

WOVEN ART
Mint Museum of Craft + Design exhibit shows function and form of baskets
A&E/1D



Navajo-style bowls and trays will be on display.

Volume 32 No. 2

The best high school football games, players step up this week

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IN SPORTSIC



Teen racer on fast track to NASCAR promotion
Marc Davis won six races at Hickory

\$1.00

The Charlotte Post

The Voice of the Black Community

WEEK OF SEPTEMBER 28-OCTOBER 4, 2005

Crash course for struggling high schools

Reconstitution mandate means major changes for Garinger, West Charlotte, West Mecklenburg, Waddell

By Erica Singleton
FOR THE CHARLOTTE POST

More than student achievement will be at stake for Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools' underperforming high schools. Jobs will be on the line, too.

In response to public and legal pressure to boost underperforming schools, Superintendent

Peter Gorman unveiled part of his reform initiatives this week.

On Tuesday, Gorman outlined plans to reconstitute four high schools. Three – West Charlotte, West Mecklenburg, and Garinger – are part of the High School Challenge grant, and E.E. Waddell was added due to low composite scores on last year's

End of Course tests.

The school board voted 8-1 to approve Gorman's proposal to use \$4.9 million to improve achievement in the schools. The plan still has to go to Mecklenburg County commissioners for approval.

"These schools are still not successfully teaching more than half

their kids," said Gorman. "We know that, we are concerned about it."

On September 12, the school board held a public hearing in which they did a first reading of their "reform governance policy" – three new policies and one revised policy and one revised bylaw that will "drive action in

the district."

"There comes a point where policy needs to become action, where the rubber meets the road," Gorman said. "And for our reform initiatives that was last evening."

Schools are evaluated on how effectively they are teaching

Please see HIGH/2A

Farrakhan hands over control of NOI

Administrators take on most of leader's duties

By George E. Curney
NATIONAL NEWSPAPER PUBLISHERS ASSOCIATION

WASHINGTON – Likening his predicament to that of Cuba's Fidel Castro, Minister Louis Farrakhan says he is facing some serious health challenges, causing him to turn over administration of the Nation of Islam to its executive board and cancel all appointments and personal appearances until further notice.

Farrakhan said his illness is related to the heavy dosage of radiation he received as a result of having prostate cancer in the late 1990s. He underwent surgery in November 2000 at Howard University and on a recent visit there was found to have an infection and inflammation.

"I have been suffering from the after-effects of an extremely high dose of radiated seed implantation that indeed killed the cancer cells that had broken the prostate capsule, but over time, these seeds have done severe internal damage," he explained.

Farrakhan said his illness represents "a period of testing" for his organization.

"In this period of testing, you can prove to the world

See FARRAKHAN/3A



PHOTO/CURTIS WILSON

WBAV Radio news director Beatrice Thompson was the first black woman to anchor a Charlotte TV newscast, in 1979. Thompson says she's encountered racism and sexism during her career.

ASCENT OF A WOMAN

Trailblazers beat odds to succeed

Breaking glass ceiling requires fortitude and longevity

By Erica Singleton

FOR THE CHARLOTTE POST

Part of a series on issues facing African American women.

Beatrice Thompson did not set out to be the first black female to anchor the news in Charlotte.

Actually, when she was younger, she wanted to be an archeologist.

"I was fascinated by documentaries... and I liked antiquities. My cousins hated to play with me, because they didn't know

what I was talking about," reminisced Thompson.

Women historically have always been second when it came to achievement in business and society. Still, many black women have led, in spite of the odds, from the first black millionaire being Madame C.J. Walker, to her contemporary counterpart and media queen Oprah Winfrey.

In Charlotte, they have made their mark, despite opposition and sometimes confrontation.

As a teenager, Thompson saw first hand the effects of urban renewal on black neighborhoods, which in led her into journalism.

"No one explained what was going on," said Thompson. "There was no redevelopment; just get up and get out. It made me angry. I watched white realtors use black families as block-busters starting white flight. These kinds of elements went into my decision."

Please see WOMEN/6A



PHOTO/CURTIS WILSON

Drs. Andrew Ighade (left) and Frances Obeng are two of a growing number of African-bred doctors practicing in Charlotte.

Charlotte medicine gets dose of African doctors

By Erica Singleton
FOR THE CHARLOTTE POST

When you walk into Mid-Carolina Pediatrics, you are greeted by a waiting room decorated with characters from the movie "Finding Nemo," and the cheerful song and conversation of children's programming fills the air.

Next door at Alfa Medical

Clinic, the décor is simplistic: leather chairs, tables with magazines, and a single television turned to 24 hour news. The two offices couldn't be more different, but they are beside each other due to what they do have in common:

Dr. Andrew Ighade of Mid-Carolina Pediatrics and Dr.

Please see DOSE/3A

Music legend Nancy Wilson makes rare appearance to champion education/2D

INSIDE

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