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Reality show star speaks at WSSU

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YWCA leader takes bold step

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Teens kick butts at local occasion

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THE CHRONICLE

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THURSDAY, APRIL 21, 2005

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Vol. XXXI No. 34

City mourns legend Gaines

Former WSSU coach died after suffering a stroke on April 15

BY COURTNEY GAILLARD AND T. KEVIN WALKER
THE CHRONICLE

If there is a basketball game being played in heaven today, there is a good chance that Clarence "Big House" Gaines is coaching from the sidelines.



Gaines

The legendary coach who led the Winston-Salem State University basketball program for nearly half a century passed away Monday evening, leaving many in this town with heavy hearts and decades of memories to cherish.

"Coach Gaines was an icon, who helped raise the profile of WSSU to national prominence," Harold L. Martin Sr., the school's chancellor, said in a release. "His contributions and accomplishments in sport were incredible, but the contributions he made to uplift the lives of so many young people during his lifetime, I think, is his greatest legacy."

A native of Paducah, Ky., Gaines picked up his nickname, Big House, for his mammoth physical size. In his prime, he was well over 6 feet and 250 pounds. In recent years, health problems made Gaines much smaller. He had recently battled cancer. He died from complications from a

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Latisha Fisher admires the flower bush in her front yard.

Photo by Kevin Walker

Hope in Progress

Only female New Hope participant putting best foot forward

BY T. KEVIN WALKER
THE CHRONICLE

Latisha Fisher used to avoid the cops like most people avoid Business 40 at rush hour. The mere sight of a police cruiser would send her nerves into overdrive. When you're slinging drugs for a living, staying clear of law enforcement is one of the first lessons you learn.

Fisher was barely a teenager when she learned the fine art of keeping one eye on customers and the other scanning for police cars. But Fisher never truly felt secure, not as she was selling drugs on street corners in and around Cleveland Avenue Homes or when she went home to sleep at night.

"I always knew (the police) were coming to get me. I always knew it," she said last week, tapping her hand gently on her

kitchen table.

Fisher was right. Detectives came to her door a few weeks ago and told her that they not only knew that she sold drugs but had evidence to prove it. As the detectives spoke, Fisher searched her floor for her shoes so that she could prepare herself to walk to the detectives' car for a ride to the county jail, a place she was not unfamiliar with.

But jail was not in the cards this time. Fisher was offered a chance to take part in the New Hope Initiative, a program that partners the Police Department with several local churches and agencies in an effort to give people like Fisher an alternative to a life of drug dealing.

The initiative is a new one for the department. Cops spent much of last year

See Fisher on A12

CLOWNIN' AROUND



Photo by Kevin Walker

Salem College picked the perfect day to celebrate the opening of Blixt Field. The school took over the former city-owned Central Park and has converted it into a new ball park. The field is named for Chuck and Leslie Blixt, the couple who donated \$1.4 million to purchase the park. Monday's grand opening featured a softball game that pitted Salem students against faculty members. There was also lots of free food and games for anyone who stopped by. Pictured here is another one of the attractions, Mark C. Donnell (aka "Mr. Pokeeto"), a Mount Airy-based professional clown. Here, Mr. Pokeeto makes a colorful balloon hat for a young boy. To read more about the opening of Blixt Field, see page C1.

Trucker makes kids' day with bikes

Students learn words and earn prizes

BY COURTNEY GAILLARD
THE CHRONICLE

Brenda Meacham challenged a second-grade class at Latham Elementary School to learn 31 words during the month of March. She promised a big surprise to the boy and girl who exceeded the goal. On April 13, the professional truck driver made good on her promise and then some.

Each of the 15 students received a brand new bicycle.

"I don't think it's a day they'll ever forget," said Meacham, who lives in Denton.

Meacham became linked to the Latham second-grade class through a nonprofit mentor program, sponsored by the American Trucking Association, called Trucker Buddy International. She and the students have been exchanging letters over the past few



Brenda Meacham and Vicky Beaver get hugs from Latham students.

Photo by Courtney Gaillard

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Rep. Womble again looks to the past with new bill

Proposed legislation would make companies reveal their connections with slavery

BY T. KEVIN WALKER
THE CHRONICLE

Two years ago state Rep. Larry Womble introduced legislation that struck down North Carolina's eugenics program. The controversial program had forcibly sterilized more than 7,500 people, many of them African-Americans, from 1929 to 1974.

Womble is now hoping to have success with another bill that looks

to acknowledge sins of the past. The Forsyth County state legislator is cosponsoring a bill with Rep. Earl Jones of Guilford that would require companies with state contracts to reveal if they profited from the once lucrative slave trade.



Womble

The bill is not punitive, Womble was quick to point out last week, meaning that companies that did profit from slavery will not be made to pay a fine or

See Womble on A5



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