

A Hero's Tribute

Navy Ship Named In Honor Of Black Marine

Lifestyles/Page 7A



The Advantage of Specialty Placement

Business/Page 4A

Bob Moore Explains New Job Change

Sports/Page 7B

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Big Showing Of Black Political Candidates

By Jalyne Strong
Post Managing Editor

With the August 7 deadline for candidate filing for Charlotte local elections drawing close, serious political contenders have been separated from the not-so-serious and rumors concerning who will run for what are dying down.

The 1987 fall elections in Charlotte are expected to be exciting for the black community with several black citizens running for office: a few running against each other for District seats traditionally held by blacks; black candidates campaigning to get a good share of both black and white votes; and two black Republicans seeking office.

A few Charlotte blacks on the campaign trail this year include the honorable Mayor Harvey Gantt who is seeking a third term in office; City Councilman Ron Leeper, who has given up his five-term reign in District 3 to run for City Council at-large; and City Councilman Charlie Dannelly, running unopposed in District 2. Dannelly was elected to the Dis-

trict 2 council seat in 1977 and has been an incumbent since that time.

Robert "Bob" Davis has reentered the political arena running for the city council District 1 seat. Davis had previously run for city council at-large in 1984. At that time, he led in the primaries but was defeated in the general election. This time, Davis says he's "assured to win provided the members of the community come out to vote."

"He who gets out the vote will be the winner," states Davis. "And I intend to do that."

But all in all, it seems the primary for city council District 3 will be the most heated race with three black candidates racing to be the Democratic candidate for the November elections. So far three blacks have filed to run in the Democratic primaries: Paul Recard, Samuel Carr and Ella Scarborough.

Then too, the fall election in District 3 will have the Democratic frontrunner in a contest against Roosevelt Gardner, a black Republican who has filed to run in District 3.

Black GOP Member Runs
Gardner, a registered Republican since 1985, is making his first bid for elected office in this year's city council election. In spite of the fact that District 3 is an overwhelmingly Democratic dis-



Roosevelt Gardner

trict that has elected the same black Democratic candidate to city council for the last five terms, Gardner says, "I'm going to win. The time is right for District 3 to have a different sort of representation."

He joined the Republican Party because, says Gardner, "for young blacks there are better opportunities in the Republican Party than in the traditional Democratic Party. Black Republicans is a growing group, attracting a lot of professionals and business people and blacks need to be involved in both parties. There is a two party system. If blacks are involved in both parties neither party can take their

vote for granted." Gardner has been a member of the Mecklenburg Black Republican Council for one and one half years.

He says his participation as a Republican in the District 3 race widens the choice of representation for the people of the district. The issues of concern Gardner has recognized in District 3 are the revitalization of the Wilkinson Boulevard throughfare and noise levels in the area associated with the nearby Charlotte/Douglas International Airport.

A native of Mt. Holly, NC, Gardner has lived in Charlotte 13 years and has resided in the Westerly Hills neighborhood for ten years.

Claiming he's been involved in "some form of politics" since he was a teenager, Gardner, age 34, is now Republican Precinct 53 chairman and he was a delegate to the GOP state convention in Asheville. He says he has been planning on becoming a Republican city council candidate in District 3 for two years and Mecklenburg GOP chairman Barbara Boye has said Gardner has the party's full backing.

An agent for United Insurance Co. of America, Gardner is a veteran who served in the Navy during the Viet Nam War. He was honorably discharged in 1974.

Gardner is married to Ernestine and they have three children.



Ella Scarborough

Until the fall election, this candidate will be raising funds for his campaign and awaiting the outcome of the primaries.

Primary Competition

Ella Scarborough, however, has her work cut out for her now, as she is competing for the Democratic slot in the District 3 city council primary. Scarborough is facing some formidable competition from two other Democrat contenders.

Scarborough has lived in Mt. Claire-South a neighborhood of located within District 3 for over eight years. About her political involvement, she says, "I've done many things informally as far as addressing issues in District 3." She has served as chair-

man of the District 3 committee, a group that worked through Councilman Ron Leeper, since 1980 and she elaborates, "This process worked very well. Plus, I'm pleased with the experience I gained through it."

In seeking the city council seat in District 3, Scarborough says she is now ready for "more formal ways of serving the people of the district."

As for issues she's concerned with, Scarborough says that City Council is already working on many important points of interest of the district and she would see to it that these issues continued to be addressed; such as, she relates, "the Wilkinson Boulevard 'facelift,' diminishing crime in the area and making sure the city staff enforces the codes of housing to upgrade the neighborhoods."

Moreover, Scarborough claims one important function she will bring to the office is "staying in touch with the people."

"The people of the district make the issues," she contends. "And with so many issues out there, it will be important for me to be flexible, able to listen and be accessible to talk with people and the neighborhood groups. These things are very important especially in a district structure."

However, Scarborough also

See Black Candidates on Page 5A



Davis

Tolbert's Return Highlights Cherry Community Celebration



Berlinda Tolbert

When a family has a reunion, everybody comes home.

The Cherry Community Organization Inc. considers itself a family and this weekend the organization will be celebrating its 10th anniversary.

In honor of the special occasion, one of Cherry's own, Berlinda Tolbert, the actress most noted for her role as "Jenny" in "The Jeffersons", will share in the celebration.

The Cherry Community Organization, Inc plans to pick up Berlinda and her husband, Bob Reid in a limo at the airport.

Stopping at the Park Center, the merriment will begin. Various booths from local businesses will be on display. Hors d'oeuvres will be provided and the Naughty Boys, a band from Gastonia will be performing.

The highlight of this evening will come when Berlinda Tolbert establishes the Berlinda Tolbert Scholarship, to be given to a deserving student in the community each year.

After the announcement of the Berlinda Tolbert Scholarship, Vivian Nivens, director of the Afro-American Cultural Center

will be presented a plaque bearing the scholarship's name that will be placed on display at the center.

On Saturday, August 1 at the block of 1500 Baxter Street, the Cherry reunion will start up with the famous fish fry. Rides, games, balloons, other foods, as well as music spun by dj Don Cody is on the agenda. The fun will last from 2 p.m. to 8 p.m. Berlinda will be on hand to meet the community.

For more information call Clara Williams at 375-2435.

ABOUT BERLINDA
Prepared and persistent, that's Berlinda Tolbert to a "T" and "T" stands for tenacity, the word that describes her best.

It could also stand for training because Berlinda is the kind of actress who is constantly taking lessons and coaching to improve her craft. She feels it's all very well to be in the right place at the right time, but without the necessary skills, what could have been one's big break can become an embarrassing pitfall.

Fortunately, Berlinda has been in the right place at the right time and not once has this talented actress fallen on her face, or anywhere else. To the contrary, her face was seen for 10 years on the CBS hit series, "The Jeffersons," on which she played Jenny Willis Jefferson, daughter of an interracial marriage and wife to the Jefferson's son, Lionel.

In a professional acting career spanning 15 years, Berlinda has made guest appearances in countless comedy and dramatic shows on television, starred in a made for television movie and acted on stages from England to Broadway.

Born in Charlotte, N.C., Berlinda is the oldest of three children. Her father, Sonny, was a house painter and her mother, Corrine, an ardent PTA mother. Berlinda's family continues to be very close.

Berlinda's introduction to performing came in elementary school, where she enrolled in a special speech class to help overcome a stammer. She developed

See Berlinda On Page 5A

Myers Gives Entrepreneurial Leads

A group of approximately 30 CABWE (Carolina Association of Black Women Entrepreneurs) members and guests were in attendance at the recent CABWE meeting where Lewis H. Myers, Assistant Secretary in the North Carolina Department of Commerce, was guest speaker.

Myers is responsible for operations of the Small Business Division of the Department of Commerce, the division that formulates policies on state programs that support small business development.

For the CABWE meeting, Myers spoke about several programs and agencies that function as assistance to beginning entrepreneurs.

He mentioned the community colleges' Small Business Centers, stating that these centers provide a wide variety of workshops and seminars for small business owners. In addition to this fact, Myers also pointed out that these business centers have established networks with business leaders in the community who volunteer to advise and consult on a referral basis.

He went on to mention the business counseling provided by the North Carolina Small Business and Technology Development Center which is operated by the University of North Carolina at six locations in the state. These centers, stated Myers, primarily help with business management and financial plans.

Myers also informed the audience of the existence of the Investment Contacts Network, a compu-



At last week's CABWE meeting, guest speaker Lewis H. Myers revealed several sources of information available to small business owners. Lewis (center) is observed by CABWE member Gloria Campbell (r) and the organization's President, Laura McClettle (l).

terized program that matches entrepreneurs with investors. This program was just recently begun in Charlotte, he revealed.

In conclusion, the Commerce Secretary told the group of several upcoming events that should be of interest to the business community. Specifically the Governor's Conference on Small Business to

be held September 29 in Raleigh and the Buyer/Supplier Exchange that will be held in Hickory, NC September 20.

Myers talk was welcome information to the people gathered for the CABWE meeting. Participants consisted mainly of C

See CABWE on Page 5A

Walton Fights For Minority Affairs Office

In a last ditch effort to make another appeal for the Minority Affairs Office which was twice voted upon not to receive funding by at Republican controlled County Commissioner's board, commissioner Bob Walton wrote a proposal recently presented to the County Commissioners. Although the proposal was rejected, Walton has not conceded defeat.

The lone Democratic commissioner commented, "No action was taken on the proposal and as far as it relates to this year's budget session, nothing will be done."

However Walton also mentioned that in the upcoming weeks he will be in contact with black businesses, churches and individuals to discuss the idea of establishing a Minority Affairs Office independent of city/county funding.

Because it would be free of governmental restraints, the office would have more meaning, according to Walton. Walton further added that the commissioners' vote to halt funding for the Minority Affairs Office may

be a "blessing in disguise."

"I feel that sometimes we as blacks can be complacent with the minimal. And I'm of the mind that the larger society will not support an agency that helps minorities."

Asserting that the black community needs to develop itself politically, Walton compared the possibilities of the proposed Minority Affairs Office to that of the Women's Commission. "Since the formation of the Women's

Vacant School Board Seat Up For Election

On Tuesday, July 21, the Mecklenburg County Board of Elections voted unanimously to place the vacant School Board seat (Harvey Sadoff's) on the November 3, 1987 ballot. This will be a plurality election which means the top vote getter will be elected to fill the unexpired term. The term expires in May 1988.

Candidate filing will open 12 noon, Monday, August 3 and will close at 12 noon, Tuesday, September 8.

Commission, women as a group have been able to make a large dent into the political scenario." Walton projects that an independent Minority Affairs Office could be as powerful.

"We need an office that deals with the issues in the black community—economic development, political development, teenage pregnancy, drugs, etc."

| INSIDE THIS WEEK | |
|------------------|-----|
| Editorials | 2A |
| Lifestyles | 7A |
| Church News | 8A |
| Entertainment | 1B |
| Sports | 7B |
| Classifieds | 12B |