

# Ceremony tonight will honor dead soldiers

SPECIAL TO THE CHRONICLE

A ceremony this evening (March 27) at 7 at Lloyd Presbyterian Church, 748 Chestnut St., will commemorate the American lives that have been lost in Iraq.

This week, the total number of U.S. military deaths from the Iraq War reached 4,000. Thousands of Iraqis have also died in the five-year-old conflict.

Events across the country have been held to bring attention to the deaths. The Lloyd event will "mourn the human cost of war, call for the troops to come home, and support funding an Iraqi-led reconstruction of that war-torn country."

This event is sponsored by the local office of the American Friends Service Committee, along with local "peace allies" such as the St. Anne's Iraq



Study Group and Lloyd Presbyterian.

"This event is a testament to our commitment to change course in Iraq," says Ann Lennon of the American Friends Service Committee. "Not one more Iraqi or one more U.S. soldier should be killed and not one more dollar spent on sustaining

this war and occupation. We should focus on diplomacy and reconstruction instead."

American Friends Service Committee have called for such events across the nation.

For more information about the nationwide memorial events, visit [www.afsc.org/4000](http://www.afsc.org/4000).

## Farrakhan

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nation if he went out on his own."

Now Bailey and others say it is time to recognize Farrakhan for his contributions to society, by bestowing him with a WSSU honorary degree.

"This man is one of the most famous alums that we have. He's known all over the world," Bailey commented.

Bailey says that leaders of WSSU's National Alumni Association are also in favor of awarding Farrakhan an honorary degree. However, calls left for two leaders of the association were not returned by press time.

Aaron Singleton, director of news and media relations, says that the school adheres to a strict policy when determining who should be given the honor, which is presented at school commencement ceremonies. WSSU's next graduation is in May.

"Our process is for the Academic Affairs Committee of the WSSU Board of Trustees to present names and make recommendations to the full board during the executive session of WSSU board meetings," he stated. "As in accordance with state policy, the WSSU full board then will discuss and vote for a decision."

Though the Million Man March founder and Nation of Islam leader never completed his education at WSSU, Bailey says he can think of no one more worthy of such a gesture.

WSSU Student Government Association President Robert Stephens says he will probe the matter more deeply, but as of now, he does not have a problem with the school honoring Farrakhan, who converted to Islam in the 1950s after a brief career as a calypso singer.

"Even though he is a controversial figure, he is a Ram and one thing that we always like to say is, 'Once a Ram, always a Ram,' so based upon



Bailey



Stephens

that standpoint, that's why I support it," said Stephens.

Though respected by many, Farrakhan is one of the nation's most controversial figures. The New York native has been called the "Black Hitler" by Jewish groups who object to his views of their religion. Farrakhan is also an unabashed Afrocentric who often expresses his belief that blacks are Earth's original inhabitants. Some have said those views are anti-white. The minister has also been criticized for his statements on homosexuality.

Just recently, the presidential campaign of Sen. Barack Obama felt it necessary to distance itself from Farrakhan after the minister made some glowing remarks about Obama, touting him as "the hope of the entire world."

Bailey knows that Farrakhan rubs many people the wrong way, but Bailey contends that the ability to spark emotional responses has helped the minister move his objectives forward.

"I think he's just like the

Black Panthers - his movement had a place in history," Bailey said. "I think some things that we have accomplished, if it weren't for people like Louis Farrakhan, we never would have accomplished."

The minister has lived up to the school's motto, "Enter to learn, depart to serve," in Stephens' estimation.

"He has blazed quite a path," he remarked. "Whether it's been positive or negative, he's been an individual who's stood up for what he believes in. I think that is the very essence of what our university teaches, to take a stance on issues and be a leader."

The Board of Trustees is scheduled to meet tomorrow (March 28). Bailey says he requested to address the board, but was denied.

Winston-Salem State's Rudy Anderson acknowledged that the matter would be discussed at the upcoming meeting, but said that the board's decision will not be released until a later date.

# Second Homeless Connect event will be April 9

SPECIAL TO THE CHRONICLE

The 2008 Project Homeless Connect will be held in the LJVM Coliseum Annex on Wednesday, April 9 from 8:30 a.m. - 4 p.m.

Project Homeless Connect is a one-day, one-stop shop with a goal of bringing together people who are homeless or experiencing a housing crisis with volunteers and service providers on site to establish the necessary connections to end their housing crisis.

Services available include housing assistance, emergency financial assistance, employment, job training and education opportunities, substance abuse treatment information, the Social Security Administration, legal services, the Veterans Administration, medical care, victims' advocates, medical care. Transportation assistance to the event will be available for individuals who would otherwise be unable to attend.

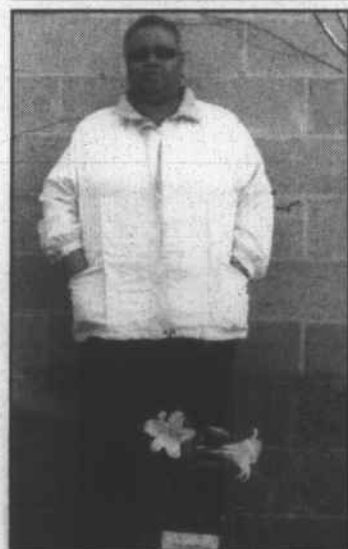
Project Homeless Connect is sponsored by Mayor Joiner, The City of Winston-Salem/Forsyth County, United Way of Forsyth County, Inc., BB&T, American Express, and North Carolina Interagency Council on Homelessness, Sprint, Target, and others. It is part of our effort to implement the vision of

the Ten Year Plan to End Chronic Homelessness, by improving people's access to the services critical to ending their homelessness.

The project is modeled on the successful one-stop service centers organized by communities across the country to assist Hurricane Katrina evacuees and the "Stand Downs" organized by the Department of Veterans Affairs.

The 2007 event generated a multitude of positive outcomes from just one day of community involvement. More than 370 people were served, including 18 people who received housing placements; 34 people received HIV screening from the Sickle Cell Association of the Piedmont; 21 people received financial assistance from the Salvation Army, both in housing placement and financially; 50 people received haircuts, 30 people took showers, more than 400 "goodie" bags were distributed containing food, toiletries, socks, underwear, t-shirts and 50 children received stuffed animals.

For more information Project Homeless Connect, contact Andrea Kurtz at 721-9373.



Vera Stepp



Project Treasurer Doris Woodruff



Dick Fulp

## Garden

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located off of Shorefair Drive, near the Dixie Classic Fairgrounds.

The cemetery, named after the Odd Fellows fraternal organization, began in 1911 and is estimated to be the final resting place for as many as 10,000 people. It's one of the oldest and largest African-American cemeteries in Winston-Salem. Clyburn, who has family buried in Odd Fellows, said progress is being made.

"It's going real well," he said. "You can see a big difference in it."

Nearly two acres have been cleared, he said, and the cemetery has been added to the city's and state's list of historic landmarks. Plans are underway to get it added to a national historic registry as well.

Clyburn hopes the garden, which is located next to the cemetery's former caretaker's house, will attract loved ones of those buried in Odd Fellows and get them involved in the reclamation effort.

"Once they come up and see the cemetery and see how it's been cleaned off, they might get interested in cleaning their own family plots off," said Clyburn, who added that those who can't donate physical labor to the effort can give financial donations.

Many of the flowers that had been placed in the garden had been put there by committee members with loved ones buried in Odd Fellows. The committee's secretary, Vera Stepp, actually planted flowers there to honor her late husband, Henry Stepp Sr., a former president of the committee who was buried last year. Henry Stepp's burial was the first at Odd Fellows since an uncle of Clyburn's was



Photos by Todd Luck

Families placed flowers in the garden for Easter.

buried there in 1984.

Vera Stepp admitted that even when restoration efforts are complete, some families still will be unable to locate the grave sites of their loved ones.

"As old as it is ... there are going to be grave sites we are not going to be able to identify, and there are going to be family members here who ... know they have family members here and have no idea where they are buried," she said. "The idea of the memorial garden is it gives you an opportunity to memorialize those persons without having to actually find the grave site."

Plans are to eventually create a permanent memorial garden for the cemetery. Vera Stepp said the committee will work with community groups to restore the caretaker's house so that it can serve as a place to honor those buried in Odd Fellows.

Dick Fulp has been leading volunteers in clearing the cemetery's overgrowth for nearly three years now. He was drawn to the cause by his fascination with old, abandoned cemeteries

and is now the committee's vice-president.

Community volunteers have come from groups such as the Boy Scouts and the Northwest Piedmont Council of Government's Service Corps. Fulp said when he began working on the cemetery, he could only see one tombstone. Now, dozens of tombstones are in the clear, even though a lot of work is left to do. Fulp agrees that family involvement is vital to clearing and maintaining the cemetery.

"The key to the future is getting people interested in their family plots, and we'll help them in any way we can, but they got to help us keep those plots clear," said Fulp.

The Odd Fellows Cemetery is open 9 a.m. - 5 p.m., every day. The entrance to the cemetery is on Shorefair Drive, next to Senior Services Inc., near the intersection of Shorefair and Deacon Boulevard. For more information about the restoration effort, contact James Clyburn at 723-6452.

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