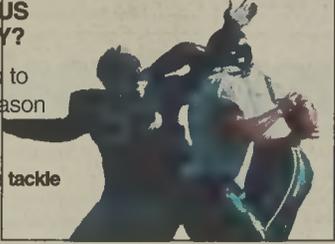


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HARDLY JOLLY

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▶ **Billy Bob Thornton, Bernie Mac and Tony Cox star**



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WGVV the Top Buy in Charlotte, N.C.




PHOTO/CALVIN FERGUSON

Altheresa Goode-Howard packs CDs as operations wind down at WGVV. The station, which went on air in 1948, was the first to broadcast primarily for African Americans in Charlotte. It went off the air Sunday.

Dead air at broadcast institution

WGVV was first to value black listeners

By Artellia Burch
artellia.burch@thecharlottepost.com

WGVV-AM is silent for good.

The gospel station's closing this week is the last chapter in what was once the only place on the radio dial catering to African Americans.

On Nov. 24, WGVV's staff was informed that CBS-owned Infinity Broadcasting decided the station would go silent Sunday at midnight.

"It just wasn't viable," said Terri Avery, program manager at WGVV, WBAV and WPEG. "The listening audience never grew according to Arbitron (ratings). You need to make money to run a business.

"Since the word got out I received about 20 phone calls. People are hurt. I think I'm hurt more than anyone. There's a lot of history connected to the legendary WGVV. People throughout the industry know about the legendary WGVV. That's what hurts more than anything else. The whole staff is sad not just employees of WGVV. We're offering our churches airtime on WPEG and WBAV."

Francis Fitzgerald founded WGVV in 1951. The call letters stood for "We are GI Veterans." WGVV was one of many independent stations that popped up after World War II to play records all day. At its inception most broadcasters carried news and soap operas.

WGVV was the station of firsts. Not only was it the first in this area to play music all day, it was also the first to openly appeal to African Americans with what became known as Rock & Roll. It later morphed into R&B and soul before switching to gospel.

Fred Wellington Graham III, production manager at WPEG and former program director and morning drive personality at WGVV, says with its closing, the black com-

Please see **WITH WGVV'S/2A**



When it signed on in 1948, WGVV-AM became a force in Charlotte broadcasting. The station had an integrated staff, including its sales force (top left) and hall of fame on-air talent that included the late "Genial" Gene Potts (above) and "Chatty" Hattie Leeper, one of the first women broadcasters in the U.S. Leeper went on to start her own broadcasting school in Charlotte.



Study: Black women surpass men in winning offices

By Hazel Trice Edney
NATIONAL NEWSPAPER PUBLISHERS ASSOCIATION

WASHINGTON – The rate of black females being elected to public office in America has surpassed black males by 5-1 over the past 30 years, according to a study by the Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies.

"In sum, the trends have dra-

matically changed from the early 1970s when about 82 percent of newly elected black elected officials were men. In the post-1995 period, 85 percent of the growth in the number of black elected officials was from black women being elected to office," observes the report, "Black Elected Officials: A Statistical Summary 2001."

The report explains that dur-

ing the first five years that the Joint Center tracked the number of black elected officials nationwide, there were 4.5 black men elected to office for every black woman, (1,664 to 370). The trend continued but slowed from 1975 to 1985, two black men for every black woman (1,724 to 829); then even lower in the last half of the '80s, with only 1.2 black men to each female.

In the 1990s, the trend suddenly changed with new black elected officials becoming disproportionately women. Between 1990 and 1995, there were 1.9 new black women elected to office for every new man (687 to 362), and between 1995 and 2001, the ratio was 5.9 new women for every new man (583 women to 99 men).

The news is exciting to C.

Please see **WOMEN/7A**

Goals next for small business program?

Debate likely to focus on when – or if – race-specific targets needed

By Herbert L. White
herb.white@thecharlottepost.com

Charlotte City Council will tackle the issue of race-specific goals in its small business program by the start of 2004.

But there's an issue: When is the time right – if at all – to put them in place?

The council last month adopted the findings of a disparity study that found racial minorities had fewer opportunities to win city contracts a year after Charlotte's race-based vendor program was scuttled. With the new council sworn in Monday, the board can start debate on whether – or how much – race should factor into how contracts are awarded.

"We're looking at options in terms of putting goals in place," said Malcolm Graham, who has been instrumental in remaking the small business program. "Certainly the one I favor is putting goals in place with the Small Business Opportunity program. It'll be like the program is the cake and the goals is the icing on top."



Graham

Committee assignments, the first step in the debate, will be made by Mayor Pat McCrory this month. The first meeting is scheduled for Jan. 5 – nearly a year after Charlotte scrapped its Minority and Women Business Development program.

MWBD was shuttered in the wake of a lawsuit

Please see **APATHY/3A**

2 Charlotte artists earn arena projects

By Herbert L. White
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Charlotte's uptown arena will be adorned with locally-produced art.

Tommie Robinson was one of six artists commissioned by the Arts & Science Council to work on the project.

ASC's board accepted the Public Art Commission's recommendation to approve the artists for publicly-funded projects from a field of 217 responses to a national open competition. The artists specialize in mediums ranging from photographic tile mosaics, granite sculpture and oil paintings.



Robinson

"We are pleased to have these six capable artists create dynamic and memorable work for the enjoyment of residents and visitors alike – great art will be a permanent part of this newest landmark in our Center City," ASC board Chair Tim Arnoult said.

Robinson, who has lived in Charlotte for more than 30 years, has had work featured in national magazines including Art News and Watercolor Magazine. His public art commissions include the West Boulevard Library, University Park Performing Arts Elementary School and corpo-

Please see **2 LOCAL/3A**

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