

# At a Glance

News briefs compiled from the Associated Press



(AP Photo/Anders Krusberg)

## New music website

Grammy-winning producer Quincy Jones unveils Qradio.net, his global music website, Wednesday, March 18, 1998, in New York. Visitors to the interactive site will be immersed in the South African world of music, history and culture.

## Africa bill passes

A bill which provides a framework for and funding to aid Africa in its economic development has been passed by a substantial margin in the U.S. House of Representative. The African Growth and Opportunity Act, (H.R. 1432) which was co-authored by Rep. Charles Rangel (D-NY), would aid countries on the continent in infrastructure development and in reducing their debt. Rep. Rangel said, "The plan has been welcomed ecstatically in Africa. In the U.S. it has deep, broad-based support among Black leaders and in the business community. In Congress, it has bipartisan support." He continued, "Sub-Saharan Africa is not the nightmare of war, famine and poverty portrayed in the media."



(AP Photo/Kathy Willens)

## Rapper's legal woes

Sean "Puff Daddy" Combs speaks to the media outside New York Civil Claims Court, Monday, March 23, 1998, in New York. Combs spoke after taking the witness stand in a lawsuit filed by the family of a man who died and seven others who were injured in a stampede at a 1991 charity basketball game promoted by Combs at the City College of New York. The plaintiffs are charging that Combs and others oversold the event, failed to provide adequate security, and failed to make provisions to control the crowds attending the event.

## Government sues Airborne

PHILADELPHIA (AP) — Charging that shipping company Airborne Express discriminated against a black employee before ultimately firing him, the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission has sued the firm in federal court.

The Seattle-based company discriminated against Rodney Wilkins, of Wilmington, Del., through harassment, unfair disciplinary measures and refusing a transfer request, according to the EEOC's lawsuit, filed Friday.

Wilkins was hired as a driver at the Airborne Express terminal at Philadelphia International Airport terminal in February 1994. In June, he asked to be transferred to Airborne's New Castle, Del., terminal so he could work closer to his sick grandmother.

His request was denied, but a white worker with less seniority did get a transfer.



(AP Photo)

## Violence in South Africa

A protester gestures as about 2,500 black demonstrators marched towards a high school in Vryburg, South Africa Thursday, March 19, 1998 where racial violence has flared in recent weeks. Demonstrators were marching in support of black students who say they no longer feel safe at Vryburg High School, which has been the scene of repeated racial clashes over the past month. The marchers demanded that the school, which has resisted racial integration, be closed, that the principal resign and that the school's governing body disband.

## MEETING

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"It all boils down to segregated schooling back over again," said Alston as the audience applauded in agreement.

Alston, who was one out of eight panelist to speak, made sure his message was clear and concise.

"The white community wants us to go to our schools and they want their children to go to their schools."

The concern surrounding this issue was also voiced by some of the other panelist.

"I will never go back to being told where I can go to school and where I cannot because of the color of my skin," said Redistricting Committee member Celestine Hunt, who believes there's a catch to the idea of neighborhood schools.

"If I don't have any schools in my neighborhood, where will my child go. Do I have a choice at that point if you close 12 of the schools in the African American community?"

Redistricting wasn't the only topic discussed this night. Another hot issue centered around African American teachers.

"We need more minority teachers in our schools," said Dr. Charles Morris who is with Pupil Support Services of Guilford County.

Some feel that low teacher salaries are the main reason why African American college students are not majoring in education and why



Guilford County School Board member Johnny Hodge came out to support the town meeting Monday night.



African-American parents filled the Bessemer auditorium.

African American teachers are leaving schools today.

Alston said that if a raise in teacher salaries is needed to keep and recruit African American teachers, then it needs to be done.

"Our children need to see more African American principals, teachers and guidance counselors," said Alston.

Guilford County Schools Superintendent Jerry Weast talked about the danger that poverty plays in the county.

"If you put all of the free and reduced lunch kids in one school system you'd have the ninth largest school district in the whole state out 117," said Weast.

"We have a high concentration of poverty."

Weast feels this issue (poverty) is some Guilford County students struggle to learn in school and it's something that must be addressed by all people.

"We've got to attack that as a community," said Weast.

Hunt said that being poor is no excuse for a child not to perform well in school or behave in a good manner. "We have to hold the school system accountable," said Hunt.

The meeting ended with a question and answer session that gave the community a chance to get some of their concerns addressed.

When the question was raised about getting money from the school board to hire more teachers Weast let it be known that beating down the door of the school board will not

make a lot of headway since they have no power in controlling funds. The county commissioners have this jurisdiction.

Alston came back to say that the school board does have the power to request funds from the commissioners.

Weast assured Alston and the audience that the board has requested funds in the past for various problems and they will continue to do so.

All in all, the message behind meeting was delivered.

"The purpose of this town meeting is to inform the citizens about the happenings of the Guilford County School System," said Allen Davis, the chair of the Community Action Committee Chair of Positive Direction for Youth & Families, Inc.

## TOUR

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his," said Hunter.

A stop at SciWorks entailed a brief presentation in the planetarium and scientific exhibits. One section of SciWorks features inventions by African Americans such as Garrett Morgan's stop light.

The Southeastern Center for Contemporary Arts (SECCA) has photo exhibitions of African Americans by photographers like Tom Rankin and Debbie Fleming Caffery.

By lunch time some VIPs had plans for the attractions they attended so far.

"I've already put my itinerary together," said John Lucas, a district chief with the WS Fire Department. Lucas and WS Fire Marshall Bernard Smith are preparing for the N.C. Fire Chief's and Fire Men's Association Conference in August.

Smith is a part of the entertainment committee, while Lucas is in charge of taking care of the husbands, wives, boyfriends and girlfriends of the participants of the conference. Lucas plans to take the guests to SECCA, the Reynolda House and the Piedmont Craftsmen Gallery.

The Stevens Center for the Performing Arts also was on the agenda. Deborah Anderson of the WS Convention and Visitors Bureau remembers going to the Center to watch movies when it was the Carolina Theatre. African-Americans had to sit in the top balcony during this time.

"I used to throw popcorn over the balcony," said Anderson.

After visiting the Sawtooth Center of Visual Arts Mary Jackson, a VIP from the Sawtooth Center couldn't



VIPs had a chance to play around and learn in SciWorks. Jimmy Price (right), a Residence Inn employee works with a tornado machine while WS Fire Department District Chief John Lucas (left) looks on.



VIPs Deborah Anderson (left) of the WS Convention Visitors Bureau and Denise Swain (right) of Hawthorne Inn look over a brochure to learn more about the Reynolda House Museum of American Art.

wait to get to the next stop, Old Salem.

"That's the one I'm waiting on," said Jackson who looked forward to walking on the path connecting Old Salem to Happy Hills, an African American neighborhood where her relatives grew up.

Because of rain, Jackson was unable to take the walk, but that didn't prevent the VIP's from viewing The Gallery at Old Salem Across the Creek Happy Hills 1816-1952. Photos of families and buildings tell the history of Happy Hills. Early Happy Hills residents were slaves and worked in Old Salem.

Anderson, who group across the tracks in the Morningside neighborhood, never knew slaves occupied Happy Hills up to the 1900's. The slaves worked in Old Salem and were not owned by individuals, but by the

Moravian Church.

The last stop of the tour took place on the campus of WS State University at the Diggs Gallery, which features African American contemporary art.

According to the director, Brooke Anderson, the gallery holds the two largest murals in North Carolina. Dr. John Biggers, a native of Gastonia, painted the 30-foot by 15-foot murals in the gallery. Biggers, with help from his nephew James Biggers, started painting in 1990 and finished in 12 months.

One of the murals, "Ascension," which traces a family's roots to the present, stuck with Jimmy Price, a native of Dallas, Texas, and VIP from Residence Inn by Marriott.

"It took me back to when my grandmother told me she wanted to live to see me be a man," said Price.

"Price's grandmother, Nattie Bell Price—a former slave who died at the age of 113—would tell stories about picking cotton and bailing hay in Texas. She also talked about how God brought their family through the tough times.

"(The painting) showed me you still need to be family-oriented," said Price.

The tour, which started 7:30 a.m., ended at 5 p.m. back at the Visitors Center. Many of the VIP's were little tired but pleased with the tour.

"I think it's very good," said Smith.

Mary Cotton, a VIP from the Hawthorne Inn, also enjoyed the tour and said the tour guides made everything comfortable for them.

"(It) gives me a nice, warm feeling to know what things go on (around the city)," said Cotton.

## WSSU

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- establish a service-oriented culture, and
- promote leadership and service

Several students said they were pleased to hear that creating a "student-centered" atmosphere" topped the chancellor's agenda.

"For a while, it felt like the students weren't very important," said Bobby Conner, a junior.

Students and administrators have butted heads a couple of time since Schexnider arrived. He got off to a bad start with the students shortly after arriving and rejecting students' request to have the Nation of Islam's Leader, Louis Farrakhan as their commencement speaker.

In addition to claims that students felt administrators were not listening to them, there have been concerns that faculty have had more access to technology and equipment than the students.

"My senior year in high school, I



Ayana Wall

made a decision that I wanted to attend a university that was student centered, offered a quality education, had a sense of pride and produced marketable skills" said Ayana Wall, a junior who was asked to speak on the changes. "Somehow, we kind of wandered away from our mission."

Wall told fellow students that she believed the chancellor's strategic plan "can be a positive step toward the future of Winston-Salem State University."

However, she emphasized, "it can-

not be completed without the input of the students."

In her prepared remarks, she addressed some of the issues that have bothered the student body.

"Why are there not more accessible computers with Internet software as well as laser printers, for all students to use?" she asked. "Why are there so few faculty to teach the courses that need to be offered to such large amounts of students in the classroom? Why is it necessary to go all over your particular department to register, standing in line, only to get to your destination and have to stand in another line before finding out that the classes are closed?"

Wall said that some people believe that the only way to accomplish change is by marching.

"No. This is an institution of higher education. We should feel confident and comfortable enough to go to the administration and discuss whatever the issue is with hopes that something will be done about it. Wall said."

Wall concluded her remarks with a request that "there be an equal distribution of funds to each and every

department."

Schexnider said that the strategic plan is more than mere words on paper. In fact, as he spoke, trucks were already on campus with the equipment necessary to ad computer cables to buildings. Some students said the trucks were a sign that the administration is committed to making positive changes.

Another change Schexnider and others spoke of involved diversity. Bill Austin, who described himself as both a minority and non-traditional student, also spoke positively about the changes being made.

"I must confess that I came to Winston-Salem state as a minority and not sure about how I was going to be received. And, quite frankly, I was expecting the worst," he said.

However, Austin said his education at WSSU is comparable to such institutions as the University of Virginia, where he also has taken courses. He added that the students will benefit by the administration's commitment to include them in the school's decision making process.

## STUDENTS

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to the possibility of the existence of a handicap and appropriate services and aids when:

- suspension or expulsion is being considered for any student.
- retention is being considered for any student.
- a student shows a pattern of not benefiting from the instruction being provided by the school.

• a student is referred for an evaluation but it is determined that one would not be conducted under the IDEA.

• a student is evaluated and is found not qualified for special education services under the IDEA.

• an identified exceptional child under the IDEA is considered to be 'identified/unserved.'

• a student exhibits a chronic health condition.

• a student is identified as 'at risk'

or exhibits the potential for dropping out of school.

• substance abuse has been an issue in the past (NOTE: Section 504 rules do not apply to a person currently using drugs).

• a handicap of any kind is suspected.

• new construction or remodeling of any kind in the building is being considered (with regard to accessibility for the student)."

The manual also says that parents

can refer their child to the school SAT for evaluation if they believe the child is having a hard time learning.

If you have questions or concerns about Section 504, contact your local school. If officials there cannot answer your questions, call the Exceptional Children department of WS/FC County Schools at 727-2083. You can also contact Tesh at 788-2742 with any questions or help getting your child evaluated.