

Election not kind to Gantt, Leake

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new day."

Over the weekend, the Black Political Caucus and dozens of other organizations and political groups spent \$11,000 to send letters to 70,000 African American voters in Charlotte urging them to vote a straight Democratic ticket.

"We formed a coalition with the caucus, NAACP and 60 other groups," Davis said. "We could never afford to mail out that kind of ballot by ourselves."

The caucus decided to endorse only Democrats in an effort to boost Gantt and Gov. Jim Hunt, who contributed to the mailing, Davis said.

However, Velma Leake, who failed in her at large bid for the Board of County Commissioners, said that hurt her candidacy since blacks did not single shot vote for her, while whites were able to do so.

"I think I lost because this community does not support the black candidate at large," Leake said. "We were led to believe as a people to go a full ticket...and the black people supported the process and they fussed about black people single-shotting and they single shot their candidates."

"I couldn't have got 83,000 votes with just black people. There were white people who voted for me... but we need to reassess the support the Democratic Party gives its people."

Leake finished fifth, two places out of the top three needed to win election. Democrat Becky Carney won a seat on the board, giving Democrats a 5-4 majority on



PHOTO/PAUL WILLIAMS III
Royce Burriss makes his choices for elected offices Tuesday at Precinct 98 on Old Pineville Road.

the nine-member board. Black Democrats Hoyle Martin in District 2 and Darrel Williams in District 3 were unopposed Tuesday.

Davis said Leake's criticism was unwarranted.

"I think Velma just got caught up in the broadness of the race," Davis said. "A lot of

folks criticized the Caucus for recommending a straight Democratic vote and not a single shot for Leake, but the Caucus felt we could help Harvey by doing that. Harvey's was the most important race at the time."

In his concession speech Tuesday, Gantt gave no indi-

cation of his future plans, through a third run against Helms seems unlikely.

Asked what it will take to beat Helms, Davis lamented, "He won't be beat...Helms is going to have to die in office."

Davis said he was happy with black voter turnout Tuesday, which was about the same as the average 57 percent turnout, according to Bill Culp, Mecklenburg's supervisor of elections.

"An Observer reporter said in the last election there's no more black power," Davis said. "I am happy to tell him black power is alive and kicking. We had lines galore. We had lines all around voting places in some precincts. We had early returns in precincts that have never voted that high since I have been operating."

Culp said: "The black vote was good, but not great...not much over 57 percent. That's not an overwhelming turnout."

"It appears to me, for most part, that about 80 percent of the black community was voting a straight Democratic ticket. (Commissioner candidate Parks) Helms got 80 percent of the black vote. Velma led in the black boxes, but by a much smaller margin. In this election, the black community voted straight Democratic."

Culp said Gantt probably won't run again for the Senate, but may show up in an appointed office.

"In urban areas, he ran very strong...but he got killed in small towns and rural areas, particular in the eastern part of the state," Culp said. "Democrats were ready to support Jim Hunt, but not a black candidate for Senate."

Slave ship exhibit opens Friday

Henrietta Marie tells of Africans' Middle Passage

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The Henrietta Marie exhibit goes on display at 10 a.m. Friday at Spirit Square. The exhibit runs through Jan. 24. Hours are 10 a.m. - 8 p.m. Tuesday through Saturday. Tours can also be booked on Mondays.

The exhibit is free and open to the public.

But the real strength of the exhibit's Charlotte appearance is the full complement of lectures, workshops and discussions planned concurrently. Most events are free, but some lectures costs a nominal sum, usually about \$8 per person.

And other local organizations have joined in to present related exhibits, including the Afro-American Cultural Center's

showing of Tom Feelings' powerful drawings from his book "The Middle Passage," and the Museum of the New South's African American church display. Sykes praised Charlotte exhibit organizers for the inclusion of so many related activities.

"I am so excited for Charlotte," he said. "They have followed through. Given what I have seen so far, you all are the most organized. The initial controversy with the other group (Discovery Place), helped mobilize Charlotte. The people got together and said, 'go for it.'"

Discovery Place is displaying works by noted African American scientist George Washington Carver.

Dawn Womack, who pulled off the feat of bringing the exhibit

to Charlotte, including raising \$155,000 for associated programming, was excitedly overseeing the final touches of an effort involving 600 volunteers. Tours have already been booked for over 5,000 people.

"The phones haven't stopped ringing," said Womack, a Spirit Square vice president. "The excitement is real high. People are responding very well to the lectures and programs."

Madeline Burnside of the Mel Fisher Museum said Charlotte's programming is unique compared to the exhibit's three earlier stops in Detroit, Chicago and Los Angeles.

"Charlotte has put together a fantastic program," Burnside said. "No one has put together anything of that scope. You are

using the exhibit to be what we want it to be...the basis of opening up 20th century discussion on race relations."

"Sometimes people have been nervous or anxious about presenting the subject of slavery. It is not a happy subject."

"If you are going to tell what really happens in history this is the way it has to be."



Womack

College's enrollment tumbles

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

FRANKFORT, Ky. — Kentucky State University's enrollment has dropped 9.5 percent since last year, a problem that some students contend can be traced to an incompetent administration.

Students also have raised allegations of rodent-infested dorm rooms, harassment by campus police and crimes in an all-male dormitory.

The issues surfaced during a meeting of regents who approved, without discussion, a preliminary report showing enrollment at 2,336 students compared to 2,579 last year at the 110-year-old historically-black institution.

The racial composition today is 42.7 percent white, 52.2 percent black, and 5.1 percent categorized as other.

More than 30 students crowded into the meeting room Friday and for about three hours urged President Mary L. Smith and university

Historically black Kentucky State

officials to take action.

Cory Brown, editor of the school newspaper, was the first student, asking why students and some faculty members were leaving in ever-increasing numbers.

"This has got to stop," said the senior from Louisville. "I'm ashamed. I'm really ashamed." He said he "hasn't seem much of a vision" from KSU officials since the day he enrolled.

Brown said secrecy surrounded meetings and activities of the board and complained that information at the university — including the daily police log — is closed to public scrutiny.

Other students claimed that McCullin Hall is plagued by drug activity, infested with roaches and rats, has only one working shower on the third floor and a leaking roof that is close to collapsing.

Vaughn Little, vice presi-

dent of student affairs, reported that campus housing officials were investigating the alleged beating of one student by three others wielding a chain.

Little made the announcement after students told the regents that six campus police officers were in the dorm at the time of the alleged beating but no arrests were made.

Board Chairman Anthony Remson thanked the students for speaking out and promised action on their grievances.

"We do value your opinion and we're going to work on some of these things," Remson said.

Regent Anthony Howard, who served on the board when he was a KSU student, assured the group that their complaints "won't go away," adding that he would do what's necessary to fix the problems.

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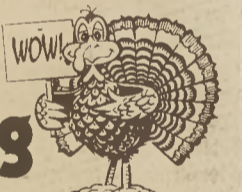
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