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# The Charlotte Post

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THE AWARD-WINNING "VOICE OF THE BLACK COMMUNITY"

50 Cents

## Minority Affairs Office Reinstated

By **HERB WHITE**  
Post Managing Editor

Mecklenburg County Commissioners voted Monday to revive the Minority Affairs Office, two years after it was scrapped. But it will take more than the county to make it a success, says the head of the task force who recommended the office be brought back.

"Now it's our duty to make it work," said Dr. Jewett Walker, chairman of the 14-member minority affairs task force. "It's not going to mean anything until we

make it work."

The Republican-dominated commissioners voted 5-2 to reinstate the office, with Barbara Lockwood and George Higgins dissenting. The lone Democrat and black, Bob Walton, voted for the office.

"I had no anticipations about how it would turn out," said Walker of the vote. "The county commissioners sent out a task force, and we did our job. The community had a lot of expectations and I believe we delivered."

Before approving the office,

commissioners accepted a modified version of the minority affairs task force's recommendation on the selection of an executive director.

The task force proposed last month that commissioners appoint 15 people to a committee that would select the director. The compromise will allow County Manager Jerry Fox to fill the position. The task force recommended that a director be named by Feb. 1990.

"It'll be alright," Walker said of the decision to let Fox name the

director. "We can monitor and hopefully interface with the county manager as far as who's hired."

Walker said the minority affairs office would be best served if some members of the task force are named to committee. Their knowledge of Mecklenburg's non-white communities could provide direction in forging county policy.

"It's my hope that some of those people will be selected," he said. "There out to be some continuity in our thoughts."

The minority affairs office will be responsible for providing county government with information about Mecklenburg's ethnic communities, such as their size, location and needs. The office is seen by supporters as a bridge between non-whites and government-sponsored services.

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, the combined population of various ethnic groups amounted to 24 percent of Mecklenburg's population, a fact that was pointed out in the task force's report.

"At times, this fact causes problems for county government, especially when members of Charlotte-Mecklenburg's minority communities feel slighted by certain county policies or actions that, in effect, ignore minority concerns and issues," it read.

Walker said the commissioners' vote showed the county is committed fair treatment of non-whites.

"You look on hindsight, and you don't like to say people were wrong," he said. "But to rectify it shows they are committed."

## Communities, First Union Agree On Neighborhood Pact Bank To Spend \$9 Million

By **GWENDOLYN DANIELS**  
Post Staff Writer

Charlotte-based First Union National Bank and a grassroots community group have reached agreement on a plan to pump millions of dollars into predominantly black neighborhoods.

The Charlotte Reinvestment Alliance, a group made up of neighborhood groups, successfully negotiated a pact in which First Union will put more than \$9 million into Charlotte's low-income neighborhoods.

The alliance maintained the bank redlined, a practice of refusing to make loans and other services available to non-white and low-income communities.

As a condition of the settlement, the neighborhood groups withdrew their regulatory challenge to the proposed First Union-Florida National Bank merger. First Union still has to deal with Florida community organizations who allege redlining of their neighborhoods.

In a settlement signed Thursday, First Union agreed to:

•Provide \$5 million in favorably-termed mortgage loans to previously redlined neighborhoods

•Supply up to \$4 million in special commercial loans to small minority-owned businesses in the same neighborhoods

•Finance the startup of a real estate trust that will promote affordable housing in targeted Charlotte communities

•Provide funds to establish community development corporations in the Belmont and Reid Park neighborhoods.

Emmanuel Allen, chairman of the board of directors for the alliance, said the group was pleased with the outcome of the deal.

"Negotiations went quite well, he said. "We received most of what we wanted."

Allen said the group's challenge to First Union has prompted executives from First Union and NCNB to visit the Belmont neighborhood and see first hand how banks deal with black communities.

"This has increased their sensitivity to low-income neighborhoods," Allen said.

First Union was unable to close the deal because it failed to comply with the Community Reinvestment Act, a 1977 federal law that compels regulated depositories to meet the credit needs of all communities in their service area.

The Federal Reserve Board recently deferred approval of the First Union-Florida National deal pending an investigation of First Union's compliance to the Reinvestment Act.

Rogers Seegars, president of the Belmont Neighborhood Strategy Force, said challenging First Union was long overdue.

"We finally came up with some guarantees for the neighborhoods that have been so neglected over the years," he said.

The agreement is the first city-wide CRA program that First Union has undertaken.

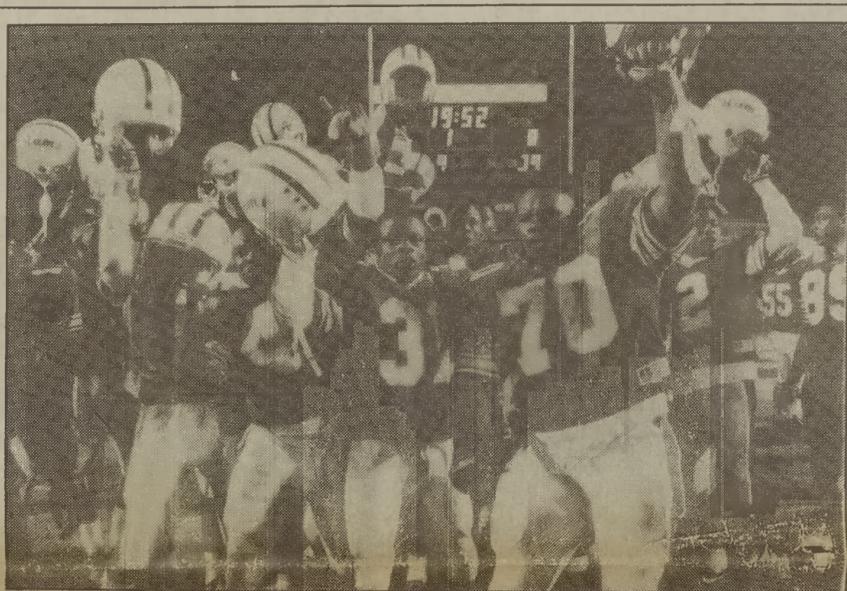
Rickey Hall, president of the Reid Park Association, said he feels both parties should be proud of the end product.

"The challenge now for the neighborhoods is to take what First Union has provided and make a positive change," Rickey Hall said.

Allen said the alliance's present goals will focus on targeting other financial institutions and asking them to follow First Union.

Allen said he believes communities have to follow through on their accomplishment.

"The challenge now is to make sure funds are used effectively," he said. "Our work is not done. It's just beginning."



Photo/CALVIN FERGUSON

## IT'S CELEBRATION TIME!

Harding Rams football players rejoice after Friday's 35-0 win over westside rival West Mecklen-

burg at Memorial Stadium in the second round of the N.C. 4A playoffs.

## Leadership Class Focuses On '90

By **MILLICENT LINK**  
Post Staff Writer

Focus on Leadership is only looking for a certain type of person: a person with vested interest in the black community.

The program is designed to develop skills primarily among black citizens in Charlotte-Mecklenburg. The organization's sole purpose, say officials, is to identify and groom future leaders.

Focus on Leadership was initiated in 1987 by Mayor Pro-Tem Ron Leeper and the Black Political Caucus.

Joan Ross, recruit chairperson and board member, said, "Both Leeper and the caucus saw a need to develop a group of people with a good mix of grass roots."

"We are looking for individuals interested in investing time

in the black community."

Alumni from the group consist of leaders in government, business and industry, non-profit organizations and other leadership groups.

Alumni include leaders such as optometrist Paula Newsome, Kevin Patterson, a manager at IBM, and Hoyle Martin, District 2 city councilman-elect.

The 25 participants will be introduced to a series of seminars that explore various community issues while offering challenges in addressing those concerns.

"Our goal for 1990 will be to recruit 25 representatives as leaders that have an interest of community growth and development for the city of Charlotte," said Ross.

Topics for the 1990 class will include the history of Charlotte,

government and politics in the city of Charlotte and Mecklenburg County, economic development, black family structure, and personal development.

Candidates for selection must be at least 21 years old and have demonstrated community involvement.

The 1989 class was responsible for presenting a forum on Economic Development in the Black Community and the creation of the Think Tank, "a group of individuals whose common purpose is to come up with ideas to improve the black community," said Ross.

The Focus on Leadership group also hosts an annual awards banquet that recognizes 10 honorees for their service to the community.

## Oprah's Up By 17 Pounds

The Associated Press

CHICAGO (AP) --- Oprah Winfrey told her talk-show viewers today that she has regained 17 pounds of the 67 she lost in a diet a year ago.

"We all know ... that the battle only begins with losing the weight," Winfrey said.

"I did not add 67 pounds of fat back," said Winfrey, who made headlines a year ago with the announcement of her successful weight loss on a liquid protein diet over a four-month period.

She said the worst part of the past year has been trying to lose while in the public eye.

"You order a side dish and they call 911 on you," she quipped.

She recounted ordering apple pancakes in a restaurant, saying she "read about it in two newspapers the next day."

Winfrey said her "body is most comfortable about 10 pounds lower than it is now," and that she is aiming for that with an exercise routine and a diet low in fat and low in sugar.



## NAACP Events Scheduled

The Charlotte-Mecklenburg County Branch - NAACP will hold its Executive Board meeting tonight at Alexander Funeral Home, 112 North Irwin Ave., Charlotte, in the Conference Room.

Branch meeting is November 30 7 PM at Greater Bethel A.M.E. Church, 201 Grandin Road, Charlotte. The Pastor is Rev. Conrad Pridgen.

The WIN (Women In NAACP) will sponsor a Baby Contest and Christmas Party December 3, 1989, (Ages 1-12). Location: Greenville Community Center, 1330 Spring St. at 3:30 Chair: Mrs. Ruby McCatharine.

For additional information contact: Mrs. Ruby McCatharine - 537-6617 or 333-0231 or Mary E. Clarke, President, Charlotte-Mecklenburg County Branch, NAACP - 334-0207.

## America Needs To Improve Learning Ability

By **MILLICENT LINK**  
Post Staff Writer

America must produce lifelong learners and convert to technological advances, Charlotte-Mecklenburg School Superintendent Peter Relic told members of the Gaston College Advisory Council.

"Modern America is an economic society that calls for higher education," he said. "We have to impact these kids at an early age and this means starting at the elementary level."

Relic said American schools have abandoned the teaching of values. He also expressed concern with increasing number of dropouts in Mecklenburg and Gaston counties.

"If we work together in close consortium we can decrease the dropout rate," said Relic.

To combat the dropout problem, Gaston College has established an Adopt a Student Retention Program. The program is designed to lower the dropout rate of high risk students. Each faculty member will be respon-

sible for five high risk students. Gaston has also established an Adopt-A-School program.

East Gaston High School was the first school to be adopted. Holbrook Junior High will be adopted for the 1990 school year.

Relic said the poor performance of the Scholastic Attitude Test (SAT) is a sad reflection of how materialistic American children are. He also blames the poor test scores on the invalid comparison to other cities. "Many cities only test a portion of their students," said Relic.

In order to maintain a working relationship with the public school system, the Liberal Arts and Sciences division has established a number of other programs.

The Advisory Council's primary purpose is to serve as a support group to ensure that all segments of the community are aware of and familiar with purpose and programs of the division and vice versa.

The 60-member council is the

brainchild of Dr. Willie Kimmons, Dean of Liberal Arts and Sciences at Gaston College.

"The council will continue to play a significant role in the continuous process of increasing enrollment, visibility, and

positive image," said Kimmons.

In addition, the council serves to improve the relationship and cooperation between the Division of Liberal Arts and Sciences, the college and its constituencies and supporters.

ing that actions by Singleton had disrupted the learning process, school district attorney Bruce Davis said.

"I think it's an appropriate decision," Davis said in a telephone interview from his Camden office. "I thought we had a strong case going in. I think his conduct caused about as much disruption as one could imagine."

"I think the evidence showed that his presence as a teacher at the middle school made it impossible to conduct school there."

Singleton, a Conway Middle School science teacher and president of the local branch of the

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Relic

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