



Coretta Scott King gets a hug from the Rev. Jesse Jackson during celebration at the Ebenezer Baptist Church in Atlanta several years ago. Monday will mark the birthday anniversary of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

## Jackson Says Follow Dr. King

### ◆ Local birthday celebrations begin Monday, January 15

ST. LOUIS (AP) - The Rev. Dr. Jesse L. Jackson kicked off Missouri's birthday celebration for Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. over the weekend by calling on his audience to follow King's example in working for social change.

Jackson, who was with King on his last birthday in 1968, was the keynote speaker at a program and awards ceremony Saturday night at Harris-Stowe State College that was attended by about 1,000 people. Jackson received the Chairman's Award from the Dr.

Martin Luther King, Jr. State Celebration Commission.

Jackson talked about working in 1996 to register voters and building coalitions to beat the forces that threaten to water down King's image. He charged that House Speaker Newt Gingrich and his allies are trying to take away King's impact.

"It is our burden tonight to follow (King), not merely to admire him. To admire him is merely superficial," Jackson said.

He said youth must step up and take over

leadership roles. Jackson referred to his son, Jesse L. Jackson, Jr., who was sworn into Congress in December. Jackson urged youth not to become frustrated with a lack of jobs. The manufacturing industry has been replaced with construction of jails and ball parks, he said.

Jackson charged that the jails are being filled with black males who are arrested disproportionately in comparison to whites and

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Floyd Davis, left board chairman of the Technical Assistance Center, joins Marcia Johnson, board chairman of the Northwest Child Development Council, Alderman Nancy Pleasants, and Nigel Alston, chairman of the Forsyth County Early Partnership, for the ribbon-cutting opening of the Technical Assistance Center.



## MEAC Cancels Free's Contract

The Mid-Eastern Athletic Conference board of directors has decided to not renew the contract of commissioner Ken Free.

The decision came out about a week before the Dec. 29 heritage Bowl and the position was quickly advertised in NCAA News.

Delaware State president William DeLauder, chairman of the MEAC executive council's personnel committee, said the decision was based on a desire to take the conference into other directions.

"I wouldn't want to describe it as dissatisfaction, but more of looking toward the future," DeLauder said. "Just like with any organization, when you want to take the next step, change is needed. It's the feeling of the CEOs that this was the opportunity to have new leadership."

Free, 59, joined the league as its first full-time commissioner in 1978. Free said he was shocked by the news.

"It's their privilege," Free told The Associated Press. "It's their choice. They were wanting to make a change. I thought we were doing well. But it's totally



Ken Free

their decision. I don't want this to be a negative. I have no locks on the job, no lifetime guarantees."

Free, currently a member of the NCAA's executive committee, is a N.C. A&T graduate who played five seasons of professional baseball.

He supported the effort in gaining 1981, 1982, and 1986 automatic bids for the conference in the NCAA Division I-AA football playoffs.

In 1981, he oversaw the

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## Smart Start Center for Kids Opens

By JOHN HINTON  
Chronicle Senior Staff Writer

The staff of the Technical Assistance Center greeted 40 people last Saturday at the facility's grand opening.

The center funded through the Smart Start initiative offers support services for child care providers in Forsyth County.

"It looks like it's 'children friendly,'" said

Nigel Alston, chairman of the Forsyth County Early Partnership. Alston joined four others in a ribbon cutting ceremony at the center.

The participants in the ribbon cutting also included Alderman Nancy Pleasants, Floyd Davis, chairman of the center's board, and Marcia Johnson, board chairman of the Northwest Child Development Council.

The facility located at 520 N. Spring Street can accommodate 10 children, said

Carol McLennan, the director of the Technical Assistance Center. It employs five people and is administered through the Northwest Child Development Council.

The center accepts children from six months to five years of age.

"We are willing to work with anyone in the county," McLennan said. "The children

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## Shutdown Affects Local VA, SS Offices

By JOHN HINTON  
Chronicle Senior Staff Writer

Mary Watson of Winston-Salem recently saw the effects of the federal government shutdown.

Watson accompanied the Army ROTC unit from East Forsyth High School on a trip to Washington, D.C. Every tourist attraction was closed in the nation's capital.

"It was really sad," she said. "The students really wanted to see the sites but they couldn't."

Her experience came as the furloughs of 280,000 "non-essential" federal workers entered its fourth week.

Prior to President Clinton and the

U.S. congress reaching a temporary agreement on the federal budget last week, 480,000 emergency workers were being kept on the job without pay.

The U.S. Labor Department and the National Labor Relations Board are closed due to the shutdown. However, other federal agencies remained open, including the Post Office, the Federal Aviation Administration, the Department of Transportation, the Department of Agriculture, the Department of Justice, and local military recruiting offices.

The shutdown also affected the local offices of the Veterans Administration and the Social Security Administration.

The VA furloughed more than 240

employees at its regional office in Winston-Salem, and the 25 people that worked in December only received half of their normal pay, said Mike Hampton, a VA spokesman.

Workers could only open mail, take personal interviews, and assist with claims, Hampton said.

"We were not able to process these claims," he said. "We already had a backlog of 11,000 claims prior to the furlough."

The VA regional office serves 700,000 veterans and their families in North Carolina. It handles veterans benefits, disability claims, home loans,

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Corrine Shelly, left, a service representative at the Social Security office helps Mary Watson of Winston-Salem. The office is open, but workers are receiving less pay.

## Blacks Lose Supreme Court Challenge Over Electing Ala. Judges

By PHILLIP RAWLS  
ASSOCIATED PRESS WRITER  
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MONTGOMERY, Ala. (AP) - A lawsuit designed to increase the number of black judges in Alabama has been scuttled by the U.S. Supreme Court, which will let the state keep its at-large system of electing judges.

The Supreme Court, without comment Monday, left intact lower court rulings that said Alabama's at-large system does not violate the federal Voting Rights Act. Blacks hold 11 of Alabama's 225 trial court judgeships, or 5 percent in a state

that is 25 percent black.

State Attorney General Jeff Sessions, the lead defendant in the case, said the decision reflects a philosophical change in the courts since the Southern Christian Leadership Conference filed suit in 1988.

"Conventional wisdom had it a few years ago the ruling would go the other way and they'd be carving out districts in counties for circuit judges and district judges. Districts lines would have been driven by race. It would have vulcanized justice and it would not have been good for public policy," the Republican attorney general said.

cases, are elected in countywide elections.

Led by the SCLC, a group of black voters filed a class-action lawsuit challenging the system for electing circuit judges in 10 circuits and district judges in four counties.

There are 69 circuit judges in those 10 circuits - 64 white and five black. There are 21 district judges in the four contested counties - 20 white and one black.

The lawsuit contended that: Predominantly black counties were

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WHERE TO FIND IT

### This Week in Black History

January 15, 1929

Martin Luther King Jr.

born in Atlanta.

Died April 4, 1968.

"The most peaceful warrior of the twentieth century."

-Ralph D. Abernathy.

