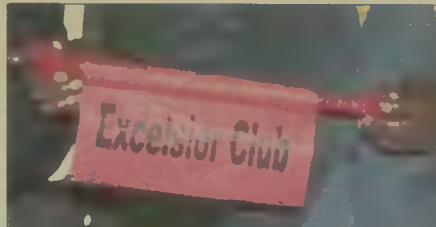


'IDOL' INFAMY

Going off paid for Charlotte contestant 1D

Rhonetta Johnson



PASSING THE BATON

Attorney James Ferguson officially takes over as owner of landmark Excelsior Club/7B



BIG TICKET ITEM

C.I.A.A. tournament sold out; single-game tickets on sale Monday/1C

Volume 31 No. 21

\$1.00

# The Charlotte Post

The Voice of the Black Community

Also serving Cat

WEEK OF FEBRUARY 9-15, 2006

JAMES B. DUKE LIBRARY  
CHARLOTTE-MECKLENBURG UNIVERSITY  
\*\*\*\*\*5-DIGIT 28216 S10 P1  
James B. Duke Library  
100 Beatties Ford Rd  
Charlotte NC 28216-5302

## Congress flunks out on black concerns

By Hazel Trice Edney  
NATIONAL NEWSPAPER PUBLISHERS ASSOCIATION

WASHINGTON — Although the head of the Republican National Committee and President Bush have pledged to make a more concentrated effort to win over black



Ford

voters, 98 percent of Republicans in the House and Senate earned an F on the latest NAACP Civil Rights Report Card, compared to only 2 percent of Democrats receiving failing grades.

"Republican Party Chairman Ken Mehlman has been out beating the bushes and saying that the Republican Party was appealing for the black vote, but this is the most powerful evidence and continuing evidence that the Republicans have not realigned their public policy approaches to attract the black vote," says University of Maryland Political Scientist Ronald Walters.

According to the NAACP's mid-term report for the 109th Congress, all but one of the 231 Republicans in the U.S. House of Representatives got an F. The exception was Rep. Christopher Shays of Connecticut, who earned a D. No House Republicans got Bs or Cs.

In the Senate, 51 of the 55 Republicans earned Fs. Lincoln Chafee of Rhode Island was the only one to get a C, the top grade among GOP members. Olympia J. Snowe and Susan Collins, both of Maine, and Mike DeWine of Ohio, all received Ds. Sen. Jim Jeffords of Vermont, an Independent, got a C.

Of the 201 House Democrats, 123 earned As, 38 got Bs, 29 received Cs, six were awarded Ds and five flunked with Fs. That's a decline from the 108th Congress, when no Democrat received an F. The five House Democrats who earned Fs this time were Rep. Leonard Boswell of Iowa, Rodney Alexander of Louisiana, Collin Peterson of Minnesota, Dan Boren of Oklahoma, and Gene Taylor of Mississippi. An Incomplete was

See CONGRESS/2A

### CHANGING ACADEMIC CULTURE



PHOTO/CURTIS WILSON

West Charlotte High School principal John Modest checks on Demario Wiggins and Markey Edwards during their senior class exit project.

## Modest goal: Boost West Charlotte High

*Facing declining test scores and discipline, first-year principal sets sights on returning school to excellence*

By C. Jemal Horton  
FOR THE CHARLOTTE POST

John Modest smiles a whole lot more than your old high school principal from back in the day.

There are no scowls with Modest. Voice-raising is pretty much non-existent. And the man has such an engaging personality that people, even students, enjoy being around him.

Joe Clark he is not. Modest, however, is exactly what former Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools Superintendent James Pughsley thought low-achieving West Charlotte High School needed when he lured the well-respected principal from Wake County last year.

And after six months on the job, during which Modest has made critical strides in revamping the mind-set of the oft-maligned school, a lot of people already are inclined to agree with Pughsley's assessment of

Modest.

"First of all, he has an open-door policy, and that shows the students they're important," said Mable Latimer, a 1952 graduate of the school and past national president of the West Charlotte National Alumni Association.

"The students can come right in here to talk to Mr. Modest. Children can tell whether you care about them; they're perceptive. It doesn't take long for them to tell whether you really care. It helps them to know that you're there for them. And Mr. Modest is there for them. He is a listening ear. We truly believe he can take West Charlotte where we need to be."

Don't let the smiles and the earnest conversations fool you; Modest is anything but a pushover.

Part of what makes Modest so highly regarded as an administrator is his dexterity: he's firm

See MODEST/3A



"Not only do we need to have high expectations of them to perform at a high level academically, but also in the way they conduct themselves."

West Charlotte High School principal John Modest

## Open season on urban property

*Poorer neighborhoods likely at higher risk with federal, N.C. law*

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

Government has always had imminent domain over private property.

But developers won't be far behind.

A recent U.S. Supreme Court ruling affirming governments' right to seize private property and sell it to developers has raised concerns that the politically weak will suffer most.



Turner

In North Carolina, the state's Urban Redevelopment Law allows sweeping latitude for government to seize property, according to a report authored by the conservative John Locke Foundation. Its scope is so wide, said Daren Bakst, the Raleigh-based foundation's legal and regulatory policy analyst, that non-blighted property can be taken for economic development.

"North Carolina law needs a narrow definition of blight, or it will be open season on private property," Bakst said. "Right now its laws are so vague they are open to all kinds of interpretation."

Charlotte City Council member Warren Turner, whose southwest dis-

Please see URBAN/8A

## Jurist brings diversity to top court

*Timmons-Goodson first black woman on panel*

By Sommer Brokaw  
THE TRIANGLE TRIBUNE

Patricia Timmons-Goodson will make history as the first black female appointed to the N.C. Supreme Court.

Gov. Mike Easley appointed Timmons-Goodson to the position, giving the Supreme Court two women on its panel. Chief Justice Sarah Parker, who replaced the retiring I. Beverly Lake, is the other female.

The Supreme Court hears cases involving constitutional issues and considers errors in legal cases or interpretations of the law. Only three black jurists have served on the bench prior to Timmons-Goodson's appointment: Henry Frye, James A. Wynn and G.K. Butterfield.

"It is for sure a rare privilege," Timmons-Goodson said. "I don't care what race or gender you are."

But, Goodson said she did face prejudice back in the early 1980s.

"When we didn't have as many

See JURIST/2A



ASSOCIATED PRESS PHOTO/ROB CARR

Mary Ravenell of Rowesville, S.C. stands in line to attend the Coretta Scott King homegoing ceremony at New Birth Missionary Baptist Church in Lithonia, Ga., Tuesday.

### CORETTA SCOTT KING 1927-2006

## Civil rights leader lauded for building own legacy

By George E. Curry  
NATIONAL NEWSPAPER PUBLISHERS ASSOCIATION

WASHINGTON — With four U.S. presidents in attendance — two Democrats and two Republicans — the 6-hour funeral of Coretta Scott King on Tuesday started out as though it might be a star-studded exercise in political correctness, with speakers gingerly avoiding issues that have sharply divided

them in the past.

President George W. Bush, an ardent opponent of affirmative action and other social programs favored by both Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and his wife, Coretta, was effusive

in his praise of Mrs. King.

"I've come today to offer the sym-

Please see KING/7A

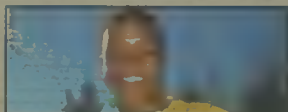


King



Timmons-Goodson

Country Day's Dejon Bivens ascends to top spot in N.C. amateur tennis. 1D



### INSIDE

Life 1B  
Religion 5B

Sports 1C  
Business 7C

A&E 1D  
Happenings 6C

Please Recycle



To subscribe, call (704) 376-0496 or FAX (704) 342-2160. © 2005 The Charlotte Post Publishing Co.