



**“The Greatest”**

**Family Boxing**

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# THE CHRONICLE

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## John Larson, Josh Brannon win primary contests

5th District race will repeat in the fall

BY TODD LUCK FOR THE CHRONICLE

John Larson decisively won the City Council South Ward primary that was held again during the June 7 primary.



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Carolyn Highsmith, president of the Konnoak Hills Community Association, won the March 15 primary by just six votes with 2,029 votes to Larson's 2,023 votes, before the State Board of Elections ordered a re-election

due to election errors. Tuesday's turnout was far lower and the victory far larger with Larson receiving 962 votes to Highsmith's 562.

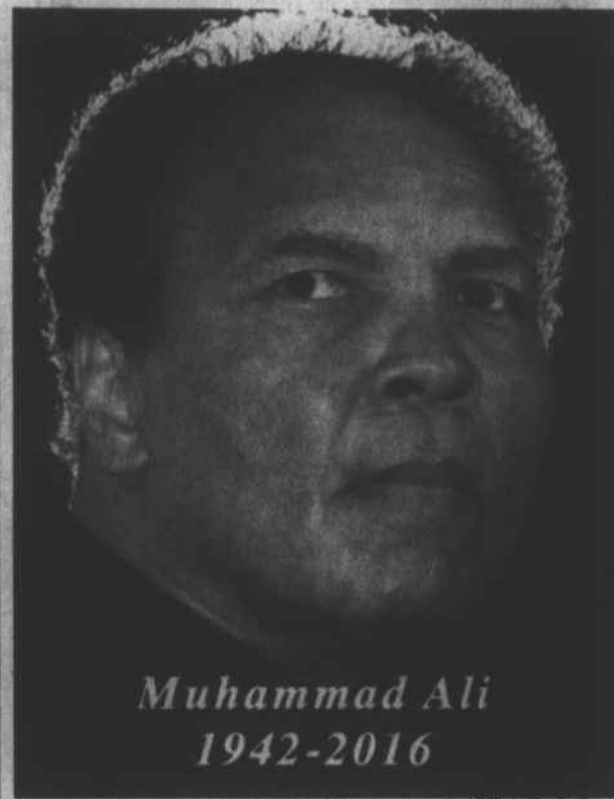
Larson, vice president of restoration at Old Salem Museum and Gardens, will face Republican Michael Taylor in November.

"It sort of validates obviously the protest that we offered back in March, and validates the work we did to allow people to vote that had been disenfranchised," said Larson.

Larson's election protest to the Board of Elections involved voters who received the wrong ballot and were not able to vote in the South Ward primary when they should have. Larson said he believed there were less errors this time and commended the Board of Elections on its efforts.

Larson credited the hard work of his

See Primary on A2



**Muhammad Ali**  
1942-2016

In this Dec. 17, 2005, file photo, boxing legend Muhammad Ali poses in Berlin, Germany. Ali, the magnificent heavyweight champion whose fast fists and irrepresible personality transcended sports and captivated the world, died June 3.

EXCLUSIVE

## ‘The Greatest’ had strong ties to N. Carolina

BY CASH MICHAELS FOR THE CHRONICLE

As the world stops to say goodbye Friday, and three-time heavyweight champion of the world, Muhammad Ali, who died June 3 at age 74, is laid to rest in his hometown of Louisville, Ky., there are many right here in North Carolina who also hold fond memories of personally knowing and working with “the Champ.”

Ali had many friends in the state, dating back to his early days as a heavyweight champion. Two of them were Minister Kenneth and Sister Margaret Rose Murray-Muhammad of Raleigh.

"It certainly is a tremendous loss to lose him," Ms. Murray-Muhammad, a retired educator, recalled when reached by phone Saturday morning, hours after the world woke up to news of his death at a Phoenix, Ariz. hospital Friday night. "But, he's in a better place."

The Murray-Muhammads became good friends with Ali and during the down times when he wasn't training for an upcoming fight, Ali would come down to Raleigh and stay with the Murray-Muhammads at their West Raleigh home. "He was so vibrant and full of life," Mrs. Murray-Muhammad says. "We were happy to have him come to our home, and he would have been sort of incognito if my neighbor didn't recognize him and told everybody."

After a laugh, she added, "But he took it in stride." After Ali retired from boxing after 1980, he remained close with the Murray-Muhammads and in 1986, he was the guest of honor at the O. A. Dupree Scholarship Banquet at Shaw University in Raleigh at their invitation. A literal who's-who of North Carolina political, civic and academic leaders attended, and though Ali's speech was slurred due to his Parkinson's Disease, he told the audience how proud he was to be a Muslim, how he was now spending his retirement traveling the world with his wife, Lonnie, giving away autographed copies of the Holy Qu'ran, and bringing joy to people wherever and whenever he could.

"I enjoyed introducing him," scholarship committee member Geoffrey Simmons recalls proudly. Virtually every North Carolina or Raleigh dignitary who delivered

See more stories on Muhammad Ali on pages A4, A5, A6 and B1.

See All N.C. on A4



A model displays a custom made dress during the 21Ray's fashion show held at Quality Education Academy on Thursday June 6. 21Ray's is a fashion line designed by Rayon Johnson, a former student at QEA.

## Teen's clothing line explodes onto the scene

BY TEVIN STINSON THE CHRONICLE

Many teenagers have dreams of one day becoming fashion designers, but very few actually see it happen. On the other hand, some teens are bigger doers than dreamers. Like Rayonna Johnson, who turned that dream into reality before her high school graduation.

Johnson's clothing line, 21Ray's exploded on to the scene last Thursday evening during a fashion show held at Quality Education Academy (QEA), where Johnson has been a student since middle school.

From African print skirts and dresses for women and young girls to T-shirts for men and boys, the 21Ray's collection is sure to have something that will catch

your eye. While discussing her journey into the world of fashion, Johnson said as early as elementary school she would sketch drawings of designs.

"I just love fashion. That's all I can say," Johnson smiled during an interview with *The Chronicle*.

"I can't really remember when I first started, but I do know fashion and art have always been passions of mine," she said. "I always knew that this is what I wanted to do."

Soon after receiving a sewing machine, Johnson began to transform her sketches into clothes to wear to school - she even made her own prom dress for junior prom last year. Member of the executive leadership team at QEA Tamara Turner said after seeing Johnson sport some of her original designs to school, she encouraged her to turn her hobby into a business.

"The pieces that she wore to school were very cre-

See Clothing on A2

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