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Leaders see progress in road's opening

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Alumni game brings back Ram baseballers

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THE CHRONICLE

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NC GOP Photo

Johnson C. Smith University forum participants (from left) Ada Fisher, Kory Swanson, Hasan Harnett, Vince Coakley, Katherine Restrepo, Clarence Henderson, T.J. Jackson and Earl Philip.

GOP looks to make inroads with blacks

BY TODD LUCK
THE CHRONICLE

North Carolina has joined a national Republican initiative to engage African American voters.

Though the state's GOP African American Engagement Office has been up and running since September, it was formally opened in Charlotte on Oct. 21 during a ceremony that drew state and national party leaders. Party officials say they have been looking for new ways to make inroads into the black community since President Barack Obama won reelection in 2012, easily winning the vast majority of votes cast by minorities.

Pope

Earl Philip, the Republican National Committee's African American director for N.C., said the new office fills a "void that has been missing."

"We make no quarrels about it, we should have been communicating a little more and engaging a little more (with African Americans), so that is what we're doing now," he said.

Philip said that though black votes have overwhelmingly gone to Democrats for many decades, Republicans have shown they can get minority votes through engagement. He pointed to Pat McCrory, who got only three percent of the minority vote in his failed 2008 gubernatorial run, but won the governorship in 2012 with 14 percent of the minority vote.

Philip said the engagement office won't focus on specific policies, but will tout core Republican values to appeal to blacks.

"The mission of our office is to be a resource to the black community for Republican ideals and promote the traditional values of the black community, which are the core values of the Republican Party," he said. "Those core values are faith in God, strong families, small government, personal responsibility, strong economy and equal opportunity for all."

The office will focus much of its efforts on black businesses, churches, organizations and Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs). Philip said the reception the office has received so far has been good.

"We've been doing this since September, and we have received nothing but open arms, no negativity, none what-

See GOP on A9

Photo courtesy of M. Leight

Molly Leight is seeking her third term.

Taylor, Leight look to retain seats

BY LAYLA GARMS
THE CHRONICLE

Democratic City Council members Molly Leight and James Taylor say they are optimistic about their chances for reelection.

Taylor, who won the Southeast Ward seat four years ago, beating the Democratic incumbent along the way, says one of his greatest accomplishments on the Council is the work he has done to bring economic development to the ward. He is also proud of his championing of an anti-graffiti ordinance that prohibits the sale of spray paint to minors and 10 percent minority businesses participation requirement for firms vying for city business.

James Taylor

"This ward has created the most jobs in the last four years, with the addition of Caterpillar, Herbalife and Pepsi," he said. "…We've been successful with changing the quality of life, not only with jobs and economic development, but also through legislation."

See Election on A8

HANDY MEN

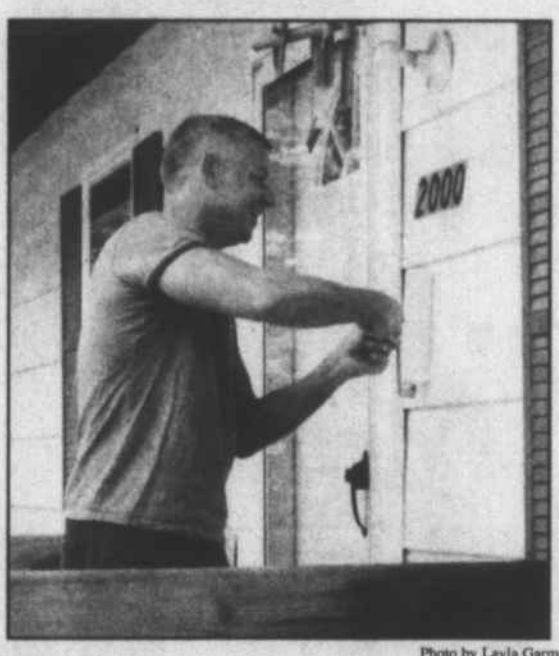

Photo by Layla Garms

Forsyth County Elections Director Robert Coffman paints the home of a local senior. He and other county leaders recently rolled up their sleeves to help mark the Shepherd's Center's 5,000th home repair. Read more on page B1.

WFU hosts tomorrow's lawyers

BY LAYLA GARMS
THE CHRONICLE

City native Vondell Davis believes in planning ahead.

Since she was 16, Davis, the oldest of five children, has been working towards her goal of becoming a corporate attorney. Last week, the Winston-Salem State University senior continued on her quest at Carolina's Vineyards & Hops, where she was able to network and compare notes with other law and pre-law students from across North and South Carolina.

"I just do everything that I can so I can see what I'm getting into if I do enroll at Wake Forest," said Davis, who is hoping to be accepted to the university's JMBA program, which includes a law degree and an MBA. "It's not about where you're going – it's about who you meet during that time."

Davis, 23, was one of nearly 100 up and coming African American law and pre-law students from across the region who convened at Wake Forest on Oct. 25 and 26 for the National Black Law Students Association's Academic Retreat for Sub-Region III. The event – which included networking sessions, panel discussions and workshops on everything from dress-

Photo by Layla Garms

Charlotte School of Law's Victoria Owens (left) and Z'a Williams.

See Lawyers on A9

Black 'Nam vets tell students war tales

Raynor

BY TODD LUCK
THE CHRONICLE

A group of African American Vietnam War veterans were invited to Wake Forest last Friday to share their memories from the controversial conflict with students in an English class.

The students had been exploring the letters mailed home by American soldiers as they fought in Vietnam and various other wars. Sharon Raynor, a visiting professor from Johnson C. Smith University, teaches the class and conducts an oral history project

See Vets on A7

Photos by Todd Luck

Vietnam veteran John Barnes speaks as Robert Jones looks on.