "the hotel changed completely." It was just before some 100,000 young people were scheduled to arrive for the 1999 Black College Reunion, a loosely organized, weekend celebration attended mostly by young African Americans.

The housekeeping staff removed furniture from the lobby. The security presence - suddenly heavy with uniformed officers walking the upper floors - made Rizzo and his family feel awkward and fearful. At breakfast, a hotel worker chained the restaurant doors facing the Atlantic Ocean, prompting Rizzo, a safety officer with the New York City Transit Authority, to complain about access in the event of fire.

"It put a bitter taste in my mouth. I didn't want to be there," said Rizzo, 38, a white Staten Islander who felt inconvenienced but also grasped that the hotel was locking down for the black guests who were arriving as he left. Had he been one of those guests, he said, "I would feel insulted."

His comments, made to lawyers in August, were to be one of the building blocks in the case against Adam's Mark - a case brought by five of its black customers from that weekend in April 1999 and later joined by the Florida Attorney General's Office.

But not one of them will have his or her day in court.

Last month, Adam's Mark agreed to pay about \$1 million to former guests and four of Florida's historically black colleges. The NAACP agreed to end an economic boycott against the chain.

The settlement put an end to the dispute, giving both sides a modicum of satisfaction. But it also left an emotional debate over racial discrimination strangely unresolved.

It seemed a compelling case. But public records released this month show that it also was going to be hard to prove. "This court case is a roll of the dice for both parties and there may be a better way," Fred S. Kummer, president of Adam's Mark's parent company, HBE Corp., wrote in an August letter that offered an olive branch to NAACP President Kweisi Mfume.

The day before that letter, Kummer sparred with state and plaintiffs' lawyers in a contentious, daylong deposition. He admitted that his hotel may have gone too far during Black College Reunion. He called the event frighten-



When this photo was shot of the Daytona Beach Adam's Mark late last year, the hotel was undergoing a massive facelift. About 300 rooms were added to the building.

ing. He also was made to confront statements he gave to two Florida newspapers:

"It's pretty much a community under siege," Kummer once said of the event. "We man the fortress. We nailed down everything we could."

He also had said: "I think what we did was get too protective about property and not sensitive enough about people." He referred to some of the hotel's actions as silly and unwarranted, yet stuck by his managers. (He did not respond to a request for an interview for this article.)

On the other side of the case, however, the outlook was not much better.

Seventeen Orlando-area residents who listened to a mock version of the trial last month struggled with the notion of discrimination.

Fifteen of the 17 mock jurors agreed that the hotel's policies during Black College Reunion 1999 differed from its policies for other special events in Daytona Beach. They wanted to award damages.

But then the 17 were asked to go a step further - to consider whether the hotel had discriminated against its guests based on race. A bare majority - nine - said yes.

Of those nine, only one was white. The rest were black and Hispanic.

The hotel compiled a to-do list for the weekend of April 9-11, 1999. The tasks included: setting up 65 metal bike racks to use as barricades at the front entrance; distributing a letter to all rooms and making a public address announcement designed to prod guests into checking out by 11 a.m. Sunday, lest they be charged for another night's stay; removing furniture from the lobby; locking the in-room liquor cabinets, known as "robobars"; locking all entrances to the hotel except the front door; locking the garage and beach club elevators; restricting all in-room movies and phones until guests paid cash in advance.

The hotel also required guests to pay the full cost of their rooms in advance, plus a \$50 per night damage deposit. The money was refundable, but you had to request it no later than 30 days before the event. That arrangement locked many guests into staying at the Adam's Mark,

even though some wanted to switch hotels after seeing the bunker-style atmosphere.

Guests also complained about having to wear bright orange wristbands to get into the hotel and not being allowed to have visitors in their rooms. Because many of its 437 rooms were occupied that weekend by three or four people, the Adam's Mark ordered 2,000 wristbands to meet the demand.

Guests also reported a serious breakdown in the hotel's housekeeping and room service. Many beds were never made during the weekend and guests had to track down maids for fresh towels.

Guests were not allowed the usual convenience of putting restaurant meals or room service or even rollaway beds on their room tab. The hotel wanted cash.

According to the state, the accommodations hardly lived up to Adam's Mark's marketing, which bills the hotel as the "best on the beach" and promises "remarkable services and amenities you would expect from a premier resort."

The hotel insists that none of the changes was made because of the guests' race. However, the state produced the sworn statement of a white kitchen worker who said his white boss referred to arriving guests as animals who needed to be caged.

Kummer, the chain's president, attributed the hotel's reaction to the youth and "exuberance" of its guests that weekend. He called them "people trying to get too much into 24 hours, into 48 hours."

He added there was no sin in tailoring a hotel to the tastes and demands of its guests. "We may be totally different in terms of our response" to different groups, he told lawyers. "That's the nature of every business, and even more so maybe in the hotel business."

The previous year, 1998, hotel managers said they felt besieged by Black College Reunion guests. There was a stabbing on the 11th floor, 11 aggravated assaults on the upper floors, a major fight in the lobby and more than

See Adam's Mark on A9

## DaimlerChrysler named Company of the Year by popular magazines

SPECIAL TO THE CHRONICLE

AUBURN HILLS, Mich. - The Chrysler Group of DaimlerChrysler AG has been named as the 2002 Patterson-Greenfield Company of the Year by African Americans on Wheels and Latinos on Wheels magazines. The award was presented during the recent sixth annual Urban Wheel Awards at the Detroit Institute of Arts.

The gala event is annually held in conjunction with Press Preview Week of the North American International Auto Show in Detroit, Mich., to honor individuals and corporations for contributions to diversity in the automotive industry.

According to Randi Payton, founder of the Urban Wheel Awards and president and CEO of On Wheels Inc., parent company of African Americans on Wheels and Latinos on Wheels magazines, DaimlerChrysler was recognized for its "long-standing support of diversity."

Wolfgang Bernhard, Chrysler Group chief operating officer, accepted the

award on behalf of the company's employees. "In spite of our challenges this past year, we have remained true to our values," Bernhard said.

Specifically, the company's annual spending with minority vendors and suppliers grew to \$2.7 billion; it launched a major diversity motorsports program to increase the number of minority drivers and technicians in the field of motorsports; and Chrysler Group was among the leading corporations with diverse work forces. Currently, people of color make up 27 percent of the company's work force.

In 1997, the former Chrysler Corp. was named the Patterson-Greenfield Company of the Year. Last year, the Chrysler PT Cruiser was named Car of the Year.

The Patterson-Greenfield Company of the Year Award is named in honor of the first African-American coach bus and car company operator. Following a nomination process, award recipients are selected by an independent panel of automotive journalists.

## Bell Ringers



L.A. Clippers stars Elton Brand and Corey Maggette ring the opening bell last week at the American Stock Exchange.