



MEAC Photo by Yusuf Abdullah and Ed Wallace

The 2010 Men's Champions Morgan State pose with their trophy.

MEAC set to make return to The Joel

BY LAYLA FARMER
THE CHRONICLE

The Twin City is again gearing up for the MEAC (Mid Eastern Athletic Conference) Basketball Tournament at Lawrence Joel Veterans Memorial Coliseum.

Members of the 13 Division I teams that call the MEAC home will flock to the city March 7-12 to vie for the coveted MEAC title, and a chance to make it to "The Big Dance," aka the NCAA Division I championship, later this month.

The Conference, which is in its third year in Winston-Salem, recently announced it would be staying on in the city through the 2012 tournament. Though the city had hoped to land a full three-year commitment from the MEAC, retaining the conference for another year is a step in the right direction, said Benjamin "Bucky" Dame, director of Public Assembly Facilities for the Winston-Salem Entertainment Sports Complex, which includes the Lawrence Joel, where the tournament will be staged.

"For the coliseum and the complex, it's a major event," said Dame, a Virginia native who has worked for the city for nearly 30 years. "It brings people into the facility, but the other side of it and probably more important, is the impact on the Winston-Salem community."

The six-day event typically draws around 30,000 fans to the area and translates to more than \$3 million in economic impact for the city, Dame said, quoting statistics from Visit Winston-Salem.

When Winston-Salem State University left the MEAC last year to return to the CIAA and Division II ball, some in the community expressed concern that the MEAC would go elsewhere, but conference leaders have laid those fears to rest for the time being, Dame said.

"In talking with the MEAC officers, they were committed," he related. "They saw it as a good fit for the community and they wanted to extend it on."

No decisions have been made about whether the conference will stay on after 2012, MEAC Commissioner Dr. Dennis Thomas said, but Conference officials and fans have been treated hospitably in Winston-Salem thus far.

"We are enjoying our stay here," said the commissioner. "We feel that the city and Mayor (Allen) Joiner have provided the leadership we are looking for as a conference and as a basketball tournament. That's why we elected to sign on for another year."

The MEAC makes an effort to ensure that the city benefits from its presence beyond the financial gain that comes with the tournament, Thomas said.



Dame

"The most important thing to me is how we've outreached to the community, particularly with Read With MEAC. That has been an absolutely outstanding success," he said, referring to a reading initiative for youngsters the conference stages annually in partnership with Winston-Salem/Forsyth County Schools. "It's important for us to connect with the community and let the community know we're here for more than just a basketball tournament."

The Conference stages other events, such as a college fair on High School Day, where college-bound students in the local area can meet with representatives from each of the 13 MEAC schools.

"I'm really a proponent of engaging the local community from an educational standpoint," said Thomas, an Alcorn State University alumnus. "To me, that's what it's all about."

As usual, the MEAC will host a Community Day, two after parties and performances by local acts at half time and before and after games throughout the tournament.

"I think people should come out to all the activities," Thomas said. "It's wholesome entertainment for the whole family."

For more information about the MEAC or to purchase tickets, visit www.meachoops.com or call 1-800-745-3000.

City crews begin bulky item collection

SPECIAL TO THE CHRONICLE

The Sanitation Division began its annual bulky item collection on Monday, Feb. 28. Through Aug. 29, crews will go through the city street by street, collecting bulky items that garbage crews cannot accept. Furniture, mattresses, appliances, grills, carpet, old toys, and lawn furniture can all be set out.

The city cannot collect televisions, computer equipment, building materials, hazardous waste, tires, cement, cars and car parts, stumps, tanks and oil drums, fire wood or yard waste. And the City is asking residents to not mix bulky items with yard waste, recyclables, or brush.

Bulky item collection is for single family residences, not businesses or apartments. The Sanitation Division will mail post cards in advance to let home owners know when bulky item collection will be held in their neighborhood. Crews will go through each neighborhood only once. To ensure collection, items must be at the curb by 6 a.m. the Monday of your collection week.

Citizens can view a map of collection routes and look up their collection week online at www.ci.winston-salem.nc.us/Home/Departments/Sanitation/Articles/BulkyItems.

For more information, call CityLink at 336-727-8000.

FIRSTGOV.gov
1 (800) FED-INFO
All kinds of government information are just a click or call away.

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News Clips

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Nomination period open for 2011 N.C. Awards

Nominations are being accepted for the 2011 North Carolina Award, the highest civilian honor bestowed by the state. Created by the General Assembly in 1961, and administered by the N.C. Department of Cultural Resources, the award recognizes significant individual contributions in fine arts, literature, public service and science.

Award nominations may be submitted by anyone and must include a completed nomination form and cover letter, as well as the nominee's biography or resume. Letters of support and examples of the nominee's work will also be accepted. All materials should be sent to the North Carolina Awards Committee, N.C. Department of Cultural Resources, 4601 Mail Service Center, Raleigh, N.C. 27699-4601. Nominations will be accepted by the N.C. Department of Cultural Resources until April 15.

The North Carolina Awards Committee will review the nominations and make its selections this summer. The recipients will be honored during ceremonies in Raleigh in the fall. Past award recipients have included some of the country's most distinguished artists, poets, writers, performers, journalists, scientists, and public servants. Among the recipients are James Taylor, Maya Angelou, Gertrude Eilion and James B. Hunt Jr.

To receive a copy of the nomination form and guidelines, contact Jennifer McCrory Fontes at (919) 807-7256 or by e-mail at jennifer.fontes@ncdcr.gov. For

more information, go to www.ncculture.com.

Journalism students earn Moore scholarships

Three students from the department of Journalism and Mass Communication (JOMC) at North Carolina A&T State University are recipients of the 2010-2011 Richard E. Moore Scholarship. They are electronic media and journalism junior Shaketa Berrie; print journalism junior Sylvia Obell; and broadcast production senior Brittany Wilson.

The scholarship is given annually to English and journalism and mass communication majors based on merit and financial need.

The award is funded by an endowed scholarship established by the family and friends of the late Dr. Richard E. Moore, who graduated from N.C. A&T with a B.S. degree in English and a minor in Spanish and military science. He earned a M.S. degree from Columbia University and a doctorate in education from the University of North Carolina at Greensboro. He was a renowned journalist, educator and spokesman for N.C. A&T and served at the helm of the university's Public Relations Office for more than 28 years. He was also an associate professor in the department of journalism and mass communication and the organizer of the University's Mass Communication Conferences held for many years.

Each student will receive a \$1500 award. They will be recognized in mid-April at the 10th annual Richard E. Moore Lecture Series.

Local Girl Scouts chapter joins social media sites

Girl Scouts Carolinas Peaks to Piedmont (GSCP2P) has launched its official Facebook and Twitter pages.

As part of its continuing efforts to provide information to the public and its membership, GSCP2P has established

a presence on these two social media sites. Now, people from across central and western North Carolina can use these popular social media sites to find information and receive regular updates.

The GSCP2P pages will act as a platform for communicating with the community, current or potential volunteers and members and parents. Tweets will include news updates, links to articles, event information publications and much more at www.twitter.com/girlscouts_p2p.

"Facebook and Twitter are an excellent way for our council to alert those involved or interested in Girl Scouting with the most up-to-date information possible," said Girl Scouts Carolinas Peaks to Piedmont Chief Executive Officer Marcia Cole.

Human Rights Campaign awards ENC grant to fight marriage bill

The Human Rights Campaign, the nation's largest lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender civil rights organization, and Equality North Carolina (ENC) are pleased to announce a partnership to work towards equality in North Carolina. HRC has provided a grant of \$10,000 to support ENC's work to fight the proposed law.

Their focus will be Senate Bill 106, recently introduced in the North Carolina Senate, which would amend the state constitution to include a new section that reads, "Marriage between a man and a woman is the only domestic legal union that shall be valid or recognized in this State."

HRC and ENC say that language would not only limit marriage to opposite sex couples, but would prohibit any other form of relationship recognition.



Cole

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