

Local Dems open headquarters in University Plaza

By ROBIN BARKSDALE
Community News Editor

Local Democrats' participation in the 1988 presidential campaign began in earnest Tuesday afternoon with the local kickoff of "Victory '88" and the opening of the Democratic headquarters in University Plaza.

Local party officials and candidates turned out for the occasion, celebrating the opening of the office and the official start of local efforts in support of Democratic presidential candidate Michael Dukakis.

Jim Snow, field coordinator for the fifth district, said that the office will oversee several activities for the

Democratic presidential campaign efforts in the Winston-Salem area.

"We will have five regular staff members," he said. "This office will be responsible for volunteer recruiting, phone bank coordination, general office management and events coordination and publicity."

The headquarters staff is hoping to put together a pool of 500 volunteers and Snow said that he is pleased with the response he has received from potential volunteers.

"The response from volunteers has just been tremendous," he said. "But we're still hoping to get in 500 volunteers now and another 500 as the campaign goes on."

Michael Wells, chairman of the local Democratic Party, too, is encouraged by the response he has received from interested community members and said that the new office should be very beneficial to recruitment efforts.

"I think the opening will be very positive in this area," he said. "There has been a lot of interest in Dukakis. People have called me wanting to know when there was going to be an office opening here, so I think this will work out well."

The opening of the office and its potential to serve local Democratic candidates as well as those on a

national level, will be extremely important, said Alderman Larry Womble.

"This is 'Victory '88' and it's supposed to be a united effort among the Democratic Party," said Womble, the fifth district chairman for the unity campaign. "I'm hopeful and confident that it (the office) will be very good for all of the Democrats running for office. This is the time for us all to come together. The primaries are over so it's not Democrat against Democrat anymore. We're uniting now and the activities of this office should be good for all of the candidates running. The opening of this office is an extension of that unity that we have."

Police youth grant revised by aldermen

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These groups would each hire a part-time coordinator, Assistant City Manager Alexander R. Beatty said at board committee meetings Monday.

The Aldermen's Finance and Public Safety Committees voted unanimously Monday to send the proposal back to the state for consideration of the proposed amendments.

The two-year program, approved by the board of aldermen last month, was recently awarded to the city by the Governor's Crime Commission and the state Department of Crime Control. In order to modify the grant proposal as the aldermen requested, the state agencies must approve the changes.

The program, as developed by the police department, involves sending policemen into East Winston to conduct activities with children between the ages of 10 and 15 who have never been in serious trouble. The police officers operating the program would serve as positive role models for youngsters, police Sgt. P.D. Norris said.

The activities under the original program proposal include neighborhood clean-up sessions, tutoring, bowling, a summer camp, job training, child abuse and neglect workshops and other activities at the 14th Street Recreation Center. A day-long field trip following the route through the criminal justice system of an offender who gets caught would also be offered. All personnel would have been furnished by the police department except for a civilian coordinator.

In the board meeting last month when the original program was approved, Police Chief George L. Sweat said that having police personnel staff the program allowed more grant money to go toward youngsters' activities.

In board of aldermen committee meetings Monday, Beatty said the two groups would provide "more culturally enlightening programs" than the police department had proposed, including trips to Little Theatre productions, Stevens Center productions,

Winston-Salem State University functions, Delta Fina Arts and Sawtooth Center programs. A 12-month contract would be provided for each community group, Beatty said, and the groups could consider using police department personnel after the two-year grant expires.

Most of the activities listed in the original grant would be conducted if the program is amended, but the community groups, not the police, would determine who would operate them. "Based on the need for expertise for various program activities, the police department will make officers available to the programs as requested," a Board of Aldermen Action Request Form stated.

Newell said she met with Sweat to discuss the amendments, and he listened and said nothing.

"It (the police program) makes it look like the black kids are the only criminals in the city," she said in an interview. "We dub them criminals, and put that label on them. I'd rather take the money and research why the jail is filled with black people. If we're going to take kids and help them understand themselves and improve their self images, we don't need police to do that. We'll hire local people, using love rather than billyes and blackjacks. If it has to have police, let them work with the people in the community. Let a localized group who understands them better work with the kids."

"I was determined that no group of East Winston youngsters would be dubbed prospective criminals. Vivian Burke and I met with Mr. Beatty and talked about it. We will identify some children who need help, but we will not have force. We're going to control and discipline them with love. Using force it looks like we're lower animals. If you have to control these kids by police, then we're giving up control of our children."

Alderman Robert S. Northington disagreed with Newell at the meeting, but still voted for the program changes. "I take issue with saying it's

because the police are all force," he said. "That's one of the major problems, that people think police officers are there to do something to them rather than for them."

Alderman Burke said the community is trying to bring back the East Winston area. "The neighbors are taking action there," she said. "From 14th to 25th Street, we can

hardly exist over there. Mrs. Newell and I have just about become social workers, 24 hours a day. We need some help."

Alderman Martha Wood agreed. "It's a whole lot better to have people work who are partners in the solution rather than having someone else say, 'We know what's best for you,'" she said.

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Thompson

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the legislature has put pressure on the university not to allow students to do internships in my Senate campaign for academic credit..." Robinson claimed that WSSU students were being denied participation in his internship program for partisan political reasons.

But Thompson said Tuesday, "This has simply been a process of trying to obtain information to make sure he is not going against the board of governors' policy." Thompson said he had just received correspondence he had requested from Robinson which addresses the board of governors' concerns. He said that he will pass Robinson's correspondence on to the board of governors and that if the board of governors find no conflict-of-interest in the intern program, then he (Thompson) will have no problem approving the program.

Robinson however, said that Thompson had agreed to "circulate a memo to the various departments involved to extend the add date for the campaign internships."

"To say I will circulate a memo is premature," said Thompson. He said he planned to take no action until the board of governors issued their decision. Thompson said the issue was raised after university officials noticed Robinson had placed an ad in the Chronicle announcing internship opportunities with his campaign.

"Obviously there could be a conflict-of-interest if the students in his classes are also involved in his internship program," said Thompson. "So, we asked Robinson to explain his plans for the internship program to us, and then we, in turn, would check with the board of governors for their approval."

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