

# Bailey explains comments about Hispanics

## Black/ Hispanic relations forum has few fireworks

BY T. KEVIN WALKER  
THE CHRONICLE

County Commissioner Beaufort Bailey said that the firestorm that his comments about Hispanics created in January was much ado about nothing.

"I was raised not to dislike anyone," said Bailey. He made his statements Friday at Southside Baptist Church during the second African-American/Hispanic Relations Forum sponsored by the city's Human Relations Commission and the local branch of the NAACP.

It was Stephen Hairston, the president of the local NAACP, who asked, Bailey, who was an audience member, not a forum panelist, to explain comments he made in January during a meeting of the city's Homeless Task Force. Bailey told the group of businesspeople, community leaders, elected officials and homeless advocates that the city's 10-year plan to eliminate homelessness should

concentrate on homeless people who were born in this country. Bailey also said too much attention is paid to the Hispanic community at the expense of African-Americans and other American natives.

His comments were heavily reported by local media and roundly criticized. Hairston even wrote a letter to The Chronicle, describing Bailey's statements as out of line.

Bailey said the news media twisted his statement, at least partially.

"Some of my statements were taken out of context; some of them were not," he said. None of the 40 or so people in the audience questioned Bailey further or challenged his response.

This second forum was muted compared with the first one held in June. At that forum the panel played a supporting role as blacks and Hispanics in the audience voiced their concerns and feelings about each other.

Last week's forum was more structured. Panelists were invited to talk about specific issues, such as housing code enforcement and the effect the state lottery may have on minorities. Human Relations director Wanda Allen-Abraham said the change in format



Noemi Alcantara calls for racial unity during last week's forum. She works for Accion Hispana.

allowed for specific issues that were brought up at the first forum to be addressed.

The lottery was the issue that generated the most discussion. State Rep. Earline Parmon, a panelist, is among the members of the General Assembly who voted for the lottery. The state lottery got the green light in August when the

state Senate narrowly approved it. Proceeds from lottery sales are supposed to go toward education. Panelists were asked if the lottery was a good thing or bad thing for minorities in North Carolina.

Rev. Aldo Barceló of Southside Baptist said he opposed the lottery for moral reasons and because it will cause people who

are already struggling financially to invest their money in a far-fetched dream.

"It becomes a game of chance, a game of luck," he said through an interpreter. "It is not good for minorities that are working hard every day for their money."

Parmon said she herself struggled with the moral issue of the lottery, but she said ultimately, she had to listen to the voices of the people who elected her. Sixty to 70 percent of the people in the state support a lottery, she told Barceló and the audience.

One member of the audience said that churches send mixed messages when they sell raffle tickets for church fund-raisers while condemning gambling. Bailey asked Barceló and another pastor in attendance if they would take lottery winnings if a winner were to donate a portion of his or her earnings to their churches. Both pastors said they would take the money.

A third African-American/Hispanic Relations Forum is planned. The Human Relations Commission and the NAACP then plan to hold some type of social event where the groups can interact in a more casual setting.

# United Way puts out call to contribute

SPECIAL TO THE CHRONICLE

In the wake of two recent natural disasters in the United States, United Way of Forsyth County announced recently the need for continued donations locally during its 2005 campaign that officially kicked off Sept. 8. The goal for this year is \$16,365,000.

United Way officials applaud the generous giving that is under way for disaster relief in other areas of our country, but they also encourage local residents to remember there is an ongoing vital need here as well.

"United Way is the most powerful way to change lives," said Ron Drago, president of United Way of Forsyth County. "We know this community is extremely giving. We see it any time a crisis happens, most recently with Hurricanes Katrina and Rita. The human needs in our community are steadily increasing, however, and we need everyone's support if we are going to change more lives here at home."

United Way offers financial support to 34 partner agencies in Forsyth County, which includes disaster relief agencies that have been assisting in Hurricane Katrina relief efforts: the American Red Cross, Experiment in Self-Reliance, The Salvation Army and the Second Harvest Food Bank of Northwest North Carolina. United Way of Forsyth County also contributed financially to the American Red Cross by recently donating \$50,000 for hurricane relief efforts.

To learn more about the campaign or to give, log onto [www.forsythunitedway.org](http://www.forsythunitedway.org).

# City Council's Vernon Robinson cries foul over hassled voter

CHRONICLE STAFF REPORT

City Council Member Vernon Robinson criticized the local and state boards of elections last week after a college student ran into roadblocks when he tried to cast a ballot for Robinson in last week's primary.

N.C. School of the Arts student Adam Weinberg, a registered Libertarian, said that poll workers at the Griffith Fire Station Precinct told him that he could not vote in the primary. Earlier this summer,

the State Board of Elections decertified the Libertarian Party because the party failed to get at least 10 percent of the votes cast in last year's election. Libertarians, though, still can cast ballots. The State Board of Elections sent out letters to county boards shortly before the primary notifying them that Libertarians could change their party affiliation to Democrat, Republican or unaffiliated on the day of the primary, if necessary, and cast ballots.

After putting up a fight, Wein-

berg said he was allowed to cast a provisional ballot, which voters are allowed to do when their voting status cannot be confirmed at a precinct. Provisionals count as long as a voter's status can be confirmed later.

Kathie Chastain Cooper, the county's director of elections, said her office received the letter from the State Board the Friday before the Tuesday primary. She said it wasn't enough time to adequately educate poll workers about the Libertarian rule. She said poll workers were instructed to call the Board of Elections if a situation like the one Weinberg found himself in arose.

"Nobody called about it," Cooper said.

With or without Weinberg's vote, Robinson would have won his primary. The two-term incumbent beat Republican challenger B.G. Hauser by more than 160 votes. But Robinson said if just a few Libertarians were turned away in the Southeast Ward primary — where it appears that



Vernon Robinson talks to young voters at Rock the Block.

Democrat Evelyn Terry won by just two votes — it could have changed the results of the race. Cooper said she had no indication that Libertarians were turned away or even voted in the Southeast.

Robinson said he wants poll workers and election officials to

do a better job for next month's general election, when Robinson will face Democrat Molly Leight.

N.C. Libertarians will be automatically classified as unaffiliated voters if they do not change their party status to Democrat or Republican by Oct. 17.



Min. Mikal Muhammad addresses the crowd.

## MMM

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Islam leader Min. Louis Farrakhan is calling for men, women and children of all religious backgrounds, political persuasions and sexual orientations to take part in the Millions More Movement on Oct. 15 to bring attention to topics such as education, peace and reparations.

Razzak wasn't just talking the talk with her chant. She plans to walk the walk with other local people at the Millions More Movement.

"We are suffering as black people. I think this march will be the one that can help change our condition," she said.

There have been other marches initiated by the Nation of Islam. Two years after the 1995 Million Man March, a Million Woman March was held in Philadelphia. A Million Family March took place in Washington in 2000. Razzak was on hand for that march.

Donald MacThompson, a political science professor at Winston-Salem State University was among the more than 70 people who listened to the program outside of Winston Mutual that followed the march. MacThompson was among the hundreds of thousands of black men who took part in the Million Man March.

He remembers being empowered by that march to work for change. He remembers the sense of brotherhood he felt with the other marchers. And he remembers feeling a sense that things were about to change for the better for the black community.

MacThompson said the aftereffects of the Million Man March were short-lived because marchers went home and left their resolve on the National Mall.

"People had good intentions of actually going back

and practicing some of these things... but nothing has happened really," he said. MacThompson said a scheduling conflict will prevent him from taking part in the Millions More Movement, but he hopes that what is preached there will be practiced at home by those in attendance.

The local mosque has chartered several buses to transport local people to the Millions More Movement. Min. Mikal Muhammad, who heads the local mosque, has been touting the Oct. 15 event for months. He says this event will be unlike past rallies.

"This is not just a march," he said. "This is a movement. It is just the beginning."

The Millions More Movement has several long-term plans, including the establishment of a "Black Economic Development Fund" that would be used to create an economic infrastructure.

According to the Millions More Movement Web site, plans also include the creation of a separate "Buy Black" movement.

Muhammad believes that Farrakhan, who spoke in Greensboro last month to promote the Millions More Movement, is the leader that can guide blacks, other minorities and even poor whites to greater economic prosperity and opportunity. The answer, Muhammad said, lies in unity, self-sufficiency and the other principles that will be exhorted in Washington later this month.

"We need to take our destiny into our own hands," he said.

Those who want to reserve space on one of the buses may call (336) 721-1616.

Tickets are \$50, which includes the cost of the train ride to the National Mall. Tickets can be purchased at Special Occasions Bookstore and Shabbazz's Restaurant.

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