

Joyner defection shakes Charlotte radio

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said. "I was the person who first brought Tom into the Charlotte market 10 years ago.

"Tom is an icon. He is already on several other Radio One Stations and will be a part of TV One, which isn't in Charlotte yet. Hopefully it will soon be offered in this area."

TV One, a collaboration between Radio One and Comcast, features Joyner's Sky Show, the traveling morning radio event that will be shown in primetime. Radio One is the seventh largest radio broadcasting company in the country and the biggest owned by African Americans.

The Tom Joyner Sky Show was the first full-length program to air on TV One.

For jumping ship in Charlotte, Joyner was rewarded. Radio One agreed to add his show in Dayton and Columbus Ohio.

Since Joyner's show isn't aired on hip-hop stations Radio One changed its format and canned the on-air personalities at 92.7.

Loyal listeners of Joyner not only flooded the stations with calls but one fan even went as far to circulate an e-mail protest accusing Bill Schoening, senior vice president of Infinity's six Charlotte stations, of removing Joyner over racial motives.

Terri Avery, WBAV's opera-

tion manager, said the accusations in the e-mail allegations are untrue.

"All the facts are totally wrong," she said. "WBAV is going to stay an urban radio station."

"There was nothing WBAV could have done to keep Tom," she said. "It was totally Tom's decision. Our contract was up with Tom Jan. 23. We found out Jan. 21 at 5 p.m. We got a fax saying that Tom was not going to renew with us."

The news of Joyner's depart-

ture hit hard in the WBAV camp because it had just tied for No. 1 in the Arbitron ratings with WPEG, its sister station."

Avery says WBAV isn't going to change its format. But some changes will occur. "We're planning some big things," she said. "I'm not able to talk about them right now. We're going to give Charlotte something to be proud of."

"In the meantime we will continue to play good music and have our other great personalities and do what we do in the community."

Brown says he's optimistic about changes at 92.7.

"We're going to be really involved in the community," he said. "That's what it's all about. Debbie Kwei is the station manager over there and she understands this market very well. We look forward in making a quick and great impact in this market."

Avery said she's not worried



Avery

Rally protests school resegregation

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Collins of the Charlotte-Mecklenburg NAACP said marking the Brown anniversary is meaningless when American public schools are resegregating by race and economics. Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools are a prime example.

"Quite naturally, we're focusing our energy on the local school system," said Collins, a member of the NAACP Education Committee. "Fifty years after Brown, we see the visibility of resegregation of schools across the U.S."

The Brown decision is generally considered a defining moment in civil rights and education in the U.S. The case, which was a unanimous decision for desegregation, was initiated by J.A. DeLaine of Clarendon County, S.C. Four other lawsuits were joined to the

Clarendon litigation under the Topeka umbrella.

A string of court decisions over the last decade - including one in Charlotte - have removed busing as an instrument of desegregation. As a result, more school districts have turned to neighborhood-based pupil assignment. The coalition contends that draws distinctions between poor and rich neighborhoods when it comes to the quality of education Brown was meant to eliminate.

"We definitely see a resegregation back to 1954 instead of 1994" when CMS used a combination of busing and magnet schools to desegregate, Collins said. "With the housing patterns in this city and county, you can't help but have a segregated school system (without busing). If we're going to have anything approaching Brown v. Board of Education, that's a bad place to start with that as the crux."

Drought menaces Africa

Appeals made to feed the starving

By Alexandra Zavis
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

MAFETENG, Lesotho - From miles around they come, pushing wheelbarrows in the relentless heat to collect sacks of maize meal, beans and cooking oil from the U.N. food agency.

The worst drought in more than a decade is sweeping through southern Africa, destroying crops, driving up food prices and leaving millions hungry - even as foreign assistance dries up, governments and humanitarian agencies say.

Last week saw the first significant downpours since April - but the rain came too late to save the summer harvest, and forecasters predict more dry weather ahead. Aid workers expect near total crop failure in the tiny mountain kingdom of Lesotho, along with massive losses in Swaziland, southern Mozambique and parts of Zimbabwe.

"The current drought could be disastrous for southern Africa," Richard Lee, regional spokesman for the World Food Program, said Tuesday. "Parts of the region, which have now experienced two years of crisis, will have another year of massive shortages, if this continues."

The southern town of Mafeteng, once surrounded by some of Lesotho's most productive agricultural land, is now on the front line of the region's drought. Dams are empty, rivers have been reduced to a muddy trickle, and wells are drying up.

With the soil too dry to plant, vast areas have been left idle. The few maize crops that were put in have been stunted by the sun. Despairing of rain, some farmers are already allowing their skinny herds into their fields to eat the scorched crops.

"Normally we have maize

all over," district secretary Eliase Thekiso said as he surveyed a parched and rocky landscape. "But the soil is going and leaving us with stones."

Between 600,000 and 700,000 people - a third of Lesotho's population - are expected to need food aid this year.

But while the international community reacted swiftly to last year's food crisis in six southern African countries, response this year has been much slower, U.N. officials say.

Despite recent contributions by the European Union and United States, WFP is still short \$127 million - 29 percent of its emergency appeal to feed 6.5 million people in Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Swaziland, Zambia and Zimbabwe for the year finishing in June 2004.

Millions of people in Zimbabwe have already had their rations reduced due to lack of funds.

In Lesotho, there is only enough aid for the most vulnerable, including the sick, the elderly, children under 5 and pregnant women. General distributions were suspended this month.

"What are we going to do?" despaired Mateko Mafereka, who has been trying to support a family of six on the \$3.50 a week she makes selling apples and candy in the nearby Ha Lepolesa region. Her entire village was unable to plant this year, and there is no other work to be found in the area.

"There is no future without water," she said.

This is the third consecutive year of drought in many parts of southern Africa, and subsistence farmers like Mafereka's family have nothing left to fall back on. There are no seeds to plant, no livestock or other assets left to sell.

If the drought persists, U.N. officials fear many families will be pushed into destructive coping mechanisms such as pulling their children out of schools, migrating to urban areas and prostitution.

The AIDS pandemic is also having a devastating effect, cutting a swathe through the

region's most productive age groups.

Making matters worse in Lesotho, tens of thousands of migrant laborers have been retrenched from neighboring South Africa's mines and farms over the past decade, depriving families of their only alternative source of income.

Lesotho is also suffering the effects of years of over grazing and over dependence on maize, which has depleted the soil of its nutrients. Erosion has left the southern lowlands crisscrossed with deep gullies, in stark contrast to the level fields on the South African side of the border.

In Zimbabwe, once a regional breadbasket, food production has been crippled by erratic rains, soaring costs and shortages of seed, fuel and fertilizer. Government supporters have seized 5,000 white-owned farms for redistribution to blacks in an often-violent reform program that has crippled the country's agriculture-based economy.

Basic food prices are increasing even faster than the country's record inflation rate, currently around 600 percent, putting many items out of the reach of many Zimbabweans.

In Swaziland, government officials say the current drought has the potential to be the "worst in recorded history." Just under a quarter of the tiny kingdom's 1 million people are receiving food aid, while low water levels in the rivers and dams are putting livestock at risk.

Mozambique, devastated by floods in 2000 and 2001, is now experiencing its lowest rainfall in 50 years in some areas. Worst hit is the southern province of Gaza, where more than 11 percent of children under 5 are suffering from malnutrition.

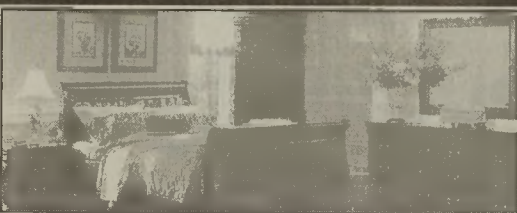
In Malawi, the government recently appealed for help feeding 3.5 million people, particularly in the south.

The South African government has declared parts of six drought-stricken provinces disaster areas. Farmers have planted 6.2 million acres of maize, the staple for millions, compared to 7.6 million acres in previous years.

about WBAV losing ground in the market because of 92.7's switch in format.

WQNC "is a 6,000-watt station," she said. "WBAV is a 100,000-watt station. So whose signal will go further? If you're going to compete, then you have to compete all the way."

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