

## Editorials

### The Making Of A Great City

Charlotte, the "Queen City" of the Carolinas, has made great strides in the past two decades to allow it to be deserving of such a name. With the developments of Discovery Place, Spirit Square, the enlargement of the Mint Museum, the impressive growth of UNC-Charlotte, and Central Piedmont Community College, and the in-migration of such private firms as Gold Bond and Royal Insurance, Charlotte is fast acquiring the qualities of a great city.

Yet, a great city is a constantly maturing city, not necessarily in the sense of bigness, as in the case of Atlanta, but more in the sense of its feeling of community, brotherhood, and closeness. These qualities are very evident in our annual SpringFest as strangers develop a commonality in the mutual fun of the events, feasting and merrymaking. Such fun, merrymaking and sense of community can be observed daily in the spring and summer evenings and on Sundays as literally hundreds of young men and women engage in slow-pitch softball games in Freedom, Hornet's Nest and Park Road parks. As they play, young wives or husbands hold infant children and cheer their spouses and teammates to victory in the hustle of an evening of fun. Elsewhere, within the sound of a bouncing basketball, young men are doing just that — playing pick-up fast paced roundball games, all within a sense of closeness and community.

What all this brings quickly to mind is the fact that while softball is certainly not baseball, the people of Charlotte do have a sincere love of the first cousin to baseball. Then too, let's not forget that while the college and high school baseball seasons are relatively short because of the timing of school closing, there are six baseball diamonds across the city that play the hard ball game every Saturday and Sunday from mid-April through the end of August, year after year.

### Charlotteans Love ACC

While the league's name has changed occasionally throughout the years — now called the Triple County Baseball League — the league contains some teams that are legends in the city. The Hoskins Giants, the Queen City Rangers, and the Charlotte Phillies, formerly known as the Charlotte Hawks, to name but a few. Out-of-town teams in the 12-team league this year include the Rock Hill O's, the Norwood Pirates and the Monroe Dodgers. Minnie Mindosa is a former league player and Bobbie Thompson, formerly of the Texas Rangers, now plays in the league. On any weekend hundreds of people are gathered around baseball diamonds across Charlotte enjoying baseball, fried fish and assorted other goodies.

Charlotteans are noted too for their fantastic love of ACC and local high school basketball. Thousands of Charlotteans this past season followed closely the ACC teams, especially Duke University, in its quest for the NCAA title which it lost only in the final game. Likewise thousands more traveled to

many places to see West Charlotte's undefeated team in the state 4A Playoffs which it won in Chapel Hill's Dean Dome with a perfect 29-0 record.

True, this is not professional basketball and many would argue that pro ball was once here and did not succeed. That's history and a history that was rooted in a weak league to begin with and a team doomed to failure because its "home" was shared with two other cities.

### NBA Franchise Possible

We have said all this to say that Charlotte has the possibility of getting an NBA franchise, a women's professional basketball team and a more suitable home for the Charlotte O's baseball team. As a maturing city characterized by diversity in many areas, Charlotteans should give each of these sports ventures an opportunity to succeed.

Those who would oppose the agreements that the City made with George Shinn in the quest for an NBA team or who oppose the proposed one-time 1.3 cents on your County property tax for one year to help build a baseball park, simply don't understand the economics of professional sports, including the indirect economic benefit to the city. For example, in the heydays of the two-day North-South Basketball Doubleheader with N.C. Chapel Hill and N.C. State against Clemson and South Carolina, estimates of \$2 million in revenue were generated for each weekend in private business sales — motels, food and retail sales — and taxes for the City and County over and above ticket and concession sales at the Coliseum.

Because the voters approved the baseball park one-time tax of \$2.7 million by the slimmest of margins, 50.6 percent of the votes cast, or 17,825 to 17,396, it was nevertheless a majority vote. The real issue, as former City Councilman Tom Cox says is whether the people of Charlotte-Mecklenburg want a ballpark for professional and amateur baseball.

Mr. Cox, who was considered to be a conservative while serving on the City Council, offers a number of valid reasons for county-wide support of the single-shot ballpark tax. Drawing partly from his thoughts: 1) there will be no debt and no cost operating subsidy; 2) partial government financing in any venture of this type is necessary as has been shown across the nation; 3) the tax means a one-time \$7.80 on a home with a tax valuation of \$60,000, again only a one-time tax; 4) the absence of the ballpark will diminish our great city's quest as a maturing city because those who appreciate the Mint Museum may not be the same people who like and appreciate baseball; 5) the ballpark will be owned by the citizens of Charlotte-Mecklenburg; 6) the facility will complement the nearby new 25,000 coliseum; 7) it may be the first step toward moving up to a Triple A baseball team only one step from the major leagues; and 8) the new park will be a prime factor in retaining Charlotte as the home of the Charlotte O's.

### Miller Says:

## Black Upward Mobility: Reaching Back To Help

By Sherman N. Miller  
Special To The Post

As the black intelligentsia joins the white American exodus to the suburbs, their flight raises concern over who has the responsibility to help less fortunate blacks also rise up the socioeconomic ladder. Do upwardly mobile blacks really have a responsibility to return something to the black community for the help they themselves received?

I recently attended a youth guidance program, hosted by the Black DuPont Employees Association (BDEA), where upwardly mobile blacks were attempting to be both counselors and role models for approximately 300 black youth. John Fisher, BDEA president, says this annual youth guidance program offers them an opportunity to return something back to the black community.

"The participants, organizers, as well as the people who come out to help put this on, in some way are returning to the community what we have gained during our early development. We all extracted something from wherever we came from and it's important that we take something back."



Sherman

I have heard the black intelligentsia being severely criticized for "acting white" and ignoring mainstream Black America. I challenged Fisher to tell if this annual program was an attempt to address this criticism.

"Exactly that," replied Fisher. "In 1971 when this organization was founded, one of the key issues the founding members of this organization attempted to deal with was that very issue. That is, taking something back to the community. You've gotten something from it and you've been educated of whatever, so now you have to give something back to that community."

### BE A PART OF THE NEW AWARENESS

**BLACK BUSINESS MEN AND POLITICIANS SHOULD BE IN THE FOREFRONT OF LONG-RANGE PLANNING FOR IT IS ONLY THROUGH ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL CLOUT THAT ETHNIC GROUPS HAVE BEEN ABLE TO MOVE UP THROUGH SOCIETY.**

MICHIGAN CHRONICLE

SUBURBAN

THE FLIGHT OF CAPITAL FROM BLACK COMMUNITIES



### Health, Fitness: Everyone's Concern

By Sabrina Johnson  
Special To The Post

Health and fitness is everyone's concern in today's society. Whether one is physically active or not, it is still a major topic of conversation. People are going about it in a variety of ways: lunch hour walking, running or aerobics is still popular among office rats. It allows them the opportunity to get outside, move around and, according to experts, reduce stress. Those are the health benefits. The vanity benefits are that folks can wear the latest look clothing manufacturers have convinced the world is "in."

Two places people are looking to for fitness are the mall (a new use) and the once termed fat farm.

Older citizens are using malls to walk instead of shop. Walking is the preferred exercise of more and more adults, particularly the aging and ailing. Walking is less intense than jogging, aerobics and burns calories. There are about 55 million regular walkers in America.

Why are elderly citizens walking in malls? They are climate controlled, security



Sabrina

patrolled and usually conveniently located; freeing the walkers from the hazards of outdoor walking such as dogs, the unsavory street element and other potential hazards to the elderly.

Some malls open their doors early to mall walkers, measure courses and even issue walkers maps. Considering most malls are large it is not uncommon for walkers to log a couple of miles in one session.

Also with the assistance of health organizations and hospitals, some facilities are

establishing walker's clubs — issuing T-shirts, buttons, discounts and free meals. Of course, they also log the mileage for their members.

Mall walkers are serious about their purpose. They do not window shop. They move quickly and zippily along the appointed route and it allows for camaraderie of the fun kind — making new friends. Recently joining these people are overweight adults, pregnant women and mothers with infants. Can fitness help bridge the generation and gender gaps?

The second phase in the lifestyle of health and fitness is the "fat farm" — which "ain't" what it used to be. Middle class baby boomers spending \$1,500 to \$3,000 a week to rediscover themselves.

Rediscovery through six hours of exercise, jugs of water, sliced oranges, mud baths and water therapy, and meals. Greetings, U.S. Spa 1980s!

About 10 years ago spas were for pampering and passivity. They catered to the well fed and well spread women of the era. Today's spas are "one-stop fitness shops." Guests are carried through vigorous exercise, low calorie rations for lunch and dinner, taught nutrition, stress reduction and healthy habits. Facials, massages, pedicures and the like offer some temporary relief from the day's events.

The spa is the way to expose the self to new things in health, fitness, diet and nutrition, according to some experts. Yesterday's fat farms are today's virtuous vacations. About five million people sign up each year to go to the new fat farms. Which is up significantly from 400,000 five years ago. There are more than 60 spas today where as years ago there were about a dozen.

Spas are big business catering to more and more yuppie-buppie types than the once exclusive rich and elderly. Couples and men are too a new part of this scene. The new spas are located in the mountains, by the beaches, in posh hotels and resort areas and in corporate headquarters.

What sparks the flame? It is believed that spas are a great vacation as well as a new beginning. They put the soul and body on the same thought pattern toward health and fitness.

There may be and are true benefits for the growing concern and preoccupation with health and fitness.

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