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Darryl (Keith) Beasley, Jr. and Kiara M. Thorpe were crowned Mr. Hillside and Miss Hillside at the 3rd Annual Mister and Miss Hillside & New Tech Scholarship Pageant on Oct. 7; the first time in history that such honors have been bestowed upon the #1 & #2 ranked students in the class. They both maintain a 5.0 or better GPA in the rigorous International Baccalaureate Program at Hillside. At this time they hold the current Valedictorian & Salutatorian slots for the Class of 2015. See story on page 3.

Police pepper-spray black teen at his foster home

RALEIGH, North Carolina (AP) - Police mistook a black teenager for a burglar and pepper-sprayed him inside the North Carolina home of his white foster parents, authorities said Oct. 8.

Responding to a neighbor's report of a break-in, police said they used pepper spray Monday when 18-year-old DeShawn Currie "became profane, threatening and belligerent" and "refused to follow instructions" from officers.

Currie told WTVD he became angry when three officers showed up inside the home and noted that he was not included in family photos on a mantle.

"They was like, 'Put your hands on the door,'" DeShawn told the television station. "I was like, 'For what? This is my house.' I was like, 'Why are y'all in here?'"

Currie's foster parents, Ricky and Stacy Tyler, said he has been with them for about a year. The Tylers, their three young children and Currie moved into their new home in July and don't know all their neighbors in the suburban Raleigh town of Fuquay-Varina, the Tylers said.

Police said there had spate of crimes in the area recently, but did not specifically say how many or what kind. Authorities said when they entered the house, Currie produced identification showing another address.

A police spokeswoman did not respond when asked specifically about what instructions Currie did not follow. Police also have not said how many officers entered the home, their length of service with the department or their race.

Currie was treated by medical personnel at the scene, police said. No charges were filed.



Civil Rights icon Cong. John Lewis, left, was in Durham recently to promote his new book "March". He also spoke about the need to "Get Out And Vote" in this November's election. He also toured the Triangle and attended three church services in Raleigh. Here, he is shown with Sen. Kay Hagan, center and Cong. David Price.

Should white mom be paid for brown baby mistake?

By Jesse Washington

(AP) - What is the price of being forced to raise a brown baby? It's an unusual question, arising from an unusual lawsuit prompted by an insemination gone wrong. And it has set off an extraordinary discussion touching on sensitive issues of race, motherhood, sexuality and justice, though the debate begins with one basic premise: You should get what you pay for.

Jennifer Cramblett and her wife, Amanda Zinkon, wanted a white baby. They went to the Midwest Sperm Bank near Chicago and chose blond, blue-eyed donor No. 380, who looked like he could have been related to Zinkon. When Cramblett was five months pregnant, they found out that she had been inseminated by donor No. 330 - a black man.

"The couple did not get what they asked for, which was a particular donor. The company made a mistake, and it should have to pay for that," says Jessica Barrow, an information technology professional.

Barrow is black and lesbian, with a white partner. They considered insemination of the white partner before choosing to adopt. When looking at donors, they wanted sperm from a black donor, to create a biracial baby that would have shared some physical characteristics with both of them.

"They're not saying anything racist, they're not saying we don't want a black baby," Barrow said of Cramblett and Zinkon, who profess their love for their now 2-year-old daughter. "They're saying, we asked for something, you gave us something different, and now we have to adjust to that."

That "adjustment" is a major justification for Cramblett's lawsuit. It cites the stress and anxiety of raising a brown girl in predominantly white Uniontown, Ohio, which Cramblett describes as intolerant. Some of her own family members have unconscious racial biases, the lawsuit says.

That leads some to believe that Cramblett is asking to be paid for the difficulties that many black folks - and white parents of adopted black children - deal with for free.

"I don't think I deserve anything more being the white parent of a black child than any parent of a black child does," says Rory Mullen, who adopted her daughter.

Strangers have asked Mullen why she didn't adopt a white baby. One remarked in front of her white then-husband that Mullen must have cheated with a black man. Too many white people to count have pawed her daughter's hair.

"It's hard, but being a parent is hard," says Mullen, who is author of "Chocolate Hair Vanilla Care: A Parent's Guide to Beginning Natural Hair Styling."

"Being a parent is going to throw things at you that you never expected, and we make a decision that we're going to roll with it, because we love our kids and they deserve it," she says.

Mullen agrees that a company should be held liable for promising one thing and doing another. But she thinks the fact Cramblett waited more than two years to sue indicates that the experience of raising a black child is her real problem.

"When you say this is too hard, I didn't deserve this, this is too much for me to handle, then the child internalizes it and it affects their self-esteem," she says. "It's my job to pour self-esteem into my daughter, not tear it down."

From the days of American slavery through the 1960s, white men fathering children with black women was commonplace and tacitly accepted - yet there were few things as scandalous as a white woman with a brown baby.

That history makes Denene Millner, author of the MyBrownBaby.com blog, say that the lawsuit is "rooted in fear ... stuck in the muck and mire of racism and the purity of white lineage."

"She simply cannot fathom dealing with what it means to, in essence, be a Black mom, having to navigate and negotiate a racist world on behalf of a human she bore, in an environment of which she is a product," Millner wrote.

Darron Smith, co-author of "White Parents, Black Children: Experiencing Transracial Adoption," says that the lawsuit reflects America's unexamined racist attitudes and Cramblett's angst over having a biracial child.

He notes that due to supply and demand, it costs about half as much to adopt a black child as a white one, and many black boys in foster care are never adopted.

"This lawsuit demonstrates quite nicely the value of skin color," says Smith, a professor at Wichita State University.

Yet Cramblett's defenders say she should not be held responsible for being unprepared.

"White people who aren't affiliated with black people don't necessarily understand the challenges that black people face in all facets of their life. This couple wasn't expecting that, and now they have to deal with it," says Rachel Dube, who owns a youth sports business in New York.

"She didn't ask for a biracial baby. She was given one, she loves it, she adores it, now she's facing challenges and admits it. That doesn't make her a racist," Dube says.

"You can't fault her for what she was not exposed to," she says. "Her only obligation is to love and raise her child in the best environment possible. And if the money will help her do that, then good for her."

Sen. hopefuls taking attendance in 4 states

By Gary D. Robertson

RALEIGH (AP) - Lawmakers run from chairing committees to giving speeches to casting votes, raising campaign money all the while. It's what they do, whether serving on Capitol Hill or at the statehouse. No one has perfect attendance.

Yet in at least four competitive Senate races from Colorado and Iowa to Kentucky and North Carolina, the candidates are taking each other's attendance and criticizing absences from their jobs.

"It's really a tool of the silly season and not really an accurate representation of how somebody is informed," said Patrick Griffin, formerly a legislative affairs aide to President Bill Clinton who has worked in the U.S. Senate.

Nowhere is the strategy more pronounced than in North Carolina. Republican state House speaker Thom Tillis criticized Democratic Sen. Kay Hagan for acknowledging she couldn't attend a Senate Armed Services Committee hearing because of a campaign fundraiser. But even as he made the argument, Tillis knew he'd missed days at work in the statehouse to raise campaign money, too.

Tillis has turned missed meetings into an issue in his tight race against Hagan, both in a television ad and at their second debate this week. He's accusing the freshman senator of putting fund raising ahead of vigilance about threats posed by Islamic State forces and others.

"There is nothing more important than receiving briefings on our national security," Tillis said. "Sen. Hagan has failed to do her job."

But since he announced his bid for the Senate, Tillis has at least twice been in Washington raising money while his colleagues in the North Carolina House debated or negotiated key legislation.

In July 2013, he was absent when the House gave final approval to North Carolina's most sweeping tax changes in a generation. Also on the calendar that day were significant bills related to immigration, coastal regulation and firearms. And while lawmakers were trying to negotiate an end to this year's General Assembly session last summer, Tillis was back in Washington for two more fundraisers.

"It is Speaker Tillis who acted inappropriately by skipping work and his duties as House speaker to raise funds for his Senate bid," Hagan campaign spokesman Chris Hayden said in a statement.

Similar dust-ups over attendance have come up in other close U.S. Senate races this year as Republicans try to gain the six seats required for the majority in the final two years of President Barack Obama's time in office.

In Iowa, Republican nominee Joni Ernst has faulted Democratic Rep. Bruce Braley for missing hearings of the House Veterans Affairs Committee, while Democrats have pointed out that Ernst missed many floor votes as an Iowa state senator while running in the GOP primary.

In Colorado, Republican Rep. Cory Gardner released an ad this week criticizing Sen. Mark Udall for missing 64 percent of his Armed Services Committee hearings. At a debate Oct. 7, he challenged Udall to explain where he had been. Udall didn't answer, but he stressed he had never missed a committee vote.

And in Kentucky, Republican Sen. Mitch McConnell and Democratic challenger Alison Lundergan Grimes, Kentucky's secretary of state, have argued about the propriety of taking their government salaries while campaigning.

From party leaders to rank-and-file lawmakers, members of Congress have jam-packed schedules, often with multiple committee meetings taking place simultaneously. They routinely miss meetings and are

filled in later by staffers with expertise on the given issue. Congress, in fact, was set up to

(Continued On Page 3)