

Special Occasions closing after 27 years of business

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A Winston-Salem minority-owned bookstore for 27 years will be closing.

Special Occasions, owned by Ed and Miriam McCarter, is one of the largest black owned bookstores between Washington, D.C. and Atlanta.

"It is a testimony to clientele in the community," Ed McCarter said.

"We appreciate the support from everyone."

Special Occasions inventory includes books, church supplies, Greek paraphernalia, greeting cards and other gift items.

"Now churches print their bulletins in-house," Ed McCarter said.

This, along with e-books and online booksellers and a down falling economy brings the close of Special Occasions.

"There is a transition in the marketplace," Ed McCarter said.

"The sales of books have declined because they are now downloadable."

Ed McCarter said that he has no desire to expand to e-books.

Special Occasions provides Afro-centric products to the Winston-Salem community, and has clientele that stretches as far as Charlotte, Durham and Greensboro.

The McCarters, former teachers, started selling products out of their home. They opened the business on July 4, 1983, in the Jetway Shopping Center on New Walkertown Road. In 1989, they relocated to the building at 112 N. Martin Luther King Jr. Drive.

"There were very few places to find Afro-centric greeting cards, or Afro-books," Ed McCarter said.

"That was our niche in the community; we sold items geared towards the black community."

The store will close after Mother's Day, May 8. The final date will be decided by how quickly their inventory is sold.

Although Special Occasions will not close for two months, the McCarters started their 20 percent off sale Feb. 15.

Ed McCarter said that since the sale started, they have sold almost 30 percent of their books, and 70 percent of their paraphernalia.

The store also has a good, long relationship with the Winston-Salem State community.

"Students would bring their parents in the store and they would buy books," Ed McCarter said.

"Then after students became alumni, they would come back to the store to purchase items."

Aside from selling Afro-centric products, the McCarters have provided a black Santa since the early 1990s, and this was one of Ed McCarter's fondest memories.

"The look on the teenagers faces, to see someone that looks like them, as Mr. Pickett played Santa," Ed McCarter said.

According to the Winston-Salem Journal in an article written on Feb. 16, the McCarters are considering leasing the building, or selling the business or its merchandise and equipment.

When asked will they open another store in the future, "It's hard to say," Ed McCarter said.

"The future is wide open, and I will not block it out."

Moore Hall reopens as coed in fall; renovations to bring it up to code

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Moore Hall will re-open with substantial renovations next fall after being unoccupied since September 2010.

Moore Hall was closed because of the low enrollment of freshmen in fall 2010. Students were moved out of the building and relocated in other residence halls. The residence hall will go through a series of repairs to ensure that students will have a safe and comfortable living environment.

"Moore Hall is expected to have the best living environment and to be compatible with other residence halls," said Linda Inman, the director of Housing and Residence Life.

Inman said Moore Hall is being changed into a coed residence hall. Moore Hall will be a living and learning community. The living and learning programs allows students to participate in activities in the residence halls conducted by faculty members.

Owen Cooks, the assistant vice chancellor of facilities said some of the repairs for Moore Hall will include fixing on the entrances, heat and air conditioning system and electrical system.

These repairs have to meet the inspection codes of the N.C. State Construction office and requirements of the American Disabilities Act.

"Students are bringing more electronics, so we have to make sure the capacity of the circuits is increased," Cooks said.

Renovations will begin this summer. The cost of living in Moore is proposed to be \$2, 186.

"Three main goals that we want to accomplish are to upgrade the facility, have the building back in service, and to make sure it is the kind of environment the students need," Cooks said.

Pegram, another residence hall that was closed in the summer of 2009, will be renovated into an academic building. It is being used as office space.

The University has plans to build a new residence hall and renovate other residence halls such as Atkins and Dillard. A survey was conducted last year to see what students would like to have in a new residence hall. Focus groups evaluated proposed costs, room type and location of the new residence hall.

Red and white goes green

WSSU sustains efficiency

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The carbon footprint of Winston-Salem State is on its way to becoming neutralized. The 17 campuses of UNC are required by law to be carbon neutral by 2050.

Each year, the amount of greenhouse gases emitted into the atmosphere by institutions, events and individuals is measured. This measurement is called the carbon footprint. When the measurement is zero, the footprint has reached carbon neutrality.

Most "green" or sustainability efforts pay for themselves including one the University has commissioned with Siemens Corporation.

They will conduct an energy audit of 10 buildings on campus. The project has the potential to save WSSU more than \$650,000 in utility costs per year.

"It [Siemens project] is self-financed," said Dick Kabis, director of sustainability. "What we save is how Siemens gets paid."

Three new construction projects -- the Student Activities Center, the new science building and the Center for Design Innovation -- must meet the requirements of Session Law 2007 546 which mandates 30 percent greater energy efficiency than 2004 standards.

Kabis said that although the budget for new buildings has been available for awhile, General Assembly took some money, but not because of recent budget cuts. Construction costs for the state have gone down; therefore, the renovations and new buildings won't cost as much.

A \$350,000 grant from the State Energy Office will fund three projects: repairing the faulty steam traps; installing energy efficient lighting in seven buildings; and installing motion lighting controls in the corridors of

Brown and Wilson halls.

"The state has passed a new law that schools can keep the money they save on sustainability projects and invest up to 60 percent of savings into other efficiency projects," Kabis said.

More recycle bins are noticeable on campus, but Kabis said recycling on campus needs improvement.

"I don't think everyone knows what is recyclable and what isn't," Kabis said. "A lot of trash ends up in recycling and has to be sorted."

It costs the University money to sort recycling and the more trash the WSSU community throws into recycle bins, the more money the University has to spend to sort it.

The sustainability committee has a waste reduction sub-committee that helps educate the WSSU community about what is recyclable.

Chelii Broussard, marketing and promotions coordinator, is in charge of "Go Green Week" April 11-15, followed by the Piedmont Environmental Alliance's "Earth Day Fair" at the Dixie Classic Fairgrounds April 16.

In 2009, there were several educational

and informative activities for "Go Green Week" that Broussard said overloaded the students.

"There was a lot of information and not enough time to take it all in," Broussard said. "So last year we began using themes and colors to better connect students to the cause."

After the week's activities, a small group of students will go to Whole Foods on Miller Street and display what WSSU did to contribute to the going green cause.

"[Last year] a lot of people from the community that know little about WSSU were very amazed that we were taking the initiative to take better care of our community and our planet."

"People from the community were amazed that we were taking the initiative to take better care of our community and planet."

— Chelii Broussard, marketing and promotions coordinator

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