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REGION

Camp for the holidays
City Park Center in Salisbury will host a
Holiday Camp with arts, crafts for kids
K-5. Rowan Events, page 8B

Black farmers talk discrimination with Clinton

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS
RALEIGH - Black farmers from North Carolina and around the country got a chance to speak to President Clinton Wednesday about discrimination that sometimes led to financial ruin. Several were from North Carolina, home to one of every nine black farmers in the United States. Among them were Griffin Todd, who farms in Wake County and has never forgotten a slight he suffered three decades ago. On a late summer day at a

tobacco warehouse in Wilson, a U.S. Department of Agriculture grader gave Todd's leaf the top rating. Then, Todd made the mistake of standing near his crop and letting the grader see that he was black. The next thing Todd knew, his tobacco had been downgraded. The insult took money from Todd's pocket. Far worse, it seared a wound into his soul. "It hurt me so bad," he said last week at his brick ranch home on the edge of Zebulon. "I was like a dog who put his tail between his

legs and crawled off." The farmers are at the center of a nationwide class-action suit against the government. The lawsuit, which had 641 farmers when it was filed in August and now has nearly 1,000, seeks almost \$1 billion as compensation for what the farmers allege is decades of racial discrimination in the distribution of agricultural loans. The plaintiffs contend that a good ole boy network of local Farmers Home Administration agents and boards, nearly all of

them white, delayed or denied their loans, accelerated their payment schedules, foreclosed early on their property, gave them less money than white neighbors and excluded them from technical training. The lawsuit also alleges that the Agriculture Department ignored hundreds of written complaints filed by black farmers, especially after President Ronald Reagan dismantled the department's civil rights office in 1983. Such discrimination, the lawsuit says, sped the demise of the

black farmer and helps explain why blacks have left the land at twice the rate of whites since 1950. Today, only 18,000 black families still till the land. Pushed by the Congressional Black Caucus, Agriculture Secretary Dan Glickman has launched an initiative to reverse his department's record. Among them: a moratorium on new foreclosures and ordered that any already started be frozen if the property owner files a civil rights complaint. Despite his reforms, Glickman

missed his own deadline of clearing the old complaints by July. In fact, the backlog has grown as investigators discover old cases that lay dormant for years and as farmers come forward with more claims of past grievances. At his age, Tim Pigford says there is no time for delay. Pigford, a Bladen County man who is lead plaintiff in the lawsuit, is 46. Thirteen years after he claims Farmers Home Administration discrimination drove him from the land, Pigford still longs to return to farming.

Black Moravians studied

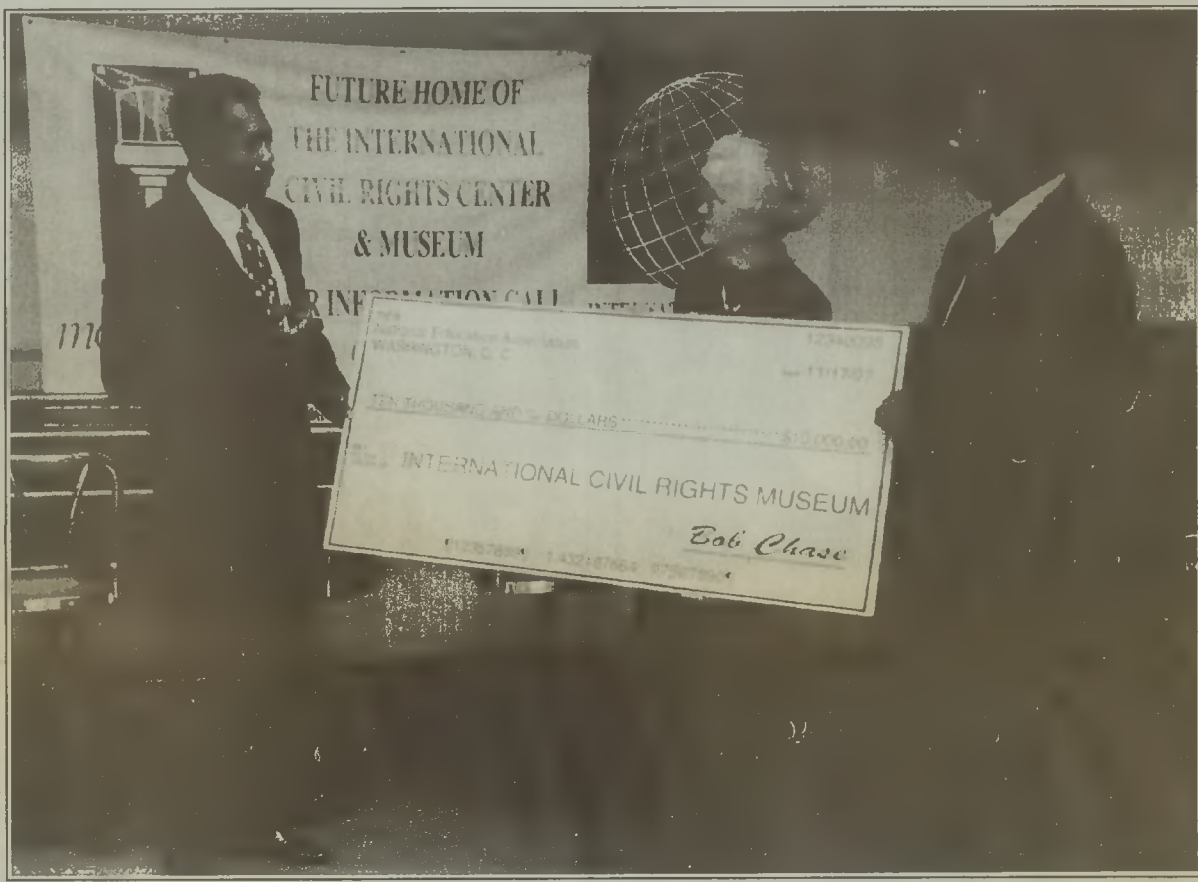
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS
WINSTON-SALEM - The history of blacks at Old Salem will take a more prominent place in the community with the help of a grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities. A \$600,000 grant from the organization, announced last week, will be used to strengthen Old Salem Inc.'s study of black history and to renovate the old St. Philip's Moravian Church, built for black Moravians on the southern edge of the community in 1861. "It gives us a center from which we can really concentrate on the African American-in-Old-Salem experience," said Hobie Cawood, the president of Old Salem. "It further makes the point that Old Salem is the roots of all the community - not just the European-American, but also the African American."

Under the terms of the grant, the NEH will award Old Salem \$600,000 if it raises \$2.4 million. In addition to the St. Philip's renovation, Old Salem officials plan to use the money to reconstruct a log building built in 1823 that served as the original church for black Moravians and an outbuilding, as well as to endow White's position. White Moravians in Salem owned black slaves. At first, historians say, the Moravians and their slaves worked together. The Moravians taught their slaves German, and the slaves taught them English, White said. Many black slaves joined the Moravian church in Salem.

But in the early 1800s, according to historian Jon Sensbach, "fear of slave revolt and increasing racial chauvinism" led white Moravians to segregate the black Moravians from their congregation. The white Moravians formed a black church in 1822 that came to be known as St. Philip's. Sensbach has just published a book on Salem's black community prior to the Civil War.

Many of the blacks who once lived in Salem moved across Salem Creek to the Happy Hill area but continued to return to St. Philip's for worship. In 1952, the St. Philip's congregation left the brick building in Old Salem for a community center in Happy Hill. In 1967, the congregation moved again, to Bon Air Avenue.

Donation for civil rights landmark



Greensboro City Council member Earl Jones (left) accepts a check from the National Education Association for \$10,000 to the International Civil Rights Center and Museum. Making the presentation are Eddie Davis, NEA Executive Committee member and Joyce Elliott, president of the North Carolina Association of Educators, an NEA state affiliate. Donations will be used to renovate Greensboro's F.W. Woolworth's building, site of the 1960 lunch counter sit-in that sparked civil rights demonstrations across the South.

Duke to keep race scholarships

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS
DURHAM - Duke University plans to nearly triple the annual amount of its main minority scholarship program in 1998 despite recent legal and federal challenges to race-based scholarships. "We think this is the right thing to do," said Judith Ruderman, vice provost for academic services. "The chips will fall where they may. We're committed to doing this at Duke." However, the number of the four-year Reginaldo Howard Scholars awards will drop to five from seven. The award, named for the first black person elected student body president at Duke, has offered \$6,000 annual scholarships to about seven incoming black freshmen each year. Beginning next fall, the annual award will jump to 75 percent of tuition for both freshmen and upperclassmen who receive Howard scholarships. With tuition now topping \$21,000, the scholarship's value would be almost \$16,000 a year.

"We've been looking at African American recruitment for a while," Ruderman said. "We don't want to lose African American students for reasons of loss. We want to reclaim our lost ground." The announcement came less than a week after the president of the 16-campus University of North Carolina system ordered a review of all race- and gender-preference policies.

Earlier this fall, the UNC system began assessing its scholarship program to make sure it complied with a 1994 decision by the 4th Circuit U.S. Court of Appeals. The court struck down a state scholarship program for black students at the University of Maryland at College Park. Black students make up about 8 percent of Duke's 6,200 student undergraduate enrollment. The university has seen a recent drop in the number of black high school seniors applying for, and accepting, admissions offers.

A survey of black students who turned down Duke and current scholarship recipients revealed concerns about the Howard Scholars program, Ruderman said. Many of those questioned said they had received better scholarship and financial aid offers from other schools. Duke officials last increased the Howard award in 1984.

Three honored for humanitarian service to N.C.

By Herbert L. White
THE CHARLOTTE POST

Three of N.C.'s unsung heroes were honored for their courage and commitment to improving the human condition recently. The Rev. Harrison T. Simons of Oxford, Mother Mary Benignus Hoban of Belmont and Chenay Costen of Sunbury were named recipients of the Nancy Susan Reynolds Awards by the Z. Smith Reynolds Foundation.



Simons

The awards are awarded annually and carry a prize of \$5,000. Each recipient receives \$5,000 personally and then can designate

\$20,000 for a charity of his or her choice. "We do not have to search for saints or heroes in distant lands, in the slums of Calcutta, mine fields of Bosnia and Africa, or hospitals for incurables in England," said Stephen Neal, president of the foundation. "Look and we will find them in North Carolina."



Hoban

Costen is founder of United Family Support Services in northeastern N.C., which offers adult basic education, day care and meal services in addition to home ownership programs for first-time buyers. She has worked on behalf

of poor rural people in five counties, initiating programs that built economic opportunity and literacy. Costen recently founded a community development program. Simons, rector of two Episcopal churches in Oxford - one black, the other white - helped bring together the congregations in worship and social ministry. He and his churches have been central figures in improving race relations in Granville County, a rural community on the Virginia border.



Costen

Hoban, the founder and president of Holy Angels, a nursery for disabled children in Belmont, has

cared for children from N.C. as well as other states and countries. Now 91, Hoban founded Holy Angels in 1955 after a severely handicapped and sick infant was left at a day care center operated by the Sisters of Mercy, a Catholic order. The child survived, and at 42, is employed at Holy Angels. A native of Ireland, Hoban has lived in the U.S. for 71 years, most of it in North Carolina. She has been a teacher and administrator of a college and hospital. "Saints?" Neal asked. "It never would occur to them to consider themselves anything but ordinary human beings who have seen needs and determined to meet them - regardless of the odds. "They have proven that even with limited resources, one can change lives and move people by the powerful force of love."

Rowan Events

Table with 4 columns listing events for Dec 18 and Dec 19. Includes churches, times, and descriptions of activities like Christmas programs, dinners, and band performances.