

Fighting against drugs



PHOTO/PAUL WILLIAMS III

Barbara Hess of the Charlotte Area Health Education Center (left) talks with Mary Clarke during an anti-drug meeting sponsored by the Graham Heights Community Organization. The meeting was held at Walls Memorial AME Zion Church.

Athlete represents U.S. at Paralympic Games

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training in Charlotte, in part because of Cornwell's inspiration and dedication to the games.

NationsBank, a major Olympic sponsor, also sponsors portions of the Paralympic games, including the torch relay. The torch is expected to arrive in Charlotte about 5 p.m. Friday. A celebration is planned in Marshall Park.

The official Paralympic torch was lit in Atlanta on Monday from the Eternal Flame at the Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial. It was the first ceremonial lighting in history from the slain civil rights leader's crypt. The torch was taken to Washington, D.C., and began a 10-day, 1,000-mile relay down the East Coast.

Actor Christopher Reeve, who suffered a severe spinal injury after falling off a horse, will be master of ceremonies for the opening celebration in Atlanta.

Cornwell has won a number of championship medals in power lifting competitions, including the Pan American and United States titles.

"I am thinking of retiring after this," Cornwell said. "I'll just do it for recreation."

He'll also probably continue speaking to children and adults about the need to give the disabled an opportunity in the work force and in the community.

Cornwell's retiring doesn't depend on winning a medal. He said he will be satisfied "just getting there and being involved."

Battle assignment as bishop not related to \$100,000 gift

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from office. Battle withdrew the money from church accounts with the approval of two church elders and used it to pay back a portion of the \$600,000 embezzled by Hairston, a member of his former church, Gethsemane AME Zion Church in Charlotte.

With the \$100,000 payment, Hairston's two-year sentence was reduced and she now lives in Atlanta. Hairston was a First Union National Bank branch manager when the theft occurred. She pled guilty and was sentenced to two years in prison, which was cut in half and she was released last year.

One critic, Sam Jennings, a former trustee chairman at the Pineville AME Zion Church in Rock Hill, said Battle used poor judgement.

Battle was elected bishop in 1992. The 7th Episcopal District he supervised previously included about 230 churches in S.C. and Georgia.

Battle could not be reached for comment and several key church leaders were out of the country for a mission conference in South America this week.

Battle has said he acted within church guidelines by securing the approval of the elders. He said he was coming to the aid of a loyal church member in trouble when he gave the money to help repay

her debt to the bank. The bank then agreed to her early release.

"This is dead wrong," Mia Hefney, a Rock Hill hair stylist and Pineville AME Zion church steward, was quoted as saying after word of the gift spread. "To me this is not missionary work. This isn't what our money should be used for."

Hefney reportedly circulated a petition seeking repayment from Battle of the \$85,000 taken from the S.C. conference based at Rock Hill and the \$15,000 taken from the mission fund of the Palmetto Conference, based in Spartanburg.

"I think he took his authority and went beyond the call of duty," Jennings said. "I've been in the (AME Zion) church 47 years and this is the first time I've ever known that magnitude of money going to one person. I've never know anyone to get \$1,000. Good God, a lot of people have approached me considering what they could do with \$100,000."

Jennings said he is concerned because the money came from South Carolina, but was spent to help someone in North Carolina.

"I just think he used poor judgement. I feel like he should put the money back. This was way out of the guidelines. When it comes to mission, there are guidelines as to what each person gets."

Appointments for CMS

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lar to the former area superintendents concept ended under former Supt. John Murphy.

Smith called the assistant superintendents, among them former acting superintendent for administration Dennis Williams, a key center piece of his effort to bring equity back to the system's schools.

The assistant superintendents will oversee K-12 groupings of schools feeding upward to the high school level.

They will serve as points of contact and advocacy, handling problems not dealt with at the school level, Smith said.

But their other functions may be more critical, according to Smith.

"They will deal with the assurance of equity within our schools," he said. "These individuals will come together on a regular basis to talk about real world, day-to-day issues that need to be addressed...and insure an equitable level of service and performance of all 130 schools."

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