

# BUSINESS FOCUS

## Briefs

### R.J. Reynolds Tobacco Holdings appoints new chief financial officer

R.J. Reynolds Tobacco Holdings, Inc. has announced the appointment of Richard H. Bogan as executive vice president and chief financial officer, effective July 22. He succeeds Kenneth J. Lapiejko, who has announced that he will retire on Aug. 1 after a 25-year career with RJR.



Bogan

Andrew J. Schindler, chairman and CEO of R.J. Reynolds Tobacco Holdings, said, "We will benefit from Richard's broad-based experience, financial expertise and leadership skills. His diverse management experience includes information technology; audit planning, strategy, and analysis; managing relationships with investors, analysts and bankers; and key operational leadership roles."

Schindler added, "All of us at R.J. Reynolds are grateful for Ken Lapiejko's numerous contributions to our business during his 25-year career with RJR, and wish him the best as he retires. Ken's knowledge, commitment, dedication and integrity have been the hallmarks of his career with RJR. Ken has been a respected member of our team, and we will all miss him dearly."

Bogan is the former president of north American Logistics, an operating company of Allied Worldwide Inc., the world's largest household moving/storage van line and high value products logistics company with operations in the United States, Canada and Europe. Before that, he was president and chief financial officer of Unisource Worldwide Inc., the leading North American distributor of printing and imaging papers, packaging and sanitary maintenance equipment and supplies. Previously, Bogan held a variety of senior management positions during his 20-year career at Philip Morris Companies Inc., including: senior vice president - finance, strategy, and information systems for Miller Brewing Company Inc.; vice president - financial planning and analysis and information systems for Philip Morris Companies Inc.; and vice president - corporate audit for Philip Morris Companies Inc.

### Winston-Salem/Forsyth County school bus driver honored

The N.C. Petroleum Marketers Association has honored Wanda T. Bullins of Kernersville, a Winston-Salem/Forsyth County school bus driver, for safe and courteous driving.

Bullins has driven 27 years with the school system, averaging about 14,000 miles annually. She has 26 safe driving awards and perfect attendance during her entire career. She has driven both regular and exceptional children and is very conscientious about the safety and well-being of her students.

Andy Sayles of Quality Oil Co. in Winston-Salem presented the plaque on behalf of the association.

The N.C. Petroleum Marketers Association established this award in each county to bring awareness and renewed dedication to school bus safety throughout the state. That award was named the Tracy Lea Calhoun Award in memory of a 17-year-old student who lost her life when a school bus ran a stop sign. She was on her way to a part-time job at an oil company in Raleigh.

### Jordan named acting chairman of National Black Chamber

WASHINGTON, D.C. - The National Black Chamber of Commerce, the world's largest organization dedicated to black business empowerment, has announced that respected corporate CEO Frederick E. Jordan has been named acting chairman.

President and CEO of F.E. Jordan Associates Inc., an engineering, architectural, environmental and construction management firm, Jordan brings an extraordinary global vision to the 10-year-old NBCC. With offices in San Francisco, Oakland and Baton Rouge, F.E. Jordan Associates has successfully completed more than 1,000 projects in the United States as well as in East and West Africa and Central America.

Jordan has immense credibility, not only in business but in the public and civic sectors as well. Past chairman of the San Francisco Bay Area Urban League, the California Minority and Women Business Coalition and the San Francisco Black Chamber of Commerce, Jordan is the author of more than 30 articles and editorials on affirmative action issues. His 1998 book, "The Lynching of the American Dream," is considered to be one of the most important and cogent works on the subject in recent history. He has also served as a San Francisco commissioner and as a California state commissioner.

Jordan serves as a development partner on the ambitious 42-story St. Regis Museum Tower, a mixed-use development that will ultimately house a 20,000-square-foot African American/African Diaspora museum, scheduled to open in 2004.

NBCC President and CEO Harry Alford said the NBCC is honored to welcome Jordan to his new post. "As a businessman, a civic and political activist, Fred Jordan is among the nation's most estimable figures. His experience with global business issues, and as a co-founder of BlackCommerceMall.com, makes him uniquely qualified to serve as acting chairman of the NBCC.

"Simply put, he is an ideal fit for us at this moment in our history."

## Birmingham company honors Sept. 11 victim

BY JESSIE J. LEWIS SR.  
THE BIRMINGHAM TIMES

BIRMINGHAM, Ala. - A Birmingham-based Christian candy company is using its newest product to honor the sacrifices of an Alabama native killed in the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks.

Scripture Candy, whose products carrying Bible verses are sold in 40 states and 13 foreign countries, in mid-July will release the 9/11 Patriotic Tin, a keepsake patriotic tin containing sugar-free mints.

A portion of the proceeds will go to a memorial fund set up for the family of Army Maj. Dwayne Williams of Jacksonville, who was killed when a hijacked plane struck the Pentagon in Washington, D.C. Williams' brother, Roy, is a reporter with The Birmingham News.

Scripture Candy owners Brian Adkins and Michael McCarron said the tin is their way of honoring those who died.

On the 9/11 Tin's lid is a drawing of an American flag over the words to the Pledge of Allegiance. The pledge is also on the side of the tin, along with the phrase "one nation under God" and words from Isaiah 40:31, which begins, "But they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength."

The bottom of the tin has a tribute to Williams and the other 3,200 victims killed on Sept. 11 when hijacked planes crashed into the World Trade Center, the Pentagon and a Pennsylvania field. Adkins said those acts took the nation to a new level of patriotism and his Christian candy company feels a duty to take the country closer to God.

"We're going to use this product to get this country to rally behind the one and only true God," Adkins said.

McCarron said the words "under God" from the Pledge of Allegiance are featured prominently on the 9/11 Tin. With the controversial ruling by a California court putting the pledge under attack, McCarron said it is great timing to show the nation's patriotism and love of God.

"It just shows even more how important it is to stay under the grace of God as a people and a nation," McCarron said. "Our nation was founded under God and we must not lose focus or we will perish. Our products show how people can stand up and be a witness to God."

Scripture Candy has been one of the big success stories in the Birmingham Entrepreneurial Center, a downtown incubator, officials there say. Adkins started the company in November 1997 as a one-man operation, selling candy canes and peppermints in wrappers containing Bible verses mainly to a few dozen Christian bookstores.

McCarron joined the business a year later, and they began adding new products and expanding into other retail outlets. More than 4,000 book, clothing and drug stores, nail salons and restaurants carry Scripture Candy goods.

Churches and Christian organizations sell the products to raise money and spread the Gospel. Products also are listed in Revere, a Montgomery fund-raising catalog.

"It's a great way to witness as well as provide a service to customers," McCarron said.

Scripture Candy has more than 60 product lines, including tiny mints shaped like the Christian fish symbol, suckers, peppermints, chocolates and jelly beans. It ships about 13,000 pounds of candy a week from its downtown distribution center, McCarron said.

The company also has candies with Scriptures in Spanish. Adkins wouldn't divulge sales but said the company had record business last year.

The 9/11 Tin isn't Scripture Candy's first time reaching out to help those affected by tragedy. Last September, it unveiled Faith Pops, a sucker in wrapping with Bible verses and a tribute to Faith Bynum, a Dora 9-year-old paralyzed below the neck in a May 31, 2001, car accident. A portion of Faith Pops' sales go into a special account set up for Faith.

The 9/11 Tin and Faith Pops are part of Scripture Candy's way of fulfilling its company motto, "reaching the world one piece at a time," McCarron said.

To order the tin or Faith Pops, go online to [www.scripturecandy.com](http://www.scripturecandy.com).



The Marriott Los Angeles Airport Hotel is one of hundreds of hotels worldwide owned by Med and operated by Marriott.

## NAACP: Hotels improved diversity but still lacking

BY DEBORAH KONG  
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

HOUSTON - The NAACP said some hotel chains are lagging behind others in their treatment of minorities and urged consumers to use the group's hotel report cards in deciding where to stay.

The report cards, which consider employee diversity and advertising in black-owned media, among other factors, assigned grades to 11 national chains. Marriott received the highest grade, B, on the 2002 report card; Starwood was the lowest with a C.

"We're asking people of all races, who believe in fairness in this country, who for whatever reason make a decision to go to a hotel, to use this report as a guide," said Kweisi Mfume, president of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People.

Hotel chains have made progress in providing business opportunities to minorities, but have been slow to increase black property ownership and advertise in black-owned media, according to the NAACP report, released at the group's annual convention recently.

In the last report card, issued

two years ago, the NAACP gave grades of mostly C's and D's to

### Grades

Marriott	B
Cendant	B
Hilton	B-
Wyndham	B-
Hyatt	B-
Choice	C+
Omni	C+
Radisson	C
Best Western	C
Six Continents	C
Starwood 7	C

the chains.

Donna DeBerry, senior vice president of diversity at Wyndham International, said the chain's lower grades in the past - a D in 2000 - "definitely impacted our business." For 2002, Wyndham received a B-minus.

American blacks spend more than \$35 billion annually on travel and tourism, according to the NAACP report.

The NAACP did note some progress in board appointments, employment and increased contracting opportunities. Hotels also have formed diversity councils and franchise recruitment programs, the report said.

But "the ability of African-American and Latino entrepreneurs in particular to break into the historically closed-door society of hotel ownership remains hampered," Mfume said. "The hotel industry generates huge revenues," yet those are "disturbingly being enjoyed by only a few."

The grades, which cover 2001 and 2002, are based on the NAACP's assessment of the hotels' diversity in hiring practices, vendors, advertising, philanthropy and equity ownership and franchise opportunities.

Starwood Hotels & Resorts Worldwide, owner of the Sheraton and Westin chains, "takes the NAACP report very seriously," said spokeswoman K.C. Kavanagh. "We're a relatively new company and are aggressively pursuing diversity issues."

Starwood formed a diversity council of senior executives and recently hired a seasoned diversity executive, she said.

## Bringing color to your home

### Entrepreneur starts ethnic housewares business online

SPECIAL TO THE CHRONICLE

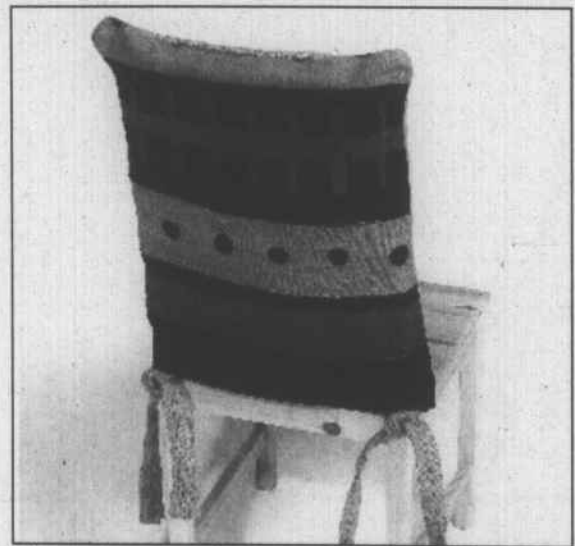
NEW YORK - Housewares is a \$79 billion a year industry and minorities buy home furnishings, appliances and the like at a much faster rate than white households. However, ethnic home decor items remain difficult to find in traditional retail outlets.

According to the American Housing Survey, nearly 44 million home purchases were made in the 1990s, of which 8 million, or 19 percent, were by minorities. In 1991, 54 percent of minority purchases were by first-time buyers, compared with 66 percent in 1999.

As home ownership continues to grow among minorities, the market for home decor that reflects their culture will grow as well. However, the products that hold appeal for this diverse customer base are still mostly found in small specialty or outlet stores.

"I wanted a nice, colorful throw," says Yuwanda Black of the online start-up EthnicHomeDecor.com. "I went to several home decorating stores and could find nothing that appealed to my sense of color, culture, style. Finally I gave up, went to an African fabric store, selected fabrics and made my own."

Black is owner of the online start-up EthnicHomeDecor.com. Ethnic Home Decor offers soft home furnishings with ethnic themes at reasonable prices. Frustrated at trying to find



Chair jackets like this one are among the many products available through the company's Web site.

what she thought were simple home decor items with ethnic themes, Yuwanda started EthnicHomeDecor.com. "I reasoned that if I was having a hard time trying to find these items, others were as well. So, being an entrepreneur, I saw this as a major opportunity."

Results from the U.S. Census Bureau's Census 2000 report show that the nation's combined minority could eventually become its majority. As we move toward this more diverse culture, many companies are taking steps now to capture their share of this emerging and profitable consumer base.

In order to capture this audience, more companies need to realize that they must first market

directly to these consumers. Traditionally having been excluded from the majority of society, many minorities feel as if their wants, needs, and tastes are unimportant. Initially, the music industry made the same error with rap and hip-hop music. Now, it is the most popular form of music among American youths, of all races.

Black said, "One day, I hope to be able to find pillows made of vivid African print fabrics as easily as I find floral-patterned pillows. What's ironic to me is retailers don't realize that these items have mass appeal. I have friends from many different races, and they are as likely to buy a mud-cloth pillow as I am."