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THE CHRONICLE

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Theatre Festival to start Monday

Opening gala sells out ahead of schedule

BY T. KEVIN WALKER
THE CHRONICLE

Today, the pavement downtown is merely a maze of cement. On Monday, that pavement will become "Black Theatre Holy Ground." The National Black Theatre Festival has adopted that Divine theme for the past several years.

More than two years of work, prayers and dedication will culminate Monday when the 2005 National Black Theatre Festival kicks off. About 100 performances of dozens of shows will be staged over the six-day festival. Well-known names like Melba Moore (Sweet Songs of Soul); Malcolm-Jamal Warner (Love & Other Social Issues); Ella Joyce (Willie and Esther) and Hal Williams (Freeda Peoples) will star in some of the productions. Other shows will be headed by up and coming newcomers who many predict will be the stars of tomorrow - people like Daniel Beaty (Emergence-See!), Michelle Banks (Reflections of a Deaf Woman) and David Paladino (Champion).

Larry Leon Hamlin, the festival's producer and artistic director, promises that all of it will add up to one of the best festivals ever.

"This festival is going to be like a nuclear explosion in the city of Winston-Salem!" Hamlin said Tuesday. Each show has been hand-picked by Hamlin, who began organizing the 2005 festival shortly before the 2003 event got underway. He is spending this week "wrapping up last minute details. He spent much of the early part of the

See **NBTF** on **A10**

Graduates from old Atkins reunite

There are mixed emotions about new high school

BY T. KEVIN WALKER
THE CHRONICLE

There are few places in Winston-Salem as esteemed as the former Atkins High School.

The thousands of students who came through there and the faculty and staff who taught and guided them say the school was a piece of educational heaven on Earth. The expectations that teachers and principals set for students, and the tough love style of education that was practiced at Atkins High are credited with producing not only local leaders but worldwide leaders, including Togo West, a former U.S. Secretary of Veterans Affairs.

"We felt that our school was the best school in the world," said Richard E. Rice, a 1955 Atkins graduate. Rice and dozens more



Hairston



Frankie Neal helps her husband, Earl, get ready for the mock graduation.

Photo by Kevin Walker

See **Atkins** on **A11**



BETTER THAN A JUNGLE GYM

Photo by Kevin Walker

Larvin Frederick Crockett playfully hoists his son, Quentin, up into the air Saturday afternoon. Father and son were on hand for the Belews Street Reunion at Balton Park, which brought out dozens of people from the former historic community. To read more about the reunion, see page C1.

Parkland principal ready to be leader

School is in period of great transition

BY COURTNEY GAILLARD
THE CHRONICLE

Timothy Y. Lee has been operating on pure adrenaline since he was appointed principal of Parkland High School last week by the Winston-Salem/Forsyth County Board of Education. The former North Forsyth High School assistant principal has been racing from one meeting to the next between the two schools were he's tying up loose ends on one campus and interviewing prospective teachers on another.

The whole experience probably feels something like the fourth quarter of a season ending basketball game to this former college hoops player who stands over 6'4 feet tall.

"It's a whirlwind right now," said Lee, who will succeed former Parkland principal, Harold Smith, who plans to head up a high school in Tennessee. "With all of the things that have been happening in the last few days you'd think I'd be just be (over-



Lee

See **Lee** on **A9**

Crosby Scholars present the gift of reading

Photos by Kevin Walker

Crosby Scholar D'Andre Starnes (left) reads to Khrie Sawyer Tuesday at the YWCA Empowering Families Center.



BY T. KEVIN WALKER
THE CHRONICLE

About 60 rising 7th graders spent part of their day Tuesday spreading the joy of reading to kids half their age and seniors old enough to be their grandparents.

The middle school students are Crosby Scholars. As part of the program's community service component, they spent the morning reading to groups at three separate sites - the Best Choice Center, the YWCA Empowering Families Center and the Elizabeth and Tab Williams Adult Day Center.

The "read-ins," as they were called, gave the scholars the chance to work one-on-one with the younger kids. At the Empowering Families Center, the scholars were paired with little ones in the center's pre-K through second grade summer camp. There were more little-ones than scholars but that did not pose a problem.



Lovett

See **Scholars** on **A4**



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