

WFU professor: Nothing special about upcoming dates

SPECIAL TO THE CHRONICLE

Hot on the heels of last year's 11/11/11 come two big dates in December. Are you ready for 12/12/12 or 12/21/12? Should you be? A Wake Forest University professor says these dates on a calendar page do not offer mystical truths.

While a few specific dates when written out can achieve a unique and interesting numerical pattern, are these dates really significant or is there just increased attention from the superstitious?

Eric Carlson, a physics professor who also teaches about skepticism, pseudoscience and the scientific method, offers his take on two upcoming dates in December:

December 12, 2012 (12/12/12)
"Although repetitive patterns like 12/12/12 are interesting, they have no

more special significance than when your car's odometer hits 121,212 miles."

December 21, 2012 (12/21/12)

"This date marks the end of the 13th b'ak'tun of the long count Mayan calendar. But just as our own calendar ends on Dec. 31, but then starts over again, so also the Mayan calendar continues after Dec. 21. The date has no other particular astronomical or other significance, and there is no reason to expect it to mark the end of the world, or the beginning of a spiritual transformation.

The date is not singled out in Mayan writings as being particularly special, and claims that it coincides with some sort of galactic alignment are incorrect, and fly in the face of our understanding of astronomy and physics."



Carlson

Womble

from page A1

learned months after the crash that he would be facing a misdemeanor death by motor vehicle charge.

The N.C. Attorney General's Office, which was charged with handling the case to avoid the appearance of bias by the Forsyth County District Attorney's Office, decided to charge Womble after an initial investigation by the Winston-Salem Police Department indicated that it was Womble's car that crossed the centerline and hit Carmichael's vehicle. The police department's investigation reportedly included the statements of two witnesses.

From the beginning, Womble has insisted that he was traveling in the westbound lane of Reynolds Park Boulevard, heading towards a banquet at WSSU, and did not leave his lane.

"I knew that it couldn't have been Larry (at fault) because I knew he was coming from his home," said Womble's attorney David Freedman. "...I had witnesses that could place Larry at his house (east of the scene) just before the accident. Once I heard that the accident happened in the westbound lane ... I knew that Larry was not the driver (at fault)."

After viewing the initial WSPD report, Freedman contacted Special Deputy Attorney General Steven Arbogast and asked that he review both Womble and Carmichael's phone

records and talk with Womble's witnesses, who could support the defense's claim that he would have been traveling in the westbound lane.

"I had tremendous trust in the prosecutor I was dealing with, that he wanted to do the right thing, so I decided rather than surprising him in court, maybe we could work together," Freedman said.

Arbogast agreed to have the investigation reopened. During the second investigation, which Freedman said was also led by members of the WSPD, receipts were discovered in Carmichael's pockets that placed him at a downtown bar west of the scene 20 minutes before the accident. Local law enforcement called in an accident reconstructionist, whose findings corroborated the partial story told by Womble's phone records (which included a call reminding him of the banquet) and Carmichael's receipts. Soon after, Arbogast filed the paperwork to have the charges dropped.

Mayor Pro Tempore Vivian Burke, chair of the city's Public Safety Committee, said that she is concerned that local law enforcement's initial assessment of the accident was so far off base. She and other city leaders discussed the incident during a City Council meeting on Monday.

"When you give reports like the one that we just got (initially), it makes the citizens doubtful of the police department," Burke remarked. "... It puts the thought in your head: Did they do what we would consider a

thorough investigation? That was the question that I asked (City Manager Lee Garrity), and of course he said that they did."

Burke added that the incident may be an indication that the police department needs to reevaluate the way it investigates accidents of this nature.

"It would appear that the individuals who investigated it, it would appear that they failed but they will tell you that they used a different tool (to investigate). That's my understanding," she said. "I'm sure the next accident that we have ... that it will have a better report than this one."

Police Chief Scott Cunningham declined to comment on the WSPD's involvement in the case.

"For a variety of reasons, WSPD will not comment for the article," Cunningham said in a Dec. 3 email to The Chronicle.

Although the initial report turned out to be wrong, Freedman said, he doesn't blame the police. In fact, he said local law enforcement have been more than fair in their handling of the investigation.

"I think they took some extra steps. They on their own contacted the accident re-constructionist once I gave them the witness that put Larry at his home," he stated. "They reopened the investigation. They didn't have to do that."

Womble said he is just happy to be able to put it all behind him.

"I'm grateful to have the State Attorney General's Office make the ruling that they did," he said.

"Obviously this is a huge recognition of UNCG's commitment to military-affiliated students and I look forward to future endeavors," said Dedrick Curtis, UNCG's veteran services coordinator.

About 650 schools in several categories applied for the ranking.

Categories include four-year schools, two-year schools, online schools, and career and technical schools.

About 483 military-affiliated students at UNCG receive GI Bill benefits; UNCG's graduation rate for veterans is 72 percent.

Vets

from page A4

any way possible."

Rankings are based on several factors, including staff assigned to support veterans, graduation rates for veterans, loan default rates for veterans and numbers of military-affiliated students enrolled.

Media

from page A4

Since she founded the Institute, it has commissioned more than 12 groundbreaking research studies and has amassed the largest body of research on gender prevalence in family entertainment in the last 20 years. The Institute's research has found that:

- Males outnumber females 3 to 1 in family films, a ratio that has not changed much since 1946;

- Females on the screen are almost four times as likely as males to be shown in sexy attire and are nearly twice as likely as males to be shown with a diminutive waistline;

- And from 2006 to 2009, not one female character was depicted in G-rated family films in the field of medical science, as a business



leader, in law, or politics.

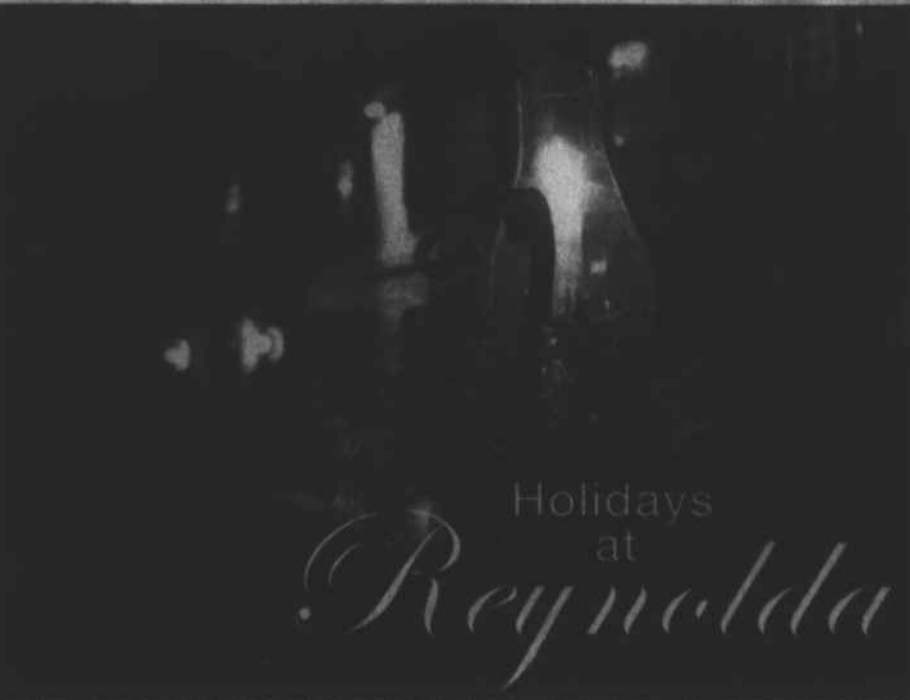
Diversity Woman's editorial content is designed for the unique concerns of women business leaders, executives and entrepreneurs. Founder Sheila Robinson says that it is the only magazine on the market designed exclusively to help smart, savvy women of all races, cultures and backgrounds achieve their career and business goals.

Winning Designs



Second Harvest Photo

Jamison (left) and Oded hold the holiday cards that they designed for Second Harvest Food Bank's Gift Outside the Box holiday honor card program. In all, the designs of four Second Harvest Kids Cafe clients were selected for the cards program. The winners took home prizes and the cards featuring their designs are available for sale at www.hungernwnc.org to benefit the Food Bank.



Holidays at

Reynolda

December 6, 7, 8

Candlelight Guided Tours

Tours offered every half hour, 4:30-7 p.m.



Stories of a Reynolds family holiday, carols on the Aeolian organ and live entertainment. Includes *Romare Bearden: A Black Odyssey*.

December 11 | 8 p.m.

Holiday Pops Concert: Carolina Brass

December 16 | 3 p.m.

Play: A Christmas Memory

REYNOLDA HOUSE MUSEUM of AMERICAN ART

2250 Reynolda Road | 336.758.5150
reynoldahouse.org

Advance purchased recommended for all holiday events. Tickets on sale now. Supported by the Arts Council of Winston-Salem & Forsyth County

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