

Marshall says sports can help school kids

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"If we have something for them to do it would help keep them out of trouble, Marshall says. "It would give us a leg up in managing student conduct. I think it could also motivate them to stay in school and improve their grades."

The local system stopped intercollegiate sports participation in middle schools in 1984 after the local schools were grouped into K-5, 6-8 and 9-12 grades. Up until two years ago there was no athletic competition in the middle schools (grades 6-8). They decided to go with limited sports after Marshall presented a proposal to sponsor athletic teams in middle schools a little over two years ago.

Marshall proposed that the system go back to its format that it used for junior high schools where they sponsored teams in volleyball, basketball, football, baseball and track. The proposal did not receive enough support to pass, but as a compromise the board voted to bring back volleyball, basketball and track to the middle schools.

Although Marshall said the vote was not totally racially motivated, there were racial overtones to it.

"A lot of it had to do with the fact that as a rule white kids are not participating in football and they didn't see the need to support something as expensive as football when they could go another route," Marshall said.

According to figures given to him by Jim Bovender, who heads the system's athletic department, it would cost in excess of \$300,000.00 the first year to put football back in the middle schools. Although he says that figure might seem high, it is a small price to pay to get some students back on track.

"It is not a racial issue in and of itself, but right now football has become a predominately black sport among the young kids," Marshall says. "The white community has embraced soccer. I think if that community was really concerned about behavior and motivating the entire student-body of middle schools they would support it. It's not going to solve all of the problems, but I do know that it gives incentive."

Marshall says that when you look at it, it is a situation of paying now or paying more later.

"For a number of years we have seen the figures on what it costs to incarcerate someone for a year," Marshall says. "That figure exceeds \$25,000.00 a year. It costs a lot less to send a student to college. I look at this as a preventative measure. If we can get the right type of programs in place in our system I think it would cut down on the number of kids that will eventually go into the criminal justice system. I'm not saying that it is a cure-all, but I think it would help to cut down on a lot of problems that we are facing today in our school system."

"I believe this will help the school system in the long run," Marshall says. "Sure its going to cost us a lot initially, but I think it will help in building character in our students. That's one of the best ways to reach many of our young men."



Walter Marshall

When Marshall brought forth his proposal originally, the biggest hurdles that he had to climb were those centered around funding. But there were also concerns about the facilities, lack of trained coaches and the problem of transportation.

Marshall says all of these problems can be worked-out if given time. Bovender has gotten quotes on the approximate cost of equipment, preparing facilities, coaching suppliments and transportation.

According to documents supplied to Marshall, the total cost of brining football back to middle schools would be \$301,270.35. The vast majority

of that figure (\$160,700.00) would be the cost of field preparation. the next biggest expenditure, \$67,475.15, would be for equipment. Marshall says both of these expenditures could be cut considerably if the local high schools helped in the process. But even if they didn't those figures are not excessively high for fielding 12 teams with approximately 35 players.

The next biggest expenditure would be for coaches (\$26,013.30). Marshall says that Forsyth County community has an adequate pool from which to choose, even if many of them are not currently in the school system.

The bottom line, according to Marshall, is getting interest in the community.

"I don't see this as a panacea for all of the problems that we face, but this is certainly a good place to start," Marshall says. "The thing that we have to do is to get the community to see that this would have far-reaching effects on it. There is nothing like sports that can teach young men the importance of teamwork and working together for a common goal. They would become better individuals through competition."

Youth Entrepreneur Symposium to be held in Greensboro

The National Coalition for Empowering Youth Entrepreneurs will sponsor the 36th National Entrepreneur Symposium, March 25-28 at the Holiday Inn Four Seasons Convention Center in Greensboro, N.C. The symposium is being organized and hosted by the Cooperative Extension Program at North Carolina A&T State University.

The symposium will provide technical assistance to teen entrepreneurs, youth (13-19) who are seriously interested in starting a business, and adult professionals and volunteers interested in entrepreneurial programs for youth.

Thirty-six seminars will be offered in three sessions during the tenure of the conference. Skill development seminars are designed for those wanting to improve knowledge. Sessions include hands-on activities providing foundations, basic concepts and skills needed for operating and becoming a success, working with people, and creating business ventures. Sessions titles include Conflict Resolution, Customer Relations and Entrepreneur Readiness.

Other highlights include a

welcome reception, youth entrepreneurs forums, keynote speakers, networking, business tours, nightly entertainment, a talent show, exhibits, a Teen Vendors Market Place and fine dining and Southern hospitality.

The opening keynote will be teen oratorical sensation Ayinde Shomari Couvil Jean-Baptiste, the young Chicagoan who permanently wrote his name in the history books of tomorrow by becoming the youngest speaker at the 1996 Million Man March.

Ayinde has been privileged to speak at churches and events around the Chicago area that have featured such speakers as the Rev. Jesse Jackson, members of the late Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s family, and Presidents Bill Clinton and Aristide, among many others.

His oratorical flare has also landed him on such shows as "The Oprah Winfrey Show," "Chicago Remembers King," "The Today Show," and a cameo role in the movie "Get On the Bus" by producer Spike Lee. Ayinde's captivating speech at the 4th National Youth Entrepreneur Sympo-

sium in Long Beach, Calif., earned him the distinct privilege and honor of becoming the first speaker to be invited back to deliver the opening keynote address at the premier symposium.

This annual Youth Entrepreneur Symposium began in Baltimore, Md., in 1993. Since that time it has been held in Memphis, Tenn. (1994); Chicago, Ill. (1995), and Long Beach, Calif. (1996).

Participation is limited to the first 600 registrants! So don't delay, register today by calling (919) 286-9758.

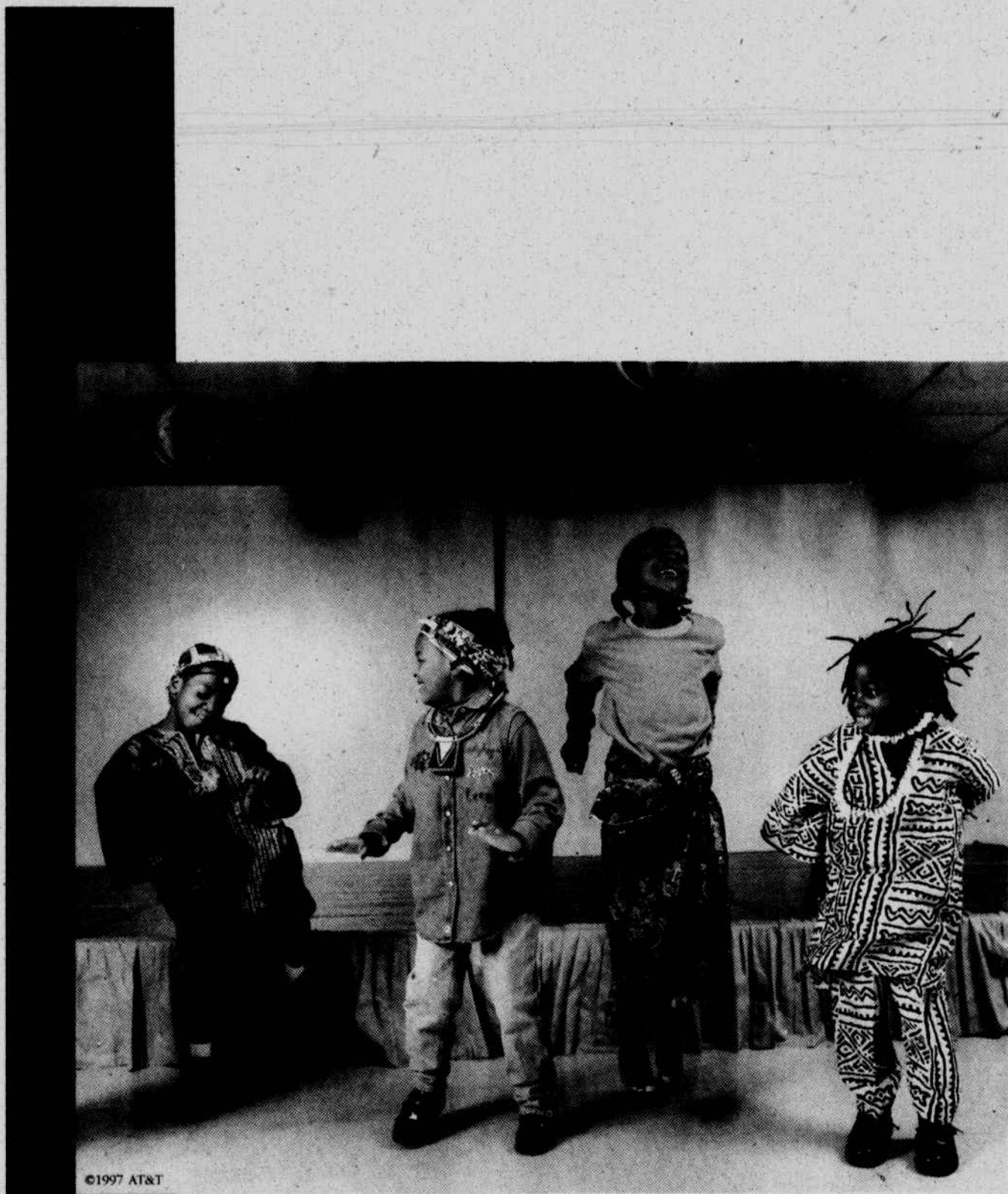
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From your twirling feet

to the tickled fancy of
the sweet trusting dreams
you keep.

No pain.

No grown-up rain.

Know it not.

Dance long. Dance free.

As you should.

As it should be.

This Is Your Time To Dance.

As the African proverb goes, no tree can flourish without roots. And as AT&T celebrates Black History Month, we continue to support organizations that work on behalf of children, like The Children's Defense Fund and California's Children Now. By giving our children a good foundation, we're helping to give them the freedom to discover and enjoy the rich cultural legacies that strengthen for life.



Church to hold Mens Day celebration

New Smith Grove Baptist Church, Lexington N.C., will hold its annual Men's Day, Feb. 16 at 3 p.m.

The Rev. B. Wellington Moseley, Associate minister of Union Baptist Church, Winston-Salem and Interim pastor of Fellowship Baptist church, will deliver the message. The host pastor is the Rev. Ronnie Stewart.