



Boys of summer prepare for battle

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Forsyth hosts African nurses

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Boys become Eagle Scouts

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# THE CHRONICLE

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## Leery leaders to monitor Taser use

Police force will get electroshock weapons in July

BY TODD LUCK  
THE CHRONICLE

Every police officer in Winston-Salem will soon be equipped with a Taser, an electroshock weapon that can briefly disable those shocked.

The City Council approved the purchase of 550 Tasers at a cost of nearly \$550,000 for the Police Department. Money confiscated in drug arrests will be used to cover the bulk of the cost, but taxpayer money may be required as well.

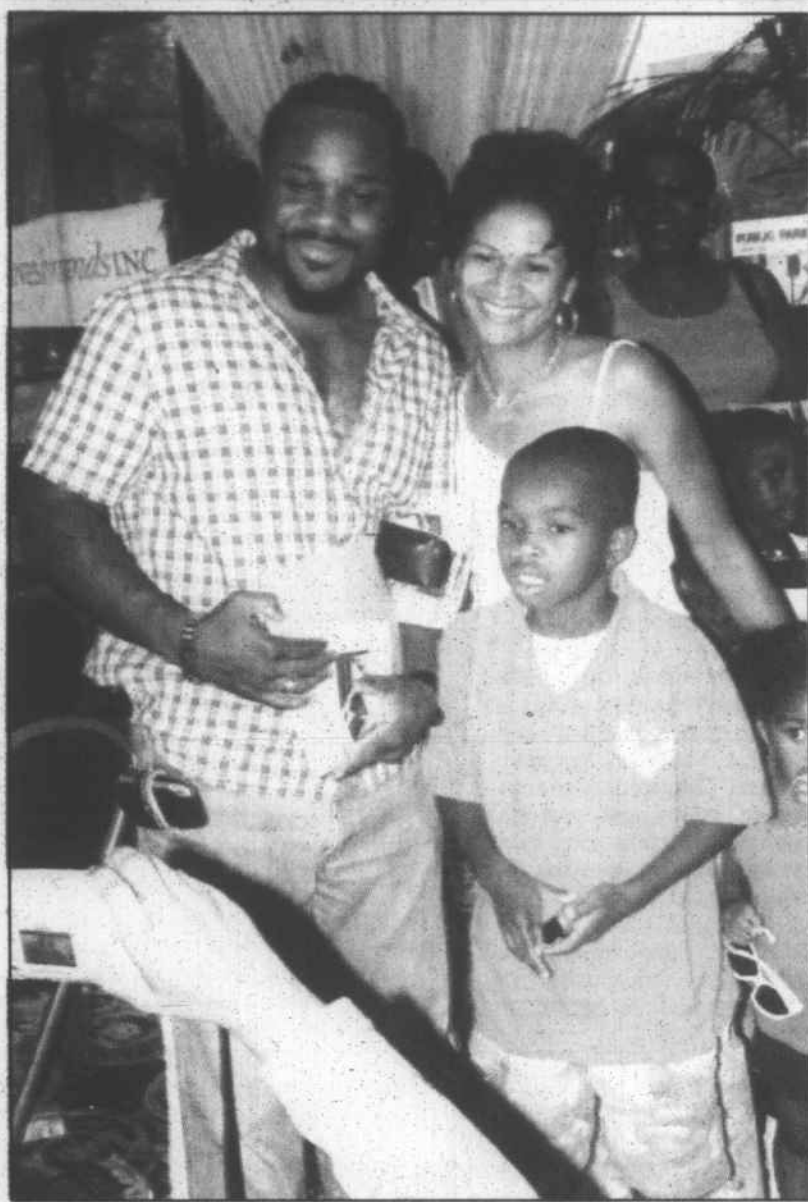
At the same time the Council was approving the purchase of Tasers at around the time that African-Americans residents of Warren, Mich. were up in arms after 16-year-old Robert Mitchell died after police used a Taser on him. It was the third death involving people shot with a Taser in 2009.

Mayor Pro Tempore Vivian Burke, who heads the Public Safety Committee, voted for the Tasers but said she didn't do so lightly. Burke talked with Police Chief Scott Cunningham, who requested the Tasers, to make sure they would be used only by "well trained people" who are "carefully monitored." She said she wanted the assurances so that Tasers won't be used in a heavy-handed manner or to target minorities.

"I'm very concerned," said Burke. "That's why I have said that this is not a tool that will be used in such a way that is not monitored carefully and also people will be cautious how they use it."

Cunningham said he's a "firm believer" in Tasers as a less-lethal law enforcement tool than guns. He supervised their use in previous positions in police departments in Cary and Tampa, Fla. He said he believes in their safety, citing studies like a recent one by Wake Forest

See Tasers on A8



Actor Malcolm-Jamal Warner poses with fans during the '07 NBTF.

## '09 NBTF Season is set to begin

Pre-festival events start on Saturday

BY LAYLA FARMER  
THE CHRONICLE

Although the National Black Theatre Festival is still two months away, officials at the North Carolina Black Reparatory Company, which puts on the biennial event, are already working to stoke the fervor for the six-day extravaganza, which will mark its 20th anniversary.

With the death of Founder Larry Leon Hamlin still fresh in the minds of many, and the ever-present fundraising pressure in an ailing economy, the 2009 season has been a challenge. The Festival faces a steep deficit even as the opening day

draws ever closer, but Executive Director Gerry Patton is adamant that the Festival will go off without a hitch, despite the setbacks.

"It's going to be a success, no doubt about it," Patton declared. "We've always done a whole lot with a little bit; we're just keeping up the tradition."

While the economy may have affected the Festival's fundraising ability, it has had no impact on participation thus far, Patton said. The Festival remains an attraction for people from far and near, who plan family reunions, conferences and the like to coincide with Festival week, she said.



Patton

See NBTF on A9

## Yellowjackets stung by negative attention

Active alumni population has kept school strong, leaders say

BY LAYLA FARMER  
THE CHRONICLE

On any given day, you can find them, in the hallways, in the classrooms, at the entrance of Carver High School. And the members of the Carver High School Alumni Association don't stop with mentoring and greeting at the historically black high school; they raise money for scholarships; attend school programs; and support the students in myriad other ways.

"I've not worked in another school that's had an alumni association that's so actively involved," said Judy Nelson, who has served as interim principal at Carver since the fall of 2008 when the school's former principal, Carol Montague, was promoted to assistant superintendent. "Usually, people gradu-



Interim Carver Principal Judy Nelson.

ate from high school and they move on, but this group has always had an interest in

Carver." The network of support is a hallmark of the school, according

to Alumni Association President Isaac "Ike" Howard, who has volunteered at Carver for more than a decade.

"We have one of the most active alumni associations of any school in Forsyth County, made up of individuals from all career fields ... all over the nation," he said. "We're currently inside the school, working with staff, faculty and students to try to turn things around."

Carver alumni and students share a special bond, says Howard, a member of the Class of 1965.

"The old Carver spirit is still here," he commented. "Once they go to Carver, there's a certain closeness that's instilled, even now. That's why we call it 'Carver Nation.'"

See Carver on A10

## Hoping for a Feeding Frenzy

City leaders, school officials work to promote summer feeding program



Second Harvest's Clyde Fitzgerald talks about the summer program.

BY LAYLA FARMER  
THE CHRONICLE

Summer break is a time that many area children eagerly anticipate. For many youngsters, summer camps, vacations and time by the pool are the hallmarks of the season. However, for the thousands of local kids who depend on free and reduced cost meals during the school year, the time away from school may also mean time away from the nutritional sustenance they enjoy when school's in session.

In an effort to eliminate this concern, Winston-Salem/Forsyth County Schools hosts a Summer Feeding Program, which offers free, hot breakfasts and lunches to local youth, from birth to age 18. The program is supported by funding from the federal government that is allocated for summertime feeding initiatives.

Last year, a collaborative effort between the school system, the Office of Mayor Allen Joines and Second Harvest Food Bank of Northwest NC provided for the dispensation of more than 64,000 meals, served from 20 designated locations across the city and county. But that isn't enough for Joines, who joined the effort four years ago, agreeing to help pro-

See Feeding program on A9

## BEST OF THE BEST



All eyes were on Brian Jones' 1971 Chevrolet Chevelle on Saturday during a car show at Carver High School. Jones' ride was one of the top winners at the event, which raised money for the school. Read more on page A10.

Photo by Chad Roberts

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