



Forsyth's Furr has many, many talents

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Elected officials hear from locals

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Council hands out awards at banquet



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CHRONICLE

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CATCHIN' THE SPIRIT

Big Four worship service is a big hit with alumni

BY T. KEVIN WALKER THE CHRONICLE

It was a time to pray and ponder, reminisce and reflect.

Last Thursday's worship service held in conjunction with the annual Big Four festivities meant many things to many different people.



Hampton

But amid the hand-clapping, toe-tapping and roof-raising singing, one thing was crystal clear to the hundreds that packed the sanctuary of St. John Christian Methodist Episcopal Church - life is precious and fleeting.

"We are all getting older and some of us who were here last year aren't here this year."



Photos by Kevin Walker

Shelia Astrop pins a boutonniere on Bishop Edwin Allen Sr.

said Carolyn Hampton, the Paisley High School graduate who organized the worship service. "We just enjoy being together and enjoying life."

Each year graduates of the

county's four historically black high schools - known as the Big Four - come together for several days of events and activities. The annual Big Four Reunion has become a way for

the alumni to keep the legacies of their schools alive. Only Carver High School remains today. Paisley was long ago closed and converted to a middle school, as was the original

Atkins High School. Anderson High School closed its doors more than two decades ago. The alumni associations of each school take turns planning the reunion each year. It was Paisley's turn this year.

This year's slate of Big Four events also included a dance Saturday night at the Benton Convention Center and a brunch last Friday at Friendship Baptist Church, where teachers and administrators of Big Four schools were feted. The worship service has gained in popularity since it was founded by members of the Carver Alumni Association several years ago.

"This has become more popular than the dance, Theodis Foster, an Anderson grad who is one of the Big Four founders, said of the worship service. "People come here to get inspired."

A choir made up of about 50 people from the various Big Four schools provided a roaring soundtrack for the event. The Big Four Choir practiced for weeks for the event, and it showed in every note and in every 'amen' and 'praise Jesus'

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The wisdom of old age

HOMETOWN COLUMN

By Maya Angelou



We in America, in fact in the entire world, are living so fast it is a wonder that even our shadows can catch up to us. Thanks to technological advances we can board a plane in the morning in Greensboro, N.C. and arrive in London, England by nightfall. We can pick up a telephone in High Point and speak to a friend in Johannesburg, South Africa in minutes.

We find ourselves far from the things we need, which help us to grow into healthy contributing citizens and active loving members of our families.

It is very sad to realize that many young people are growing up without older people in their homes. Many are raising themselves and seeking answers to their questions on morality from folks who would not know morality if it appeared in a mink bikini dancing the Harlem Shake.

We make important phone calls, which challenge and can change our lives as we hurry along busy streets. We consume our daily meals standing at crowded counters. We are too swift to learn each other's names and ways. How then can we learn the nature of faith, that element not seen with the common eye but known as the substance, which makes life hopeful and livable.

My grandmother, my father's mother, who we called "Momma", had and still has a profound impact on my life, on the way I view the world and on my sense of right and wrong.

When hard times became

See Angelou on A14

Feminist bell hooks well-received at Salem College

BY LAYLA FARMER THE CHRONICLE

More than an author, bell hooks is touted as an influential visionary, a champion of feminism, a prominent scholar and prolific speaker.

Students at Salem College packed the Hanes Auditorium at the Salem Fine Arts Center Monday night, clamoring to hear the cultural critic speak.

The dimly lit room fell silent as hooks, who does not capitalize her name, took the stage to speak on the college's yearlong focus, "Global Challenges and Reconciliations: Mirror on America."

hooks has authored more than 30 books to date including

"Happy to Be Nappy," which was nominated for an NAACP Image Award, "Yearning: Race, Gender, and Cultural Politics," winner of the 1991 The American Book Awards/ Before Columbus Foundation Award, and "Ain't I a Woman?: Black Women and Feminism," named one of the 20 most influential women's books in the last 20 years by Publishers Weekly in 1992.

Her works cover a wide variety of topics from gender to race and the significance of media for contemporary culture, to even children's books.

"I honestly feel so blessed, so fortunate that I can come to a circumstance like tonight and there can be so many of you who have read my work," hooks told the crowd. "There are so many black women writers who went to their graves without knowing that they have a readership, that people care about the work that they do. I'm just so lucky that that is not

my experience." hooks spoke about feminism as it relates to women of the past and the present and how its influences stretch across the boundaries of culture and class. She urged the audience to remain assiduous in their quests for social justice.

"We are here at Salem College ... to arouse our collective will to continue freedom's struggle, to continue to use our intellect and imaginations to forge new and liberatory ways of knowing, thinking and being for change," hooks said. "We are here to revitalize our critical consciousness, to rekindle the seeds of militant radicalism that are the roots of every woman's study, feminist study, and women's research center in our nation."

hooks highlighted the continuing struggle for equality the black woman endures, and the importance of black women in

See hooks on A13

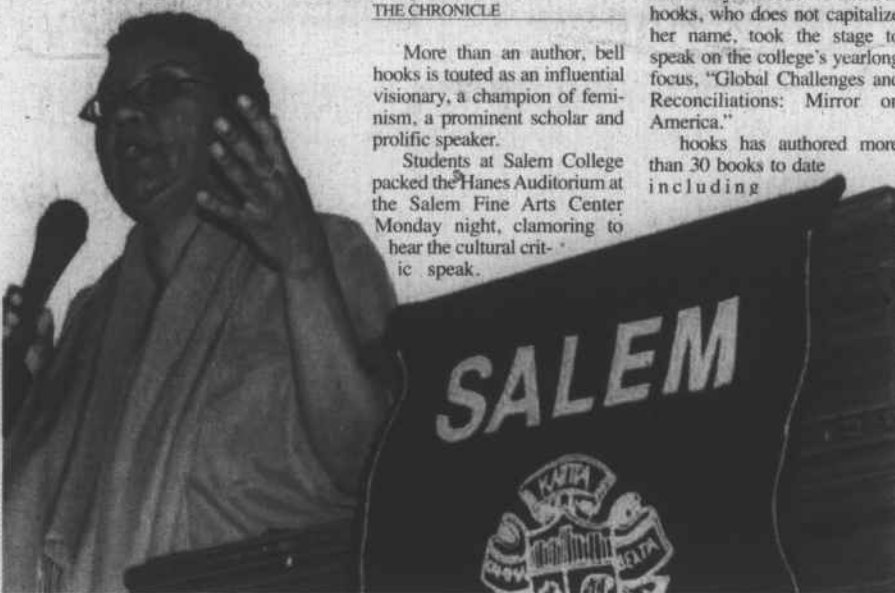


Photo by Jason Pitt

bell hooks speaks to students earlier this week.

Race pits law enforcement vets

BY T. KEVIN WALKER THE CHRONICLE

Bobby Blakely Jr. thinks that there should be a new sheriff in town; Bill Schatzman is hoping that county voters disagree.

Blakely, a Democrat with more than 25 years of law enforcement experience, is standing between Republican incumbent Schatzman and his second term. Schatzman, who spent 24 of his 30 years in law enforcement in the FBI, took down a longtime incumbent and a popular department veteran in 2002 to become sheriff. He believes he has earned another four years.

"We have evolved as an agency, in terms of staffing, in



Blakely



Schatzman

terms of equipment ... in terms of training." Schatzman said. "As a result of all of that, the county is safer."

When asked why he is seeking to become sheriff, Blakely did not hesitate in his response. "I feel like the citizens of Forsyth County deserve better," he said.

Blakely said under Schatzman, the Sheriff's Office has become too detached from the community. He has plans to bulk-up the School Resource Officer Program, which places deputies at

local schools. He believes the pro-

See Sheriff on A13

Lt. Gov. Perdue works out with local kids

State is taking active stance to fight childhood obesity

BY LAYLA FARMER THE CHRONICLE

The state of North Carolina has taken up arms in the fight

against childhood obesity, enacting the Healthy Active Children Policy in 2005. The policy

requires all elementary schools to provide students with 150 minutes of physical activity per week, and all middle schools to provide students with 225 minutes of exercise.

Since the summer, the N.C. Health and Wellness Trust Fund has taken on the task of helping schools reach their physical activity goals, with a new initiative called Fit Kids. As part of Fit Kids, the Health and Wellness



Photos by Layla Farmer

Lt. Gov. Bev Perdue chats with students.

Trust Fund is training teachers in the art of combining traditional lesson plans with various kinds of physical activity.

Last Thursday, representatives from the Health and Wellness Trust Fund, including Lt. Gov. Beverly Perdue, who

heads the trust fund, joined Superintendent Don Martin and a smattering of community members and parents at Cash Elementary School, where they saw the Fit Kids program in action.

"This program is an outreach

of our Fit Kids initiative, which speaks to the State Board of Education mandate for 30 minutes of physical activity each day for kids in grades K-8," said Meka Sales, program officer of obesity for the Health and Wellness Trust Fund. "With the obesity epidemic in this nation, it's really important for kids to get at least 60 minutes a day of physical activity. If we can tackle 30 minutes within the school day ... then we can look for ways and activities to implement and incorporate that other 30 minutes."

The Health and Wellness Trust Fund has joined forces with Be Healthy North Carolina, Inc., a nonprofit organization dedicated to improving the health of all North Carolinians, to provide a training program for 250 teachers statewide. The teachers who participated in the course, known as "master trainers" in turn will educate their peers on Fit Kids techniques and

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