

Horton Society Poetry Conference attracts thousands from

Yale Young Poets winner Margaret Walker and Pulitzer Prize winners Rita Dove and Yusef Komunyakaa read their poetry.

By FELECIA P. McMILLAN
Community Correspondent

More than 2,000 literary enthusiasts from around the nation converged on Chapel Hill to celebrate the legacy of George Moses Horton, the Historic Poet Laureate of Chatham County, the rich oral tradition of African American poetry, and the scholarship on this genre.

The first George Moses Horton Society

Poetry conference was held at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill during the weekend of April 3-5 in conjunction with the first biannual North Carolina Literary Festival. Yale Series of Young Poets winner Margaret Walker Alexander and Pulitzer Prize winners Rita Dove and Yusef Komunyakaa wowed the audiences with the fruits of their pen. Poets, scholars and lovers of African American poetry from around the nation participated in the poetry readings, keynote addresses, panel sessions, and social events.

George Moses Horton was a poet enslaved in the Chatham County and Chapel Hill areas of North Carolina from his birth, around 1797, until he was freed by the Union soldiers in 1865. The Horton Society was conceived by Dr. Trudier Harris, J. Carlyle Sitterson professor of English at UNC-Chapel Hill, in the

spring of 1996.

Her purpose for founding the organization was "to encourage sustained scholarly focus on the works of African American poets and to foster presentation and publishing opportunities for that scholarship."

Harris named the organization in Horton's honor because he established his career on the UNC campus. Although he was not allowed to attend the university, he learned from the students who often solicited his poems for their sweethearts and paid him with dictionaries and other literary gems. The conference opened on Friday, April 3 in the Wilson Library Assembly Room. Dr. Harris welcomed the participants and thanked the Horton Society Planning Committee and the

See POETRY on A4



LoValerie King, secretary/treasurer, George Moses Horton Society, Ph. D. candidate English, and coordinator of the conference, greeted Dr. Margaret Walker Alexander, the Grand Dame of African American Poetry, before the conference began.

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Court: Redraw voting districts

Federal court orders North Carolina to redraw congressional districts

RALEIGH, N.C. (AP) — A federal appeals court ordered the state to redraw its congressional districts, threatening primary elections scheduled for May 5.

After the 4th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals issued the ruling Friday, state Attorney General Mike Easley said he plans to appeal the ruling to the U.S. Supreme Court.

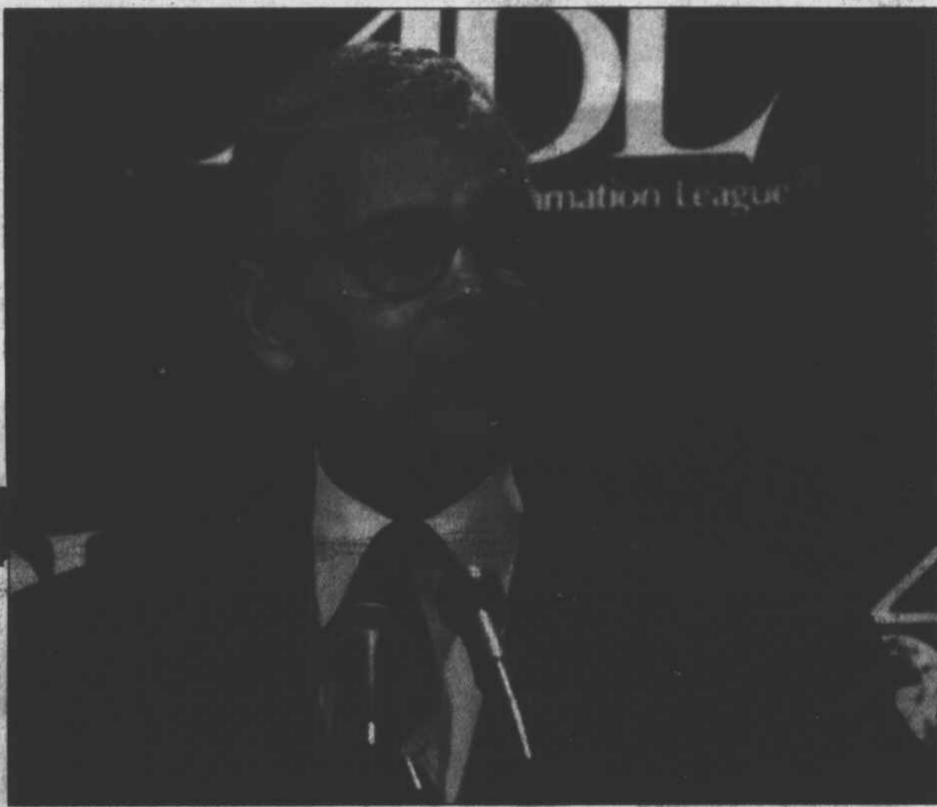
The three-judge panel ordered state legislators to report by Wednesday on how they plan to redraw the districts. If the General Assembly doesn't come up with a new plan, the judges will do it themselves.

"This is getting ridiculous," Easley said. "A federal court approved this plan last August and today another federal court struck down the same plan. Our state legislature is getting very confusing signals as to how to draw districts that will satisfy these federal judges."

If Easley's appeal fails, the primaries for all of North Carolina's 12 congressional districts will be postponed indefinitely.

Earlier in the week, the panel heard arguments for and against the makeup of the 1st and 12th Districts. Duke law professor Robinson Everett, who represent-

See REDISTRICTING on A5



NAACP Chairman Julian Bond gestures while discussing "A Vision of Race Relations in America" while addressing the Anti-Defamation League's annual Leadership Conference in Washington Monday April 6, 1998. (AP Photo/Ruth Fremson)

NAACP leader urges unity

By PAUL SHEPARD
Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — Blacks and Jews should mend divisions in an alliance that has seen severe strains since it helped define the civil rights struggles of the 1960s, NAACP Chairman Julian Bond said Monday.

"The coalition between blacks and Jews helped make the American promise real," Bond told a luncheon gathering of the Anti-Defamation League's Annual Leadership Conference. "Strengthened, that coalition can finish what it helped begin, and in

the process, revive the spirit that brought black and white, Jew and gentile together in common cause."

A history professor at both American University and the University of Virginia, Bond in his address, traced the history of black-Jewish relations, saying that while there are points of conflict between the groups, they share much in common.

"I want to return to that day when we work hand in hand," Bond said.

Bond, a former Georgia state senator and civil rights activist who marched with the late Martin Luther King Jr., was elected chair-

man of the Baltimore-headquartered NAACP in February.

Blacks and Jews helped form the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People in 1909. The height of the comradeship between the groups is probably best recalled in the 1964 killings of James Chaney, a black man, and Andrew Goodman and Michael Schwerner, both Jews, in Mississippi during the civil rights movement.

But a more divisive underside to the relationship was shown in some Northern cities, Bond said, where "conflict between blacks

See BOND on A5

Drug policy draws mixed reactions

By DAMON FORD
and TABITHA BELL
THE CHRONICLE Reporters

There is a new drug policy in the Winston-Salem/Forsyth County school system. The new policy will have students who participate in extracurricular activities randomly tested for alcohol and drugs next year.

A majority of the members of the WS/FC Board of Education believes that participation in extracurricular activities is a privilege and not a right. They contend that students involved in extracurricular activities represent the school and school system in interscholastic competition, public performances and various other activities.

Consequently, those teens are role models for other students. Their use or abstinence in the use of alcohol or illegal drugs is likely to influence the choices of other high school students, some official argue. In addition, the use or abuse of alcohol and/or illegal drugs by these athletes is likely to increase student injuries to the user or others with whom he/she is playing.

"This policy applies to all high school students who elect on a voluntary basis to participate in any school sponsored extracurricular activity. This includes, but is not limited to: athletic teams, school bands, orchestras, choruses, cheerleading squads, majorettes, drill teams, dancing boots squads, aca-

ademic competition teams, student government, school sponsored clubs etc.

"Next school year a student that wants to participate in an extracurricular activity will have to agree in writing on a form adopted by the superintendent to submit to random alcohol and drug testing."

The parents must also be in agreement with this.

Keith Wilkes, the varsity head football coach at Carver High School doesn't look down on the policy.

"If it's going to deter the kids from doing drugs, then I like it," said Wilkes.

One concern from Wilkes and other coaches deals with the way students will be selected amongst all the county schools. No coach wants over half of their athletes tested while another schools have only a quarter of theirs tested.

According to the policy, "approximately ten percent of the eligible students at each high school shall be selected at random for testing on a periodic basis as established by the Superintendent."

"I want to know the steps they're going to have to help the kids that come back positive," said Wilkes, who also believes that the student should be given a second chance.

"We all have made mistakes in the past, I'm sure the people who made up these rules and regulations have made mistakes in the

See DRUGS on A2

April is Fair Housing Month

By TABITHA J. BELL
THE CHRONICLE Reporter

Concerned citizens turned out for Fair Housing Month Kick-off Celebration, at the Human Relations Department Office.

Attendees included Pat Gilliam, Sherita Carter, Dorothy S. Johnson, Annie Doris, Joann Falls, along with realtors, Trip Smith deal and Randy Cunningham were among those celebrating this occasion.

"April is Fair Housing Month across the country," says, Eugene

See HOUSING on A2

Mother's ordeal is an unsolved mystery

By CHARLENE FLOWERS
THE CHRONICLE Intern

Shirley Young has an unusual situation.

She has identical twin sons, Cedric and Frederick Young. Frederick was convicted in 1993 of armed robbery and received a 68-year prison sentence. Frederick Young insists that he is innocent of the crime of armed robbery. The twist to the story is that Frederick believes that his twin brother, Cedric, is the person who committed the crime.

In 1993 Frederick was stopped by the police. Frederick did not have any licenses so he used his brother's name, Cedric, when the cops

asked for his licenses. Frederick knew that he had drugs on him. The cops searched his car and found the drugs and a gun that Frederick did not know about. Frederick was taken downtown and was released on bond later that night. A few days later the police arrested Frederick as a suspect in an armed robbery. Frederick knew nothing about the robbery so he could not give the police any information about the robbery. The victim of the armed robbery identified Frederick as the robber, not knowing that he was a twin. When Frederick was arrested for this crime he was willing to take a lie detector test to prove his innocence.

Frederick has had three attorneys working with his

case. His case is going to be heard before a judge the end of this month. Frederick has several witnesses that will be at the trial the end of this month. There will be a few people that can tell his whereabouts the night of the robbery. The person that was with his brother, Cedric the night of the robbery is willing to testify that Frederick was not the one who committed the arm robbery. The guy that was with Cedric the night of the robbery received 20 years in prison.

Shirley Young, the twin's mother says, "I believe my son did not commit the arm robbery and I believe Cedric did." Shirley Young has not had much success in freeing Frederick from prison. Shirley

Young writes to talk shows, radio station, congressmen, attorneys, and even the president of the United States trying to get some answers to her son's case. Shirley Young has not had much help from family and friends. She has dedicated the past four and a half years to freeing her son from prison on a crime that he did not commit. Shirley Young has had three attorneys since the beginning of this entire ordeal. Frederick has received some support from people around the United States. "I have received so many letters from the public I can not write all them back," says Frederick.

Still it seems as if Shirley

See TWINS on A2



Shirley Young is the twins' mother.