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EARLY VOTING BEGINS OCT. 20

A Voteless People Is A Hopeless People - L.E. Austin

17 years after devastation, historic Princeville floods again

By Jonathan Drew

TARBORO (AP) - Amanda Brown clutched a green folder with personal documents while she waited to speak to a FEMA representative along the banks of the river threatening to inundate her town.

She lives in Princeville, a historic town of about 2,000 that's considered one of the oldest chartered by blacks in the U.S. It was devastated in 1999 after Hurricane Floyd's torrential rains, and it has started flooding again after Hurricane Matthew.

Officials said water was flowing around a dike that protects the town, and aerial photos from Oct. 13 show brown water surrounding many of homes and buildings. Still, forecasters and authorities are hopeful the river level will fall before causing a failure of the dike.

Brown and her fiance, David Corey, fear the worst for the mobile home where they live with their 7-year-old son.

"The water didn't come up 'til a day ago. We've been watching: No water in Princeville, no water in Princeville. Now, it's coming," she said, standing about 100 yards from an orange High Water sign and a cluster of law enforcement vehicles blocking a bridge into Princeville.

They don't have flood or renters' insurance, so they're hoping FEMA can reimburse them for clothes or food or hotel accommodations.

At a news conference Oct. 13 afternoon, North Carolina Gov. Pat McCrory said Princeville was under water.

"We're going to have a lot of work to do," McCrory said. "We're going to have to rebuild a town."

The flooding triggered by heavy rain from Matthew - which killed more than 500 people in Haiti - has left at least 38 dead in the U.S.

McCrory said the number of power outages was down to about 55,000, from a high of nearly 900,000 when the storm hit last week. He reported the death toll climbed to 22.

But McCrory said flooding continues to be a major problem in poor areas in the eastern part of the state.

"It's a surreal experience to see this on a sunshiny day," McCrory said.

Theodore Rowe moved from Princeville to the outskirts of nearby Tarboro after Floyd hit in 1999. He said his current neighborhood hasn't flooded, and he came down to the river to see how high it had risen.

"I used to live in Princeville when Floyd came. That's why I left. I said I'd had enough of it," said the retired U.S. Marine Corps drill sergeant who has lived in the area for about 30 years. "The last time this happened, it was two weeks before we could get back. When we got back, the house had made a 180 degree turn. It faced the street, but when we went back, the back of it was facing the street."

Floyd roared ashore on Sept. 15, 1999, not long after another hurricane saturated the state. Two days later, the rising Tar (Continued On Page 12)



NCCU students enjoy the Homecoming Parade on Oct. 15. See photos from the parade on page 9.

Obama: 'My Brother's Keeper' will benefit US economy

By Darlene Superville

GREENSBORO (AP) - Promoting his initiative for boys and young men of color, President Barack Obama said Oct. 11 that helping these males stay out of trouble and on the right path is an "American challenge" that will pay off for the U.S. economy in the long run.

Speaking about the "My Brother's Keeper" program during an ESPN-hosted forum, Obama said the economy could grow about 2 percent faster if the U.S. closes documented achievement, wealth and employment gaps that often consign minorities to lives that are less stable and less financially secure.

He acknowledged that 2 percent "doesn't seem like a lot" but said "it would mean trillions of dollars of additional wealth for everybody."

Young people today are the workers, taxpayers and business customers of the future, Obama said, adding that everyone will benefit if they have money in their pockets, including "old heads" like himself who in the future will rely on them for Social Security checks.

"So if they're unemployed or underemployed, if they're in prison, that is bad for all of us, not just for them," Obama said

"This is an American challenge."

Obama launched "My Brother's Keeper" in February 2014 to address persistent opportunity gaps facing boys and young men of color. Some 250 communities in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico and 19 tribal nations have their own "My Brother's Keeper" programs, the White House said.

Before leaving Washington, the White House announced that Sprint Corp. will do its part to help close the digital divide by providing free tablets, smartphones and other mobile devices, along with four years of service, to 1 million low-income, high-school students who can't get on the internet at home.

Obama also praised the value of the nation's historically black colleges and universities during the forum, which was taped at North Carolina A&T State University, an HBCU with a highly regarded engineering program. The event was hosted by "The Undeclared," an ESPN website that explores the intersection of race, sports and culture. ESPN broadcast the forum Oct. 11.

Obama pushed back against the notion that his administration has been insufficiently supportive of historically black colleges,

which are under enormous financial pressure.

He called HBCUs a "foundation stone" for building the black middle class and black wealth, and said he had increased federal funding to them to \$4 billion annually. Obama said these schools are facing difficult financial decisions, as are non-HBCUs, because states are cutting funding

for higher education.

The president urged students worried about the cost of a college education to vote. "If you don't vote, then you will not have any say in the decisions that are made in state capitals or in Congress about the kind of support that you receive," he said. "You don't have to be an engineering major to figure out the math on this one."

Democrats, civil rights groups want more registration time

By Gary D. Robertson

RALEIGH (AP) - North Carolina Democrats and civil rights groups are criticizing the State Board of Elections for not extending a voter registration deadline this week in light of Hurricane Matthew's destruction, saying they want the board to reconsider.

Democratic state legislators, members of Congress, former Gov. Jim Hunt and state NAACP president the Rev. William Barber are among those urging that a Friday deadline be extended. They say displaced residents need additional time and may lack access to documents proving their residence for registration purposes because those documents are in flooded homes.

Barber also said Oct. 13 early in-person voting should be expanded and Saturday and Sunday early voting occur in storm-affected counties. He said poor people, African-Americans and Latinos are more likely to be disenfranchised.

"Streets are out, people cannot get where they need to go," Barber said at a Legislative Building news conference. "People will have a lot of devastation to deal with once the waters recede."

Board staff announced this week that mailed-in applications postmarked after Oct. 14 be accepted as long as they are received by next Wednesday and the applications are dated by Friday. People can still register to vote and cast ballots during the early-voting period starting Oct. 20 through Nov. 5.

There is no registration on Election Day, Nov. 8, so the Friday deadline would apply to people who choose not to take advantage of registering during early in-person voting or who want to vote by mail-in absentee ballot.

During a conference call meeting Thursday, the five-member board discussed the voter registration situation with Executive Director Kim Strach, who has the authority to make such weather-related schedule changes. She said the board had received letters from the state Democratic Party and state NAACP seeking further extensions and were reviewing their requests.

Strach also pointed out that registration applications can be turned in by Friday to public libraries, DMV offices and public assistance offices. Board member Joshua Malcolm, who lives in storm-battered Robeson County, urged board staff to get registration and voter information out to the public through social media to alert people in flood-ravaged areas.

Barber on Thursday said by email that he and other clergy were prepared to go to court or participate in actions of civil disobedience if "these constitutional rights are blocked and undermined and the people not protected."

Private autopsy: Man killed by police shot in back, abdomen

By Tom Foreman Jr.

CHARLOTTE (AP) - A black man shot and killed by a North Carolina police officer last month suffered fatal gunshot wounds to the back and abdomen, according to results released Oct. 12 from an independent autopsy conducted for his family.

Attorneys for the family of Keith Lamont Scott said in a statement that the family "authorized this release of information because, as they have maintained from the very beginning, they are simply seeking transparency."

Scott was shot to death Sept. 20 by a black Charlotte-Mecklenburg police officer. The shooting set off two nights of unrest in Charlotte and a series of marches and protests.

The autopsy, performed in the morgue at Newberry County Memorial Hospital in South Carolina on Sept. 30, was signed by forensic pathologist Kim Collins. Collins said the cause of death "is best deemed homicide."

According to the report, Scott suffered gunshot wounds to his left back, left abdomen and left wrist. He also suffered rib and wrist fractures.

Scott's wife, Rakeyia, said in an interview excerpt shown Oct. 12 on "CBS Evening News" that she and her family are still seeking answers from police about the shooting. Police have said Scott had a gun, which his wife denies.

"All we want to know is why," Rakeyia Scott said. "Why did you have to take Keith that day? ... Give us a reason, because everything that you're saying right now, it just makes me angrier each day because I just keep hearing more stuff."

The county medical examiner's autopsy results have not been released. Charlotte-Mecklenburg police didn't immediately respond to a request for comment Oct. 12 night.

Scott's funeral, which was postponed because of Hurricane Matthew's approach to the South Carolina coast, was scheduled for 11 a.m. Oct. 14 at First Baptist Church of James Island in Charleston, South Carolina.

Louisville plans festival to celebrate Ali's legacy

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (AP) - Louisville will host a 10-day festival next year to celebrate the legacy of native son Muhammad Ali.

City officials and the Muhammad Ali Center say the "I Am Ali" festival will be July 5-15 in 2017. It will include local arts and cultural groups, performances and events, along with two girls' basketball tournament events.

The humanitarian and former heavyweight boxing champion died in June at age 74 after a long battle with Parkinson's disease.

The city's inaugural "I Am Ali" festival was held at the Kentucky Center during the week of Ali's death and memorial, attracting 15,000 young people. Louisville Mayor Greg Fischer says next year's festival will build on that success and will become an annual event for the Kentucky city.