

News at a Glance

Coach files bias suit against university

(Special to the NNPA) - Nolan Richardson, former University of Arkansas basketball coach, has filed suit against the university in federal court, claiming his free-speech rights were violated and he was discriminated against because he is black.



Richardson

University Chancellor John A. White fired the outspoken Richardson on March 1 after the longtime basketball coach complained that he was being treated differently because he is black.

"As the season neared completion, the chances for the team to participate in post-season competition were clearly in jeopardy," the lawsuit says. "This situation caused pressure and tension for the plaintiff Richardson, a perfectionist, driven to achieve with players and other staff each year, the successful season, which the citizenry of the state had come to expect."

Richardson led the Razorbacks to post-season play in all but one of his 16 seasons, making the NCAA tournament 15 times. The Razorbacks won an NCAA championship in 1994 and played in the 1995 title game.

The lawsuit also says that Richardson's victories brought national prominence to the institution, leading donors to make substantial financial contributions.

Arkansas agreed to pay Richardson \$3 million over the remaining seasons of a seven-year contract that he signed last year.

"I am confident that the claims asserted by Mr. Richardson...will be shown to be groundless and without merit," said Fred H. Harrison, university system lawyer. "The complaint is simply a one-sided rendering by Mr. Richardson's attorneys of their view of the facts, a view with which the university strongly disagrees."

Subject of interracial book dies at 90

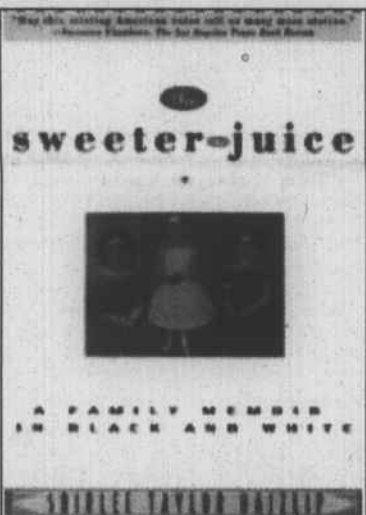
NEW YORK (AP) - Margaret Taylor Hancock, whose upbringing in a multi-racial home was chronicled in a book by her daughter, died on Tuesday in Branford, Conn. She was 90.

Hancock, who was born in Washington, grew up black and was separated from her white siblings at age 4. In 1992, after 76 years apart, Hancock reunited with a sister.

These experiences were brought to life by the 1994 book "The Sweeter the Juice: A Family Memoir in Black and White," written by Hancock's daughter, Shirlee Taylor Haizlip.

In the memoir, Haizlip describes how Hancock's great-grandmother came over from Ireland and married a half-black slave. The family was classified as mulatto in the 1900 status but later split into separate white and black branches.

Hancock went on to become a co-founder of the NAACP branch in Ansonia, Conn., and became active in Connecticut's foster care system, fostering six girls herself.



Azapo recalls liberation hero Stephen Biko

PRETORIA, South Africa (GIN) - The Azanian People's Organisation (Azapo) is urging that the Union Buildings and Schoeman Street in Pretoria be named after Black Consciousness Movement leader Bantu Steven Biko, who died in police custody in 1977.



Biko

Azapo said in a statement recently that Biko would have celebrated his 56th birthday Dec. 18. However, many of his former colleagues, now successful businessmen and governmental leaders, no longer thought of commemorating his life or even mentioning his name.

"(Azapo) is saddened and outraged by the fact that almost every street and building in this country are named after Nelson Mandela and the ANC people only."

Azapo said it wanted the Union Building to be renamed Bantu Biko Building and Schoeman Street renamed Bantu Biko Street.

As the charismatic leader of the Black Consciousness Movement, Biko urged South Africa's blacks to fight for their empowerment; the eloquent advocate of black self-pride soon emerged as the leader of a generation of young black militants.

He preached that blacks' main problem was their attitude of inferiority, and that only they could spearhead a victory over their oppressors, rather than the white liberals who tried to speak for them. Biko's death made him a martyr to the cruelties of minority white rule and racial separation.

SOS aims to help students achieve

BY JAEON PITT
THE CHRONICLE

The Support Our Students (SOS) Initiative is making tremendous strides toward improving the local school system. The N.C. Department of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention feels that it is saving many students' academic careers as well as their futures in general by administering the program.

Gov. Mike Easley released evaluation data that showed the achievement gap between whites and blacks is gradually coming to a close. The statistics were gained through private evaluation of nearly 20,000 N.C. students in middle schools and junior highs that participated in SOS in the 2001-2002 school year.

African-Americans showed great improvement last year, and it showed on the N.C. End-of-Grade (EOG) Tests. When combining all of the minorities and comparing their EOG reading scores, minority SOS participants made almost double the gain of white students to exceed the state's improvement goals.

Easley said, "This is great news for North Carolina's entire public school system. It demonstrates that our students, teachers and communities are committed to doing what it takes to ensure academic success. North Carolina is making more progress than any other state in closing the achievement gap, but we cannot be satisfied until it is eliminated. By encouraging more people to volunteer and mentor in our public schools, we will realize our goal more quickly."

SOS has inspired youths to want to do better in the classroom. Teachers reported that SOS participants have made wonderful changes in class in a number of areas. Overall attendance has improved. In- and out-of-school suspensions dropped 5 percent from last year, and 40 percent of students said they like school better after joining SOS.

"It is a self-esteem issue as well. Homework gets done, and you're not making excuses; plus they get this role model," Carol Yardley said. Yardley works closely with the community outreach services



Students in the SOS prepare to take a trip to Tanglewood last week.

Photo by AJ White

department of the YMCA and supports a number of programs that encourage academic achievement and character development. Yardley believes that programs such as SOS are good for students and parents alike. She said, "So many youth go home to an empty house. Parents are both working. They're just dead tired when they get home. They don't have the time. They would probably like to have the time to help their kids."

Yardley said that in grades six through eight, which SOS targets, the after-school hours are when kids are most vulnerable and at a higher risk of committing crimes. They are most at risk between 3 and 6 p.m.

The Support Our Students staff encourages parents to add their children to the list or seek similar programming.

SOS is very affordable. At \$10 a month, kids can get enrichment and snacks for five days a week.

Locally, Wiley Middle School, Hanes Middle School and Northwest Middle School have been active in the program.

Others include Ladeara Crest Community Center and the Ledges Apartment Complex. Recreation centers were facilities in the past, but SOS decided to move into the schools in order to get better cooperation from students and teachers. Parents are glad that their kids are playing less basketball and doing more homework.

George Sweat, the secretary of the N.C. Department of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, said, "Many times, closing the gap is about catching up. Instead of struggling academically or being home alone, SOS participants are succeeding in a safe, supervised, drug-free environment. They receive such benefits as healthy snacks, one-on-one tutoring in various core subjects, and access to computers. Many spend time with an adult mentor, a figure often missing from their lives. The programs are supported by community volunteers, which enables high-quality services and low tutor-to-student ratios that would otherwise not be possible."

Initiative feeds community for holidays

BY T. KEVIN WALKER
THE CHRONICLE

Christmas came early for several hundred people at the Happy Hill Community Center on Dec. 21. The center, a place where children usually gather to play games and take computer lessons, was transformed into a yuletide banquet hall. The occasion was a festive Christmas dinner hosted by Community Outreach, a religious initiative spearheaded by New World Cappadocia Outreach Center that brings churches together to tackle issues that face mostly low-income residents.

Members of several local churches served as hosts, hostesses, waiters and waitresses at the dinner, serving up hot turkey and ham plates along with tons of warm smiles and holiday cheer. The Kiwanis Club also supplied food and volunteers for the dinner. Many residents of Happy Hill came out to enjoy the event.

Organizers also went around the city in church vans to pick up people off the streets or anyone in need of a good meal.

The Rev. Melvin "Rip" Wilkins, pastor of New World Cappadocia and founder of Community Outreach, personally went around to homeless shelters, bringing back a van full of appreciative men. Wilkins said the dinner was a way of trying to feed not only the spiritual needs of people but also the physical.

"Our mission is to go out so that people might be saved and set free. The people on the outside want to get into the inside of the church until we come out and show love," he said.

The dinner was just one of many outreach efforts Wilkins and his flock have been involved with over the years. Community Outreach efforts also include prison and street ministry programs; clothing giveaways and youth counseling. Wilkins said outreach efforts are done all over the city, wherever there is a need, but his church has a special bond with Happy Hill because many residents of the community attend New World Cappadocia.

Yvonne Jefferson is one of



Organizers say that more than 200 people ate at the holiday dinner.

Photo by Kevin Walker

Happy Hill's best known residents and also a longtime member of New World Cappadocia. Jefferson helped to serve at the

Happy Hill Community Center, where she serves as the center's director. "There is a need for this,"

she said. "People are hurting, especially at this time of year...I see them crying out. They need this help."

Can you put the Dixie Classic Fair together?

If you've ever wanted to have a say in the Dixie Classic Fair, here's your chance. The Winston-Salem Public Assembly Facilities Commission is seeking individuals throughout Northwest North Carolina interested in serving on the commission's Fair Planning Committee.

The committee assists Fair Director David Sparks in planning the annual Dixie Classic Fair.

Interested? Need more information? Call David at (336) 727-2236, write him at P.O. Box 7525, Winston-Salem, N.C. 27109 or e-mail him at sparks@dcfair.com.

The deadline for applying is Jan. 10, 2003.



www.dcfair.com

The Chronicle (USPS 067-910) was established by Ernest H. Pitt and Ndubisi Egemonye in 1974 and is published every Thursday by Winston-Salem Chronicle Publishing Co. Inc., 617 N. Liberty Street, Winston-Salem, NC 27101. Periodicals postage paid at Winston-Salem, N.C. Annual subscription price is \$30.72.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to: The Chronicle, P.O. Box 1636 Winston-Salem, NC 27102-1636

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