



Restaurants closing smoking sections

BY SANDRA ISLEY
THE CHRONICLE

Following in the footsteps of other restaurants, Golden Corral at Hanes Mall has decided to kick a deadly habit. At the start of the new year, the restaurant barred smoking.

According to manager Terry Muckenfuss, it was a decision made by owner David Gronewoller, who is a smoker.

"When you look at the big picture, and that's what our owner did, his thought is that more people would be happy with it, even though he knew some wouldn't be," Muckenfuss said. "We're getting more positive feedback than negative."

One of the biggest factors that determined the ban of smoking in the family-based restaurant was the presence of children, he said.

Muckenfuss said that a few patrons have walked away from Golden Corral after learning about the ban, but he remains optimistic about the outcome. He believes in the long run it will prove beneficial.

According to Ellis Wendell Doss, owner and operator of Doss' Old Fashion Ice Cream, the bottom line has remained unchanged for his restaurant since he banned smoking last May. He's only seen one change. "It's changed my clientele," Doss said. "I don't have as many people from 18 to 27 years of age as I used to have, but I picked up more people that are from the age of 30 on, because they appreciate the nonsmoking atmosphere."



Singleton

Going into his second year of his second attempt to quit smoking, Doss feels that the air in the restaurant is cleaner and healthier.

"The air quality in the restaurant is 100 percent better. You wouldn't believe the difference in the air conditioner filters when I change those monthly, or how much cleaner they are than what they used to be because everybody was smoking in here," Doss said.

Local cigarette giant R.J. Reynolds has no problem with restaurants making decisions on their own to ban smoking. However, the company doesn't believe that the government should pass laws to create such bans.

"If Golden Corral, or other chains for that matter, decide that they want to ban smoking for whatever reason, just because of the mix of their customers or just because they're not getting much request for seating in their smoking section, that's fine," said John Singleton, director of communications at R.J.R. "We would still prefer accommodation of both smokers and nonsmokers."

Smoking is a matter of freedom and one of personal choice, Singleton added.

For smokers who would like to quit, the Health Department has added a new support line. The quit line is open every day and provides you with one-on-one coaching. It is available in English, Spanish and other languages. The number is 1-800-QUIT-NOW or online at www.QuitlineNC.com.



Winston named a top digital city

SPECIAL TO THE CHRONICLE

Winston-Salem has been ranked as one of the top 10 most technology-advanced cities in America for the fourth-straight year.

The Center for Digital Government 2005 Digital Cities Survey of cities with a population of 125,000 to 249,999 ranked Winston-Salem third. The annual study examines how city governments are using digital technologies to better serve their citizens and streamline operations.

During 2005, the city's Information Systems Department supervised completion and activation of the new 800 MHz public safety communication system, added an online lien assessment application, and implemented new in-house computer programs for the Human

Resources and Finance departments. During 2006 the department will update the city's Web site.

The city also ranked third among cities of its size in 2004, second in 2003 and 10th in 2002. Winston-Salem was one of the first cities in the United States to offer a public wireless hotspot (WiFi on Fourth). The city is also a partner in WinstonNet, the high-speed community computer network that gives all city residents access to the Internet through more than 40 community access centers.

Examples of other digital services by the city include online requests for services, online payment of water and sewer bills, online job applications, and purchase of building permits.

News Clips

Keep Winston-Salem Beautiful to hold arts fund-raiser

Keep Winston-Salem Beautiful is soliciting art donations and selling tickets for "Art Has a Heart," a gala fund-raiser to be held Feb. 10 from 6 to 10 p.m. at the Millennium Center, 101 W. Fifth St.

Original art featuring recycled materials, as well as "recycled" canvases, prints, photos, sculptures, painted furniture and yard art, will be available for purchase. The proceeds of all sales will help create a grant fund for community beautification programs.

The gala will include live music, catered food, free beverages and a cash cocktail bar. Tickets are \$25 per person. Discounts are available for groups of four or more.

Keep Winston-Salem Beautiful is soliciting donations of unused or under-appreciated art for the fund-raiser. Resident artists are invited to donate original art that features recycled materials. All donations are tax-deductible.

To purchase tickets or donate art, call Keep Winston-Salem Beautiful at 727-8013.

Smart Start receives early intervention grant

Smart Start of Forsyth County received an early intervention grant for \$30,000 from the N.C. Partnership for Children through a donation from Bank of America. This grant will fund an early intervention transition coordinator to assist children and their families as they transition from Child Development Services Association (CDSA) into the Winston-Salem Forsyth County school system. The CDSA serves children ages birth to 2, and Winston-Salem Forsyth County Schools serves children ages 3 to 5.

According to an April 2005 report from the Frank Porter Graham Institute, 10,515 children enrolled in 216 child care programs in Forsyth County had 161 children with documented special needs and another 155 children referred for evaluation. This does not reflect needs of children who are not enrolled in regulated child care in Forsyth County, which is approximately 18,000 children ages birth to 5. According to estimates, approximately 12 percent of children in this age range are suspected to have special needs in Forsyth County.

"Smart Start of Forsyth County is pleased to have the opportunity to assist this special group of children and their families," said Pamela Wyatt, executive director of Smart Start of Forsyth County.

These funds will provide assistance in bridging CDSA, Winston-Salem Forsyth County Schools, the child and parents in coordinating the transition services and communicating key information to the parties.

For more information about this program or other services provided by Smart Start of Forsyth County, call (336) 725-6011, or visit www.smartstart-fc.org.

'Color of Love' author to speak

On Tuesday, Jan. 24 at 7 p.m. at the Malloy Jordan East Winston Heritage Center, 1110 E. Seventh St., author Gene Cheek will discuss his book "The Color of Love: A Mother's Choice in the Jim Crow South."



Cheek

He will also answer questions as well as sign copies of his book.

His book is about his mother's controversial marriage in the 1960s to a black man. The interracial couple lived in Winston-Salem, where much of Cheek's book is based.

Gov. Easley proclaims January as Mentoring Month

RALEIGH - Gov. Mike Easley has proclaimed January as Mentoring Month to emphasize the importance of mentoring, recognize those already involved in mentoring, and recruit new mentors for young people in North Carolina.

The theme for this year's national observance is "Share What You Know. Mentor a Child."

North Carolina's third annual

"Thank Your Mentor Day" will be held on Jan. 25, when citizens are urged to thank and honor those who have encouraged and guided them by contacting their mentors directly, sending their mentor an e-card, becoming mentors themselves, or posting a tribute to their mentor on the campaign Web site www.whomentor2you.org.

State employees are encouraged to use their community service leave to serve as mentors. Brochures are being distributed to government agencies with information about the community service policy and how to become a mentor.

African-American Art Gallery Talk

Reynolda House Museum of American Art will host a Gallery Talk on Tuesday, Jan. 17, from 5:30 to 6:30 p.m.

The focus of the talk will be the current exhibition, "Paper, Leather, Wood: African-American Art of the Twentieth Century, on view through Feb. 5. The exhibition is housed in the new Works on Paper Gallery in the historic house.

The new exhibition showcases the works of a range of artists, including Jacob Lawrence, Horace Pippin, Romare Bearden and Lorna Simpson.

Allison Slaby, Reynolda House assistant curator, will speak on the museum's collection of African-American art on Tuesday, Jan. 17, from 5:30 to 6:30 p.m. A wine reception will follow the talk, and space is limited. For information, call (336) 758-5150. The cost is \$5.

A MILLION HERE, A MILLION THERE,

Pretty Soon You're Making Real Progress

How much difference can \$30 million of targeted investments make in Winston-Salem, and Forsyth County? Just look around. The non-profit Millennium Fund has invested private sector funds to provide a catalyst for new jobs, new construction, downtown revitalization and a growing arts community. In the last three years, The Millennium Fund has invested in:

- Support for the Downtown Winston-Salem Partnership
- Piedmont Triad Research Park
- Land acquisition and site improvements to help attract Dell's new manufacturing plant
- Nissen Building residential redevelopment in downtown Winston-Salem
- Goler/Depot Street Community Neighborhood revitalization
- Southeast Gateway
- Land control for a potential new downtown baseball stadium
- West End Village residential development
- The Alliance Science and Technology Park
- Plans for the downtown Civic Plaza
- The Stevens Center renovation
- Piedmont Crafters' new shop in the Arts District
- National Black Theatre Festival
- 4th Street Jazz and Blues
- Superior Trade
- Rock the Block
- Hispanic Festival
- RiverRun International Film Festival
- Winston-Salem and Forsyth County's 250th Anniversary
- Arts Ignite
- Support for entrepreneurial development
- Children's Museum of Winston-Salem
- Support for Winston-Salem Business

So as you drive around Winston-Salem and Forsyth County, take a look. You will see how The Millennium Fund is helping to make our community a better place to work and live.

Millennium Fund Oversight Executive Committee

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