

N.C.'s Barber elected to the National Board of the NAACP

CHRONICLE STAFF REPORT

The Rev. Dr. William J. Barber II, president of the N.C. NAACP, won election last week to the civil rights organization's national board.

The Goldsboro-based pastor of Greenleaf Christian Church Disciples of Christ will join the board Sept. 1 — the same time that Benjamin Jealous, the National NAACP's Executive Director, will start.

Barber was up against two others for the Region 5 seat on the national board. He received 177 of the 329 delegate votes for the seat, beating incumbent Madie Robinson, of South Carolina, who received 94 votes. Barber was nominated for the position by fellow North Carolinian Helen Coleman, who already sits on the national board.

The election took place during the 99th Annual National NAACP Convention in



The Rev. Dr. William J. Barber speaks from the pulpit of a local church during one of his many visits to Winston-Salem.

Cincinnati, Ohio, which was attended by more than 9,000 delegates, alternatives and observers.

Barber was buoyed in the election by a passionate, inspir-

ing, and visionary speech to the delegates of Region 5, which includes Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Tennessee, South Carolina, North Carolina and Mississippi.

The Rev. Barber has won praise across the state and the nation for his efforts as the head of the state NAACP as he has fought for justice and equal rights for all North Carolinians.



Barack Obama in Winston-Salem earlier this year. Local Obama Office opens Friday

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The Barack Obama for President Campaign will open its Winston-Salem office on Friday, July 25 during a grand opening event from 6 — 9 p.m.

The public is invited to attend. The office is downtown in the Loewy Building, 500 W. Fourth St. Obama staffers, elected officials and members of the local Democratic Party are expected to be on hand for the event.

Reportedly, the Obama Campaign will launch an aggressive strategy to win North Carolina in the November

General Election. Although the state has not been kind to Democrats in the past, the campaign believes it has a shot to steal the Tar Heel State away from Republican Presidential Nominee John McCain.

On Tuesday, the campaign announced three new additions to its North Carolina office: Susan Lagana, who will serve as the campaign's N.C. communications director; Deputy Communications Director Paul Cox; and Kevin Monroe. They will join N.C. Director Marc Fariella and the rest of state's executive staff in the Raleigh office.

Boycott

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organizers, said employers should be concerned about what their employees know and their on-the-job performances.

"It should not be about what you look like," said Hines-Gaither.

The Salem College professor is extra sensitive to this issue. People often ask Hines-Gaither if her waist-length braids ever pose a problem for her at work. At Salem — the nation's oldest educational institution for women — the professor's hair has never been an issue. But it is not as if the campus is without its rules.

Hines-Gaither says she understands and agrees that companies, agencies and schools should have policies that govern the way they operate. She doesn't, she says, understand a rule like the one used to suspend Love for wearing a hairstyle that is fairly common.

"When I saw this on the news, I was outraged," Hines-Gaither said.

Beautician Erricca Cargill was among the protesters urging local people to spend their money at other theaters. She doesn't understand how anyone could have taken issue with Love's hair color. Cargill said burgundy dye is extremely popular among African-American women.

"I dye the hair of businesswomen all the time," she said.

The hair of Tanjela Jones, Hines-Gaither's mother, is just

a few shades darker than the color that got Love into hot water. As she held a bright yellow and green sign that read "BOYCOTT THE GRAND," Jones expressed disbelief in the situation that got Love suspended and pride in her daughter for taking a stand.

Many of those who protested are Salem students who became just as passionate about the issue after Hines-Gaither began sharing her frustration about the situation with anyone who would listen.

"This could have been me. I could have been the one suspended," said Achlai Ernest Wallace. "I get weaves. I get color."

Her classmate, Kezia Bobo, is bald due to a medical condition, but she sees little difference between Love's situation and one in which someone would have an adverse reaction to her hair — or lack thereof.

"When you have an issue like this, anything else can come into play," she said. "That's why I am here: to say this isn't OK and it can't be OK."

The demonstrators say that many drivers who planned to go to The Grand Saturday, changed their minds after reading the fliers and protest signs. Still, it was a very brisk business day at the University Parkway theater, as local moviegoers helped the latest Batman movie, "The Dark Knight," strike box office gold.

The movie is playing on at least two of The Grand's 18 screens.

Messages left for the theater's manager and Love were not returned by press time. The head of New Orleans-based Southern Theatres, which owns The Grand, provided a written statement to The Chronicle in response to an inquiry about the boycott.

CEO George Solomon calls allegations that Love was discriminated against "inaccurate," and says his company employs a diverse group of people.

"As an employer of approximately 1,200 throughout the Southeast, we have and will continue to be an Equal Opportunity Employer as we practice fair and ethical practices," he said.

Solomon emphasized that Love is back at work and that the issue is in the past.

"We have resolved the situation, and Meyosha remains employed with us to this day ... I am pleased to report that the situation is resolved," said Solomon.

But those who held picket signs and handed out fliers along the busy street in front of the theater already knew that Love's suspension had ended. They say they are concerned about the next person who may be suspended, reprimanded or fired because of his or her appearance — and not just at The Grand, but any place of employment.

"(Love) was definitely a catalyst for this, but this is not about an individual, it is about an issue," Hines-Gaither said. "Meyosha will be going to college in a few weeks; what about the next person?"



Hines



Protestors gather after what they called a successful campaign.



Water Safety

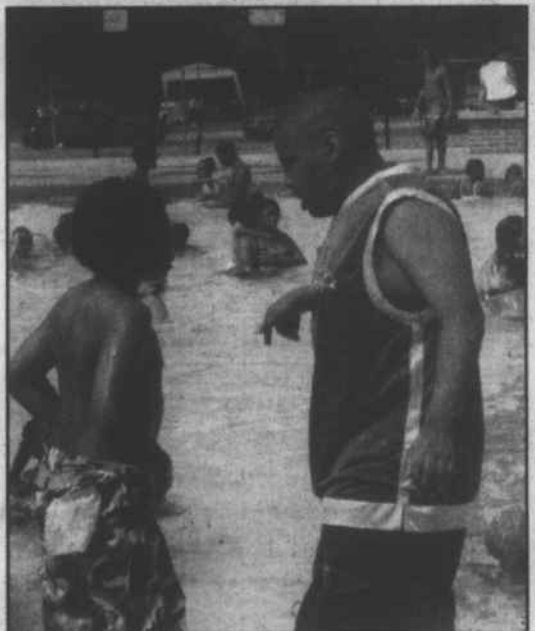
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children and are doing something else, like talking to another person, reading, eating, or talking on the telephone. Among adults, the risk factor of alcohol use is involved in many water and boating fatalities. Other risk factors that can occur in children and adults are:

- Not wearing a life vest / life jacket
- Not practicing safety around recreational watercraft
- Lack of swimming knowledge — The CDC has found in a national study, that African Americans self-report being the most limited with regard to swimming ability
- Seizure disorders — persons with these illnesses should be monitored when around bathtubs, pools, lakes, rivers, the ocean or any open water.

How can I reduce my and my family's risk?

- NEVER leave children alone in any water — this means bathtubs, pools, or natural water
- ALWAYS swim with someone else — at least have someone watching you while you are swimming in case of emergency
- Teach your children not to run, push, or jump over others near the water
- Learn the steps of Cardio-Pulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) — CPR has been shown to save lives, when often it can take a few minutes for paramedics to arrive. Your local Red Cross offers these classes.
- Make sure you and your family always use life vests that are approved by the US Coast Guard
- Avoid drinking alcohol before swimming, boating or other water sports.
- Inflatable floats are not designed to keep swimmers safe or save lives.
- Make sure that you and your family swim in safe areas of rivers, lakes, and oceans
- Take yourself and your family to swimming and water safety classes — Most local swimming pools and YMCAs/YWCAs, as well as some parks, offer these types of classes.
- If someone is watching your children, make sure they knows how to swim, know CPR, and



File Photo

Summer is prime time for water tragedies.

- have a telephone close by for an emergency.
- If you have a pool at your house, make sure that the area is properly protected with locked doors so that children cannot go into the pool without adult supervision.
- If you go to the beach, make sure you do not drift away from shore when there is a rip tide.
- If you do get caught in a rip tide, swim parallel to shore and you will eventually swim out of the rip tide, and then you can swim toward shore.
- Know the weather conditions before swimming or boating on lakes, rivers or the ocean
- Enjoy the North Carolina summers with your family, but do so using common sense and observing safety rules so that this beautiful time does not turn into a tragedy!

— Contribution by Sarah Langdon, BA

For further information, questions or comments about this article, call toll-free 1-877-530-1824. Or, for more information about the Maya Angelou Research Center on Minority Health, visit <http://www.wfubmc.edu/minorityhealth>.

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