



Deac headed to LA to play pro ball

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Noted activist makes local stop

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Family holds reunion in Winston

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THURSDAY, July 1, 2010

God at center of debate

New billboards, Commissioners' prayer stance fires up church and state issues

BY TODD LUCK
THE CHRONICLE

The separation of church and state has been a much debated issue since the nation's founding fathers rough-drafted the Constitution. A new statewide billboard campaign will undoubtedly add to this centuries-old debate. The North Carolina Secular Association, a coalition that includes atheist and agnostic groups as well as those with mem-



Rev. Bass



One of the Association's controversial billboards.

bers of faith, are behind the billboards, which feature the United States flag with the words "One Nation Indivisible." The N.C. Secular Association's Web site is also featured on the billboards. "One Nation Indivisible" is a reference to the section of the Pledge of Allegiance. In 1954, the

pledge was changed when lawmakers added the words "under God" between the words "One Nation" and "Indivisible." That change still doesn't sit well with Jim Moury and other members of the N.C. Secular Association.

"Claiming that our national patriotism is based on a belief in

God, or that that's necessary, is not based on any kind of fact," said Moury, founder of Forsyth Area Critical Thinkers (FACT), a group of skeptics that holds monthly meetings where a wide range of topics - everything from recycling to the supernatural, are pondered.

FACT is the sponsor of Forsyth County's only "One Nation Indivisible" billboard, which stands along I-40 East.

Moury said he hopes the billboard creates interest in FACT and gets people thinking about the issue.

"Our founders intended for us to have a secular government and for there to be a clear bright line between church and state," he said.

There are fans and critics of the billboards, said Moury. One in Charlotte was vandalized when the words "under God" were painted onto it.

The issue of the separation of

See God on A9



Bryant Cameron Webb

Wake med student takes reins of SNMA

BY LAYLA FARMER
THE CHRONICLE

A Wake Forest University School of Medicine student recently took office as the 40th president of a national organization for medical students of color.

Bryant Cameron Webb, a MD candidate at the medical school, took the helm of the Student National Medical Association (SNMA) in April. Amazingly, Webb is also studying to earn his juris doctorate at Loyola School of Law in Chicago.

"It's been great," Webb said of his term so far. "We are on target, with everything moving steadily ahead and I'm very excited."

The 27-year-old Fredericksburg, Va., native will lead the organization's over 8,000 members in chapters at more than 130 medical schools nationwide during his yearlong term.

"I've always been inspired by the role student organizations have played in shaping our nation since the Civil Rights Movement," Webb said of his motivation to lead the SNMA. "I want to inspire that spirit in our organization."

An alumnus of the University of Virginia, Webb is a decorated student who has been awarded an array of prestigious scholarships. He and his wife, Leigh Ann, who is an emergency medicine resident, tied the knot a year

See Webb on A5

... LET IT SHINE

Union Baptist members find work in shoe-shining ministry

BY LAYLA FARMER
THE CHRONICLE

Union Baptist Church has launched an innovative new ministry designed to fight unemployment within its congregation.

"We were trying to figure out a way that the church could help people obtain some work and some income," explained Rev. Dr. Sir Walter Mack, the pastor of Union Baptist.

The result was the creation of Soul 2 Sole, an on-site shoe shining service. It was started at the church in March. Congregants can get their shoes shined before and after each service for a nominal fee; and the general public can even drop their shoes off for shines during the week.

"It's been great," remarked Program Director Cheryl Harry. "The congregation has been very supportive."

Sole 2 Soul has created a source of income for three Union Baptist members.

"You feel good when your shoes shine; you feel good about yourself," said Anthony Carpenter, one of the shoe shiners. "It boosts your morale."

Soul 2 Sole is the latest of a collection of unorthodox ministries birthed from Mack's imagination. A gospel ice cream truck - which sells cold treats with spiritual-themed names in neighborhoods around the city - and the Christian Football League (CFL) - which allows kids to play regardless of their weight and height - are among the church's other



Photo by Layla Farmer

Sole 2 Soul's Anthony Carpenter and Dominique Fleming.

Right: Veteran shiner Harold Payne in action.

more unique ministries. Mack believes it takes creativity to get the church's message to the masses.

"We are able to minister to people by providing that opportunity," he said. "...The church needs to meet the needs of people where they are."

See Union on A9

Church food ministry goes mobile



Photos by Layla Farmer

A volunteer gives a box to a Peacehaven resident.

BY LAYLA FARMER
THE CHRONICLE

Volunteers from the Agape Care & Share, a ministry of Agape Faith Church of Clemmons, took their mission to the streets on Saturday.

More than 37 families in the Peacehaven Mobile Home Community received pre-packaged boxes filled with food and other items from ministry volunteers. Agape Care & Share bases its work from its food pantry on Patterson Avenue. Saturday marked the ministry's first attempt to become a mobile entity that travels to communities in need of its services.



Watson

See Agape on A2



GIVING GOD THE GLORY

Photo by Layla Farmer

Bishop Bennett Alexander says he has truly been blessed. After struggling with addiction and homelessness, he has emerged to help others dealing with challenges of their own. Read more on page A3.

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