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# THE CHRONICLE

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## Officials advocate knowing HIV status

Free testing will be done Saturday for National HIV Testing Day

BY COURTNEY GAILLARD  
THE CHRONICLE

African-Americans are 27 times more likely to die from AIDS than whites in Forsyth County. Blacks often delay testing and are also less likely to get medical care once diagnosed with the disease.



Brown

"There's such a stigma around having HIV because it is sexually transmitted or through needle sharing. People look down on those things. Everybody knows they're going to die, but all of a sudden you find out you have HIV and think, 'I know what I'm going to die from,'" said Monica Brown, HIV/STD program coordinator at the Forsyth County Department of Public Health. She is encouraging people at-risk to put aside their fears and get tested for HIV this Friday at Rupert Bell Recreation Center, where National HIV Testing Day will be recognized in Forsyth County. There free, confidential HIV counseling and testing will be offered. June 27 of every year is recognized as National HIV Testing Day.

"When you look at (Forsyth County) compared to other urban counties - Durham, Guilford, Mecklenburg and Wake counties - we rank second for rate of infection for HIV," said Brown. "We try to be flexible with folks who don't want to come through the STD clinic."

Oftentimes, says Brown, people will come in for testing but never return for the results. The only way to obtain your HIV test results is to come in person to the health department. Results will not be given over the phone or sent in the mail.

"If the results do come back positive, we'll try to get them help if they want help. It's all about what you as the individual wants," Brown said.

HIV, human immunodeficiency virus, attacks and weakens the immune system, pre-

See HIV on A7



Independence High School on Clemmonsville Road will reopen in August after a brief shutdown.

## AN ALTERNATIVE ALTERNATIVE

System will try Independence idea again but with new spin.

BY T. KEVIN WALKER  
THE CHRONICLE

The city-county school system is promising a new and improved Independence High School come August.

Independence had served as an alternative school where students were sent for having discipline problems at their primary high schools. But Independence's lack of success in educating students and budgetary cuts were cited a year ago when the school was shut down.

Three day school programs were set up at different sites

"We are really concerned about the name Independence. It has had a lot of bad connotations before."

- Donald Martin

around the city to replace Independence. The day schools were designed to edu-

cate students with the severest discipline problems. The school system also started Alternative Learning Centers (ALCs) at each high school to accommodate students with minor infractions such as excessive absences.

Schools Superintendent Don Martin said the ALCs will stay in place for the upcoming school year, but the day schools will be eliminated.

"That simply did not work," he said about the day

See Independence on A6

## CROWNING MOMENT



Photo by Kevin Walker

Ninety-five-year-old Louise Davis is all smiles as she receives her crown during the June Jubilee at Sunrise Towers on Friday. Davis, who has lived in the Towers for the past three decades, was named queen of the Jubilee. Davis and many of her neighbors spent Friday evening dancing, chit-chatting and enjoying food. To read more about the event, turn to The Chronicle's Community section on C1.

## Harry begins new life at age 50

Behind the scenes mover steps to front with new business

BY FELECIA P. MCMILLAN, PH.D.  
THE CHRONICLE

This Saturday marks Cheryl Harry's 50th birthday, and it also marks the official open house for her new venture - Elegant Eventz, an events planning service that is open to the public.

"Things are coming together. I'm just thankful and grateful to God. It's all coming together," said Harry.

"On June 26, I will turn 50. My life's work is coming together in such a divine way."

Since August of 2000, Cheryl Denise Harry has served as the director of Kingdom ministries and development for Union Baptist Church, where she continues to work. Under this title, she directs, coordinates and conducts activities, programs and ministries; provides overall church administration; and works closely with her pastor (the Rev. Dr. Sir Walter Mack Jr.), media auxiliary presidents, leaders and organizations in program design, implementation and printed materials development.

Pastor Mack is not surprised that public demand for Harry's services has grown.

"Cheryl has the profound ability to take the concerns and desires of the people and make their program expectations a reality," Mack said. "With her excitement and energy, Cheryl brings a sense of optimism that ignites with her passion. She has profound insight on the community and the needs of the community, which take her expertise to a level of excellency."



Harry

See Harry on A7

## Church hosts Juneteenth celebration



Photo by Kevin Walker

Members of the Emmanuel Baptist Church choir perform vintage gospel songs during the Juneteenth celebration held Saturday at Mount Pleasant.

BY T. KEVIN WALKER  
THE CHRONICLE

About 100 people came to Mount Pleasant Missionary Baptist Church Saturday to celebrate Juneteenth, the more than a century old African-American holiday that celebrates the day the last slave was unshackled.

For years the church's Black History Committee has sponsored programs to mark the holiday. Saturday's program was a fusion of spiritual songs, dances and historical reflection. Its central message was that freedom was not free and should not be taken for granted.

Officially, Juneteenth is celebrated each June 19. History reports that on that day in 1865 word of the Emancipation Proclamation finally reached

slaves in Texas. Because of the state's geographical location, Texas slaves were the last to learn that they were free. The news came two years after President Lincoln had signed the document.

Juneteenth's popularity has always been great in Texas and Oklahoma, where the day is marked with celebrations attended by thousands. In most parts of the country, though, the holiday comes and goes as quietly as a mouse.

The Rev. Vernon Crump, the pastor at Mount Pleasant, said that is a shame. Crump said African-Americans should put Juneteenth on the same level as the Fourth of July because independence did not come for black Americans until more than 80 years after the nation's first Fourth of July cel-

See Juneteenth on A10

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