

McDonald holdings face uncertain future

Continued from page 1A

restaurant last weekend.

Ever since members of the African American community learned Pinto might eventually own the restaurant, concerns have been expressed about the possible loss of what's considered a landmark in the black community.

McDonald's was the center of westside the social activity — everything from awards dinners, receptions and luncheons. The cafeteria was a good place to find many of the community's politicians and businessmen, whose tables were right there next to travelers, blue collar workers and retirees.

The latest information from sources is that efforts to keep McDonald's in black hands has been renewed and that Pinto's bid has fallen through.

Pinto's attorney, Allan Singer, said neither he nor his client could comment on the situation. Singer would say only that changes were afoot and denied that his client was out of the picture.

The situation may be at a critical juncture, as the family works to avert a potential bank foreclosure.

Troy Watson, head of the Metrolina Minority Chamber of Commerce, is reportedly trying to put together a group of African Americans to purchase the McDonald's holdings.

Watson said he could not discuss details of any arrangements Wednesday.

"I was always one to believe McDonald's is a landmark in the black community," Watson said. "McDonald's is the center of our community, where we have all of our meetings. It ought to be something the black

community could own."

Others don't share that sentiment. Pinto, in fact, had been able to secure several endorsements from African Americans to purchase the facility. Those endorsements were designed to assure potential creditors that the black community would continue to support the restaurant, even if a non-African American owned it.

Two such endorsements came from Bob Davis, chairman of the Black Political Caucus and General Gregory, a caucus member and vice president of the local NAACP.

"His ownership would not be an affront to the African American community," Davis wrote of Pinto in a Feb. 17 letter to Brad Pearce, a lawyer for the mortgage company. "Mr. McDonald himself would turn over in his grave to know that such a 'race squabble' was going on. He espoused love, support and opportunity for 'all people.'"

Davis, who acknowledged that he wrote only as an individual, said Pinto has given McDonald's "a friendlier customer-relations atmosphere" and made some aesthetic changes.

"I believe I know the 'pulse of the black community' and I also have and value their trust; and would not attempt to do anything that would violate that trust," Davis said. "Please seriously consider Mr. Louis Pinto and allow him to be the new owner of McDonald's Cafeteria Properties. He is an asset to the African American community."

Wrote Gregory, also on Feb. 17: "It is a personal pleasure that I add my voice to the support of Mr. Louis Pinto remaining the manager and hopefully one day soon, the owner of this facility. He has served the community

with dignity and expertise since coming on board as manager.

"I was truly honored to see that the facility is now being cared for and that customers were receiving good customer service," Gregory said. "In the past years it appeared that the facility was in a downward transition. Since Mr. and Mrs. Pinto began managing the facility you can see that life has once

again surfaced."

John McDonald had already explored several avenues for selling the restaurant, hotel and Fun City before his death. Even then, the black community was wondering if the mini-empire would remain in African American hands.

GARY KEITH, P.A.
ATTORNEY AT LAW

• Auto Accidents • Personal Injury
• Wrongful Death • On-the-job Accidents
• Occupational Disease • Workers compensation

Licensed In North and South Carolina
Evening and Weekend Hours
By appointment

333-4411 1051 E. Morehead Street

Lawn Mowers assembled serviced starting price **\$134.⁹⁹**

2 keys for the price of 1

SUPER COUPON \$1

Good thru March

Oakhurst Sales **HARDWARE**

See your Helpful Hardware Folks

4200 Monroe Rd (corner of McAlway) 333-6798

7:30 - 5:45 M-F
7:30 - 5:30 SAT



You're Four Steps
Away From Owning
Your Own Home.

Charlotte-Mecklenburg Housing Partnership is currently building and renovating affordable homes with special financing in several Charlotte neighborhoods. Call us and find out if one of them can be yours.

- Step 1: Enroll in the Homeownership Program
- Step 2: Get your finances in order
- Step 3: Choose your home and get approved for a loan
- Step 4: Move in!

If you've spent years just dreaming about owning a home, consider this your wakeup call:

377-HOME
Don't Just Dream It. Do It.

Charlotte-Mecklenburg
Housing Partnership

Equal Housing Opportunity

St. Louis mayoral race

Continued from page 1A

also black. But not black enough, according to many Bosley supporters.

Harmon, 57, whose wife is white, is currently an executive with the national headquarters of United Van Lines and counts many business executives among his friends. His kinder detractors in the Bosley camp say he is "too assimilated into white society." Others are more blunt.

Bosley's father, Alderman Freeman Bosley Sr., has called Harmon a "rented negro," and Charles Mischeaux, head of the local chapter of the NAACP, criticized Harmon for announcing his candidacy on the steps of the Old Courthouse, the site of the Dred Scott trial.

"It's a fact that black slaves were sold on the steps of that courthouse," said Mischeaux. "Now we're seeing a black man sell himself on those steps."

And while Harmon winces at those descriptions, he says he understands why they are being laid on him.

As a ranking police officer for many of his 27 years on the force, Harmon had dealings with people on nearly all levels of society in St. Louis, a city almost evenly divided between blacks and whites.

"I have had throughout my career a relationship with all segments of the community," Harmon said. "I was the first African American lieutenant in the department and I became the first black area commander of a white section of the city."

"Now they are turning to me because they see the city in decline and they want my help."

Like many large cities, St. Louis' infrastructure is decaying, many of the buildings downtown are vacant and boarded up, and there are fears that some large businesses will soon leave for greener pastures.

Bosley denies the city is in trouble, saying that under his leadership St. Louis has gained a professional football team, has helped Trans World Airlines climb out of bankruptcy and has actually gained jobs as new companies moved to town.

Bosley also points to a declining crime rate during his administration, a claim that irks Harmon, who says he

resigned as police chief late in 1995 because he could get no support from Bosley.

"He's running on my record," said Harmon. "It is so incredible. I was accomplishing things, often against his will, and now he is trying to take credit for it."

Not so, says Bosley, who claims Harmon was insensitive to the needs of black officers and inept as chief.

"St. Louis is safer now that Harmon is gone," he has said.

Marit Clark, a five-term Democratic alderman from the south side, finds the whole race "bizarre."

Clark, who had registered as a Democratic candidate with Harmon's endorsement, withdrew from the primary and registered as an independent when Harmon announced his own candidacy.

3 ROOMS OF CARPET



COMPLETELY INSTALLED

Completely Installed
Cut Pile, Saxony

Based on 40 sq. yds. **\$519**

Completely Installed
Cut Pile, Plush

Based on 40 sq. yds. **\$679**



Completely Installed
Cut Pile, Plush

Based on 40 sq. yds. **\$879**

6 months % Finance S.A.C.

Includes: Carpet, 6 lb. Padding. Expert Installation

CARPET & INTERIORS
Abbey Carpet

535-7111

4517 E. Independence Blvd.

(At the corner of Sharon Amity)

M-F 9-8, T, W & F 9-6, Sat. 10-6

Specializing in Special Occasions



Individualized
attention to detail

Accommodate
rehearsal dinners
for 30 to
full receptions
for 100

Rooms available
for all size parties

Affairs to Remember

Facilities
available for
corporate catering

631 North Tryon Street
Charlotte, NC 28202

(704)333-8899

Personally
designed menus