

# Race category sparks fierce debate

Continued from page 3A

cerned that such a classification would reinforce existing societal color discrimination.

Despite a recent Census study saying that most minorities, especially blacks and Hispanics, wouldn't be hurt by the multiracial category, many civil rights organizations and academics still are resistant to a change. Currently, Americans can choose one of five classifications from census forms: American Indian and Alaska Native, Asian and Pacific Islander, black, white, or Hispanic.

As the number of children from

interracial marriages has risen to 2 million in 1990 from 500,000 in 1970, groups representing them have been advocating the inclusion of the multiracial category, or giving people the option of choosing more than one race on federal forms. Susan Graham, executive director of Project RACE (Reclassify All Children Equally), used her 12-year-old son, Ryan, to show how he's caught in the middle before a Congressional subcommittee in Washington that was examining the multiracial category issue. Because Ryan's mother is white and his father is black, he explained to committee

members his feeling of sadness when he is confronted with forms asking him to choose between the two races; he said he is unable to choose because he's both. As for selecting the option "other" when available, the boy said that term made him feel like a freak or space alien because it really doesn't describe him either.

"The reality is that not all Americans fit neatly into one little box," says Graham. "The reality is that multiracial children who wish to embrace all their heritage should be allowed to do so."

Harold McDougall, director of

the Washington Bureau of the NAACP, told committee members that he supports people's right to determine their own racial identification, but he said Census and federal forms may not be the place to do that.

Since Census statistics are used to help enforce laws against discrimination in employment, lending, housing, and schools, as well as for the allocation of millions of federal dollars through various programs, McDougall pointed out that all those areas could be severely hampered if people should start switching from one racial category to the multiracial.

## HAVE YOU SEEN THIS CHILD?

Her birth name is Kinara.



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Any information leading to the whereabouts of this child would save continued extreme heartbreak.

Contact Jennifer Hayes, Maternal Grandmother at:

**(704) 643-4969 PLEASE!**

*Child's biological mother is Juanita Reed.*

# West Charlotte choir will stay

Continued from page 1A

"I had a gospel choir at my school in Virginia," said Cline, an ordained deacon who plans to enter the ministry. "A gospel choir is the best thing that could happen to West Charlotte."

"The gospel choir does not have a sponsor now, but it will have one. The community wants this to happen. I have to find a sponsor. I have to find a person on the staff who will direct that."

Since coming to Charlotte two weeks ago, Cline has been busy interviewing new staff and faculty, who must sign a pledge of commitment to West Charlotte. He

said he's nearing the end of that process and should have announcements soon of key administrative posts.

Cline has said some of the teachers who helped get Simmons removed may be rehired. "I do not have a list of those who applied to leave," Cline said. "I can't talk about the past. I am the future of West Charlotte. I am going to make sure it is the top school in the state of North Carolina. The gospel choir only enhances those goals."

"To stop the gospel choir will be a direct slap in God's face," said Cline, who said he will give his

initial sermon in two weeks.

But many African Americans are still angered by Smith's removal of Simmons, apparently under pressure from white teachers and parents. Black Political Caucus chair Bob Davis said Simmons will address the caucus on July 20.

"West Charlotte parents are not satisfied and are not going away," Davis said. "They are still having meetings. Kenny Simmons is going to speak to the Black Caucus to tell his side of the story."

## Wheel appeal!

The Post's Auto section is a serious showcase!

# S.C. native is top Marine

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

CAMP PENDLETON, Calif. — Brig. Gen. Charles F. Bolden Jr. was promoted to major general in a ceremony here, making him the highest-ranking black officer in the Marine Corps.

At Miramar Naval Air Station, the 50-year-old Marine and Columbia, S.C., native, was assistant commander of the 3rd Marine Air Wing, which controls the F/A-18 Hornet jets. He received the second star because of his new position as the deputy commanding general of I Marine Expeditionary Force, which includes all ground, air and support troops based on the West Coast.

His new assignment will bring him to base here, where he will be the right-hand man of Lt. Gen. Carlton Fulford.

There are less than 75 generals in the Marine Corps. They wear between one and four stars, depending on their ranking.

Bolden, who spent 14 years as an astronaut, has become well-known in the San Diego community for his frequent visits to



Bolden

classrooms and club meetings.

Bolden grew up in the South, attending segregated schools and dreaming about an appointment to the Naval Academy. His

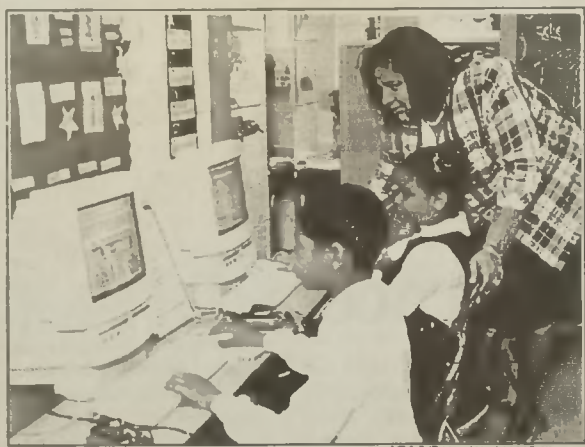
parents attended Charlotte's Johnson C. Smith University.

After graduating from the Academy, he became a Marine pilot and flew combat missions during the Vietnam War.

He became an astronaut in 1981 and logged more than 680 hours in space, including piloting the 1994 Discovery flight.

Before Thursday's frocking ceremony, Bolden, dressed in camouflage, made his way through the room, shaking hands and introducing himself as Charlie.

He and his wife, Alexis, have two children: Anthony Che, a Marine lieutenant stationed at Miramar; and Kelly, a student at Georgia Tech University.



PHOTOS/PAUL WILLIAMS III

Correction: Photographs were inadvertently placed on last week's Zawadi page. The top picture is of the presentation by First Union bank employees of an Internet system to Hidden Valley Elementary School. In the bottom photo, Bernadette Richards, program coordinator of NationsBank's newest Make-A-Difference Center, helps Ayana Hollins, 8, and Eil Pigford, 9, on new computers. The Make-A-Difference Center opened June 21 in Oak Park at Nations Ford Apartments in southwest Charlotte. The center is the eighth established by NationsBank.



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