

At a Glance

News briefs compiled from the Associated Press

Anti-hate web site

Transportation Secretary Rodney Slater meets reporters at the National Press Club in Washington Monday, Nov. 24, where he announced the launching of a new Web site to fight hate speech on the Internet. Slater joins political, community and civil rights leaders in launching the site.



(AP Photo/Joe Marquette)



(AP Photo/Washington Post, James M. Thresher)

Belated attention

Jacqueline Thompson, rear, holds one child from her set of sextuplets Friday, Nov. 21, at the Mazique Parent/Child Center in Washington while her aunt, Grace Baptiste, right, holds two babies and Ann Marie holds another two babies. Few people stepped up to help Linden and Jacqueline Thompson when she delivered six babies, the first black sextuplets born in the United States. But free baby food, car seats and diapers lavished on newborn septuplets in Iowa prompted donations this week in Washington for the Thompson babies, born last May — one girl was stillborn, but the surviving four girls and one boy are healthy and learning to crawl.



(AP Photo / Peter Andrew POOL)

Under scrutiny

Winnie Mandikizela-Mandela, right, consults with her legal advisor Ishmael Semenya, left, during the second day of a Truth and Reconciliation Commission hearing in Johannesburg Tuesday, Nov. 25. Mandikizela-Mandela, the former wife of South African President Nelson Mandela, is being investigated for apartheid era human abuses.

War's last widow

President Clinton greets Daisy Anderson, 97, at Denver International Airport before departing for Seattle Saturday, Nov. 22. Anderson is the last surviving widow of a Civil War veteran. Her husband was in the 125th colored troops division.



(AP Photo/Ruth Fremson)



(AP Photo/Brian K. Diggs)

West on Arlington

Army Secretary Togo West gestures during a Pentagon news conference Friday, Nov. 21, where he talked about burials at Arlington National Cemetery. West told reporters that assertions that burials took place at Arlington in exchange for contributions to the Democratic Party are "just not true."

Students say race relations not a cut-and-dry issue

By PAUL B. JOHNSON

For some students at North Carolina A&T State University, a historically black institution, and predominately white Guilford College in Greensboro, relations among the races today can't be defined in black-and-white certainties.

Several students recently said in individual interviews that they see promising prospects for people of different backgrounds coming together in understanding. At the same time, they see divisions that, if not resolved, could tarnish race relations.

"The whole community needs to go forward as one," said Artis Williams, an A&T student from Bolivia, N.C. Williams said he sees positive signs for better race relations in the future as more African Americans move into traditionally white-dominated professional fields and make it as entrepreneurs.

But as African Americans and other minorities become a larger part of the broad society, some people who fear other races may become more hardened in their views and actions. If that happens, Williams said, it could strain society.

"Races relations are going both ways," said Chloe McQuiston, a Guilford College student from Pittsburgh. "More people are growing up around different races, and that makes for less prejudice.

But there are also people pulling back into their own groups."

Dika Harris, an A&T student from Greenville, said she's encouraged by the fact race is becoming less relevant to her friends and acquaintances. One of her best friends is a white student at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro, and

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— Chloe McQuiston, a Guilford College student from Pittsburgh.

she said their skin color has no bearing on their friendship.

"The people that don't worry about it — that's an encouraging sign," said Devra Thomas, a Guilford College student from Durham. "If you step back for a minute and look at it, it shouldn't be a problem or big deal."

Several students said that the values of tolerance and understanding they received from their parents, and in some cases grandparents, has

encouraged them to respect people of different races.

"A lot of what my parents think has been passed on to me," said Kendall Kibby-Deck, a Guilford College student from St. Louis.

However, some students said their experiences dealing with race relations come from a different vantage point than their parents, who grew up in the turbulence of the civil rights era and segregation.

"My generation hasn't been taught the reality of struggle," said Brian Muhammad, an A&T student from Greensboro. Muhammad said his parents worked to better society by obtaining goals. After getting those social rewards from their parents' generation, too many young people today "have lost touch with the struggle of previous generations," he said.

Rose White, a Guilford College student from Greensboro, said a key to better race relations is understanding what people of different races are thinking and how they view the world.

Several students said they notice that they have had more experiences dealing on a personal level with people of different races compared to their parents or grandparents, a sign that some divisions have waned in society. Harris said that progress with race relations is incremental but noticeable. "The more time you give it," she said, "things improve."

CHURCHES

from A1

projections, the lies," said Rhodes, assistant pastor of Wake Forest Baptist Church.

The conference addressed four major topics: 1) the failure of integration and diversity as effective responses to racism, 2) the need to rewrite history from other race, gender and class perspectives, 3) the damaging effects of racism on whites, and therapy as a setting for healing this damage, and 4) reparations, addressing how to repair the harm done to people of color over the last three centuries.

This pilot conference involved 16 white clergy from seven denominations and from all parts of the country. It was founded by the late Rev. Dr. Mac Charles Jones and was funded by the Burned Churches Project of the National Council of the Churches of Christ (NCCC). Following the pilot conference, the program coordinators hope to recruit and train an additional 100 clergy from across the country and then adapt the program for use in seminaries.

The four steps toward congregational work for white churches that came out of the conference were 1) confession about racism, 2) repentance of this spiritual ill, 3) reparations to minority culture, and 4) reconciliation with the minority culture.

"The thing that made this conference different was the fact that we even questioned the white culture," said Mendez. "Under integration, what are we being asked to participate in? Under cultural diversity, minorities are asked to participate in a white majority without looking at how corrupt its history has

been. We are asked to give up our culture and belief system, and it is understood that the majority culture is what's happening."

Rhodes recalled the meditations that Dr. Samuel Mann led the group in. He encouraged them to address what he called "the evil within our people and our culture." Mann used Howard Thurman's book *The Luminous Darkness* as a discussion piece. Published in the 1960s, the text has profound implications for America today, said Rhodes. "Racism is a spiritual issue, a soul issue," Rhodes said. "Salvation comes when we work hand in hand to deal with this."

The Souls of White Folks

Among the most memorable presentations was a discussion paper called "The Souls of White Folks," by Mab Segrest, a white scholar who has worked for 20 years against racism, sexism and homophobia in local, regional, and national contexts. Segrest said, "Because racism

normalizes whiteness and problematizes 'color,' we as 'generic humans' escape scrutiny for our accountability as a group for creating

Project of the NCCC, presented a paper entitled "We Hold These Truths, or Rewriting American History." He commented on W. E. B. DuBois's monumental study *Black Reconstruction in America 1860-1880*, referring to the chapter called "The Propaganda of History."

DuBois asserts that the facts of American history in the last half-century have been falsified "because the nation was a shamed." According to DuBois, the shame of the South was that it fought to "perpetuate human slavery," and the shame of the North was that "it had to call in black men to save the Union."

Boyd said, "We have to find more creative ways to make good information available — in



The Rev. John Mendez, pastor of Emmanuel Baptist Church, helped coordinate the pilot conference on racism that the Rev. Lynn Rhodes, assistant pastor of Wake Forest Baptist Church, attended in Kansas City.

our films, television shows, radio programs, and certainly on the Internet." Boyd said it is time to popularize the works of Dr. John Henrik Clarke, Darlene Hines, Anna Julia Coper, W.E.B. DuBois and hundreds of young scholars, black and white, male and female.

Rewriting American History

Another outstanding presentation at the conference dealt with "Rewriting American History." Herb Boyd, consultant and writer to the Burned Churches

Throughout the conference participants were forced to question Christianity and the role it played in the oppression of native peoples. "There was no attempt to hide the truth. Everyone knows that the church sanctioned slavery and even promoted the Hamitic myth," Mendez said.

KLAN

from A1

"I wish the media had called me," Decker said on Tuesday.

After he learned of the rally through news reports, Decker said he realized no one, particularly an elected official who is not black, came forward to denounce the Klan. Nevertheless, Decker said he believed that none of county's legislative delegation is sympathetic to the Klan's racial prejudice.

"From the fact that no one came forward it should be clearly obvious that the Klan's overall emphasis is so far from what Christian people want that they don't even address it," said Decker. Looking back, though, the legislator wonders if speaking up would ease tension or have the opposite effect.

"I don't know that I have thought about it enough to determine what we should or shouldn't do," Decker said. "We could spend a lot of time taking positions on one thing or another."

State Sen. Betsy Cochrane, however, did not see a need for anyone to step forward to denounce the Klan or calm the mounting racial tension. Cochrane does not live in Forsyth County, but she represents a portion of it.

"I show that I don't support what



they stand for by not going," Cochrane said. "There was not much response to their effort — that should tell you about how people feel."

According to Cochrane, North Carolina has done "a great deal" to demonstrate that all people are welcome in this state, Forsyth County

included. For example, she said, a large portion of the budget is earmarked for minority business opportunities.

"Perhaps that's part of the problem," Cochrane said.

She added that part of the community's frustration over race comes

from the fact that some blacks refer to themselves as African Americans.

"We don't have Mexican-American newspapers and organizations. And you don't hear other minorities separating themselves from everyone else and being divisive," Cochrane said.

Although the Klan rally took place in Winston-Salem, it has been a topic of conversation elsewhere in the Triad. Confrontation between blacks and whites — like the one on Saturday — are by no means unique to Winston-Salem, says Dr. Mary Anne Busch, who teaches a race relations course at High Point University. She has one possible explanation for the escalating harshness between racial groups. Few people are willing to talk openly and candidly, she said.

"It seems like the white middle class might be saying it's over and done with. They've done all that can be done," Busch said. "But it's not a black issue." It's a community issue, and it should concern everyone who lives in the community."

Thirteen years ago, when she began the class, 25 students enrolled, all of them white. This semester there are only two students taking the class.

"It seems like people don't want to talk about race or race relations. The tension is growing, but people behave in an ostrich-like manner, ignoring it," said Busch.