

MERRY CHRISTMAS!

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WINSTON-SALEM, N.C.

THURSDAY, December 21, 2017

Witherspoon: County had no choice but Cardinal

BY TODD LUCK
THE CHRONICLE

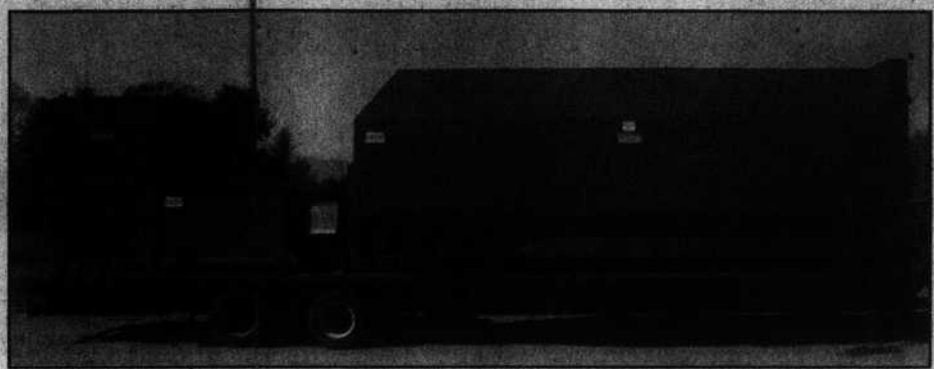
County commissioners voted on an agreement with Cardinal Innovations Healthcare, curbside recycling and a wrongful death settlement during their Thursday, Dec. 14, meeting.

Commissioners approved an annual performance agreement with Cardinal Innovations Healthcare, which provides mental health, developmental disability and substance abuse services in Forsyth and 19 other counties. By state law, counties help pay for such services. The agreement includes providing the county with invoices, quarterly progress reports on

service utilization and other data related to the use of county funds. It also says that Cardinal will provide training and assistance to the Social Services and Public Health departments.

Cardinal, the state's largest managed care organization, was temporarily taken over by the state recently because of "serious mismanagement of funds," which includes paying its CEO three times what is allowed by state law before firing him with a \$1.7 million severance package. County Commissioner Vice Chair Don Martin was absent from the vote because he was attending a meeting to choose

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This is the type of recycling compactor that Forsyth County will be adding to the Hanes Mill Road Landfill, though the county's will be colored green.



A family is in the process of choosing a toy at the Peace Toys for War Toys toy giveaway on Saturday, Dec. 16.

Photo by Busta Brown

Let there be peace in Winston-Salem

BY BUSTA BROWN
THE CHRONICLE

God said, "Let there be peace on earth as it is in heaven," and Winston-Salem's Ben Piggott has been doing just that for 23 years with his annual Peace Toys for War Toys event. The program gives children and adults the opportunity to exchange war toys for free peace toys.

Piggott started the program because of a personal tragedy.

"My brother was killed by his best friend, and the first thing my mother told us was, regardless of what happened about the shooting, let God handle it," Piggott said.

Piggott got emotional as he spoke about his mother's wisdom. "Her very



Sophia Mitchell and daughter Emma Parsons have fun at the Peace Toys for War Toys toy giveaway on Saturday, Dec. 16.

words before she passed two years ago, was the same as before, remember to always let God handle it. So with Peace Toys for War Toys, we're going to get out there and spread love instead of hate. We're not going to cause any prob-

lems. We want every child to know that, giving love solves all of our hate problems."

Ben looked at me, smiles, put his arms around me and says, "There's no way in the world that revenge is the way out.

Give love and stretch your arms around that brotha and let him know you love him, because Christ is about love, and that's what we're doing today."

The expression on the children's faces was priceless, what they were feeling was something neither gift nor money could buy, and that was pure love, which you could see and feel from Piggott and the many volunteers, liked Gary Lash.

"Look around, Busta, look at all the people here, smiling faces, a bunch of happy children, and happy parents that didn't have to go out to get any extra toys; it means the world," Lash said.

I felt Lash's passion, and as I looked around, I nearly began crying tears

See Peace on A7

W-S native steps down as Durham mayor

BY CASH MICHAELS
FOR THE CHRONICLE

After 16 years, Durham Mayor William "Bill" Bell, a Winston-Salem native, stepped down as the Bull City's titular government leader Dec. 4. Under his leadership, the city has gone from being perceived as a sleepy little also-ran to nearby neighbor Raleigh, to now being one of the hottest, ever-growing destination areas in the Southeast, with jewels in the crown like North Carolina Central University, Duke University, the American Tobacco District, Duke Medical Center, and of course, the Durham Performing Arts Center, attracting tens of thousands of new businesses and residents.

He looked back with pride, couched in his trademark cool, insight and thoughtfulness.

"By and large, we've sort of found a niche," Bell said, regarding why Durham is such a hot location right now. "Durham is sort of a funky-type town anyway. With the revitalization we've had downtown, and the way we've done it, up until the past few years, it has all been renovations of existing factories."

"Now we've got new buildings that are coming on line, but as a part of that, we've created a place to be, rather than a place to be away from, particularly in downtown. People are able to work there; live there; entertainment - DPAC has been a great success, the Durham Bulls a tremendous success. With that has come restaurants, and we've come to be known as sort of the 'foodie' type town in the south. More hotels, so all of those things coming together, I think have sort of put a spotlight on Durham, in terms of what it had been in the past."

William Bell was born in Washington, DC, but was raised in Winston-Salem. After graduating from Atkins High School, which was segregated, Bell attended Howard University from 1957-61, where he studied engineering. Bell was 16 when he finished.

In college, Bell was in the ROTC, and after Howard, he went to work at Martin Marietta in Orlando, Florida. But soon, the US Army called, and he found himself sta-

See Bell on A7



Bell

City Council approves controversial cell tower

BY TODD LUCK
THE CHRONICLE

The Winston-Salem City Council approved a controversial cell tower, a report on a potential bond referendum and an ordinance allowing for trolley pubs in its Monday, Dec. 18, meeting.

The meeting was again dominated by a controversial special use zon-

ing for a 150-foot cell tower on the property of Twin City Bible Church. The "slick stick" pole would have no visible attachments. The petitioner was represented by lawyers and realtors who presented analysis of home values in the area and in another neighborhood with a cell tower that showed it would have no significant impact on property values. The Ardmore Neighborhood Association,

which represents approximately 5,000 homes in the area, disagreed. Ardmore Association President Daniel Castro argued against the methodology and conclusions of the realtors.

By state law, cellphone towers receive quasi-judicial hearings, where the council hears sworn testimony and can only base their vote on findings of fact. They can only con-

sider "expert" testimony on property values.

City Council Member Dan Besse, whose Southwest Ward the tower will reside in, said that the law obligated him to side with the petitioner's evidence over his constituents. He said that if the tower was denied it would be easily overturned in court.

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