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REGIONAL

Attorney fights Bar suspension

By Brian Powe
FOR THE CHARLOTTE POST

SALISBURY — An African American attorney in Salisbury is fighting to keep his license from being suspended.

Gerald E. Rush, a prominent African American figure in the Salisbury community, was sus-

pending by the North Carolina State Bar's Disciplinary Commission for inappropriate sexual behavior. The decision could cause him to lose his license for up to three years if he does not seek psychiatric help.

According to the commission's order, unless a psychiatrist says he does not suffer from any con-

dition creating a predisposition predatory sexual behavior, Rush may be without his license for 36 months.

The commission said that Rush improperly touched a client and made some inappropriate sexual remarks to Priscilla Chamber Brown during a session in 1992.

Rush denies the charges. He plans to submit an appeal against the commission's order to the N.C. Court of Appeals.

If Rush receives psychiatric help and has no federal or state violations on his record after the six-month active suspension, he will be allowed to re-apply for his license and have the remainder

of the suspension lifted.

The commission's order was mailed to Rush on Jan. 24, giving him 30 days to turn in his membership card and license to the North Carolina State Bar.

Rush said last week that he does not need any psychiatric help.

"I obviously deny that I have

any psychiatric or any other emotional imbalances or illnesses," he said. "Never has there been any suggestion. I have a good monogamous relationship with my wife. There is no basis for a suggestion of that nature."

Reports say that during the day of the alleged criminal activ-

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Student charged in arson

By Brian Powe
FOR THE CHARLOTTE POST

SALISBURY — A white Catawba College student has been charged with burning a black church in eastern N.C.

Matthew Neal Blackburn is being held without bail for conspiring to maliciously damage and destroy St. James AME Zion Church last summer.

The 18-year-old Blackburn was also accused of using an incendiary device during a crime of violence and malicious destruction of a building by fire.

Blackburn, a Catawba soccer player, is the first of the four white men who will be charged in connection with the fire.

Authorities say that Blackburn and the three other men, poured gasoline around the foundations of St. James, and then threw firebombs made of beer bottles, gasoline and paper towels.

St. James AME Zion Church recorded approximately \$60,000 in damages.

According to officials, the cinder block walls of the church kept the blaze from destroying the sanctuary, but the heat melted the upholstery on the pews and scorched the floor completely.

Rev. Jean M. Anderson, pastor of St. James, gave an appeal to see the culprits before they are dealt with in the justice system.

"I would like to talk to whoever burned my church," Anderson said. "I want to try to and understand their motives for doing this. I'd like to ask them why. I can't understand what would be in anybody's mind to make them destroy a church."

Although Anderson feels that Blackburn and his entourage should be placed on trial for their actions, she realizes that the situation has probably taken its toll on the perpetrators and their families.

"I feel that they should be brought to justice, but they have their mothers, and I'm sure this is taking its toll," Anderson said. "I'm sure their mother's hearts are broken."

Juanita Bouser, a Catawba College spokesperson, said that agents from the U.S. Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms arrested Blackburn last week.

Bouser claimed that college officials have already dropped Blackburn from Catawba's soccer team and said that it may not be the only suspension that he receives.

"If he is found guilty, he's

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PHOTOS/AARONITA BELTON

The Calendar Dance, one of the most-anticipated social events in Rock Hill through the 1970s, makes its return to the campus of Clinton Junior College Feb. 15.

Dance makes a comeback

By Gwen Daniels
FOR THE CHARLOTTE POST

ROCK HILL — Rock Hill is getting a blast from the past that many hope will bring back the community spirit blacks shared in the '60s and '70s.

Clinton Junior College will mark the return of the "Calendar Dance" Feb. 15 at 8 p.m. in the Martin Gymnasium as part of the school's homecoming weekend and Black History Month.

For those too young to remember, the Calendar Dance was one of the hottest social events of the year for Rock Hill's African American community. The event was an opportunity for Clinton students, faculty, alumni and the community to dress to impress and mingle.

Cheryl McCullough, Clinton's director of admission development, said the dance initially began as a fundraiser at which civic groups and

churches decorated 12 tables representing each month of the year. The motivation for bringing back the dance, McCullough said, is to bridge the gap between Clinton and the community and strengthen community unity and spirit.

"I was looking for something that would bring the community back together with the enthusiasm it used to have," she said. "What I hope is that it will catch on and we'll begin to rebuild the tradition."

Clinton is located in the heart of an older established black neighborhood in Rock Hill. McCullough hopes the local residents and alumni will join the effort to resurrect the dance.

"Clinton has been here for 102 years and has a lot of heritage and history," she said. "And this is adding to what's already there."

Henrietta Wilkes not only has ties to the school, she also lives in the community sur-



rounding Clinton. She was a librarian and teacher there for more than 25 years. Wilkes recalls the excitement and fanfare of the Calendar Dance as she explains what drew the most attention back then.

"The decorated tables were the most outstanding part," Wilkes said. "There was a variety of decorations and centerpieces, which one time featured a manger scene on a December table."

Wilkes said participants also displayed food representative of the month they sponsored. For example, the November table may have

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Foundation grant goes to 1887 building

By Brian Powe
FOR THE CHARLOTTE POST

SALISBURY — The NationsBank Foundation recently donated \$250,000 to Livingstone College to help fund a new Student Life Center on the campus in Salisbury.

Coincided as the largest monetary gift ever given to the historically black college, Livingstone College President Burnette Joiner expressed his appreciation for the gift.

"I am extremely pleased to accept this gift on behalf of the College, and I also would like to thank President Laura Foxx of the NationsBank Foundation for this significant contribution."

The new Student Life Center will be placed in the historic Ballard Hall on the Livingstone campus once restoration of the building is completed.

"I also want to praise our Trustee and Bishop, Dr. George Battle for his leadership in making this possible," Joiner. "Bishop Battle, like NationsBank, continues to demonstrate the highest level of commitment in support of education, and particularly to his historically black colleges and universities."

In an effort to improve student life on the 116-year-old campus, officials at Livingstone hope that this gift is the jump start the project needs.

Laura Foxx, NationsBank Foundation president, said the charity respects Livingstone and the AME Zion Church, so it tries to support the institution whenever possible.

"We hope that this early major gift will significantly enhance the college's efforts," Foxx said, "in attracting additional corporate support."

Battle, a Livingstone graduate, said the renovation of Ballard Hall is more significant than people think. Ballard was the second

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Nubian Festival gears up for its fourth year

By Herbert L. White
THE CHARLOTTE POST

Salisbury's Nubian Festival and Pageant has come a long way since its beginning four years ago.

Originally planned as a showcase for black history and a business opportunity for vendors, the event has grown into an anticipated event in the African American community. That popularity is what organizers hope to build on Feb. 22 at the Salisbury Civic Center.

"The first one, we took the idea from the Black Expo in Charlotte," said Louis Jeffries, president of the Rowan Area Minority Business Association, the event's sponsor. "People were trying to come in through the doors before we could open."

"We try to coordinate it with Black History Month if possible. Basically, we want to expose businesses to the public and let them know where they are."

The festival will be divided into phases, with the Vendor Market, which is free and open to the public. It will start at 9 a.m. and will show off local talent and businesses. Vendors can reserve space for \$40 until Feb. 15, when it increases to \$45. There will also be a talent showcase, which is free to individuals or groups who want to participate.

"We plan to have entertainment and vendors, service and merchandise vendors," Jeffries said, adding that more than half of the

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Livingstone program helps high school kids prep for college

By Carol Meeks
FOR THE CHARLOTTE POST

SALISBURY — A Livingstone College program is helping high school students make the early leap to college.

LEAP is the Livingstone Early Admissions Program. It is designed for high school

juniors and seniors who are interested in taking college courses while they are still in secondary school. The program provides the opportunity for qualified students to take courses on a part-time basis and later these students may apply their credit toward a college degree at Livingstone or

another college or university.

The program allows students who have a B average to apply. They may take up to seven hours per semester in English, mathematics, biology, or social sciences.

Each student who applies to become LEAP students must have met certain high school

prerequisites and must have the approval of the principal, at least one counselor, and one or more teachers. Prior to actual enrollment at the college, an applying student must be 16 years of age or older, and must have completed a minimum of eight units, which include English 9 and 10,

Algebra I and Algebra II or geometry, and must be currently enrolled in high school and be making satisfactory progress toward graduation. LEAP students must comply with the policies of the college that relate to application, enrollment, registration, attendance, grading and

behavior as do traditional students.

LEAP students may take day, evening or weekend classes. The course content will be the same as that for regular college students, and the length of the semester or mini-session will coincide with the

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