

Efforts Ease Traffic Nightmare



STATESVILLE MAYOR COSTI KUTTEH thanks Joseph Boretski, Statesville marketing president for Wachovia bank, for the financial center's assistance in alleviating traffic problems in the Fourth Creek shopping area.

A call for a solution to the dangerous traffic conditions at the US 21 exit ramp on I-40 west resulted in a collaborative effort among several groups to solve the problem.

In recent years, as more restaurants and businesses have built along

Volunteers Needed

The Girl Scout Council of the Catawba Valley Area, a United Way agency, is requesting volunteers to help prepare Camp Ginger Cascades for upcoming spring and summer events. Fix It, Paint It, Clean It Camp Work Day is scheduled for Saturday, March 24, from 9 a.m. until 5 p.m. at Camp Ginger Cascades in Caldwell County.

Civic groups, individuals, families, and teenagers are needed to do simple construction projects, paint buildings, maintain trails and clean and set up platform tents. Lunch will be provided on Saturday noon.

"Every year we rely on Girl Scouts, their families, and community volunteers to prepare the camp for spring events and summer camp," says Skip Mosher, camp ranger.

Anyone interested in helping the Girl Scouts at Camp Work Day are encouraged to call Eva Webb at the Girl Scout Council Service Center at 828-328-2444 or 800-328-8388 or email camp@cvgirlscouts.org.



Neil Furr/CITIZEN

A NEW RIGHT TURN LANE allowing better access to shopping centers in the Fourth Creek area was a collaboration among the City of Statesville, Wachovia bank, Duke Power and the North Carolina Department of Transportation.

"It caused a horrible traffic accident in late 2005," said Rob Hites, Statesville city manager. After, that Statesville Mayor Costi Kutteh, DOT Commissioner Robert Collier, DOT Division 12 Chief Engineer Mike Holder and Hites met with NC Representative Karen Ray to discuss possible short-term solutions.

The group decided to construct a turn lane at the intersection of US 21 and Glenway Drive to keep as much traffic as possible moving along the right lane. Mayor Kutteh worked with Wachovia Bank to

get an easement donated; the City of Statesville agreed to pay Duke Power to move a utility pole and guy-wire, and NCDOT constructed the lane, built a new curb and laid two layers of asphalt. Just in time for major holiday traffic, the problem was eased and major traffic backups on I-40 disappeared.

"The long-term solution is the reconstruction of the intersection, now scheduled for 2010, but this area is much safer as a result of the turn lane," said Hites.

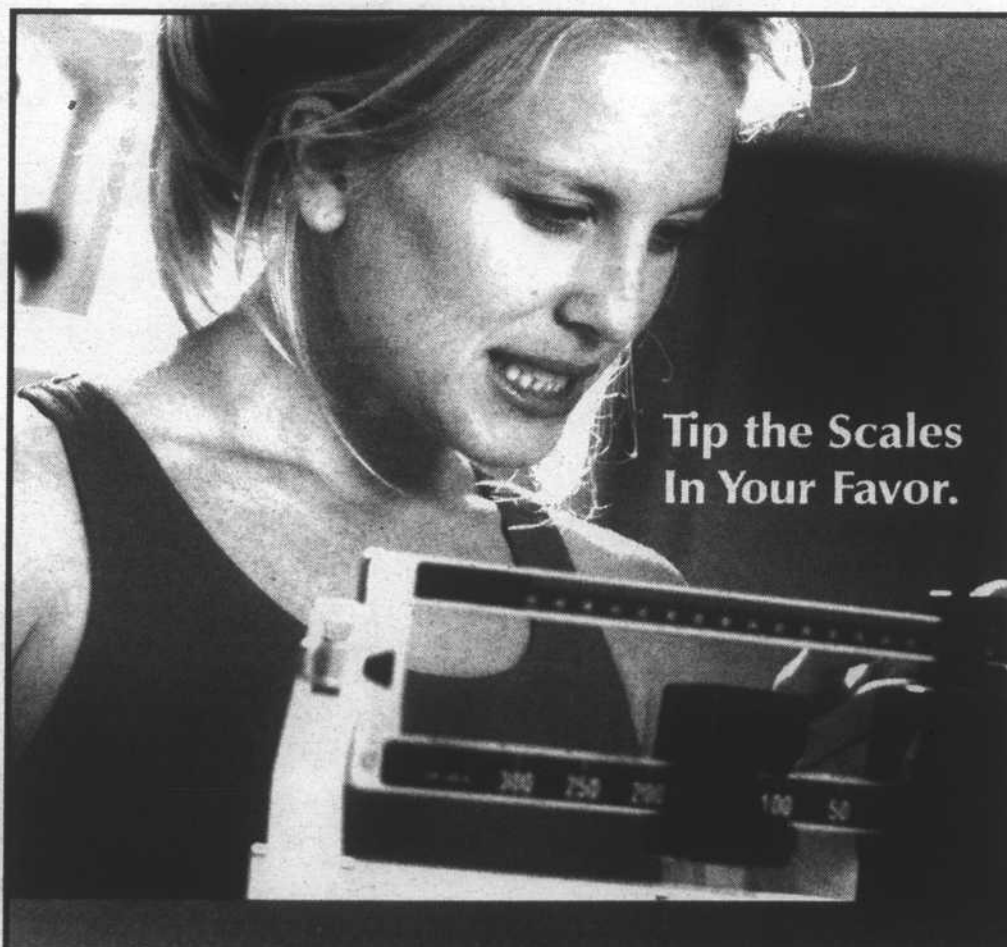
NAACP Covention Set

More than 1,800 NAACP members and visitors from across the Deep South are expected to attend the 55th Annual Southeast Region Civil Rights Advocacy Training Institute (CRATI) March 8-11 at the Chattanooga Convention and Trade Center in Tennessee. This year's convention marks the 98th Anniversary of the NAACP. The theme of this year's convention is "Operation Excellence: Moving from Good to Great."

Convention highlights include Religious Emphasis Day at Olivet Baptist Church in Chattanooga; a health symposium on HIV/AIDS; the Ruby Hurley Membership Luncheon keynote address by Dr. Benjamin L. Hooks, NAACP executive director emeritus; the unveiling of a Great Blacks in Wax Museum exhibit featuring Earl T. Sinister and Ida B. Wells-Barnett among others; and premier of the Lionsgate Film *Pride*, based on the story of Jim Ellis, a charismatic school teacher in the 1970s who changed lives when he founded an African-American swim team in one of Philadelphia's roughest neighborhoods.

Other speakers scheduled at this year's CRATI include NAACP President & CEO Bruce S. Gordon; NAACP COO Rev. Nelson B. Rivers III; NAACP National Youth and College Division Director Stefanie L. Brown; veteran labor leader Gerald Hudson; noted theologian Rev. Dr. Jeremiah Wright; and critically acclaimed actress Sheryl Lee Ralph.

For information contact Yvonne Finnie at 1-404-688-8868.



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