

B

Section

LIFE



IN RELIGION
"Honey I Got Laid Off", a story of faith, opens this weekend.

Family strategy for successful school year

By Paula Young
FOR THE CHARLOTTE POST

School is back in session and kids are getting geared up to begin a new school year. For parents though, it can be a very stressful time. School supplies, class schedules, transportation issues are the myriad of worries for parents.

Danielle Coleman, licensed clinical social worker, understands the stress for parents and students.

For the past 15 years, Coleman has worked as a mental health and medical social worker. She's also counseled school aged children and families facing difficult issues.

A mother of two, Coleman recognizes the importance of family and in 2004 started her own business,

Choice Communications. "I wanted to do what's important professionally and didn't want to take away from my family at the same time," she said.

Choice Communications is a social work service firm that works with groups and individuals by providing training and workshops in effective parenting, anger management, building self-esteem, strengthening communication skills and work/life balance.

As a former social worker with Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools, Coleman offers this advice for parents and children for the academic year:

- Do your best
- Take responsibility for your behavior
- Make no excuses
- Make positive choices
- Be at the right place at the right time
- For parents:
 - Maintain positive flow of communication with teachers and counselors
 - Stay involved
 - Ask questions of the students and the school staff
 - Attend school functions

Coleman feels that parents hold the key to their child's success. "Everybody has to own their own piece," she said. "If we're talking about school success, parents need to own a piece too."

According to Coleman, at the beginning of the school year, parents need to find out what method of homework each teacher offers whether it's weekly or if there's an agenda involved, etc.

Research finds students whose parents are involved with school and extracurricular activities are more likely to succeed. "If your child is on the basketball team, parents need to attend games, whether it's a bake sale or your child is in the band, be there. Attendance shows that you care."

Coleman says it's frustrating for school officials to offer parent support workshops and only a few parents show up. If the child and or parent do not make a conscientious effort to make school successful, the following outcomes can be expected:

- Child
 - Suspension, detention, or expulsion
 - Poor grades
 - Attendance problems
 - Alternative school placement
- Negative reputation
- Exclusion
- Parents

Please see **SCHOOL/3B**



PHOTOS/ERICA SINGLETON

The Great Smoky Mountains Railroad provides mystery and intrigue for tourists departing Dillsboro to Bryson City. GSMR offers gourmet cuisine (below) on its Mystery Dinner Theater train.

Mysteries on the rails

Intrigue, cuisine and locomotion whistle in from Dillsboro

By Erica Singleton
FOR THE CHARLOTTE POST

Where is Dillsboro, N.C., and what could possibly be there?

What attracted me to Dillsboro was an opportunity of a night of mystery and intrigue where my mother, a huge fan of whodunit programs like "Murder She Wrote," "Diagnosis Murder," and classics like "Columbo," could live out her mystery-solving fantasies aboard the Nightshade 2006 mystery dinner series the Great Smoky Mountains Railroad offers.

Operating on the Murphy Branch Line established in 1891, the Great Smoky Mountains Railroad features activities and events departing from Dillsboro and Bryson City. From the Sunset by Rail Sunday excursions offered throughout the summer to the Cotton Tail Express at Easter and the Polar Express that makes a special visit to the North Pole from November through mid-December GSMR also offers Gourmet Dinner Trains with four-course (five-course for New Year's Eve) meals served, or specialty gourmet events such as the Valentine's "Sweetheart" Trains, and the Father's Day Beer Dinner train. Our options were many, but it was our need to solve something that sucked us in.

Located in the scenic mountains of North Carolina, the steam and diesel excursions take you through mountain tunnels, along the Tuckasegee River, and past a "fugitive hunt." OK, not an actual hunt, however you pass the location where the movie "The Fugitive" shot a train/prison bus wreck scene, and you can take pictures of the site.

The Mystery Dinner Theater train is

a three-hour excursion, with a three-course meal only on Fridays, departing at 7:30 p.m., with nine Halloween mystery specials during October departing at 8pm. Reservations are required, adults only. "Dressy" casual dress is enforced. "The scenic vistas or starlit skies of Western North Carolina pass your dining car window as comic tales of intrigue unfold

See **TRAIN/2B**



Symposium to focus on diabetes

By Herbert L. White
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The devastating impact of diabetes on people of color will be addressed at a Health symposium Sept. 28 at the Charlotte Convention Center.

The symposium, presented by Carolinas Association for Community Health Equity, will highlight the disproportionate occurrence of diabetes among people of color, stress healthy lifestyles and early disease detection and increase awareness of the disease's

effect on multiple organs. Diabetes is a persistent elevation in blood sugar levels and is the fifth leading cause of death in racial minorities.

Sam Daggio-Jack, MD, Professor of Medicine at the University of Tennessee College of Medicine will deliver the keynote address. Break-out sessions will include diabetes discussions on fitness and nutrition; eye and kidney disease; heart and blood vessel disease, obesity, diabetic pain management and alternative medicine treat-

ment in diabetes.

Organizers expect 600 plus people to attend. Proceeds benefit CACHE and other programs which serve the health-care needs of minority individuals and families at risk of experiencing health care disparities. For more information about sponsorships, corporate tables or individual tickets, please contact The Main Event at 704-332-5819.

For more information about the symposium, call Yele Aluko MD at (704) 887-4545.

Empowerment activities at Chimney Rock

By Erica Singleton
FOR THE CHARLOTTE POST

While planning the trip I took earlier this summer to Asheville, a visitors center representative told me about a new rock climbing program at Chimney Rock Park, thinking it might interest me. I think I'm open to lots of new opportunities, but the truth is I'm a bit of a chicken and somewhat afraid of heights. Nevertheless, I called Chimney Rock for more information, and was excited to find out that many of the climbing clinics are geared towards women and women's groups.

"For years, enthusiasts have wanted to climb the



PHOTO/ERICA SINGLETON

The cliffs at Chimney Rock are now ready to be conquered.

cliffs at Chimney Rock," explained Valerie Hoffman, public relations and special events manager, CRP. "And now they can." The park

teamed up with Fox Mountain Guides to offer climbing and rappelling opportunities for all ages. Skill level doesn't matter,

they work with beginner to advanced climbers and the equipment is provided for you, all you have to do is wear something comfortable. How could I say no?

As I added, I was told I could bring along a friend, and make it a real "girlfriend's getaway," so I accepted. How could I have known my friend would have to go to the emergency room and I would have to face climbing alone?

I'd like to say I was still excited; I'd even like to say I was looking forward to it, but for the whole ride up U.S. 74, I tried to come up with ways to get out of it.

Please see **CHIMNEY/3B**

The People's Clinic
The Maya Rangelow Research Center
on Minority Health

Wake Forest University Baptist
MEDICAL CENTER

Colorectal Cancer

Colorectal cancer (cancer of the colon and rectum) is the third most common cancer found in adults.

The American Cancer Society estimates that 145,000 people will be diagnosed with colorectal cancer this year. Unfortunately, this will result in about 56,000 deaths. The risk of developing colorectal cancer increases with age. In fact, more than 90 percent of colorectal cancer cases occur in persons aged 50 years or older.

In general, the number of people developing and dying from colorectal cancer has been decreasing each year. This decrease is largely due to successful screening tests that allow for the discovery and removal of pre-cancerous growths (polyps) before they turn into cancer. Early detection and treatment can lead to improved medical outcomes.

Despite these improvements, African American men and women have the highest rate of colorectal cancer deaths of any racial or ethnic group.

What causes colorectal cancer?

Colorectal cancer usually develops slowly over a period of years from the cells lining the inside of the colon and rectum. It begins as a polyp (called an adenoma), then develops into an adenocarcinoma, which is cancerous. Almost all adenomas of the colon and rectum develop into adenocarcinomas if left untreated. Risk factors that contribute to the development of colorectal cancer include a family history of colorectal cancer or polyps, inflammatory bowel disease, or certain hereditary diseases. Also, lifestyle factors such as lack of exercise, poor diet, obesity, and alcohol and tobacco use may contribute to an increased risk of colorectal cancer. African American men and women who have these risk factors, especially those who are age 50 or older, are at an even greater risk of developing colorectal cancer.

How is colorectal cancer detected?

Routine screening for colorectal cancer is crucial for early detection. The American Cancer Society recommends that, beginning at age 50, both men and women have a yearly stool blood test (a test to find small amounts of hidden blood in the stool), plus one of the following exams:

- a flexible sigmoidoscopy (a procedure that allows the doctor to look at the inside of the rectum and part of the colon) every five years.
- a double contrast barium enema (a series of X-rays of the colon and rectum which are taken after the patient is given a barium dye enema

See **FIGHTING/3B**



PHOTO/THE STOCK MARKET

