

Golf

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see."

The golfing bug bit Brown years ago. She has sat at the helm of several tournaments since that time, including Alpha Kappa Alpha's annual event, which she organized for 10 years.

"I told my husband (Wendell Brown), 'You're going to have to learn to play golf,'" she related. "'if you don't, you're going to be sitting home, waiting for dinner and I'll be on the golf course.'"

The sport has taken her places she never thought she'd go, like on the PGA Tour, where she volunteered as an announcer for three years. The autographed images of Tiger Woods that hang in her basement are among the spoils of the experience.



Photo by Layla Farmer

Geneva Brown's love of golfing dates back several decades.

"That was the thrill of my life," she declared.

More than 20 golfers have signed up for this year's tourney, slated for Sept. 20. Brown says she hopes to see an increase in that number before registration closes.

Arthritis, coupled with her many other obligations, has kept her from the golf course for much of the past year, but Brown says she can't wait to tee off in September.

"It's a big challenge. I live on challenges," she related. "It makes you determined that you can come back and conquer that little white ball."

Committee Vice Chair Donna Oldham was introduced to golfing as a child by her father, the late Pete Oldham, an ardent golfer. Oldham says she learned the game watching him putting balls in the front yard, and playing games on the green at Winston Lake, one of the few places at the time where blacks golfed.

Oldham said she and her sister, Leslie Winbush, have decided to sponsor the event in honor of their father, "because every time I go to Winston Lake, I can't help but think of him... When I was a little girl, Winston Lake was the only place I could go; now it's the only place I choose to go."

Working with Brown, a woman whom she greatly admires, was an added bonus for Oldham, who postponed her knee surgery in order to participate in the event.

"Geneva Brown is, to me, the godmother of women golfers in Winston-Salem," she declared. "She really has done a lot for women's golf in the Piedmont Triad."

The tournament is open to individuals and teams of any skill level. The entry fee is \$50 for individuals and \$150 per team now until Sept. 5. Rates will increase after that date. Registration forms are available at most area golf courses. For more information, contact Brown, at (336) 724-9336, or Oldham, at (336) 231-0128.

Sheriff

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Amerson was elected sheriff of Macon County, Ala., in 1966, the year after the passage of the Voting Rights Act of 1965, which removed many barriers that had kept blacks from voting.

His election made nationwide headlines. Reporters descended on Macon County. He later received a congratulatory telegram from Vice President Hubert H. Humphrey and was summoned to the White House to meet President Lyndon B. Johnson.

He was re-elected four times in the rural, predominantly black county and served from 1967 to 1987, during some of the most turbulent times for race relations in the United States.

His son, who has written a book about his father, "Great Courage," recalls a solid, steady figure who, in an era of intimidation, had no fear.

"He was not scared" of anybody, said Anthony Amerson, a former Army captain and a procurement analyst with the Department of Homeland Security. Lucius Amerson was a compact man who developed a slight stutter when he got angry, his son said.

His favorite sidearm was his booming .357 Colt. "That's a big gun," Anthony Amerson said. "When you wear that gun, you don't have no problems."

The sheriff had few deputies and often was the solitary face of the law in the eastern Alabama county.

"Whatever he did, he did it well enough where he got mad respect from everybody, white and black," Amerson said.

In a famous case in 1968, a young black man went to the sheriff and said he was beaten and terrorized while being arrested for disorderly conduct by a white Alabama state trooper and the white police chief of a town in Macon County. The man said the two white officers had also ordered him to dance while one fired a gun at his feet.

What would the sheriff do? "The whole eyes of the black community were going to



Lucius Amerson, The First Black Sheriff Elected In The South Since Reconstruction

see whether this black sheriff was a defunct placeholder or whether he was going to really do his job," Amerson said.

The sheriff ordered the two arrested. One was taken into custody by a deputy sheriff and the other turned himself in, according to a newspaper account of the day.

"It made everybody have respect," the sheriff's son said. "It was unheard of."

Both white officers were later acquitted.

Three years later, Lucius Amerson was accused of beating a black suspect during a fracas at the county jail in Tuskegee.

The suspect, who was being arrested on a drunken driving charge, grabbed a deputy's pistol and opened fire, driving Amerson, who fired back, and his deputies from the jail. The suspect was subdued with the help of Tuskegee police and charged that he was subsequently beaten by Amerson and one of his deputies.

Amerson and the deputy were acquitted.

"The only thing left for me to do is go back home and do my job," Amerson said after the acquittal. "And it's a hard job."

Anthony Amerson detailed the incident in which his father crashed while chasing the stolen car. His father suffered burns and a broken hip, and the patrol car caught fire, incinerating his cherished .357.

The sheriff planned to get it repaired, his son said, but he never had the chance.

Winston Lake Y unveils new teen offerings

BY TODD LUCK
THE CHRONICLE

The Winston Lake YMCA held its first teen open house last Thursday - opening its doors to the community to show all that it has to offer young people.

Colorful displays were set-up in the lobby to tout both established and new Y youth programs, including Support Our Students (SOS), which was recently launched.

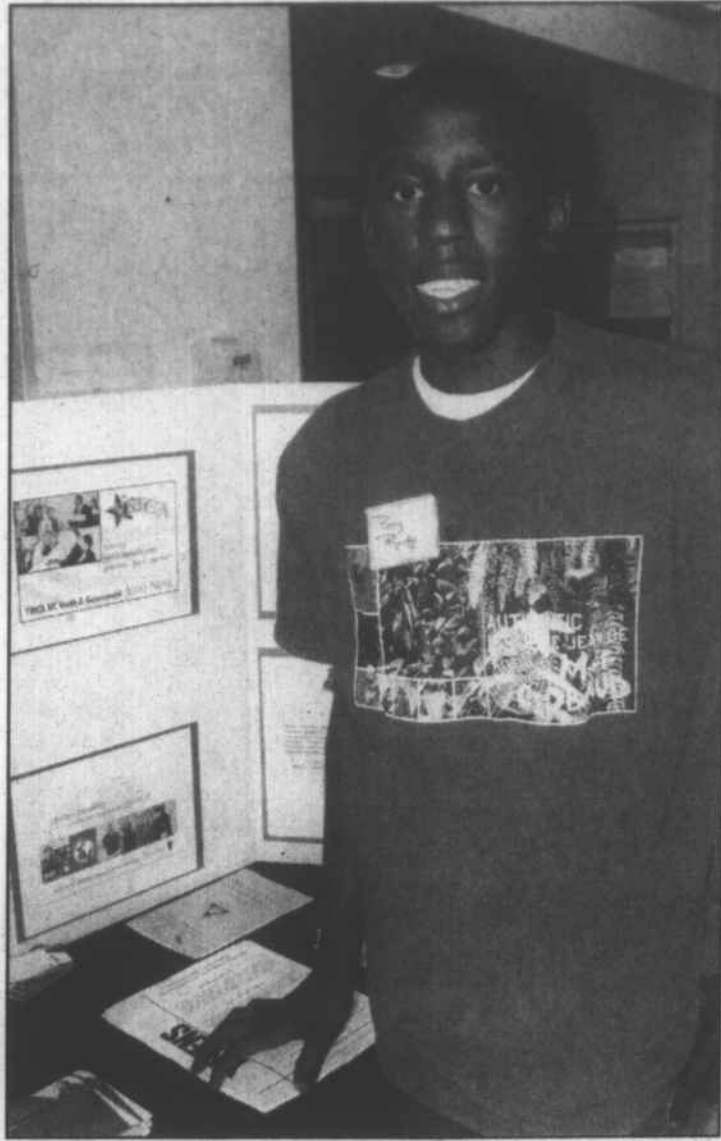
SOS is a free program funded by a grant from the Department of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention that provides after school care for middle school students. Response to the program, which is only able to take on 30 students, has been great, according to Andrea Yancey, assistant teen program director.

The students who make it into the program will have much to look forward to. From 2 - 6 p.m. on weekdays, the Y will be involved in tutoring, arts and crafts and team-building activities. Yancey hopes that SOS students eventually take advantage of other programs and activities at the Y.

"It's a way for them to build friendships and relationships and get involved in other programs in the YMCA," she said.

Students in grades sixth, seventh and eight will also have the opportunity to sign up for the Middle School Achievers program, which is modeled after the Y's popular Black Achievers program for high school students. Like Black Achievers, the middle school program will revolve around mentoring and leadership-building activities.

Black Achievers alumnus



Photos by Todd Luck

Perry Rowdy stands by the benefits of Black Achievers.

Perry Rowdy, who now is in college, manned a booth to promote the program. From Black Achievers, which covers everything from SAT Prep to how to dress for success, he said he benefited greatly.

"I can't just name all the things I learned," said Rowdy. "Black Achievers just gave me the necessary skills for living."

The Y Arts program Phi Mu Y is also new. The club, which brings together youths 8 to 18 monthly, promotes empowerment, self awareness, positive coping skills and healthy decisions.

"They'll go through workshops: self-esteem, body image - just a lot of things teens face today," said Yancey.



Spencer McCall

With well-known programs like the Boss Drummers, Jazzy Jumpers jump rope team, the all male Y-Steppers, the Y-Movements hip hop dance troupe and the Y-Ettes majorette team, about 300 young people are already actively involved at the Winston Lake Y. Spencer McCall is hoping to see that number grow.

"These programs have a proven record of helping teens grow spiritually, mentally and physically," said McCall, Winston Lake's teen program director.

Y Arts programs and the Achievers programs, do have an annual fee, usually about \$40-\$45. The fee also includes a year long membership to YMCA, which normally costs \$240. The teen programs are taking registration now and start during the month of September. Financial assistance is available for all YMCA programs and services.

For more information, visit the Winston Lake YMCA at 901 Waterworks Road or call 336-724-9205. Information is also available online at winstonlake.ymcanwnc.org.

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COMPLEX HEART PROBLEMS**

AFTER A DISAPPOINTING MEETING WITH A SURGEON who said her heart valve couldn't be repaired, Tonya Geren asked her cardiologist for advice.

"He told me, 'The right guy has been under our noses the whole time,'" she said. That specialist was Dr. Neal Kon at Wake Forest University Baptist Medical Center's Cardiothoracic Surgery Department.

Dr. Kon is a **national expert in mitral valve repair**, and he developed a technique for exposing the valve for repair **used by surgeons worldwide**.

Tonya feared that Dr. Kon would be too busy to help her. However, once she met with him, Tonya felt **her case was his top priority**.

"Dr. Kon said once the surgery was done, I would realize what a poor quality of life I had come to accept. He was right: The fatigue, shortness of breath, and irregular heartbeat are now gone!"

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Tonya and David Geren with Maggie, Charlie and Ellie

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