

YWCA unveils breast cancer survivor calendar

SPECIAL TO THE CHRONICLE

For 13 local African-American women, a very private matter has gone public. And they couldn't be happier about it.

The women are breast cancer survivors and they share their stories in "Sister, Speak!: Stories of Breast Cancer Survival," a 13-month calendar prepared by the YWCA of Winston-Salem. The calendar features each woman's story from diagnosis to the present.

The calendar was created to encourage African-American women to begin talking about breast care and to encourage them to practice the life-saving actions of self-exams and mammograms.

The women who share their stories are a diverse group. Some of them were diagnosed later in life. Others received a diagnosis while in their 20s. They are mothers and grandmothers. Some of them have family histories of breast cancer, while others are the only members of their families to battle breast cancer. They all send the same messages that black women need to perform self-exams and get mammograms and that a diagnosis of breast cancer is not a death sentence.

"This calendar is about hope and encouragement," said Robin B. Ervin, director of marketing for the YWCA. "The women in the calendar shared their stories in hopes that they could prompt at least one woman to start performing self-exams and to go and get a mammogram. That's what this calendar is all about. We are privileged to be a part of helping them get their message out."

Women featured in the calendar are Tamara Carroll, Evelyn Snead, Linda Lindsay, Pearl Bacote, Theresa Jones, Gloria Williams Wesley, Betty Brayboy, Naomi Jackson, Rev. Mary Peterson, Benita Sims, Carmen Caruth, Olivia C. Swinton and Bonnie Nash.

While breast cancer affects white women at a higher rate than black women, the death rate



Peterson



Sims



Bacote

for black women is substantially higher. This is due to the fact that black women are not detecting the disease early through self-exams and mammograms.

The YWCA's Sister, Speak! program provides free mammograms for women without insurance or whose insurance will not cover mammograms.

Copies of the calendars are available at the YWCA, 1201 Glade Street.

Million Moms award Womble for his gun control support

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State Rep. Larry Womble was scheduled to be awarded the first annual "Moms' Apple Pie" Award by the Forsyth Mothers and Others chapter of the Million Mom March United with the Brady Campaign to Prevent Gun Violence.

The honor was to be presented Tuesday night during the chapter's annual meeting

at the Center for Community Safety, 500 W. Fourth Street.

Womble was selected to be the first recipient of this award because of his steadfast support in the N.C. Legislature, often against strong opposition, of bills that promote reduction of gun violence and enhancement of community safety.

In the past legislative session alone, for example,

Womble supported: House Bill 919, which prevents possession of firearms by people under investigation for domestic abuse (enacted); H.B. 1058, which would prohibit convicted felons from possessing any type of firearm and eliminate the current exception allowing felons to possess firearms in their own homes or places of business (pending); H.B.

926, which, makes it a Class A1 misdemeanor to commit in front of a minor an assault with a deadly weapon on a person with whom the offender has a personal relationship (enacted); and Bill 1061, which would enhance the legal penalties for all felonies committed while possessing, displaying or discharging a firearm (pending).

Mothers

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next year. Tolliver and her friend Geneva Bryant, the mother of another one of the teens charged in the crime, have both complained about a lack of communication with the lawyers representing their sons.

Tolliver believes a good defense can prove that her son is incapable of the crime for which he is charged. Unlike prosecutors, who reportedly have confessions from some of the teens, Tolliver has no hard evidence of her son's innocence, just mother's intuition.

"He doesn't have it in his heart," Tolliver said. "I don't want people to have the wrong perception of these kids just because of where they are from and their backgrounds. They are not hoodlums."

Forsyth County District Attorney Tom Keith would not say if his office has a confession from any of the teens. Keith did say that the case against the teens is solid and may include some forensic evidence.

"We think we will be successful in our prosecution," he said.

Bryant and Tolliver are not claiming that their boys were choirboys before they were arrested. They both had some minor infractions, which the mothers chalk up to simply being young boys. They said murder is out of their character.

"They have done devilish things. We all did little devilish things when we were young," Bryant said. "But we are talking about murder, taking people's lives...That's not them."

Tolliver also disagrees with the notion that her son could have

just been with the wrong crowd when the crime happened. All the

teens will stand trial for murder. Keith said the law is equally as hard on those who "act in concert" during the commission of a



Jones

crime.

The mothers also have complaints about the way the boys were arrested. Bryant has complained that she was not allowed to accompany her then-15-year-old son to the Police Department when he was questioned. The Bryant family has filed a complaint with the Citizens Police Review Board, but the Police Department told The Chronicle earlier this year that the police acted within their rights in the case.

The women believe that a thorough investigation was not done before the teens were arrested. The boys were charged less than a week after Jones was found dead. Jones was a popular resident. His New Walkertown Road gas station is said to be one of the first in the state to be owned by an African-American. He was also the grandfather of Chris Paul, a local basketball phenom who will play for Wake Forest University this season. Tolliver said there was a rush to close the case because of Jones' status.

"This was a big, upstanding person in the community. There was a lot of pressure on the police

and the district attorney's office," she said.

Bryant and Tolliver said neither they nor their sons knew Jones, although he lived close by.

Keith said he had no idea who Jones was before his murder. He denies that Jones' stature played any role. He said the process was similar to the more than 400 murder cases he has handled during his tenure as DA. Keith said there was sympathy for the way Jones, a man in his 60s, died.

"I think the randomness bothered us. The age of the victim bothered us," Keith said.

Tolliver and Bryant have not

tried to reach out to the Jones family, but they said that doesn't mean that they are not sympathetic to the Joneses' loss.

"I understand what the Joneses feel. My heart went out to them," Tolliver said.

Bryant and Tolliver visit their sons nearly every week. They said their sons share their optimism about the upcoming trial. Tolliver hopes that justice will be blind and swift.

"I hope that that lady on that statue with the blindfold, I hope she is not peeking," she said.

A member of the Jones family could not be reached for comment before the paper's deadline.

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Protests

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to draw attention to the lack of jobs out there for people," said Hayes McNeill, first vice chair of the local Democratic Party.

Community for Peace, a local anti-war group, has teamed with the Democrats. Community for Peace has lined up several speakers for the event who are expected to talk down the president's policies on everything from tax cuts to the war in Iraq.

Late last week, plans for a third method of protest were announced. Democrat Larry Womble, a member of the N.C. House, has requested a permit from the Winston-Salem Police Department to hold a demonstration near the convention center during Bush's visit. A police official told The Chronicle that the permit would be issued only after the Secret Service OKed areas for protesters that would not jeopardize the president's safety.

Womble complained last week at a gathering of several grassroots organizations that the soup protest was too tame a response to the Bush visit.

"I don't want that crazy man to come into this city and have a \$2,000-a-plate (fund-raiser) and nothing has been done," Womble said. "We need to do something about

Bush. If we don't...the community will think that everything is OK," said Womble, who said things are far from OK because of job losses, U.S. casualties in Iraq and other problems.

Womble said the protest will start at Winston Square at around 11 a.m. Protesters will then march toward the convention center with protest signs. Protesters plan to hold their signs and vocalize their disapproval with the president at a location as close to the convention center as possible.

The Winston-Salem chapter of the NAACP is one of the organizations that have signed on to join the more vocal protest. Chapter president Stephen Hairston said the NAACP wants Bush to know that while some Americans can afford to pay \$2,000 for a lunch, there are many who are struggling to make ends meet.

"Not everyone is doing well. Everybody is not happy with the way things are going," Hairston said. "We wish we could offer a \$2,000 fund-raiser for some of our schools that can't afford books and other supplies."

McNeill said the Democratic Party didn't opt for a more vocal protest because officials feared that the Secret Service would mute such protests by prohibiting protesters from gathering anywhere near the president. McNeill pointed to

the 2000 presidential debate held at Wake Forest University, where protesters on both sides of the political spectrum were allowed to demonstrate in designated areas yards from the debate site.

A message was left at the Forsyth County Republican Party office asking for com-

ment on this story but a call was not received by press time.

Free Soup and Free Speech will be held from 10:30 a.m. to 2 p.m. at Winston Square Park, which is off of Marshall Street near the Sawtooth Center.



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