



Ram footballers pushed to their limits

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Frazier recalled for his warmth and zeal

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'13 NBTF to offer wide range of choices and lots of starpower

BY T. KEVIN WALKER
 THE CHRONICLE

Nearly 40 theater companies from cities across the United States, Canada and the Caribbean will converge on Winston-Salem later this summer. Over the course of six days, they will stage plays, musicals and dramatic readings for eager audiences who will come from near and far and continue to cement this city's reputation as "Black Theatre Holy Ground."

With the pomp and pageantry of a Broadway opening, organizers announced Monday the full slate of productions chosen for the 2013 National Black Theatre Festival, which will make the City of the Arts its own from July 29-Aug. 3.

"The selection committee goes above and beyond every festival," Festival Director Sylvia Sprinkle-Hamlin said from the makeshift podium in the Garden Terrace of the downtown Embassy Suites.

The committee, which includes both local and national veterans of the world of theater, undertook the task of selecting the '13 NBTF slate soon after the 2011 festival ended. A reputation built over the years on quality and excellence has made the NBTF a hot ticket for playwrights, actors and producers. The committee whittled down the hundreds of productions that were submitted to create what Sprinkle-Hamlin says is a festival that has something for everyone.

Musical theater fans can choose among several options, including "The Marvin Gaye Story (Don't Talk About My Father

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Merkerson



Coles



Photo by Kevin Walker

"Mama Marvstastic," Annie Hamlin Johnson, the mother of late NBTF founder Larry Leon Hamlin, steals the show Monday as actor/singer Chestor Gregory performs a song from his show, "The Eve of Jackie."

Winston Lake Y to share a leader

BY LAYLA GARMS
 THE CHRONICLE

The YMCA of Northwest North Carolina is breaking with the norm at the Winston Lake Family YMCA. Instead of hiring an executive director to oversee the historically African American branch, a branch director will be hired.

A job listing for the position states that the branch director "will be responsible for all aspects of day to day branch operations, including membership and program development; building strong relationships with members, community leaders, and stakeholders; and recruiting, developing, and motivating staff and volunteers."



Daniels

The salary range for the job, which closed to applicants May 29, was listed as \$39,000-42,000. Listings for branch executive director jobs in other YMCA systems placed the salary range between \$60,000 - \$70,000, a range that is in line with local EDs, according to a source. The Winston Lake Branch will be the only freestanding Forsyth County Y without its own executive director. The YMCA of Northwest North Carolina's Barium Springs location in Statesville has a branch director, as does an express location it operates at Wake Forest University.

YMCA of Northwest North Carolina CEO Curt Hazelbaker said a branch director has fewer responsibilities and is a good fit for Winston Lake because it has a membership of less than 2,000 - less than most other local branches.

"We feel real good about it. We feel it's a good direction for Winston Lake," he said, adding that the decision was

See Y on A10

Tax appeals urged

BY LAYLA GARMS
 THE CHRONICLE

Members of the Ministers Conference of Winston-Salem and Vicinity continued the fight against the Forsyth County tax revaluations Tuesday, during an open meeting with area homeowners.

Rev. Willard Bass, president of the Conference, urged all those present to file formal appeals of the county tax assessors' 2013 revaluations, which saw a decrease in value in 93 percent of properties countywide and, many believe, disproportionately affect communities of color. The ministers are joining forces with community leaders in an effort to get as many residents as possible to appeal the county tax assessor's decision to the Forsyth County Board of Equalization and Review, which oversees the tax office, before the June 28 deadline. The

See Taxes on A8



Photo by Layla Garms

The Ministers Conference's Marina Skinner addresses homeowners Tuesday.

It's 'Tree!'

WSPD Photo



Winston-Salem Assistant Police Chief Barry D. Rountree will be the city's next police chief, City Manager Lee Garrity announced last week. Rountree, a 25-year WSPD veteran, was one of three finalists to replace Chief Scott Cunningham, who is retiring June 30.

"After careful deliberation of all aspects of the chief's job, I have determined that Assistant Chief Rountree is the best candidate to assume this major responsibility for our community," Garrity said. He will be the city's second African American chief. Patricia Norris made history when she held the job from 2004-2008.

Making us laugh comes naturally for homegrown talent

Photo by Layla Garms

Jeremy "JJ" Johnson stands in front of BB&T Ballpark.



BY LAYLA GARMS
 THE CHRONICLE

Every time city native Jeremy "JJ" Johnson hits the field at BB&T Ballpark, he is one step closer to achieving his dream of becoming a household name.

As the entertainment co-host for the Winston-Salem Dash, Johnson is charged with keeping thousands of fans entertained between innings. He has garnered a loyal fan base, including a host of youngsters who have come to expect his comedic antics at games.

Johnson, who is in his third season with the team, says landing the

See JJ on A7



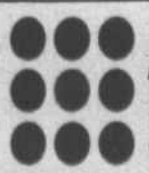
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