

SPORTSWEEK

Former Lady Ram taking on football

Night basketball gaining popularity



See B1



See A9



See C1

COMMUNITY

Goodwill Baptist holds celebration

Local bowlers dance night away

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THE CHRONICLE

The Choice for African-American News

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'Catching on Spiritual Fire'

Photo by Felicia McMillan

From left, Zilla Brown (St. John CME), Rachel Davis and Corrine Laws (Russell Memorial CME, Durham) and Annie L. Williams (St. John CME) chat between plenary sessions Tuesday. Christian Methodist Episcopal churches from North Carolina and South Carolina are gathered at Benton Convention Center and Adam's Mark Hotel this week for Carolina Annual Conference. The theme of the conference is "Catching on Spiritual Fire." For story and more pictures, see page A11.



Roarin' Back

CAT-TV users are attempting to show aldermen, residents that they are trying to help themselves

BY T. KEVIN WALKER
THE CHRONICLE



Photo by Kevin Walker
Fleming El-Amin (from left), Vance Cabiness and Paul Tomlinson.

Friends and users of CAT-TV, the city's cable public access channel, have always maintained that the station's diversity is its greatest strength. CAT-TV is a place where people of various races, professions and religious beliefs come to be heard and seen by thousands. CAT-TV officials will take that diversity concept outside of the walls of the station's small Marshall Street headquarters next month and to the Benton Convention Center for the first-ever, large-scale fundraiser to benefit the station. KAT Jam 2002 will be an all-day music bonanza featuring more than a dozen acts from musical genres ranging from country to gospel. All the acts are volunteering their talents for the fund-raiser. "One of the reasons for this concert is to promote harmony in the Winston-Salem community the

See CAT-TV on A10

Congressman making national push for bill to aid ex-offenders

BY T. KEVIN WALKER
THE CHRONICLE

About 630,000 ex-offenders are expected to be released from U.S. prisons and jails this year. If past statistics hold true, a great majority of them, about 62 percent, will be re-arrested in the next three years, and 40 percent of them will eventually end up back in the slammer.

A U.S. congressman is trying to change the fate that awaits most ex-offenders by giving them something to live for and skills to help them sustain themselves in the real world.

Rep. Danny Davis (D-Ill.) introduced the Public Safety Ex-offender Self-Sufficiency Act of 2002 back in February. Since then, he has been busy garnering support for the legislation, which would create low-income housing credits to encourage the development of housing units, job training and other essential services for ex-offenders.

The number of tax cred-



File Photo

Most people released from jails and prisons will have more run-ins with the law, according to data.

its awarded to each state would depend on the number of ex-offenders in a particular state. By using tax credits as incentives, Davis said taxpayer dollars would not be

used to fund the legislation, which has also been dubbed the "second chance" bill.

"It would not cost the taxpayer anything," Davis said Tuesday by phone from his Washington office. "It would be an investment on the part of private developers."

Davis said the legislation was conceived after the topic of ex-offender re-entry became a constant issue at every meeting he attended in his Chicago-area district. Many ex-offenders, Davis said, are released and find they have no homes to go to and family members who are often not waiting with open arms. Some end up on the streets or in homeless shelters, Davis said.

"This bill gives them stability," he added.

Congress doesn't have much time left before it wraps up this year. Davis does not expect his bill to get any consideration this year, but he is hoping to gain more and more momentum

See Bill on A10

Local lawmakers and churches vary on need for lottery

BY PAUL COLLINS
THE CHRONICLE

Two local legislators, Reps. Warren "Pete" Oldham and Larry Womble, said they support a proposed state lottery. A third local legislator - Sen. Linda Garrou - could not be reached for comment.



Oldham

Rev. Dr. Carlton Eversley, pastor of Dellabrook Presbyterian Church, said that, like his denomination and the N.C. Council of Churches, he opposes a lottery. However, Eversley said he thinks it's going to pass, but there needs to be guarantees that proceeds from a lottery would be used for education (over and above the current levels of funding. Several other pastors could

not be reached for comment.

House Bill 1676 - the 2002 Education Lottery Referendum Bill - says, in part: "The question of whether the General Assembly shall enact an Education Lottery shall be submitted to the qualified voters of the State at an election on the question to be held at a statewide primary, general, or special election on a date to be determined by the General Assembly.

"The net proceeds from the Education Lottery shall be used to enable all North Carolina children to have the education they deserve. The funds shall be used to establish a voluntary statewide prekindergarten program to prepare at-risk four-year-olds for

See Lottery on A9

Store charged with religious bias

BY COURTNEY GAILLARD
THE CHRONICLE

The U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) has filed a religious discrimination lawsuit against Winn-Dixie Raleigh Inc. on behalf of a Rastafarian man who claims a store refused to hire him because of his religious beliefs.

Melchizedek Elechi declined to shave his beard, which is a symbol of religious devotion in the Rastafarian religion, in order to take an entry-level job position with a Winn-Dixie store on Capital Boulevard in Raleigh.

Citing violation of Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which prohibits employment discrimination based on race, color, religion or sex, the complaint alleges that the Raleigh store "refused to accommodate the sincerely-held religious belief and practice of Elechi, a practicing Rastafarian, who is forbidden from shaving any bodily hair, including his beard."

The complaint requests that Winn-Dixie Raleigh Inc. provide

Elechi with appropriate back pay and benefits, and provide compensation for past and future pecuniary losses as well as punitive damages for its malicious and reckless conduct.

Mindy Weinstein, regional attorney for the EEOC's Charlotte District Office, said that Elechi had "expressed a need for an accommodation (from Winn-Dixie) in an attempt to resolve the case before filing the suit." Weinstein said the commission usually files several religious discrimination lawsuits each year.

Rastafarianism is a religion that adheres to Jamaican-folk Christianity inspired by ideals from Marcus Garvey's Universal Negro Improvement Association. The religion originated in Africa when the founding figures proclaimed the divinity of Ethiopian emperor Ras Tafari (Ras meaning prince), who then became known as Haile Selassie. Selassie was believed to be the living god, or "messiah," for the black race.

The Rastafarian hairstyle, char-

See Lawsuit on A9

Black board members don't agree about site of proposed school

BY SAM DAVIS
THE CHRONICLE

With less than a week before the final vote is scheduled to take place on the location for East Winston's new high school, African Americans appear to be lining up on two different sides on the issue of where it should be located.

The Winston-Salem/Forsyth County School Board is scheduled to vote on the issue Tuesday. Geneva Brown and Victor Johnson Jr., the lone African Americans on the board, both agree in principle on several things about the new school. However, location is not one of them.

Brown said the School Board has an obligation to follow through on its promise to the East Winston community.



Victor Johnson

See School on A5