

# Local inmate crew earns kudos for preventing huge fire

SPECIAL TO THE CHRONICLE

The truth is, when the N.C. Department of Transportation gets calls or comments about the inmate crews that work highway projects across the thousands of miles of roadways; most of them are not positive.

"A lot of times residents call and want to know what an inmate is doing in their area and why inmates are allowed to be out interacting with the public," Division 9 Transportation Supervisor-A, David Odom said. "Despite inmate convictions those that are working for the state have proven through time served and good behavior that they can be trusted to work the highways." Last week in Forsyth County along Interstate 40 East, they proved just that.

"I was driving up to check on the state employee and the 3-man inmate crew, and saw thick smoke billowing into the air around their work site, and my heart dropped. Traffic had slowed a bit and as I got closer I saw a White Ford F-150 with two very lucky passengers."

Odom said two men in a truck veered off to the side of the road where the inmate crew was working trash pick up duty and jumped out of their vehicle. They were having mechanical issues and the truck was on fire. He said the quick thinking inmate crew saw their distress,



Bonita Witherspoon stands outside the Forsyth Correctional Center.

grabbed two extinguishers from the inmate transport van and rushed to their aid moments before the truck became fully engulfed.

Odom said, "If the fire had grown any bigger, everyone's safety would have been in question and no doubt we would have had to shut down the entire highway."

Superintendent Bonita Witherspoon is in charge of the some 250 inmates housed at Forsyth Correctional Center. When she got wind of what happened; she brought all three inmates into her office to

hear first-hand what happened.

"We have an excellent working relationship with the NCDOT and we are glad to provide the inmate labor force when needed, and we are very glad our inmates were working that day," Witherspoon said. "Because of their actions, we plan on recognizing them with meritorious time off of their sentences if they are eligible."

"The bottom line is, this is the type of behavior I expect from the inmate road crews; being diligent and doing what they are suppose to do, even when no one is looking."



Imani King



Kazyhla Cunningham

# Local girls going for the crown

SPECIAL TO THE CHRONICLE

Sisters Kefiera Cunningham and Kazyhla Cunningham will compete for the 2014 Miss Jr. Pre-Teen Greensboro pageant, while Imani King of Winston-Salem will compete in the Miss Jr. Teen competition.

The pageant will take place on Saturday, Oct. 4. There are four age divisions for girls ages 7 through 19. Contestants earned a place in the competition after submitting to interviews and an application process.

The girls will compete in modeling, interview and personality competitions. Thousands of dollars in prizes and specialty gifts are up for grabs. Winners will represent Greensboro and



Kefiera Cunningham

surrounding communities at a national competition in Orlando, Fla. later this year. There, more than \$30,000 in prizes and awards will be presented, and each local winner will enjoy an expense-paid five-night, six-day tip.

Community businesses, organizations and individuals can sponsor the girls by contacting the pageant coordinator at 1-877-403-6678.



## Street Party

Photo by Kevin Walker

The Hispanic League's 22nd Annual Fiesta attracted thousands of people to downtown Winston-Salem on Saturday, Sept. 13. Held over seven hours on blocked-off streets in the heart of downtown, Fiesta celebrates Hispanic cultures while raising funds for scholarships for local Hispanic students.

Live Onsite & Online

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# THE CHRONICLE DIXIE CLASSIC FAIR

# Gospel Fest

Sundays

October 5th & October 12th

3:00 pm-6:00 pm

Clock Tower Stage

Emcees



Debra Terry



Carmen Russell



**Debra Terry**-accomplished actress, comedian, singer and producer, is the event's organizer and emcee, owner of Mustard Seed Entertainment.

**Carmen Russell**- well-known member of the Russell family who owns and operates **Russell Funeral Home**, has had a visible role in the community for over 30 years.

## Local Gospel Talent

**OCT 5-** The Brothas • Joy Coleman • Jeremiah Salter & Nu Praise • Ryan Herbin & New Vision • Bishop John Heath • Pastor Grosjean Stephens with Nu Sound • Pastor Jessie O'Banner • Todd Curry & St Petersburg United Church of God Choir

**OCT 12-** St. Paul United Methodist Church • 3rd Era • Spirit Ministry Team, Inc. • Teresa Lindsey • Love & Faith Christian Fellowship Choir •

Dionn Owen & Renaissance • The Gatekeeperz • Peace of Mind

Sponsored By

