

# The Charlotte Post

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75 CENTS

THE VOICE OF THE BLACK COMMUNITY

ALSO SERVING CABARRUS, CHESTER, ROWAN AND YORK COUNTIES

## Fairness urged with busing

By John Minter  
THE CHARLOTTE POST

While some African Americans applauded new Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools pupil assignment proposals, several groups of white parents were lining up against it.

African Americans seemed to like the balance and stability in two possible proposals, which would reassign as many as 3,775 high school students next year.

"I was very pleased with Options 1 and 3," said Bob Davis, chairman of the Black Political Caucus and a former

school principal. "They seem to have potential for more integration and potential for keeping people together from kindergarten to high school. There seems to be fairness and equity in terms of sharing of busing and resources."

Geraldine Powe said she saw the presentation on the new

proposals but they were "too much to absorb at one time."

"It seems they tried to be fair with balancing the children...to make it integrated," she said. "I am not sure they have done that. I plan to go Thursday night to see it again. Off the top of my head, I hope they would be fair to

our children to make it integrated."

Davis said the Black Political Caucus discussed the proposals, made public last week, at its Sunday meeting.

"We resurfaced our education committee and appointed more members to it in order to

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PHOTO/PAUL WILLIAMS III

Pupil assignment will affect black students most.



PHOTO/CALVIN FERGUSON

Johnnie Cochran has made a career out of taking up the cause of African Americans fighting for a fair and impartial hearing in court. Cochran, best known for his defense of O.J. Simpson, was in Charlotte this week.

## LEGAL EAGLE

Johnnie Cochran's reputation has made him a celebrity

By Jeri Young  
THE CHARLOTTE POST

Johnnie Cochran is the first to admit that he can't quite figure out how he became so popular.

"All these things that are happening are amazing to me," he said. "I don't very often take the luxury of thinking about the reactions of people at airports, or even general reactions. People are watching television, like Saturday Night Live, and there's always a joke. Steve Harvey was talk-

ing about my clothes, my purple suit. I'm amazed by that. That's the power of television."

In Charlotte Tuesday to tout his new autobiography, "Journey to Justice," minus his infamous suit, Cochran was mobbed three times in less than two hours. At the airport, at a local TV station and his book signing, hundreds gathered to get a glimpse of the man who freed O.J. Simpson.

"There's a responsibility that goes along with all this," he said. "People expect certain

things from you - they expect you to handle yourself in a certain way. I think that is very appropriate. The Lord is using me to be a positive role model for young people, especially for young African Americans."

Cochran takes his role seriously. He smiles for every photograph, shakes every hand and autographs anything thrust in front of him - from napkins to Post-It Notes. It is all part of the charm that makes Cochran the most famous lawyer in America.

Everyone from Michael Jackson to Simpson have taken advantage of his legal prowess. But before the stars and even now there are what he calls the "No-Js," the common people that have found

solace and justice through him.

"I always question the official version," Cochran said. "There is always a dispute in the facts between what the authorities say happen and what I know happened."

And many times he has proven that the authorities wrong.

Ron Settles is a good example. The young football star was found dead in his Los Angeles jail cell after being stopped for a traffic violation. Police ruled it suicide, but Cochran and his parents felt there was something more.

"Why would this young man kill himself," Cochran said. "His parents came to me and

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## NAACP election challenged

By John Minter  
THE CHARLOTTE POST

Today's local NAACP election is already being challenged before ballots have been counted.

The election is being supervised by Kelly Alexander Jr., who resigned as president of the N.C. NAACP after national NAACP officials demanded that he respond to an audit of financial records. Alexander was suspended in May, pending the audit.

Voting times in the local election are 11 a.m.-6 p.m. at First Baptist Church West on Oaklawn Avenue.

N.C. NAACP second vice president Valerie Woodard, in a letter to national branch director William Penn, cited the addition of three names to the list of at-large candidates as "yet again proof of impropriety and deceit in this election." Woodard has already contacted Penn after a candidate for treasurer, former Charlotte police captain Andrea Huff, was removed from the ballot by Alexander.

Woodard has asked Penn to void any local election results.

Rev. Conrad Pridgen, who is unopposed for president of the local chapter, said this week that he would welcome an outside review of today's election process.

"The NAACP is an organization that has a rich history of fighting for justice, freedom and equality for all people," he said. "And we want to see that same standard applied internally."

"Whatever it takes to make sure that the election was carried out properly, if that means a review from the national, that's fine. I welcome any scrutiny. "In terms of my administration, I would want to have a very open administration and I welcome scrutiny from the

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## S.C. debates Rebel flag

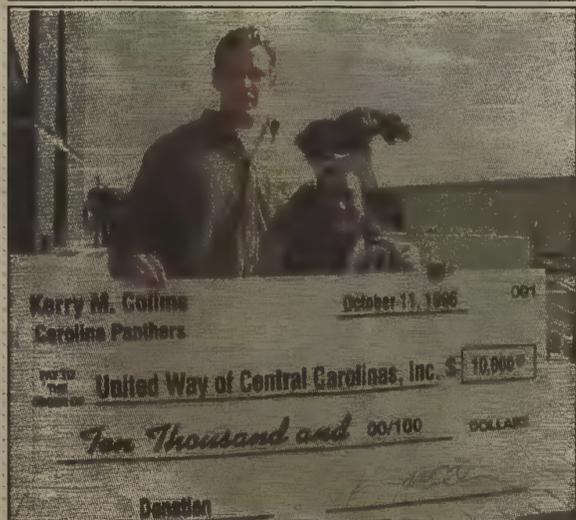
By Gary Karr  
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

COLUMBIA, S.C. - Perhaps only a Republican governor could get a conservative Legislature to pull the Confederate battle flag down from atop the Statehouse. To get there, however, GOP Gov. David Beasley may have to ignore the impact on a potential 1998 re-election bid.

As Beasley moves to the political middle on this highly divisive question, fellow Republicans are his biggest

obstacle. They wonder why the governor is getting closer to the position taken by Charleston Mayor Joseph Riley Jr., who lost his bid for governor two years ago and is considered the Democrats' front-runner for 1998.

"He's trying to take an issue away from Joe Riley, and the problem is that all the people who will praise him now will end up voting for Joe Riley anyway," said Richard Quinn, a Republican consultant who also publishes a Southern heritage magazine. See FLAG on page 3A



PHOTO/UNITED WAY OF CENTRAL CAROLINAS

Carolina Panthers quarterback Kerry Collins (left) donated \$10,000 to the United Way. United Way president Gloria King is on the right.

## Gifts please United Way chief

By Jeri Young  
THE CHARLOTTE POST

Gloria King has set the pace for the United Way of the Carolinas.

Brought to Charlotte from her native Cleveland, King has guided the group to its most successful year of fund raising ever.

In her third year as president, the group raised more than \$22 million, an increase of 7.4 percent over last year's total.

The group also added 28 new members to its Alexis de Tocqueville Society, the group for contributors who donate \$10,000 or more to the United Way.

"Most United Way campaigns

Record testament to community

on a nation wide basis, average in the 3 percent range in term of yearly increases," King said. "For us, we are in a growth period. It shows."

She also gives high marks to the community.

"This is an unbelievable community," she said. "Its ability to rally itself around, issues or causes, I've never seen anything like it. If we make a decision to do it, we go out and do it."

King also credits community growth and a healthy economy for the upswing in giving.

"We have 3 percent unemployment," she said. "We don't have a whole community that has

been decimated by downsizing. Charlotte is a giving community."

A 30-year veteran of the health and human services field, the energetic King knows why people value the United Way.

"Ninety percent of it is relationship building," she said. "A lot of people don't give that the credence it should have. People can make all types of decisions about what they do with their time and money. Building relationships and making United Way accountable and creditable,

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