

# Black elected officials to join in theater bash

By T. KEVIN WALKER  
THE CHRONICLE

It's being described as a perfect marriage: a blend of entertainment and democracy, a combination of pizzazz and politics.

The National Black Caucus of Local Elected Officials is coming to town to share three days in the spotlight with the National Black Theatre Festival.

The fact that the NBC/LEO annual conference landed here at the same time as the festival is not

an act of fate, organizers say. Bringing the two together took a fight on the part of the local host committee. They not only had to submit a stellar proposal to the national organization to have the conference here, but they also had to convince them to delay the conference for two months so that it would coincide with the festival.

The months of planning and the pitch for the city paid off; organizers here got the news last November that Winston-Salem would be the site for this year's conference.

"It wasn't (an) easy thing getting this conference here," said Alderman Nelson Malloy, the state director for NBC/LEO. "We lobbied the national organization to bring the conference here this summer because we knew that the premier, one-of-a-kind Black Theatre Festival would be here at the same time."

Malloy also co-chaired the host city committee with his colleague Alderwoman Joycelyn Johnson. Others on the host committee include Alderman Fred Terry and

State Rep. Larry Womble.

The 600-member NBC/LEO - which is a constituent organization of the National League of Cities - is made up of men and women from across the country who have been elected to local boards and offices. Many of them are expected here from Aug. 5-7 for a series of meetings and workshops, all of which will be open to the public.

Members will also have the opportunity to tour many of the city's historical sites.

Picking the topics and the

theme for this year's conference also fell into the hands of the host committee. Womble said the committee wanted topics that would not only be informative but relevant.

"This will not be your normal type of conference; you are going to get information you can use," Womble said.

Workshop topics slated for this year include: the 2000 census, charter school education, youth and technology and African American

See Conference on A10

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Youngsters play in one of the classrooms at Living Water Family Resource Center. The day care was started back in 1996.

Photo by T. Kevin Walker

## Church fills spiritual and social needs

By T. KEVIN WALKER  
THE CHRONICLE

Call it a sign of the times or the wave of the future, but there is a lot more than praying going on at Living Water Non-Denominational Church.

Over the past five years the mammoth church on Urban Street has undergone a metamorphosis of sorts. Much-used facilities began to be added to space that once went unused.

First came the children, whose giggles and playful exuberance reverberate through the colorful day-care facilities housed in the church's basement.

Then came the women, pregnant and in need of prenatal care for their unborn children. They found it at Living Water.

A full-scale clinic was erected at the church in the summer of 1998, providing prenatal care that is comparable to that offered at Reynolds Health Center and other local facilities.

Then came the women, men and the children. With a few high-tech chairs and dozens of painful-looking instruments, a dentistry facility was born at Living Water late last year. It has seen nothing but a steady flow of patients since.

While the church with its pews and stained glass windows, still exists, much of it has now become the Living Water Resource Center, which houses the clinic, day-care and dentist facilities.

"We know that Living Water Family Resource Center exists because God brought caring individuals and organizations together to meet the needs of the people in this area," said the Rev. Howard Daniels, pastor of the church.

The resource center is a result of a collaboration of First Start Inc. (a coalition of four local churches), Smart Start and the Kate B. Reynolds Foundation. The organizations' financial

support gave the center life and now keeps it alive. Doctors from Wake Forest University Baptist Medical Center and local dentists have volunteered their time to the center.

According to Audrey Davis, the center's director, First Start was moved to action a few years back after a local study revealed that child-care facilities were greatly needed in the southeastern part of the city, where a burgeoning Hispanic population has truly made the area a melting pot.

After scouring the area for a site for

See Living Water on A10

## Advancing charter schools

Proponents say choice key to black children's academic success

By DAMON FORD  
THE CHRONICLE

GREENSBORO - It's the time of year Guy Loftin looks forward to.

In less than a month Loftin, the executive director of Imani Institute Charter Middle School, and his staff will welcome students for another year of teaching and learning.

"(Starting Imani) wasn't the easiest thing to do, but it's been the most rewarding," he said. "Our students have been very energetic and our staff has been good. I think the education you receive at a charter school is excellent."



Loftin

Last week, Loftin joined other charter school proponents for a discussion on educating black children. During the forum, sponsored by the N.C. Education Reform Foundation and the N.C. Racial Justice Network, administrators from the Durham-based Healthy Start Academy discussed the advantages of educating children in charter schools.

Loftin, an administrator for Guilford Technical Community College in the early '90s, decided to open an alternative school that would focus on helping students, especially black students, achieve academically.

The result was Imani Institute, Greensboro's only charter school. Located one block from the new downtown library in the old Duke Power building, Imani opened last year with 100 students. More than three-fourths of them are African American.

Next month at least 20 more students will be added to their enrollment.

"We wanted to work with

See Charter Schools on A9

## Local pools stress safety to children

By PAUL COLLINS  
THE CHRONICLE

Running on the deck, horseplay and double bouncing on the diving board are the three most common safety hazards that swimmers are called down for at Kimberley Park Pool, says Maggie King, the pool's assistant manager.

Manager Kevin Martin had a slightly different opinion. He said kids throwing each other and grabbing around the head and neck (horseplay), running on the deck, and standing in the hallway of the bathroom, which is a pathway for lifeguards to get from the office to the pool. The only other path is for lifeguards to jump through a window opening in the office.

Dick Butler, aquatic supervisor over all nine city pools, added a few more safety hazards: kids who are not very good swimmers getting in deep water and kids going off the diving board who can't swim (they hope they

See Swimming on A11



Photo by Paul Collins

Swimmers have fun at Kimberley Park pool.

## David Taylor named High Point fire chief

By SHARON HAYES BROWN  
FOR CONSOLIDATED MEDIA GROUP

When David Taylor heard about the retirement of High Point's fire chief, he didn't think much of it at first. But now, after being a part of the Charlotte Fire Department in several capacities for 28 years, Taylor is about to make another career move.

Taylor will officially resign as Charlotte's deputy fire chief next month and step in as the first African American fire chief of High Point.

After rising steadily through the ranks of the Charlotte Fire Department for almost three decades, Taylor is looking forward to this latest challenge in his life. Without much fear in his voice, he does admit that being the first does cause some pressure.

"I felt for some time that I would like to be a fire chief somewhere.



Taylor

See Taylor on A10