

MoneyGram, N.C. enter agreement to cut down on fraud

CHRONICLE STAFF REPORT

Under an agreement with North Carolina, 43 other states and the District of Columbia, MoneyGram Payment Systems, Inc. will take significant steps to cut down on the use of its services by fraudulent telemarketers. MoneyGram will, among other things, put prominent warnings to consumers on the front of forms used to wire money and fund a \$1.1 million national consumer awareness program. Minneapolis-based MoneyGram offers money transfer services by wire at

more than 25,000 locations in the United States and more than 100,000 locations worldwide. In North Carolina, MoneyGram operates outlets in 168 cities and towns. Many outlets are located in grocery stores, gas stations and other retail businesses.

But wire transfers to telemarketing fraud rings are a substantial problem. According to a 2003 survey, nearly one-third of transfers of more than \$300 sent from North Carolina and six other states using another major wire service were caused by fraud. In 2002 alone, American consumers

lost approximately \$113 million through wire transfers to Canadian fraudsters.

"Telemarketing scammers are experts at tricking people into wiring them money," said N.C. Attorney General Roy Cooper. "This agreement will help stop scammers from using wire transfers to rip off consumers."

Cooper helped negotiate the national settlement along with the attorneys general of Arkansas, Illinois, Massachusetts, New Jersey, Ohio, Texas, Vermont and Washington. Cooper, who has long had concerns about scam-

mers using wire services like MoneyGram, helped win a similar national agreement with Western Union in 2005.

"Unsuspecting people get ripped off by scammers who call to tell them that they've won a prize but must first wire money to cover taxes and fees," Cooper explained. "But victims who send the money never get their promised prize."

The agreement aims to reduce the number of cases where fraudulent telemarketers and other scam artists trick consumers into wiring them money.



Church to offer Spanish classes

CHRONICLE STAFF REPORT

As part of a series of programs aimed at making Goler Memorial A.M.E. Zion Church a community beacon of hope and guidance, the church will offer classes to teach local people Spanish and Hispanic culture.

The free "Spanish for English Speakers" Tuesday classes will be held at 6 p.m. on July 22, July 29, Aug. 5, Aug. 12 and Aug. 19 at the church's Patterson Avenue campus.

Retired Spanish teacher Dr. Cynthia Williams will lead the classes, which will focus primarily on basic Spanish vocabulary, conversational Spanish and Latino culture and customs.

The church, which is pastored by the Rev. Seth O. Lartey, is offering several similar programs to the public as a way, it says, to "bridge the Biblical, cultural and economic divides" that exist in the city.

The "Through the Bible in One Year" classes will be offered on Wednesdays beginning July 16 from 6 - 7 p.m. This class is designed to provide participants with a lifetime of spiritual nourishment. It will be taught by the Rev. D. Isaac Gibson, who has done extensive work in the areas of religion and Christianity.

Also starting July 16 is "Money Smart: To Your Credit," a class that will teach participants about repairing and building credit, checking credit reports, credit scoring, identity theft and much more. The class, which is also from 6 - 7 p.m., will be led by Eddie Long of Credit Enhancement Services Inc.

All classes are free and open to the public. For more information, directions or to register, contact the church office at 336-724-9411.



Benjamin Jealous poses for a picture with a well-wisher after his NNPA speech.

Jealous

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100th anniversary in February. Once one of the most powerful and respected organizations in the nation, the NAACP has lost some of its shine in recent decades. Membership is down, and there was a perceived tug-a-war between longtime Board Chair Julian Bond and the last President/CEO, Bruce Gordon, over which direction the organization should take.

Ofield Dukes, a longtime marketing executive who works with the NNPA, hinted at the NAACP's recent rocky patch during his introduction of Jealous.

"I don't know if it is a plague or a blessing," Dukes said of Jealous' new job.

Jealous obviously thinks the latter is true, and he hopes that by providing strong leadership for the organization, the NAACP will continue its legacy of blessing the lives of those who are too often neglected, taken advantage of and

disillusioned.

"We have serious work to do," he said. "We have to work together ... the success of our children depends on it."

Jealous plans to use next year's centennial as the catalyst for a campaign to reawaken the masses to the NAACP's glorious past and ambitious future. A major component of that push will be a membership drive. Nationwide, there are only about 274,000 NAACP members, Jealous said. He will settle for nothing less than 500,000 members in 2009.

"We need to do it because our people are still having their dreams squashed," he said. "The school-house to jail-house pipeline has to be dismantled."

NNPA Board Chairman John Smith, publisher of *The Atlanta Inquirer*, said he has faith in Jealous, who will be the youngest NAACP leader ever.

"I think you (are) the guardian angel that has been sent to the NAACP," Smith told Jealous.

Meth

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emitting toxic fumes and causing explosions. Cooper said it will take a community effort to stop the drug.

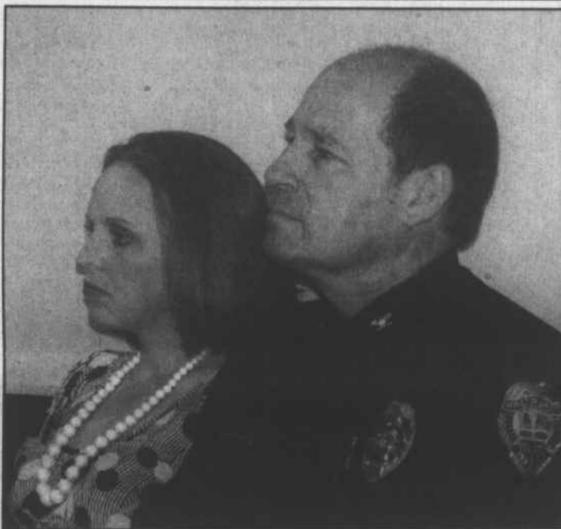
"If we fight this battle from many fronts, we can run methamphetamine out of North Carolina, and we can make our state a better and safer place to live," he said.

Meth is made with common cold and sinus medications. Cooper said that the 2005 state law that requires products containing ephedrine or pseudoephedrine to be kept behind the counter at pharmacies has helped that battle. Since the law took effect, the number of meth labs in the state has dropped 40 percent.

Winston-Salem Police Chief Scott Cunningham said that arrests have been made for meth possession in Winston-Salem, but so far no labs have been discovered. Labs have been found in surrounded counties and Cunningham fears the problem may be "beginning to walk this way."

He pledged to aggressively market Meth360, mainly by spreading the word about the Meth360 Web site, which allows residents to request officers to come to churches, schools and community events to give presentations on public safety.

Meth use has mainly been among young whites, Cooper said. But the demographics are changing and growing, showing that the drug is especially gaining popularity among women



Robin Lindner with Police Chief Scott Cunningham.

and single moms.

Robin Lindner, of Partnership for a Drug-Free NC, said that meth is an attractive drug because it's relatively inexpensive for the high that it produces. It can give the user non-stop energy for days, but this is followed by a couple days of intense crashing. Lindner said the crashing can be so bad that addicted parents have reported that they aren't able to take care of their children. The high from meth lessens after the first use, forcing users to take more of it, making it very addictive.

Lindner said the campaign will teach not only the threats posed by meth and meth labs but also what the community can do to stop them. She hopes that

community groups like Parent Teacher Associations and Rotary Clubs take advantage of the information sessions offered.

"The bottom line is whether or not we like it, we're all somehow affected by meth and we want folks to step up and say 'We're not going to have this in our community,'" said Lindner.

Winston-Salem is the second city in the state to become a part of the Meth360 campaign. Charlotte started using the program this year. Currently Meth360 is in 14 states across the nation.

For more information, visit Meth360's Web site at www.drugfree.org/meth360.



Whitehead

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The Snow Camp Outdoor Theatre is located south of Graham and north of Siler City, off of Old Greensboro-Chapel Hill Road in an Alamance County historic park that has imported buildings from the periods of past. For show or ticket information, contact the box office at 1-800-726-5115 or visit the www.snowcampdrama.com.



Mayor Allen Joines shares a laugh with Attorney General Roy Cooper, right.

Community Care Center

Volunteers working together to provide free medical and dental care to low-income, uninsured families.

You must be approved as a patient before seeing a doctor or dentist. We accept applications for new patients on **Tuesdays and Wednesdays between 1:30-4:30 PM**. We suggest you pick up a brochure about our requirements to prepare for the interview. Applications are taken on "first come, first served" basis. We accept only 40 applications per week.

- We are not able to provide care for pregnant women.
- We are not a walk-in clinic.
- We can't handle emergencies.
- We can not accept patients with Medicaid, Medicare, Veterans' Administration Benefits or private health insurance.

Volunteers and our small staff provide medical and dental care for our patients. We are supported with donations from churches, individuals, businesses, foundations and the United Way. We do not receive government funds.

2135 New Walkertown Road
Winston-Salem, NC 27101
(across from Evergreen Cemetery)
More Information: 336-723-7904

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