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FILE PHOTO/WADE NASH

eral funds for

students.

## 5: What s, what's in store next year

## Continued from page 1A

Americans and Latinos. Official findings - and ideas to deal with the violence have been slow to appear outside increased patrols in the center city after a series of well-publicized incidents.

Because so much happened in Charlotte in the last 12 months, it's impossible to get them all in. So here are the high and low points and what they could portend in 2006.

What happened: Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools, once the shining example of academic achievement and racial tolerance, continued to unravel under the twin forces of management issues and public unrest over CMS leadership. Politically, no story was

larger than the ugly public infighting on the school board. While the board ripped itself, usually along ideology and race, confidence in CMS dropped. The lowest point was the defeat of a \$427 million bond referendum that would've addressed overcrowding in the suburbs and refurbish inner-city campuses

What to watch for: In 2006, the school board has its hands full. The panel has to interview and select a new wrestle superintendent, with assembling another bond referendum and deal with overcrowding and maintenance of buildings. There's also the issue of academic achievement, which was all but drowned out in the fight over referendums and board members' behavior. And don't forget the stillpending Leandro case that has focused attention on the education of poor students in CMS, which Judge Howard Manning called "academic genocide

What happened: After a de of failure. Charlotte

Thursday

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Friday

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finally landed what many consider the crown jewel of college basketball tournaments

The CIAA, a league of 12 historically black colleges, decided to play the 2006-08 tournaments in Charlotte Bobcats Arena, giving Charlotte a major tourism boost in the process. Last year, more than 110,000 fans visited Raleigh, which had hosted the CIAA for six vears. Charlotte officials expect a minimum of \$12 million to flow into the city coffers, but whose pockets would get lined was the source of dispute.

Black business owners, concerned that uptown leaders and city officials would steer fans exclusively to the centér city, demanded greater access to opportunities at the tournament. CIAA Commissioner Leon Kerry pledged to work with local businesses to secure opportunities. What to watch for: If

Raleigh's experience is an example, it'll take Charlotte a year to get accustomed to the CIAA, which is as much homecoming and family reunion as it is basketball tournament. Tourism and steering committee leaders promise the city will roll out the red carpet. Uptown clubs, which have been knocked for being less than hospitable to blacks, have already drawn the attention of center city boosters. A good uptown experience will go a long way to the tournament's run.

What happened: Patrick Cannon was all set to give incumbent Mayor Pat McCrory a run for his seat. Cannon, then mayor pro tem, was the big-name Democrat party bosses had longed for. But before the primary, Cannon cut his campaign and City Council career short, citing family

Saturday

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A shower in spots 2° 🗛

7-DAY FORECAST FOR CHARLOTTE,

Monday

Sun and som

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Sunday

Sunshine and

commitments Cannon, the Democrats settled for two-time candidate Craig Madans, who was the swept away in November election.

What to watch for Cannon's absence opened an opportunity for Anthony Foxx, a Charlotte native who finished third in November's at-large race. Democratic backers are already betting Foxx, grandson of the late political activist James Foxx, can develop into a top-notch bridge-builder. And, some hope, mayoral material.

What happened: Afro-American Cultural Center fires executive director Beverly Cureton.

Cureton, who led the center for two years, was voted out by the AACC board in July after an impasse over the center's direction. A search was launched for her successor, whom Chairman David Taylor said should be an adept fund raiser. In recent years, the Afro Center has struggled with finding money to expand programming

What to look for: Even without a director, the Afro Center remains an important cog of Charlotte's arts and cultural future. The center is part of Wachovia's long term plan to place facilities uptown, which includes some public-private funding. And the AACC has launched a community fund raising campaign to raise awareness of the institution's mission.

happened: What Wachovia Corp. admits past profits tied to slavery.

Tuesday

Chance of a

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Wednesday

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The Charlotte-based banking giant came clean after a study showed links between today's Wachovia and predecessor companies that derived profits from the slave trade. Wachovia CEO Ken Thompson immediately offers an apology on the company's web site and \$10 million to fund programs that focus on history and educa-

What to look for: Not much, unless confession is good for the corporate bottom line. More U.S. corporations are admitting to their slave-profit past due to pressure from municipalities, but one that hasn't is Charlotte-based Bank of America, which is linked to slavery with its purchase of

What happened: Mel Watt became a national fig-ure as chairman of the Congressional Black Caucus. The Charlotte Democrat became the point man on issues ranging from the government's response to natural disasters to Supreme Court nominations. In January. Watt invited President Bush to meet with the caucus' 40 members to discuss issues of importance to African Americans, with limited results.

What to look for: Since the caucus is all Democratic, don't expect Republicans especially in the White House - to get cozy. But Watt has already proven adept at articulating caucus concerns, which has earned him praise on both sides of the ideological aisle. What

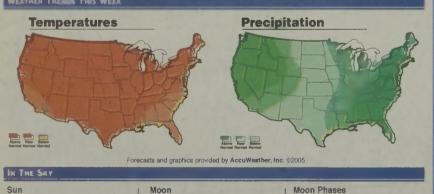
What happened Hurricane Katrina all but wiped out major portions of the Gulf Coast in the worst natural disaster in U.S. history. Thousands of residents Alabama and Louisiana were evacuated, and several hundred wound up in Charlotte and the

What to look for: Federal funding for evacuees' housing won't last much longer, but for many who've relocated to Charlotte, this is now home. Their adjustment will continue.

from Carolinas.



EATHER TREMOS THIS WEEK



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