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Charlotte NC 28216-5302

Court case could set precedent on abortion

Ayotte could alter women's options by weakening Roe

By Cynthia L. Cooper
WOMEN'S E-NEWS

WASHINGTON — A New Hampshire abortion case before the U.S. Supreme Court could vastly reshape and curtail women's right to choose, according to legal reproductive rights advocates.

The key question before the Supreme Court is whether anti-abortion laws passed by states may be challenged in court as unconstitutional before they take effect. Bringing these challenges, as currently happens, prevents many restrictions passed by anti-abortion legislatures from interfering with a woman's right to choose, whether bans on abortion procedures, spousal notification and others.

By changing the legal standard for when an abortion restriction can be challenged in court, anti-abortion laws could quickly entangle women across the country, without directly overturning Roe v. Wade, the 1973 Supreme Court case that held that states could not criminalize abortion in all circumstances.

"This is an incredibly important case. Depending on how the court rules, this could be a really critical moment for the pro-choice movement," said Jennifer Dalven, deputy director of the New York-based Reproductive Freedom Project of the American Civil Liberties Union, which represents a doctor and three clinics challenging abortion restrictions passed in New Hampshire.

The case, Ayotte v. Planned Parenthood of Northern New England, lies far below the radar of the general public and even many pro-choice activists. Those who are aware of it think of it as a case about parental notification on abortion. But its implications, said Dalven, go far beyond.

"Women seeking abortions would be forced to fight court battles while they are facing emergency medical needs," said Nancy Northup, president of the New York-based Center for Reproductive Rights, author of a friend-of-the-court brief on this point on behalf of 30 health, research and women's organizations.

A ruling against the pro-choice position could strip away a wall of judicial protection that has so far stopped numerous anti-abor-

Please see AYOTTE/2A

HISTORIC EXCELSIOR CLUB SOLD



PHOTO: CALVIN FERGUSON

The Historic Excelsior Club, founded in 1944, has been the site of meetings that helped shape Charlotte's social and political climate. The Excelsior has been sold to attorney James Ferguson II.

Westside landmark site of political, social gatherings

By Cheri F. Hodges
cheri.hodges@thecharlottepost.com

The Historic Excelsior Club on Beatties Ford Road has been sold.

Former owner N.C. Rep. Pete Cunningham sold the club and all its glory to Charlotte attorney James Ferguson II.

"I've just purchased the club and we're going to continue a lot of the things that the club has

done and we're going to do some new things as well," Ferguson said.

Ferguson said he wasn't ready to get into details about the future of the club since the purchase is so new.

The Excelsior, located on



Ferguson

Beatties Ford Road about one-half mile north of Johnson C. Smith University, was for many years the leading private black social club in the Southeast, and one of the largest of its kind on the East Coast. In addition to its importance as the only social club for black professionals in the area, it also became a political focal point of the city

Please see HISTORIC/3A

Clemency calls increase for Crips founder

By Olu Alemoru
WAVE NEWSPAPERS

LOS ANGELES — Less than two weeks before his scheduled execution intense pressure is being brought on California Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger to grant clemency to death row inmate Stanley "Ibokie" Williams.

A week-long series of demonstrations and press

conferences culminated Saturday with a rally in Watts featuring Snoop Dogg.

Williams supporters have marched on Schwarzenegger's Los Angeles office. On Sunday, there will be a candle light vigil as part of a "National Day of Action to stop the execution of Stan Tbookie Williams."

Williams, a co-founder of the Los Angeles Crips street gang, is slated to be executed on Dec. 13 in San Quentin state prison. During the 1990s, he wrote a series of award-winning books for children, warning against gangs, crime and prison which earned him a nomination for the Nobel Peace Prize.

Please see PRESSURE/2 A



Williams

"From the dialogue we want to move towards some action," said Irving Joyner, a professor at NCCU law school. "And, we have one of the No. 1 civil rights action organizations in the state working with us."

According to the Rev. David Forbes of Lost

Please see SUMMIT/7A

Exhibit recounts all-black elementary school



PHOTO: BETTY CROCKETT FAULKNER

The faculty of Isabella Wyche School, situated in Charlotte's Third Ward. The school was named for the first black woman principal in Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools.

By Paula Young
THE CHARLOTTE POST

On Saturday, Isabella Wyche Elementary School will get the recognition it deserves.

The school's memoirs will be on exhibit at the Beatties Ford Road Library. A reception will be held Saturday at 3 p.m.

The school once stood where Bank of America Stadium now stands. It was named after Isabella Butler Wyche, who was the first African American principal in Charlotte and the first woman principal of Myers Street.

Dot Brooks Siler, program and exhibit coordinator for the public library, is excited to be a part of the project. Siler was approached by Dr. Earline Major Patrick, an alumnus of the school with the project.

"This brings back memories of a time past," said Siler of the exhibit. "A celebration of the past and also to the alumni, a future of a memory of what

See THIRD/6A

the box NEWS, NOTES & TRENDS

Anniversary of bus boycott

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

MONTGOMERY, Ala. — With the death of Rosa Parks, the 50th anniversary of her arrest and the historic bus boycott it sparked will focus on the lesser-known foot soldiers in the protest.

The commemoration will also look to the future, kicking off today with a children's march to the Capitol.

Parks, who died Oct. 24, was remembered by national and civil rights leaders for her simple act of defiance - refusing to give up her bus seat to a white man - that helped inspire a movement for racial equality that spread to voting booths and schools as well as buses.



Parks

Pioneer Bowl VIII: Complete coverage of black college football classic 1C, 4C, 8C



INSIDE

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