

SPORTSWEEK

Twin City league in need of change?

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Woodbury hoping for more playing time



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COMMUNITY

SECCA program brings kids to nature

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Minorities find road-blocks to dental care

75 cents

WINSTON-SALEM GREENSBORO HIGH POINT

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CHRONICLE

The Choice for African-American News

THURSDAY, JULY 11, 2002

Lawmakers may target drinkers for revenue

Beer industry says N.C. drinkers already pay 5th highest excise tax in U.S.

BY PAUL COLLINS
THE CHRONICLE

One of the measures the N.C. General Assembly is considering to help reduce the state budgetary crunch is increasing the state excise tax on beer. One of the bills introduced, House Bill 1606, would double the tax to the equivalent of 10 cents for every 12-ounce bottle/can.



According to a North Carolina-based Web site called Pennies Count (of the N.C. Initiative to Reduce Underage Drinking), several "great reasons to raise the excise tax on beer" are:

- "It will raise revenue for state and local governments. A five-cent per bottle increase will raise almost \$83 million. By law, almost one-quarter of the excise tax is distributed to cities and counties. Local governments received over \$20 million from the state excise tax on beer in 2000. Eighty-two percent of North Carolinians support increasing the beer excise tax if the funds go to support substance abuse prevention programs."
- "It's time. The state has not raised the tax since 1969. Inflation has eroded the real tax by almost 80 percent. If the excise tax on beer had been indexed to inflation in 1969, the state would have collected roughly \$300 million more in 2001."
- "It's fair. Nine out of 10 N.C. adults would pay little or none of this tax. It's a user fee, not a general tax. Only people who buy beer would pay it, just as people that drive cars pay gasoline taxes."

Some say studies show increasing taxes and the price of beer reduce underage alcohol use, but an industry spokesman said that didn't happen after federal beer excise taxes were doubled in 1992.

Drinkings cause higher costs for society, like higher car insurance premiums and health care costs. It's only fair for drinkers to pay their fair share of these costs. Heavy drinkers (the estimated 6 percent of adults who drink at least every other day) would pay only \$8.65 per month.

Everyone will benefit from lower car and health insurance premiums and less family violence. Under-

See Beer on A4



A volunteer collects money for WAAA during the station's annual MLK program at the Benton Convention Center.

The beat goes on

WAAA back on the air after roller-coaster year

BY T. KEVIN WALKER
THE CHRONICLE

Since the day 980 AM WAAA went off the air a year ago, Mütter Evans has promised the station's loyal, longtime listeners that the station would return to radio airways to continue to provide music and community information.

Evans made good on that promise Friday when WAAA went from dead air to providing the smooth sounds that it has been known for for five decades. The station is back on the air, providing only music for the time being.

"From day one, I knew we would be back on the air," said Evans, who worked at the station as a college student and bought it about 20 years ago.

WAAA has been a staple in Win-

ston-Salem since the 1950s when it started spinning now classic soul hits. The station also gained fans for its popular on-air personalities and the block parties the station frequently held in several city communities.

Evans has tried to continue that legacy. But the station's future came into question in July of last year when Evans and her staff were evicted from their building. The landlord

See WAAA on A10

See WAAA on A10

Hopefuls are taking advantage of primary stalemate

BY COURTNEY GAILLARD
THE CHRONICLE

It's business as usual for many of the candidates now that primary elections have been indefinitely postponed due to the redistricting battle between Democrats and Republicans in the Tarheel state.

The legislative primaries were called off in April by the state Supreme Court while it determines whether or not the state Constitution allows for counties to remain undivided in redistricting.

Candidates across party lines, however, are sharing the same sentiment of disbelief over the postponement of the elections.

Earline Parmon is still taking every opportunity to remind voters that an election season is going on. Parmon, a Democrat hoping to replace Rep. Pete Oldham, says that she was "devastated" when she found out that the primaries would not go on as planned back in May.

Still, Parmon says she is making the effort to present herself at any large public gatherings to push her name and encourage voters to stay interested despite the redistricting fight.

"It's very difficult to run a campaign for elective office when the process is so confusing and undefined," said Parmon. "Like the other candidates, it's just something I have to deal with until a decision is made."

Concerned citizens, says

See Primary on A11



The annual fireworks show on the mall illuminates the Washington Monument to close out Independence Day celebrations in the nation's capital. Although safety concerns were a big topic this year in light of Sept. 11, the festivities went off without a hitch.

REUTERS/Gary Hershorn

Quicker-picker-upper

City Sanitation Department rolls out state-of-the-art trucks

BY SAM DAVIS
THE CHRONICLE

The long haul for Cheryl B. McIlwain finally ended Monday when seven new trucks rolled out of the city of Winston-Salem's sanitation terminal. The trucks, specially equipped to mechanically pick up containers filled with yard debris, had been in the works for more than 18 months before finally being deployed.

McIlwain, crew supervisor in the city's Sanitation

Department, was charged with the task of implementing the new system (Automated Yard Waste Cart Collection Service), which was designed to significantly lower the expense and occupational hazards of collecting yard debris.

Although the amount of personnel was cut from 48 to nine, no jobs were lost because of the utilization of mechanized debris collection. However, the cost reduction will be considerable.

"This is going to really cut down on the amount of manpower needed," McIlwain said. "And although we cut the staff to nine, there were no jobs lost because we transferred the rest to other departments. But it will cut down on back injuries, dog bites and things of that sort."

In the new system, residents can purchase yard-waste carts from the city

See Sanitation on A10



Cheryl McIlwain and Mark Foreman hold the ribbon as the first truck rolls out of the terminal at City Yard for the city's Automated Yard Waste Cart Collection Service.

Photo by Imas Sivad