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Longtime barber plans to retire

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Norris to apply to become next chief

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Nurses graduate during ceremony

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THE CHRONICLE

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THURSDAY, DECEMBER 18, 2003

EWPS: Revocation was personal

School says OCS wanted to pick executive director

BY T. KEVIN WALKER
THE CHRONICLE

Officials with East Winston Primary School are saying that the state's Office of Charter Schools (OCS) are letting the education of children take a back seat to bruised egos. Mikal Muhammad, the chairman of the school's board of directors, showed The Chronicle documents last week that are expected to be included in an appeal the school is expected to file today in response to the revocation of its charter.

Muhammad said the EWPS school board feels that it quickly fell out of favor with the Office of Charter Schools after the EWPS board rejected a move by OCS head Otho Tucker to handpick the school's executive director. The school's old head, Jimmie Bonham, voluntarily stepped down in the late summer amid allegations that he misused state money. According to a log of events kept by Muhammad, OCS sent a representative to an August meeting

in which the EWPS board voted to name Margaret McCloud the school's interim executive director. The day after the vote, Muhammad said, he was contacted by OCS and told that OCS wanted a man who was a teacher at the school at the time named interim executive director. Muhammad said he was told that if the man was not named interim director, the school's charter would be in jeopardy. The Chronicle is not using the man's name because the paper was unable to reach him for comment.

Muhammad said he was close to succumbing to OCS's request, but other board members were upset by the request,



Tucker



Photo by Kevin Walker

See EWPS on A11 An East Winston Primary School parent makes a point at a recent meeting.

Watt bill may save HOPE VI

Federal program has helped to rebuild public housing units

CHRONICLE STAFF REPORT

U.S. Rep. Mel Watt and a Republican colleague have pushed a bill through both the House and the Senate that would fund the HOPE VI program to at least September 2006.

The end of HOPE VI was signaled earlier this year when no new money for the program was earmarked in President Bush's budget. It was the first time in 10 years that no new money had been requested for the program.

A spokesperson from the Department of Housing and Urban Development, which administers the program, told The Chronicle that no new money was requested because HOPE VI was intended to be a demonstration program and had run its course.

HOPE VI was started in 1992 as a result of a congressional investigation into "distressed" public housing structures. HUD awards millions of dollars to housing authorities across the country to eliminate traditional public housing. As a result, decades-old brick high-rises and apartments have been demolished to make way for swank housing communities with single-family homes and apartment



Watt

See HOPE VI on A5



A City Hall Christmas

Photo by Kevin Walker

City Secretary Renée Rice waves to a guest during a holiday open house held last week at City Hall. Rice is pictured with her mother, Anne Phillips. The open house featured holiday music, food and guided tours of City Hall, which was recently renovated. Dozens of people attended the open house. Visitors were greeted at the door by Mayor Allen Joiner and his wife, Peggy. To read more about the event, see page C1.

Local dancer lands 'plum' role in 'Nutcracker'

BY COURTNEY GAILLARD
THE CHRONICLE

Mishelle Sloan doesn't know what life would be like without dancing. The Winston-Salem native has been dancing on her toe shoes since the age of 3. This month Sloan will dance the part of the Sugar Plum Fairy in the High Point Ballet's production of "The Nutcracker." While Sloan has performed in countless productions of the classic holiday tale, she has never danced the part of the lead fairy. "The Sugar Plum character is pretty and pink, very sparkly and regal. It's not very demanding. Now that I am older (dancing in "The Nutcracker"), it's like reliving my childhood

again. It's rare. I'm going to be a brown (skinned) girl up there," said Sloan.



Sloan

that her career has withstood highs and lows because of her skin color. Oftentimes black dancers are placed in the quarter

See Sloan on A9

Fall grads told to find their passion

BY COURTNEY GAILLARD
THE CHRONICLE



Photo courtesy of WSSU

Audrey Forbes Manley was president of Spelman College.

Philip McGirt was one of 245 students who graduated from Winston-Salem State University last Friday. Preparing to enter the work force at a time when the economy has been very volatile has been a challenge for him. He credits hard work and a lot of prayers for getting him to this day. McGirt, who is from Greensboro, will begin working for Pepsi-Cola in January.

"It was a long time coming, and I'm finally glad to see it," said McGirt, who earned a degree in sports management from WSSU. "Hopefully I can go out and be real productive in the working world."

Before he and the other Rams received their diplomas, they heard former Spelman College President Dr. Audrey Forbes Manley, who delivered the commencement address before a crowd of more than 1,000 people.

Echoing the university's

motto of "Enter to learn. Depart to serve," Manley encouraged the graduates, like McGirt, to commit to a life of professional and community service, particularly in this post-Sept. 11 era. All that is needed to succeed and to serve, said Manley, can be found within.

"You are being called upon to make a commitment, a commitment with everything within you to pursue with passion a life that is noble, dedicated to excellence and service. You are being called upon at this time to an inspired and intelligent vision and a greater sense of mission than generations before you, for you face new realities and new challenges in an uncertain future," said Manley.

Manley is proof herself that realities do shift and obstacles can be overcome. She was the first African-American woman to serve as deputy assistant secretary for public health in the U.S. Public Health Service. After being commissioned as

See WSSU on A4



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