

Men paying more to party

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Some men pay from \$10 to \$20 more than women do to get in clubs.

"The most I have ever paid is \$25 to get in the club without a performance," said Spriggs. "I didn't want to pay that much but I didn't want to be the reason my friends

turned around. I think we will pay those prices for one because we're with our friends. And second, because we love to be where the women are even if we have to pay more.

"The promoters may charge us that fee to make up for the loss they get from women. Plus, if the promoter has a big

name, he can do it and get away with it."

The charge of admission doesn't rest totally on the shoulders of club owners. Pricing depends on the promoter.

Some Charlotte promoters who cater to black audiences even increase admission by \$10 as the night progresses.

Romance gets a good rap

By Alona Wartofsky
THE WASHINGTON POST

NEW YORK—Carolyn Kriz is a young, extremely pretty brunette with a glamorous job: She's a media planner for a high-end retailer in midtown. So it's understandable that a guy harboring a crush on her might have a hard time letting go.

As she sits at her desk on a recent weekday afternoon, two men she's never seen before stride purposefully toward her. One of them, dressed unexceptionally, carries a camera and a bouquet of flowers. The other is dressed in dyed-black animal hides — a suede sweater, leather pants and a fur-trimmed leather jacket. A large platinum and diamond cross hangs from his neck, and his left ear is decorated with a three-carat diamond stud.

She eyes them curiously. "What's going on?"

"Carolyn? I'm gonna deliver a Rap-A-Gram for you," says the man in black.

"A what?"

"A Rap-A-Gram."

She scowls. "This is a joke, right?"

It isn't. The man delivering a hip-hop version of the traditional singing telegram goes by "Mr. R," and he performs, unaccompanied, two minutes of urban poetry, courtesy of a man Kriz says she went out with "once or twice."

According to Mr. R's rap, their date:

"Was real, wit' no pretending / Y'all met about a week

and a half ago at Happy Endings / Then after that, a night he won't forget / When y'all went to his house and watched 'The Bachelorette.'"

The sender, raps Mr. R, is: "Cool, laid-back, not wild / And the first thing he said — he loves your style / The same way you love Dave Chappelle / That's why he feels that you and him will do well."

Kriz spends most of the Rap-A-Gram cringing in embarrassment while her co-workers giggle and clap. She's not much of a hip-hop fan, but she is appreciative of Mr. R's efforts. The problem, apparently, is that she is somewhat underwhelmed by the sender.

"You have to call him," advises one of her colleagues.

Kriz grimaces. "I can't," she says. "I'm kind of in shock. I don't know."

Afterward, Mr. R. descends in a shiny, spotless elevator and shakes his head. "The whole reason he did the Rap-A-Gram is because she wasn't calling him back," he says. "I'm like, you can spend all this money, but if she don't like you..."

Mr. R, whose real name is Robert Rickenbacker, is an employee of Rap-A-Gram, a new company that provides customers with personalized raps delivered to the recipient of their choice for the sum of \$129.99.

Founded six months ago by Gail "Gee" Powell, Rap-A-Gram offers an array of messages.

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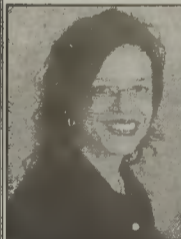
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Wanda Jones

Jones' Vision:
"I feel all students should be afforded an equal opportunity to excel despite their differences."



Rochelle McCormick

McCormick's Rewards:
"I like to empower people. There is nothing more rewarding than pinpointing various stressors that affect families and helping them to work through their issues."

There is no greater barometer of measure for how faculty affect the lives of children other than the testimony of alumni. Our "Educators of the Month" Wanda Jones and Rochelle McCormick were recommended as Coca Cola Educators of the Month by a 2003 graduate who is now in college. "They were just always there for us, giving assistance, support and understanding. As individuals they are wonderful, as a team, they are awesome," says the graduate.

A native of Waterloo, SC., Wanda Jones received her bachelor's degree in social work in 1990 from Johnson C. Smith University, and her master's in 1998 from the University of South Carolina. Wanda joined the Charlotte-Mecklenburg school system shortly thereafter.

Active in professional and civic organizations, Wanda is a member of NEA (National Educators Association), Alpha Kappa, Alpha Sorority, Inc. and Hidden Valley Optimist Club. Her hobbies include playing the piano, cooking and spending time with her husband, John and their two wonderful sons, Brandon, 10 years old and Ryan, age 4. Wanda and her family are members of Mt. Carmel Baptist Church.

Rochelle McCormick left her native city of Chicago at age 17 to attend Clark Atlanta University. She received her B.A. in psychology in 1990, and returned to receive her master's in 1994. Rochelle relocated to Charlotte in 1994 and accepted a position with the school system in 2000.

In her leisure time, Rochelle enjoys reading, cooking and spending time with her 4-year-old daughter, Iyanna.

"It is my hope that every child will succeed regardless of their circumstances," says Rochelle.

Best Wishes "Rochelle & Wanda" From
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