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THE AWARD-WINNING "VOICE OF THE BLACK COMMUNITY"

50 Cents

Some Seek Black Housing Director For City

BY JALYNE STRONG
Post Editor

With the resignation of Charlotte Housing Authority Executive Director Ray Wheeling effective April 15, the search to replace him has begun. But this time, there's hope of having an African-American fill the position.

Blacks account for over 90 percent of the residents of Charlotte's approximately 5,000 public housing units. Eighty percent of the Housing Authority's employees are black. Based on these facts, many members of the city's black community believe an African-American should be at the helm of the Charlotte Housing Authority.

Rev. Phil Davis, vice chairman of the Board of Commissioners of the Charlotte Housing Authority, says having a black person head the public housing administration seems reasonable based on the statistics concern-



Davis

ing the racial makeup of the housing residents and employees. "A black director could bring sensitivity and understanding to the residents' lives. He or she will be able to relate to how the residents feel, how they operate and what's meaningful to them," said Davis.

Most importantly, Davis adds, a black director, through a comprehensive relationship with public housing tenants, may be able to find a way to help residents move up and out of public housing.

"The initial intent of public housing was for the homes to be transitional places of residency," said Davis. "But now we have generations of families staying in public housing --- from the great grandmother on down."

"What we need now is a guide and a movement towards self-sufficiency. We need to be doing more in regard to transitional housing and tenant management. I personally believe that a black housing director, who can identify with the cultural aspects of the residents of public housing, can do more to break the cycle of generations in public housing."

Currently, according to Davis, there are 2700 families on the city's public housing waiting list. This, however, is not an accurate figure of the number of people trying to get into public housing, since the Charlotte Housing Authority closed the list for the last three to four years.

Davis, who has been on the housing commission for two years, compliments the work achieved by Wheeling who is white. "I think Ray did an excellent job in terms of innovations in development. He is very knowledgeable in terms of the ins and outs of HUD regulations at the local, state and federal level," said Davis.

Wheeling, who managed such developments as scattered site housing and secured funds for the renovations of Piedmont Courts and Boulevard Homes during his tenure, was skilled in development and land acquisition, admits Davis. "He accomplished much during a rough period in Charlotte."

"But if there was any weak point in his management it was

See PUSH on page 2A.

Poverty, Too Few Role Models Hurts Black Life

By HERB WHITE
Post Staff Writer

Many of the problems plaguing African-Americans could be remedied by shoring up the black family, a Charlotte counselor believes.

Queen Thompson, coordinator of Building on the Strength of the Family, a local advocate of black families, said black America's problems most often start at home, where economic hardships force families into lives of poverty.

"A lot of the time, we lack information... Sometimes it's hard for us to accept facts," she said.

Facts gathered by researchers point to a bleak picture for African-Americans. The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services revealed last week that while the life expectancy of whites rose from 75.3 years to 75.4 between 1984 and 1986, black life expectancy dropped from 69.7 to 69.4.

Among the reasons given for the decrease were murders, infant mortality and disease.

Thompson said the rising tide of poverty for black families contributes to the overall problem. Without the money to pay for health care, black babies are twice as likely to die within the first year of life and deadly diseases go undetected.

"Due to a lack of information," Thompson said, African-Americans often overlook their health. "Sometimes, we just don't like to look at a doctor."

Statistics in Charlotte point out the national trend. According to the 1980 census, the last year such information was available, 25,574 people, or 26.6 percent of the city's African-

Percentages of Charlotte's Population, by Race, Living Below the Poverty Level



Americans, lived below the poverty line. By comparison, 12,214 whites, or 5.8 percent of the total white population, lived in poverty.

Studies done by the Charlotte Community Relations Committee, Thompson said, show that 80 percent of black households are headed by women. And because women generally earn less than men, black families are especially vulnerable to poverty.

"The fact that 80 percent of black families are headed by a woman and the fact that women historically earn less than men, these things are perpetuated," Thompson said.

With parents struggling to escape the grip of poverty, the family unit often loses its cohesiveness, Thompson said. The

result is a decrease in discipline and role models for children.

"The demise of the family has contributed to the hardships," she said.

No Black Men

Dr. Elijah Anderson, a sociology professor at the University of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia, writes in "Moral Leadership in the Black Community" that the absence of black men in the family setting leads to a breakdown of traditional family values.

The "old heads," as Anderson wrote, are disappearing from the inner city, leaving boys with no positive role models.

"Traditionally, the old head was a man of stable means who

See FAMILY on page 2A.

Tony Brown To Visit Johnson C. Smith Tuesday

One of black America's strongest voices, Tony Brown, will speak Tuesday, March 28, at Johnson C. Smith University. Brown will speak at the free program at 7 p.m. in Biddle Auditorium on the JCSU campus.

For 15 years, Brown has been a journalist and investigative reporter and his newspaper column is syndicated in over 100 newspapers. His award-winning television series *Tony Brown's Journal*, is the nation's longest-running and top-ranked black affairs series. The show was selected as one of the top 10 television shows of all time that presents positive black images.

His first feature-length film "White Girl" was critically acclaimed after its release last spring. He was named as one of the "top 50 National Black News Makers of the Year" and *Ebony* magazine elected Brown as one of the "100 Most Influential Black Americans."

Tony Brown is recognized as one of America's leading experts in the broadcast industry and one of the most powerful spokesmen for black people in America. One writer described Brown as having... "consistent wisdom in public affairs, both

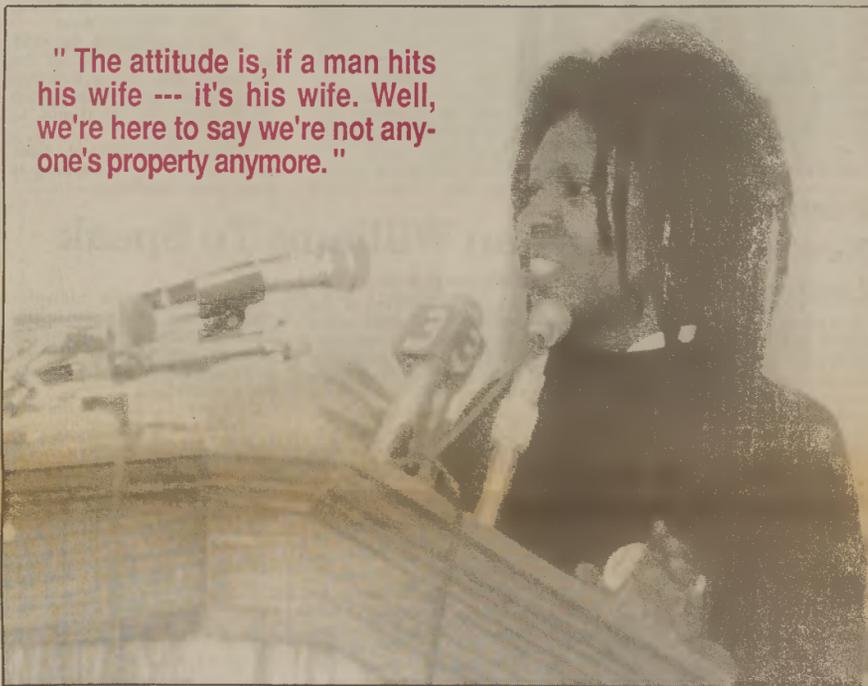


Brown

on TV and in print... An incisive mind, political acumen, an objective outlook and a deep compassion for understanding the needs of black people."

Brown's appearance in Charlotte and Johnson C. Smith University is sponsored by the JCSU Lyceum Committee, a group of administrative, faculty and student leaders who develop and bring to campus a wholesome program of cultural and educational events and speakers. For more information, contact Ms. JoAnn Craft, 378-1046.

"The attitude is, if a man hits his wife --- it's his wife. Well, we're here to say we're not anyone's property anymore."



Photo/CALVIN FERGUSON

Comedian and actress Whoopi Goldberg, prior to performing in Charlotte Monday night, spoke to

the press at the Park Hotel. She deplored domestic violence in America's homes.

Domestic Violence Is Not A Funny Matter, Says Goldberg

By LORA VANDERHALL
Post Staff Writer

Character actor Whoopi Goldberg performed in Charlotte Monday night but earlier that day she appeared at a press conference with seven former battered women to speak out against domestic violence.

Goldberg spoke on behalf of

the North Carolina Coalition Against Domestic Violence (NCCADV).

The NCCADV is a grassroots membership organization of battered women's advocates and supporters who believe it is important to end violence in the lives of women and children.

Publicist Judy Chaet of Matthews, a friend of Goldberg, requested that she come to speak in hopes that more attention would be brought to the problem of domestic violence.

Randall and Goldberg had become close friends nine years ago when they worked in a San Diego restaurant. Goldberg washed dishes. Chaet was a cook.

Goldberg spoke about the recent hostage-taking incident that occurred at the Shelter Home in Lenoir.

Just after midnight on Friday March, 10, Troy Lingle entered the home of a staff member of the Lenoir battered women's shelter. He took her and her son hostage. Lingle took them to the shelter where he gained entrance. He was looking for his wife but she was not at the shelter. He held seven people hostage with a .22 gauge rifle for 13 hours, shooting into the ceiling approximately 8 times.

Lingle is currently in custody in Caldwell County on nine

counts of kidnapping, under a \$150,000 bond.

"We must begin to say this (domestic violence) is no longer acceptable," said Goldberg. "I hope this man understands why this is offensive."

See GOLDBERG on page 2A.



Writer Keynotes LDF Banquet

Charlotte Post Publisher Gerald Johnson will bring greetings from the local media community to the NAACP Legal Defense and Education Fund Banquet to be held Saturday, April 1, 6 p.m., at McDonald's Cafeteria on Beatties Ford Rd.

Noted journalist Juan Williams will be the keynote speaker for this 20th annual affair.

Williams, 33, is a reporter for the *Washington Post* magazine.

See JUAN on page 2A.



Photo/CALVIN FERGUSON

SHOOTING THE CRATE? Creativity can always make a way. Twelve-year-old Cody Hammonds' makeshift basketball hoop serves the purpose as he dunks the B-ball on his court in Belvedere Homes.

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