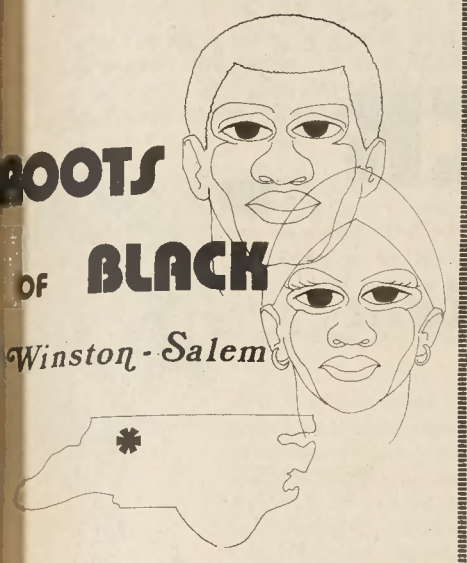


Winston-Salem Chronicle

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1830-1860

The Roots of Black Winston-Salem run deep through the city's history. This week in the Chronicle, the second installment in that story is unfolded.

The four-page section features a look at Forsyth County in the years from 1830 to 1860, highlighting the founding of the town of Winston-Salem's reaction to Nat Turner's rebellion, and the memories of Betty Cofer, born a slave on the plantation of Dr. Beverly Jones. These events in local history are mirrored in articles telling the situation of blacks in North Carolina and throughout the nation in that era.

The Roots of Black Winston-Salem is a twelve part series which will trace local black history from colonial times to the present.

Utility Costs Squeeze Poor

By John W. Templeton
Staff Writer

Mrs. Cynthia Hill, a mother of six who receives Aid to Families with Dependent Children public assistance, spread out a stack of utility bills across her kitchen table, as the first ice storm of the year struck outside.

"This one's \$151.85 for oil that I got two weeks ago, and it's about to run out," she said. "I've been burning scrap wood in the fire place to try to save the oil, but it doesn't help much."

"There's a water bill for \$49.92; my electric bill usually runs about \$35 or so," she added.

To pay the bills, she has a cash payment of \$224 per month and she sadly noted that the utility bills were beginning to exceed that amount. "I'm in a situation right now with no jobs and high utility bills..." Her voice trailed off.

The Hill family is one of a number of low-income families, particularly those on public assistance, feeling the crunch as winter heating and other utility bills eat up their incomes.

While utility rates have gone up steadily since the early 1970's, according to Hugh A. Wells, executive director of the Public Staff of the N. C. Utilities Commission, AFDC payments

have not increased since 1974, said Elaine Bowie, director of income maintenance for the Forsyth County Social Services Department.

Social Security rates have generally kept pace with the cost of living index. "Low-income people are impacted more severely than others in the winter," said Wells in a telephone interview. However, our approach is to try to keep the rates as low as possible for everybody."

"Utility rates were going up at twice the rate of inflation," said Wells. Now, we're trying to keep them at the rate of inflation.

The local agencies which provide emergency assistance with utilities and

other survival costs are in the midst of "their" peak season" as an increasing number of families seek help.

Virginia N. Britt, director of the Crisis Control Ministry on Patterson Avenue, said her agency is seeing as many as 75 persons a day, many of whom need to pay utility bills.

Barbara Randleman, social worker with the Salvation Army, said at least 30 persons have gotten help with utilities so far in January. She said paying utility bills takes up 80 per cent of the army's welfare budget during the winter.

Britt said, "In the winter months,

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Longwinded Aldermen Hinder City Hearing

By Yvette McCullough
Staff Writer

The public hearing for revenue sharing turned out to be not much of a hearing after all this week at the Board of Aldermen meeting. The city fathers took so long to get to revenue sharing that some of the residents who came to speak left before the hearing began.

Although the \$2.4 million dollars in revenue sharing hearing was first on the agenda, the aldermen spent 45 minutes discussing the community development program which wasn't on the agenda. The aldermen sent back to their finance and public works committees staff recommendations on the city's federally financed community development program for more review.

Following the discussion, the aldermen voted to take up agenda item number seven concerning an ordinance which prohibits the display of pornographic

materials to minors.

The aldermen passed that ordinance with a 5-3 vote, Aldermen Ernestine Wilson, Virginia Newell and Jon DeVries voting against it.

By that time, many of those who had come to discuss revenue sharing had gone.

However, a few citizens stayed long enough to speak. Mrs. Francis Horton spoke in behalf of the Cricket Nest, which is made up of about 400 elderly citizens.

"We support and protect ourselves," Horton told the board. "We work with our hands and will appreciate anything you can do for us."

Alderman Larry Little asked if revenue sharing funds could be used to supplement the community development funds.

City Manager Orville Powell told Aldermen Little that revenue sharing funds were used to hold down property

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A Mighty Struggle

Young Chris, a student at Roxboro learning center, is one of many students enrolled in special educational programs tailored to individual needs. Such programs are the subject of a two-part series "Exceptions to the Rule," soon to air on the UNC Television Network. Read more about the show on page 6 in Vibes.

Parent Involvement Aids Test Scores

By John W. Templeton
Staff Writer

A top state education official has said that parent involvement had a great deal to do with improvements in average competency test scores for black students between last year's trial run and this year's official test.

Dudley Flood, assistant superintendent of public instruction, said in a Chronicle interview, "The most important thing is that a whole lot of parents got involved. They were meeting in churches, schools, wherever. They weren't teaching so much as they instilling the idea in their youth that this test is important and we've got to pass it to get out."

For the official test, 75 per cent of black 11th graders passed the reading portion and 66 per cent passed the math portion, statewide. The previous year, 60 per cent passed reading and 16 per cent passed

the math portion.

Despite the improvement, the percentage of black students passing and the median score of black students lagged behind that of whites. Ninety-six per cent of white students passed the reading portion; ninety-three per cent passed the math section; the white median in reading was 113 and in math was 107.

The median reading score for black males was 97.7 out of a possible 120; for black females, 101.3; the median math score for black males was 86, for black females, 87.8.

Flood, an early critic of the testing program, said the gap shown between black and white students could have some positive effect. "The state is in a position now where there's light reflected on a segment of our school population that's not doing well," he said.

"One of the excuses has been that insidious belief that blacks are inferior

and just can't do well," Flood added. "I think the scores should knock that away because we had black kids at the top of the test."

At the Clara Muhammad School, a private Muslim school in Winston-Salem, the three 11th graders who took the test had a median reading score of 113 and median math score of 106.

Principal Mrs. Kathann El-Amin said, "We've put a lot of emphasis on reading and math because those are the basics. We feel that if they do well in those subjects they can handle anything."

"The small class size helps because we can devote much more attention to the areas in which our students are weak," she added.

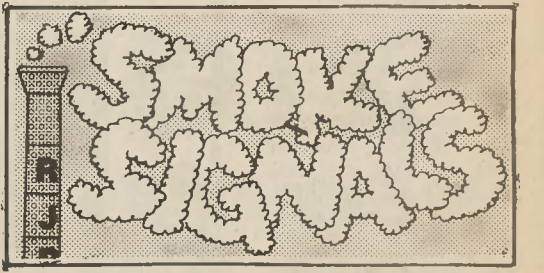
Flood pointed at the Muhammad results as a sign of what can be accomplished. "You can take any one of those failing students and put them in the same environment and their scores will

pull up."

In other reaction to the test score announcement, Nelson Johnson, co-chairman of the N.C. Coalition for Quality Education, urged parents and students "don't get discouraged and drop out of school if you failed the competency test. Instead, we want the students to stay in school and join the Coalition in fighting to stop the competency test altogether and fight for real quality education."

Coalition officials announced a statewide meeting on the competency test for Saturday, Jan. 27 at 2 p.m. in Durham at a site to be announce.

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I have suspected for some time now that my friend Catherine is made of solid plastic. She speaks fluent "update jargon" and a careful diet of health food fad diets has nearly succeeded in giving her the look she longs for: Bangladesh poster child.

Her vocabulary is gleaned from the self-help books she devours: "I'm Okay-You're Okay;" "How To Be Your Own Best Friend;" "Your Erroneous Zones;" etc., ad nauseum.

She says things like: "I'll make a commitment to have dinner with you on Thursday, if it won't give you any negative feelings for me to bring my seaweed salad to the restaurant. I'm feeling really positive about my weight. The diet has been proactive, and my carbohydrate count is super!"

Unfortunately her information beyond the world of nutrition is almost zilch. It was Catherine who once said: "I am planning to take my vacation either in Acapulco or in Mexico." (I whispered that it was possible to do both, while another friend who was with us screamed with laughter.)

Catherine makes her own yogurt, is "into" ceramics, and has a "very understanding analyst."

It took me a long time to figure out Catherine, but I think I have done it. She isn't supposed to be in Winston-Salem. She is SUPPOSED to be in California, where members of that species are as common as mosquitos, but like some misguided salmon, she swam upstream the wrong way and ended up on the east coast instead of the west.

I've discovered that if I close my eyes and pretend I'm in San Francisco, Catherine seems downright ordinary.

By Sharyn Bratcher



The City At Work

There can be some very interesting people among the ordinary jobs we seldom think about. Sam Price, a chef at Sambo's Restaurant, has been cooking for sixty of his eighty-one years. Price, pictured here with Sambo's operator William McGee, is more than sixty years older than the restaurant's youngest employee. Barbara Blakney, an employee of RJR Archer,

began her career as a clerk-typist in 1966, but she wanted more of a challenge so she asked to move to the factory floor in 1974. She is now a production supervisor in the finishing and material flow departments, supervising 18 men and ten women.

Blakney holds a position of authority in what

is usually considered a "male domain", but she still maintains her femininity. "You might get a little dirty," she comments, "but you can do this type of work and still be a lady. You have to stand firm when giving instructions, but you don't have to get loud, and you don't have to create conflict when supervising people."