



YWCA executive director Florence Corpening practices her ping-pong skills. Photo by Kevin Walker

Downtown ping-pong tourney will benefit local United Way

BY T. KEVIN WALKER
THE CHRONICLE

The heart of downtown is about to get bouncing.

It was announced Tuesday that an outdoor ping-pong tournament will be held in early September, a tournament so big that it will shut-down a large portion of Fourth Street.

Local residents will be invited to enter the tournament for a chance to take home a treasure chest of prizes, but the real winner of the tournament will be the thousands of people who benefit from United Way funds.

The tournament will benefit the local United Way and its member agencies. Steve Lineberger, president and CEO of Sara Lee Underwear and Socks and the chair of the 2003 United Way campaign, suggested the ping-pong tournament after he noticed the sport's popularity at Sara Lee.

"It seems to be this new cult," Lineberger said. "Sara Lee employees" play it in the morning before work. They play ping-pong at lunch, and they play ping-pong after work."

Tournament teams will be required to pay a \$25 entrance fee, and local companies are being encouraged to challenge other companies to ping-pong duels.

Lineberger got the ball rolling - no pun intended - by challenging BB&T to a ping-pong showdown. Mayor Allen Joines said he and City Manager Bill Stuart will take on Pete Brunstetter, chairman of Board of County Commissioners, and County Manager Graham Perrier. Joines said the tournament will give downtown Winston-Salem a chance to shine and show city residents what it has to offer.

The tournament will have a bazaar-like atmosphere with live music and children's games and activities. There will also be several featured match-ups between local celebrities. Ping-pong-inspired art and an auction featuring celebrity items will also be featured at the tournament.

The theme of this year's United Way campaign is "Together Nothing is Impossible." Florence Corpening said the theme is appropriate for the city as a whole. Corpening is

the executive director of the YWCA, one of 34 local United Way partner agencies. Corpening urged the public to support the tournament and the United Way campaign.

"There are many agencies that are part of this village. We can't do it without you," she said.

The ping-pong tournament will be latest major event that has come to Fourth Street in the last year. The city sponsored two Rock the Block events over the last year to re-introduce residents to the new Fourth Street. Rock the Block features outdoor music, food and activities. In the last year, Fourth Street has undergone a facelift. Trees and benches have been added along the street, and sidewalks have been expanded to give restaurants the option of offering sidewalk dining.

Information about the 2003 Winston-Salem Whiff Whaff, the official name of the ping-pong tournament, will be sent to area companies this week. The entry date deadline is Aug. 15.

For more information on the tournament, log onto www.forsythunitedway.org

Upward

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1997 after serving as program coordinator of Project Upward Bound from at Purdue University in Hammond, Indiana. Gwen White served in this position from 1998-2002, and the current director is Josephine Reid.

Students in attendance from 1975-1997 will hold an Upward Bound Reunion Luncheon on Saturday, Aug. 30 at Paisley Middle School. In keeping with the theme "Look How Far We've Come," the gang of friends will share memories and stories to recall the good times together. Former director Hymes looks forward to seeing this event unfold.

"Over the years whenever I encounter Upward Bound students, they ask why don't we have a reunion to meet other students from the program. I have run into students, parents and staff members who would just love to see the kids" said Hymes. "I have simply said that if the students will get it together, I will do what I can to help. This reunion will give students an opportunity to fellowship and to develop contacts for future networking."

Hymes' post-secondary follow-up statistics on the almost 500 students who came through the program during her tenure reveal that more than 85 percent of the students went on to higher education. Hymes updated the report yearly when she was the program director. Students, volunteers and mentors from the program have come forward to plan this historical event.

Sabrina Holley Stowe, graduate of R. J. Reynolds High School Class of 1982, was a member of the planning committee in 1994. She has taken a lead in organizing this celebration. She has established the Web site - ubreunion75-97@hotmail.com - in order to post registration materials and other information about the reunion. She has been meeting with the planning committee since February.

"We want to come together to see how much the Upward Bound Program has impacted our lives. . . . The word is

spreading, and the students definitely want to come," said Stowe. "I receive at least ten e-mails or calls a day. Some have contacted me from the local area and out of state. They are anxious to see everybody, to see how everybody is doing. Everybody is just proud of themselves and happy to see that we are doing better than we would have been doing had we not been in the program."

Stowe credits Upward Bound with getting her focuses

on her future. "I grew up in East Winston, a first-generation college student. I don't think that I would have gone to college without that push. If you do not have parents who went to college, sometimes you do not see the need to push to further your education," she said.

The program is designed to increase the academic performance and motivational levels of enrollees so that they may complete secondary school and successfully pursue some type of post-secondary program. Many parents, instructors, volunteers, and mentors have encouraged Upward Bound students over the years. One such mentor is Arlayne Tate who also serves on the planning committee.

"I met Mrs. Hymes socially

and we went to the same church. She started telling me about the program and I decided to help because this is a program that is really worthwhile. I could see that the program was really helping students," said Tate.

Tate and a team of volunteers would help baby-sit at monthly parent meetings, pass out programs and agendas at meetings and other gatherings, chaperone during cultural enrichment activities and travel experiences, etc. Tate will assist with decorating for the reunion.

"I served as a volunteer in the program with so many wonderful people like Vera Jordan, Miss Holley, Carrie Gray and the late Mrs. Thelma Norwood-Holtzclaw. We wanted to give volunteer hours to something worthwhile," said Tate. "I would love to see some of the students who have passed through the program over the years."

When Josephine Reid, the current Upward Bound Director heard about the reunion, she was encouraged to begin planning for a reunion that will pick up the years beginning in 1998.

"Reunions such as this give students a chance to see students who have already achieved. Upward Bound is a great program to help students focus and prepare for college," Reid said.

For more information, call Sabrina Stowe at 766-3518 or Felecia Piggott-McMillan at 788-9217, or e-mail wssuupwardbound7597@hotmail.com



Archie Blount

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