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The Charlotte Post

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THE AWARD-WINNING "VOICE OF THE BLACK COMMUNITY"

50 Cents

NAACP Called To Investigate Piedmont Air

BY JALYNE STRONG
Post Editor

Kelly Alexander Jr., state president of the NAACP and executive secretary of the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Branch, met with an ad hoc group of black Piedmont Airlines employees Tuesday to discuss strategies the employees may take to combat alleged racial discrimination at the Charlotte office of the airlines.



Alexander

"The group asked the NAACP to investigate complaints that broadly fall under Title VII -- issues of discrimination in employment," said Alexander following the meeting held at McDonald's Cafeteria.

"The NAACP will ultimately make recommendations in these areas."

The formation of the black employees group and its subsequent complaints were sparked by a specific incident of racism that occurred at the Charlotte office of Piedmont Airlines last month. The incident involved a white Piedmont employee who made a racist remark regarding a black employee.

According to sources at the airlines, the supervisor, Joel Gardner, described a black employee as "that token nigger." Upon

hearing of the remark black employees sought the assistance of the NAACP to help bring about disciplinary action.

On September 10, Alexander dispatched a letter to Piedmont Station Manager Watson Furr setting forth the complaint by the black employees. September 14, L.R. Welch, Director of Personnel for Piedmont Airlines, based in Winston-Salem, NC, responded in writing that Gardner had been demoted and transferred to another area.

Alexander says that is not enough.

"There is no indication that this man has apologized for his action," says Alexander. "Although he has been demoted and transferred, he is still working for Piedmont in Charlotte. There is nothing balancing here."

For this reason, Alexander is outraged.

"Black people of Charlotte fly Piedmont and they don't pay good money to have someone call them 'nigger.' The black employees and customers of Piedmont have a right to courteous, prompt and non-racist treatment," contends Alexander.

"I encourage people to call Piedmont and complain to the station manager. If the public let's him know that it will not tolerate Piedmont Airlines retaining in its employ people who make racist remarks, this particular issue can be put to rest."



Photo/CALVIN FERGUSON

RIBBON CUTTING FOR REVITALIZATION. At the grand opening of Universal College of Beauty are (corner l-r) Tessie Thompson (background), Joneal Williams, Candida Mobley of Radio KJLH, L.A.,

John Williams, Councilpersons Charlie Dannelly and Ella Scarborough, Rep. Howard Barnhill, Herman Richardson, Commissioner Bob Walton and Sandra Heartley of Mechanics and Farmers Bank.

Beauty College Boosts Project Catalyst

By HERB WHITE
Post Staff Writer

Project Catalyst got its first new tenant this week with the opening of the Universal College of Beauty on West Trade Street.

The Los Angeles-based institution opened its first satellite campus outside of California Sunday as westside residents and dignitaries were on hand for the ribbon-cutting ceremonies. The building once housed the old Adroit Cleaners, which went

out of business after a 1984 fire.

Project Catalyst is a joint effort of local merchants, government and Johnson C. Smith University to turn the northwest section of Charlotte into a middle-income community complete with new businesses and housing to the predominantly black area.

The proposed development, to be called Biddle Village, after JCSU's original benefactor should include retail stores and

a medical center at the end of West Trade.

Expected to be completed by 1993, Project Catalyst will cost around \$38 million, developers say. The project was the brainchild of the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Citizens Forum, an organization which addresses land-use concerns.

Government, developers and corporations have donated land, money and services to the effort. After a year-long planning

stage completed last year, the first businesses were developed. Universal is the first of several businesses planned to be located in buildings that are currently unused.

In addition to new businesses, JCSU plans to expand its physical plant with an honors college building, new dormitories, and a faculty-alumni club that would serve as a focal point for the community.

Woodard Vies For Local NAACP President Post

Charlotte-Mecklenburg NAACP Vice President Valerie Woodard announced this week her candidacy for president of the local chapter.

Woodard, a member of the organization for eight years, is the first candidate to formally announce her intentions.

Currently the NAACP's vice president, Woodard serves the same capacity with the Black Political Caucus.

The election process starts later this month with nominations and ends in December with the election itself.

Among Woodard's goals is an increase in youth participation, increased fund raising activity and monitoring local government to insure black participation.



Woodard

Scott: Blacks Must Work To Improve Education

GREENSBORO (AP) -- The new president of Bennett College says black Americans must work to improve education as part of a strategy to unite the nation.

"We can only have one nation if we make the commitment to empower blacks and other minorities," Gloria Randle Scott said Sunday during her inauguration as the 11th president of the historically black women's college.



Scott

"The notion of education must be laced with a legacy of pluralism and include scholarship about blacks and women. I say we must create a new renaissance of education in America."

Ms. Scott, 50, succeeds Isaac Miller Jr. and is only the second female president in the college's history. Bennett, founded in 1873, became a women's college in 1926. Willa B. Player was Bennett's first female president from 1955-1966.

In her 25-minute speech, Ms. Scott urged students to strive toward academic excellence.

"People will not grow except

that they are challenged," she said. "There is no growth without pain."

"The responsibility to educate the students begins with us," Ms. Scott said. "Education ought to be the diplomatic weapon by which we interact with the rest of the world, rather than military might."

In a symposium held Saturday, a sociologist said that while the percentage of black high school graduates has increased, the number of those enrolled in college has declined.

"We're in an educational regression," said Gail E. Thomas of Texas A&M University. "We've relaxed. There's been a decline in the black family income. An increase in poverty, underemployment and unemployment."

Ms. Thomas said few high school students who can make it in college are enrolling.

"We need to instill a sense of vision and mission in not only our young people but the black community," Ms. Thomas said.

Barbara Hatton, a program officer for the Ford Foundation, said a larger pool of quality students is needed so recruits can be pulled for teaching positions. She noted only four percent of the nation's teachers are black.

Garner Asks Blacks To Split The Ticket

By HERB WHITE
Post Staff Writer

Ed Garner, the Republican candidate for state auditor, believes this election can be a watershed for black politicians.

"It can be a history-making year in North Carolina," he said.

Garner, 45, is the only black candidate for state-wide this year. His opponent, incumbent Democrat Ed Renfrow, has been auditor since 1980.

The auditor is responsible for maintaining expenditure records for all state agencies.

The race is significant in political and racial terms. Garner in a position to become the first black elected to the N.C. Council of State and the first Republican to win a seat since 1896.

"I think the Council of State should have the representation of all people," Garner said. "It's time that the council reflect the representation of all people."



Garner

Being a Republican shouldn't be a disadvantage, Garner said,

adding that he expects support from a cross-section of the electorate.

"I'm getting broad spectrum of support around the state," he said.

Garner has made a previous effort for office, losing a 1984 bid for a state Rep. seat in Asheville by 1,500 votes. He blamed that loss on a lack of notoriety, but believes things will be different this time.

"I'm getting out there like a guy who's getting recognition for the first time," he said.

To beat Renfrow, Garner will have to sell his vision of inclusionary politics to voters who don't support Republicans of any color--black Democrats.

"People are beginning to see and look at candidates, and vote for the best candidate, not their party," Garner said.

To promote his cause, Garner's campaign encourages

blacks to "split" the ticket on election day. Ticket-splitting requires the voter to omit marking the ballot for any party and select candidates individually.

Garner said that contrary to what skeptics say about black voting patterns, blacks will split ballots to elect one of their own.

"I think black folk are beginning to vote more intelligently. I really believe ticket-splitting is catching on," he said. "It's demeaning for anyone to tell black people that it's too complicated to split tickets."

Blacks need to diversify political muscle by taking active roles in both parties, Garner said.

"If blacks have input in both parties, we'll have representation in both parties and we won't be shut out when one party is in power," he said.

See GARNER on page 2A.

Autrey: County Facing Housing Problem

By HERB WHITE
Post Staff Writer

Incumbent county commissioners' vice chairman Rod Autrey announced his bid for reelection last week by pledging to help improve the housing situation in Mecklenburg.

Speaking at a press conference at the Adams Mark hotel, Autrey, vice chairman of the commissioners, called housing one of the more pressing issues the county faces.

"That's one thing I learned about my community than any other," he said.

Mecklenburg should make the effort to expand housing expenditures throughout the county, preferably with local and private funding, Autrey, a Republican, said the county may need to have a \$10-15 million bond referendum for housing and was disappointed one isn't on the November ballot.

"It's a community problem and I think the community is ready to deal with it," he said.

Expressing reservations about the national government's ability to support housing on the local level, Autrey, a two-term commissioner, said a home-grown approach is better.

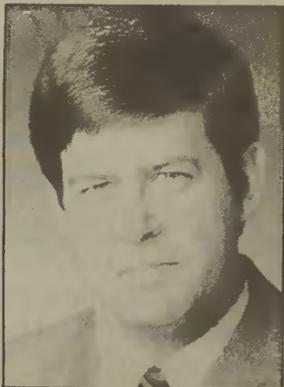
"Government is not the answer, but it should help facilitate the improvement of housing."

Autrey, who is running for one of the three at-large seats, also called for further study of merging city and county governments, saying Mecklenburg agencies could operate more efficiently under one umbrella.

He proposed a task force made up of officials from county agencies and each municipality to hammer out a plan for consolidation. The issue was last studied in 1984 by a panel that failed to make a recommendation to merge governments.

Autrey contends one government would be more effective by

See AUTREY on page 2A.



Autrey



Gantt Will Be On The News For WBTV

By M.L. LANEY
Post Staff Writer

WBTV will begin utilizing the talents of Sonya Gantt to convey its news coverage starting October 31st.

Miss Gantt is a 23-year-old Charlotte native. She is the daughter of former Charlotte Mayor Harvey Gantt.

She attended East Mecklenburg High School before going on to the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

Miss Gantt received a degree in Journalism and set out to learn the news business via television.

She presently works at WBTV in Florence, S.C., where she has been for the last year.

"I'm really excited about the move back to Charlotte. I mean it's going to be nice to be at home

See GANTT on page 2A.

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