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BELLY UP TO THE RHYTHM
Belly dancing goes from exotic past to hot form of exercise/1B

Mint exhibit goes to the dogs, cats and other animals

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The Voice of the Black Community

WEEK OF JUNE 8-14, 2006



Bobcats will miss security blanket

Fly on the Wall is a satirical look at Charlotte, chock full of mischief, mayhem and a splash of malfeasance to get the juices flowing. Long-time readers know this, but if you're neophyte, these are the rules, so don't be a player-hater. This disclaimer is provided courtesy of the legal beagles at our crack law firm... Dewey Cheatham and Howe, attorneys to wanna-be stars.

• Ed Tapscott's resignation isn't helping the Charlotte Bobcats' reputation around these parts.

Everybody knows about Mr. Ed's decision to quit his job as president of the NBA franchise last month after a disagreement over his role with the team. The ownership group thought it was helping the brother out by reducing his workload. Mr. Ed took it as a dis.

Some of Fly's most loyal low-flying spies say Mr. T has privately groused about working extra hard at getting owner Bob Johnson up to speed on how professional sports is supposed to work in building up goodwill. Apparently, it didn't work very well, considering the stumbling (C-SET shuttered after a year) fumbling (overpriced tickets) and bumbling (reversal on high school graduation at the arena). Mr. Ed smoothed those wrinkles.

Man, the Bobcats are gonna miss this guy.
• The Tuesday Morning Breakfast Forum, one of this burg's liveliest debate and See IMMIGRATION/2A



Rashad Dykes (left) and his wife Misha Wallace help build their new home in Charlotte's Druid Hills neighborhood. Despite gains in recent years, black homeownership still lags behind whites

At home, at last

Building blitz puts families on track for ownership

By Herbert L. White
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Nail by nail, Rashad Dykes and his wife Misha Wallace are building a piece of their American dream.

They're building a home in the Druid Hills neighborhood as part of Habitat For Humanity's Home Builders Blitz. The week-long campaign will build 400 homes across the U.S. Dykes and Wallace are first-time homebuyers, and the experience of building their own place makes it worth the effort.

"We helped put up the frame, the roof," said Dykes. "In a couple of weeks we'll be moving in. It's a dream come true I really can't believe it yet."

Dykes, Wallace, their son Latwan, 10 and dog Yayo are looking forward to moving in. Dykes and Wallace are helping with construction of their Justice Avenue home, and Wallace is shopping for appliances and furniture. "Washer and dryer, microwave, dishes, pots and

Please see HOME/2A

Watt co-sponsors anti predatory lending bill

U.S. Rep. Mel Watt is co-sponsoring a bill that would crack down on discriminatory mortgage lending.

Watt, a Charlotte Democrat and chairman of the Congressional Black Caucus, will hold a news conference today at 10 a.m.

to discuss the bill, which is co-sponsored by Rep. Barney Frank, D-Mass. Other African American and Latino members of the house will discuss the problems ethnic minorities face in obtaining loans for mortgages. The Watt-Frank bill isn't the only one expected to be debated in the House. A competing bill backed by Rep. Spencer Bachus (R-Ala.) has also been drafted. Both sides have been negotiating to build a compromise.

Herbert L. White



Watt

By Cynthia Dean

THE TRIANGLE TRIBUNE

RALEIGH — Why African-American organizations are not able to unify dominated discussions at the annual N.C. Black Legislative Caucus conference.

N.C. Rep. Larry Womble, D-Forsyth, initiated the conversation on why blacks have a hard time getting together

to support issues that affect them all.

The recent protest of thousands of Hispanics across the nation for immigration reform sparked his interest.

"I've worked here a long time and I've never seen so many people turn out like those Hispanics," Womble said, referring to their recent strike for fair immigration laws. "The Hispanics put on a hell of a show, and they've only been here a few years. We've been here for over 200 years."

Womble wonders why blacks can't do the same thing to make a big impact on lawmakers. He has noticed that different groups, such as the NAACP, fraternities, sororities and other advocacy groups have their own set of legislative days.

"Is it because everyone is protecting their turf?" he asked. For too long, we've been fragmented."

Courtney Crowder said the first People of Color Legislative Day, held May 23, was a step in the

Please see UNITY/3A

Charlotte Juneteenth festival combines heritage and culture

By Erica Singleton
FOR THE CHARLOTTE POST

Few places put on a Juneteenth celebration like Charlotte.

The ninth annual Juneteenth Festival of the Carolinas begins on June 15 with a celebration of history. Founder Papa S. Ndiaye, owner of The House of Africa on Central Avenue, enjoyed Juneteenth celebrations when he lived in New York, and saw festivities in Atlanta and Texas. Upon moving to Charlotte, he was

astounded that no such activities were held here.

"Everyone looked at me, asking 'What's Juneteenth?' No one knew anything," said Ndiaye. "Culture and heritage is the only direction to help you move forward."

On June 19, 1865, Union General Gordon Granger read the Emancipation Proclamation in Galveston, Texas, belatedly initiating the freeing of 250,000

Please see CAROLINAS/2A



Since its inception nine years ago, drumming exhibitions have been part of the Juneteenth celebration in Charlotte.



Carolina Panthers receiver Keary Colbert looks to bounce back from injury/1C

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Banking on return of payday lending

Bill criticized as attempt to bring back banned industry

By Cheri F. Hodges
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If N.C. Rep. Beverly Earle has her way, payday lending will make a comeback in North Carolina.

Sort of. Earle, a Charlotte Democrat, is the sponsor of a bill that would create a new type of loan, which would allow consumers to borrow up to \$3,000 and repair credit as they repay. Unlike payday loans, these loans don't involve checks and have terms no less than 120 days. With payday loans, a borrower writes a personal check to cover the loan amount and interest that is debited from a checking account on their next payday.

Earle did not return repeated calls from The Post.

Payday lending opponents say the bill allows many of the same pitfalls the industry posed when it was ushered out of the state earlier this year.

"This bill is not the answer," said Keith Corbett, executive vice president of the Center for Responsible Lending.

Corbett said that since Earle has two of the nation's largest banks headquartered in her district, she and other legislators should work with financial institutions to come up with loans for people that don't have such high interest rates.

"This bill doesn't help people in need, when you have one community paying interest rates as high as pay day lending APR and another community paying lower interest rates, they will never get into the mainstream," Corbett said.

Please see N.C. LENDING/2A

the BOX

NEWS, NOTES & TRENDS

Forum aims to help poor with civil lawsuits

A Charlotte group is advocating adequate legal representation for the indigent in civil cases.

Citizens Council for Equal Opportunity will host a forum Saturday at 2 p.m. at Friendship Missionary Baptist Church, 3301 Beatties Ford Road. The council is looking for public input for an action plan.

The council was founded by Howard McClure, a longtime advocate for legal representation for the indigent. Last year the group formed a board to press for adequate funding for some civil trials.

For information on the forum or council, call (704) 531-3543.