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COLUMN

Black Voters May Not Buy Bonds

By John Minter
POST CORRESPONDENT

Local officials pushing a multi-million dollar bond referendum on the November ballot are putting on a hard sales pitch to win over African American voters.

Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools Supt. John Murphy's \$25,000 mortgage bonus has surely heightened opposition to the \$192 million in school bonds. But

many African Americans want to know more about how the new spending will affect inner city and westside schools before promising their support.

"If it passes, it is going to be with a lot of work on the part of those heading up this bond issue," said Charlie Dannelly, the former Charlotte City Council member who is first vice chairman of the Black Caucus. "People in all communities are concerned that there's not enough informa-

tion about the bonds."

Concern about how magnet schools affect pupil assignments for African American children and drain resources from non-magnet schools has grown over the past year.

And black opposition, coupled with anticipated opposition from Citizens for Effective Government (CFEG) could produce the second defeat for a school bond issue in as many elections.

A \$15 million bond propo-

sal that would have put a magnet school in uptown Charlotte was defeated in the November 1992 election.

The current \$192 million school bond issue would use \$123 million to build four elementary schools, a middle school and two high schools, plus another \$34 million to expand and renovate six high schools - Myers Park, North Mecklenburg, Olympic, Providence (the

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Charlotte-Mecklenburg School Bond Package

- Enrollment Growth: \$123.1 million
- Expansion/Renovation Of 6 High Schools: \$34.45 million
- Renovation/Expansion of 3 Inner City Schools: \$21.9 million
- Asbestos removal, ADA compliance, underground storage tank removal: \$3.27 million
- Replacement of roofing, air conditioning/heating systems: \$8 million
- Preparation For Instructional Technology (Electrical service/wiring and network cabling): \$1.18 million
- Total: \$192 million.

SOURCE: CHARLOTTE-MECKLENBURG SCHOOLS

News And Notes From Charlotte And The Rest Of The World.

Black Town Meeting

A Black Town Meeting to address the state of Black America will be held Sunday at 5 p.m. at Bruns Avenue Elementary School at 501 S. Bruns Ave.

For more information, call 333-6471 or 391-7446.

For Thursday's Child Saturday

A fundraiser for a child support enforcement group will be held Saturday on Beatties Ford Road.

Supporters of Thursday's Child will participate in the fundraiser sponsored by Aularale Skin Care & Cosmetics at 2340-2342 Beatties Ford Road. Food, baby items and cosmetic makeovers will be part of the vendor market. Vendor spaces are available. For more information, call Sylvia Grier at 391-7446.

Student Recognition

The Wilmore Student Recognition Picnic will be held at 6 p.m. Sept. 23 at Calvary United Methodist Church, 512 West Blvd. The event is for elementary and junior high school students and their parents from Wilmore who attend Dilworth, Eastover and Sedgfield elementary schools and Alexander Graham and Sedgfield middle schools.

The picnic, sponsored by the STEP Committee of Myers Park Presbyterian Church and Calvary United Methodist Church, is free and will begin between 6:30 and 6:45 p.m.

For more information, call 376-8584.

Contracting For NFL Stadium

Prospective contractors for the proposed uptown NFL stadium have a chance to talk business next week.

Minority Business Contractors & Business Associates will host a meeting with Richardson Sports and Thompson/Turner Construction Co. on the stadium Sept. 14 at 6:15 p.m. at Johnson C. Smith University's Honors College. Discussion will focus on the expansion franchise drive and construction-related opportunities.

For more information, call Edroy Moore at 537-8828.

Charlotte Rep Holds Auditions

Toot your horn or ring a bell with the Charlotte Repertory Orchestra.

The group is holding auditions for all instruments Sept. 11 at Central Piedmont Community College's Bryant Hall. Programs include music from the classics and modern literature.

Interested musicians are asked to send a resume to P.O. Box 11334, Charlotte, N.C. 28220-1334. For more information, call 553-8320.

Celebrating The Black Family

The Carolinas Black Family Reunion at Hornets Nest Park was a big success, with an estimated 3,000 people participating, according to Mike Porter, chief of the Mecklenburg Park Rangers. In fact, the crowd was so big, rangers assigned to Freedom Park were brought over to help with traffic.

- Dennis Moore (top left) and Don do a hula dance at the background right.
- Valerie Graham (below) and shows off t-shirts in the vendors area.
- Nicole Washington strikes easy work with hula hoops during a demonstration at the main stage.



Alternative Chamber Takes Off Sept. 17

FROM NEWS SERVICES

A minority-led Chamber of Commerce in Charlotte is officially in business.

Roosevelt Maske, president of the Charlotte Area Business League (CABL), announced this week the League will become the Metro-Charlotte Minority Chamber, CDC on Sept. 17. The Metro-Chamber will become one of the four new chambers that have opened recently in the Charlotte area. He said that the Metro-Chamber replaces the CABL, an organization started in 1978.

W. Troy Watson, President/Executive Director of CABL, said, "the new chamber will do all the work previously done by the Business League, such as operate the Charlotte Minority Business Development Center, Small Cities Programs, Metrolina Resource Bank and other programs. However, it will add tremendously to its current scope of work. The official opening of the Metro-Chamber will take place on Sept. 17 during the awards reception/banquet to be held at the International Trade Center."

Watson said that Oscar Coffey, President of the National Association of Black and Minority Chambers of Commerce, will be the Metro-Chamber's special guest for the evening and will help kick off the opening of the chamber. Over the years, Coffey, a native of Oakland, Calif., has been responsible for assisting in the opening of many of the more than 68

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Bessie Coleman, World's First Great Female Flyer, Gets Her Due

By Nita Lelyveld
ASSOCIATED PRESS

WASHINGTON - She was a pioneer American aviator. Her flights drew big crowds. She was daring and exciting and beautiful, too. And she died tragically while flying. But unlike her contemporary, Amelia Earhart, Bessie Coleman made no splash in history.

Bessie Coleman was black. The world's first black female aviator got her pilot's license in 1921 - two years before Earhart. She flew in

Europe, starred in air shows, and tried her best to become famous. But outside of the segregated black world in which she lived, few people ever paid attention.

Now the author of an acclaimed biography of Earhart is working to change that, with a new book, "Queen Bess: Daredevil Aviator."

Doris L. Rich first heard about Coleman while doing research for "Amelia Earhart: A Biography." Over and over, she came across her name in early aviation history. But no one gave de-

tails.

It took a lot of digging to find any.

Coleman didn't leave records; she could barely write. And the mainstream press rarely wrote about her. Old copies of the weekly black newspapers that covered her appearances are not easy to come by.

"With Earhart, I was flooded with information," says Rich. "Every time I found a fact about Bessie, I was deeply grateful that day."

Looking back, it's hard to believe anyone could have lived Coleman's life. Born in

1892 in east Texas, she grew up in a three-room shotgun shack, picking cotton and taking in white people's laundry. She went to Chicago in 1915 and became a manicurist in a black beauty shop.

Then one day she decided to fly.

How she came to the idea is unclear. But she had always set her sights high, Rich says.

"She was born with a kind of self-confidence in which she viewed herself as very gifted, very special - as someone who was going to

amount to something," Rich said. "With people like that, background and beginnings don't matter."

When no one in Chicago would agree to teach her, Coleman raised the money to travel to France, where she took courses at one of the best flight schools - L'Ecole d'Aviation des Freres Caudron at Le Crotoy in the Somme.

Between 1921 and 1926, Coleman earned the nickname "Queen Bess," touring the country, giving exhibition flights and speaking at black churches and schools.

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Story Idea? Call 376-0496
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