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Winston-Salem Chronicle

The Twin City's Award-Winning Weekly

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'Roots' creator: Blacks no longer care about history

By ROBIN BARKSDALE
Chronicle Staff Writer

The author of the biggest best seller in the history of U.S. publishing spoke in the Twin City Tuesday night and said he feels that blacks are not interested enough in their history.



Alex Haley

Alex Haley, the author of "Roots," in town to present a lecture at the Southeastern Center for Contemporary Art, or SECCA, said that progress has caused blacks to become complacent.

"Blacks don't care enough about their history, but they should care," Haley told members of the media during a press conference at SECCA before his lecture. "A people -- any people, but particularly a so-called minority people -- needs to have as a source of strength the knowledge of who they are. Education has become less urgent because it is so available to everyone. We tend to be more complacent than we should be."

When asked to comment on the black family, Haley explained that he did not feel qualified to

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Hotseat

Beaty takes controversies in stride

By JOHN HINTON
Chronicle Staff Writer

Alexander R. Beaty represents the true rags-to-riches story.

When he was growing up in Winston-Salem in the 1950s and 1960s, Beaty delivered newspapers and groceries.

He went door-to-door cutting grass and sold soda pop to the workers who were building the Cherry-Marshall Expressway in the late 1950s. He later worked as a waiter and a bartender.

"Hunger pains will give you great amounts of energy," said Beaty, the fourth-oldest child in a family of seven children. "Money was scarce when I was growing up. You learn to work because it is a necessity early in life."

Beaty, 43, now works as an assistant city manager and is the highest-ranking and highest-paid black employee in city govern-

ment. He earns \$58,801 a year. "I am proud of my 43 years of living," said Beaty as he leaned back his chair and put his feet on a desk cluttered with papers. "I have made a lot of sacrifices in my life. I gave up the finger-popping and basketball and football games. I knew

NEWSMAKER

A look between the lines

there was some things I wanted to accomplish in my life."

Beaty was an industrious boy, said his brother, John Beaty, an assistant principal at Ashley Middle School. "He has always been a go-getter. I was not surprised by him moving up."

John Beaty said his younger brother enjoyed playing with his friends, but "he was concerned about working more than most

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Epperson worker resigns, charges racism

BY JOHN HINTON
and CHERYL WILLIAMS
Chronicle Staff Writers

Albert Bingham, the black organizer of congressional hopeful Stu Epperson's drug abuse task force, has resigned because he said Epperson is employing "racist and deceitful" tactics.

Ronald T. Butler, Epperson's press secretary, said Bingham resigned in mid-August because he wanted to make more money. He received a weekly salary of less than \$200, Butler said.

"He is no longer associated with our campaign," Butler said. Butler also confirmed that Bingham accused Epperson of racist and deceitful politics in his letter of resignation. Bingham, a native of Philadelphia,

could not be reached to comment on his resignation.

Epperson was visiting the Surry County Fair in Mount Airy Tuesday afternoon and could not be reached for



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comment.

Epperson, a Republican, hopes to unseat incumbent Fifth District Rep. Stephen L. Neal, a Democrat who is seeking his seventh term in office. Both sides are courting the black vote.

Neal said he learned that Bingham had resigned Tuesday afternoon from a staff worker in Washington.

"I just don't know what to say about it," said Neal in a telephone interview from his Washington office. "I was kind of shocked by it."

Epperson announced the drug abuse task force in July in Happy Hill Gardens, a predominantly black public housing project. He held a news conference there at the corner of Liberia and Free streets, a place where he said drug deals are a common occurrence.

Neal and several black leaders criticized Epperson for his press conference, saying that he was merely seeking publicity and was not genuinely concerned with the black community.

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STREETSNARL



Seven-year-old Lue Smith checks out the daring hair coloring of her twin brother Nathan, who, in turn, dares the photographer to touch his tresses. The siblings had their locks colored at the recent Carolina Streetscene downtown (photo by James Parker).

Mistrial encourages Mitchell supporters

New trial is scheduled for Oct. 13

By JOHN HINTON
Chronicle Staff Writer

SEVERAL BLACK leaders expressed satisfaction with the declared mistrial last week of Sammy Lee Mitchell, who was charged with first-degree murder in the 1983 beating death of Arthur Wilson, 57, outside a Claremont Avenue liquor house.

In the same breath, they renewed their criticism of District Attorney Donald K. Tisdale and the Winston-Salem Police Department for their handling of the case.

Standing up for justice

"Thank God for that there was a strong black woman who stood up for justice," said Larry D. Little, a former North Ward Alderman who was involved in Mitchell's defense and who testified in the trial. "It was disgraceful that 11 people wanted to convict this guy (Mitchell)." Little was referring to the lone juror who refused to render a

guilty verdict in the case. The jury deliberated for 13 hours before telling Judge Julius A. Rousseau Saturday that it was hopelessly deadlocked.

"It was heartwarming that Tisdale's charade didn't work," Little said. "He really doesn't give a damn about Wilson."

"Thank God for that there was a strong black woman who stood up for justice. ... It was heartwarming that Tisdale's charade didn't work."

—LARRY D. LITTLE

Said local NAACP President Walter Marshall: "It was a shame that a person almost lost his life on a trumped-up charge."

Mitchell, Merritt Drayton and Darryl Hunt were charged with beating Wilson to death with an ax handle on Sept. 17, 1983. Wilson died of head injuries.

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UPDATE

Man's lawsuit dismissed

By CHERYL WILLIAMS
Chronicle Staff Writer

Chronicle Update is a regular feature that focuses on developments in news and feature stories previously printed in the newspaper. It will appear during the third week of each month.

Curtis E. Dixon, a senior program analyst with the city, says that nothing but his faith in God keeps him going at his job.

Dixon filed a \$5.25 million lawsuit against the city in May, claiming he was denied promotions and job benefits.

Dixon, who has been a city employee for 16 years, said that he has not been promoted since he was hired and that he was abused by superiors.

The lawsuit named as defendants several top city officials. The lawsuit claims that City Manager Bryce A. Stuart, Assis-

tant City Manager Alexander R. Beaty and Sam H. Owen, director of the city's Management Information Systems and Services Department, conspired to keep him from being promoted.

In response to the lawsuit, the defendants' attorney filed a motion to dismiss the suit. The motion was heard on Aug. 4 and the lawsuit was dismissed, Dixon said.

Dixon said the defendants argued that he had no rights as a city employee. Therefore, he had two choices: accept his work conditions or quit his job.

His attorney, W. Steven Allen, said that a notice of an appeal was filed on Aug. 19.

Parking lot blues

The East Winston Shopping Center, which was plagued this summer by young people

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QUOTABLE: "The new economic leaders in America will not be white Anglo-Saxon Protestants, but Jews, Koreans, Italians, Vietnamese, Hispanics and blacks who are indigenous to a culture other than America's black slave colony."

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Probe finds guard made offer of drugs

BY CHERYL WILLIAMS
Chronicle Staff Writer

A matron at the Forsyth County Jail did offer several inmates drugs in June, a State Bureau of Investigation probe confirms.

According to Sheriff E. Preston Oldham, the SBI's findings reveal that the matron told inmates, as three of them had alleged, that she could supply them with cocaine, marijuana, heroin, pills and beer.

Oldham said, however, that the investigation showed that no one, including one inmate who wrote a letter to the Chronicle concerning the incident, took the statement seriously.

"She (matron) made a statement in normal con-

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