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Section

First African-American to sail world

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

MYSTIC, Conn. — It is hard for Bill Pinkney to describe just what it's like to float on a small boat alone in the middle of the Atlantic Ocean.

There are some things that only a sailor would understand. There are other things that happened that only someone who has sailed alone would get. And there is a whole other kind of phenomenon that Pinkney himself can barely explain.

"There are things I can't tell anybody because they weren't there," he said.

He tries, though.

One pitch-black night, the sea was completely calm. From horizon to horizon, millions of stars were visible. The light of those stars reflected off the placid water, encompassing Pinkney.

"If you suspended your disbelief for a while, it was like you were floating on a globe of stars," Pinkney said.

Pinkney, when he was a kid, could never have speculated his life would take him around the world, literally.

When he was suffering the slings and arrows of racism, he could not have guessed he would become acquainted with great and successful Americans such as Bill Cosby, Maya Angelou, Walter Cronkite and Michael Jordan.

"This was all the furthest thing from my mind," said Pinkney, 70. "The expectations of a black kid growing up on the south side of Chicago were limited."

Pinkney, a Meriden resident for the past three years, is the first African-American and only the fourth American overall to sail the world along the Great Capes—a 1992 voyage of 27,000 miles taken in a small sailboat aptly named Commitment. Some of Pinkney's gear from the trip is on display at an exhibit at Mystic Seaport titled "Black Hands, Blue Seas: The Maritime Heritage of African-Americans."

"It fulfilled a desire I'd had since seventh grade to have a great adventure and give an object lesson to my grandchildren," said Pinkney, a trim, youthful man with a grizzly white beard, glasses and a single gold hoop earring.

The lesson wasn't just about math, science, sailing and geography, though he did give those to about 30,000 Chicago schoolchildren during his trip. It was ultimately about the difference between dreams and fantasies.

"Young people today live in a world of fantasies," he said.

Dreams are attainable through perseverance, education and fortitude. The construction of the Amistad, the ship docked at Mystic Seaport that Pinkney commanded for three years, is the result of someone's dream to build a replica of the boat used in a famous 19th century slave revolt.

"There are portions of my knuckles in there," Pinkney said, pointing to the ship he helped build.

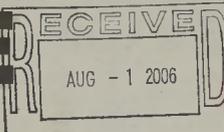
Fantasies are not unique to academics, to summarize Pinkney's thoughts. A child who believes he will be plucked from obscurity and anointed a sports star or a famous singer is fantasizing.

Fantasies aren't bad, Pinkney said—he does play the lottery when the jackpot gets really large—but too much of them diverts people from the process of living.

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LIFE



OFFICIAL RESPONSE TO THE DOWNLOW LIVING

IN RELIGION Local pastor gets 'Straight Up' about the down low lifestyle in a new book.

Asheville: More than a castle



PHOTOS/ERICA SINGLETON

Biltmore estate, built by architect Richard Morris Hunt for George Vanderbilt in 1889, was one of the most technologically-advanced homes in the late 19th century. Today, it's one of Asheville's must-see sites.

By Erica Singleton FOR THE CHARLOTTE POST

Fans of design, remodeling and celebrity home shows will get a treat unlike any other in Asheville. Just under three hours off of Highway 40 west, The Biltmore estate is the ultimate "crib."

Seeing your favorite actor or rapper's house on TV might be interesting, but touring America's largest home and national historic landmark, is an educational experience you owe yourself not to pass up. While flat-screen televisions that rise out of

end tables and movie theaters and arcades in homes today might seem cutting edge, at 25 years of age in 1889 George Vanderbilt had the most technologically advanced home built for its time, that's still admired today for its innovative engineering. The 250-room French chateau built by architect Richard Morris Hunt was fully electric and centrally heated. In a time when most homes didn't have one bathroom, much less a working toilet, Biltmore House had 43, replete with tubs and showerheads.

Completed in 1895, and formally opened to family and friends on Christmas Eve, Biltmore House also featured an intercom system, a fire alarm system, two elevators (one electric, one manual as a back-up) and a relatively new invention called a telephone. During my tour of the house, also referred to as a castle without the sand, I was amazed to find the basement held a bowling alley, a gymnasium, and an indoor pool. Today, an indoor pool might not seem that big a deal, but 70,000 gallons of heated

water, with underwater lighting, was a huge deal then, and something to be marveled at today.

As the largest private residence in the country, the estate is absolutely massive. From the Reception and Ticket Center to the Biltmore House is a 3-mile drive. Originally 125,000 acres, now merely 8,000, the estate and house require you give yourself time to explore. Though the entire house isn't open to view, you can set-up a tour with a group or go, as I did on an audio tour, where you

See THE ASHEVILLE/2B

Emotional roller coaster: Bipolar

Approximately 1.5 percent of all Americans will suffer from bipolar disorder, or manic depression, at some point during their lifetime. While it remains uncertain whether the illness occurs more frequently in minority or non-minority communities, there is no question that minorities suffering from bipolar disorder receive disparate treatment. In 2001 the U.S. Surgeon General reported that African Americans are more likely to be diagnosed with severe mental illnesses than whites, but less than half as likely to receive timely and appropriate mental health services. As a result, African Americans are more likely to attempt suicide, and they have more than twice the number of hospitalizations as their non-minority counterparts. Understanding bipolar disorder and knowing when to seek help will undoubtedly prove essential in reducing this abhorrent disparity.

What is bipolar illness? Bipolar disorder is a type of affecting (mood) disorder, meaning it causes people to experience dramatic changes in their moods and cognitions. Specifically, people living with bipolar disorder have mood swings in which their affect shifts between highs (mania) and lows (depression). These manic and depressive episodes can be mild or extreme, and the person may also experience periods of normal mood in between them. Usually, the disease surfaces during late adolescence or early adulthood and persists throughout the person's life. While it is not curable, most people with the illness can live normal lives with consistent and appropriate treatment.

What is it like to live with bipolar illness? Bipolar illness impacts every aspect of its victims' lives. To understand the illness in its entirety, one must understand what it is like to experience its two extremes.

Mania, in general, involves periods of high energy and expansive mood, often coupled with irritability and pressured thinking. Manic periods can range from a mild high, called hypomania, to extreme agitation and even psychosis. Hypomania can often feel pleasant to the person experiencing it, as he or she may experience a lot of energy and a happy, euphoric feeling. Creativity often intensifies, and thoughts and words come faster and sharper. The need for sleep dramatically decreases, so the person may feel he or she can get more things accomplished. Mania is also associated with delusions of grandeur, or having unrealistic beliefs about one's own abilities. Irritability and distractibility increase, such that the person may drive away friends and relatives or do things that would otherwise be uncharacteristic. During a manic episode, a person may also lose his or her inhibitions and do impulsive and dangerous things like having unprotected sex or spending a lot of money that he or she cannot afford to spend. While mild mania undoubtedly has its benefits,

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Coaches for every problem but skepticism

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

NEW YORK — Ruth Kaufman was tired of the stress that had become part of her job. As an account manager for legal research firm Westlaw in Chicago, she wanted something that was less of a strain and that allowed her time to pursue her acting and writing.

So four years ago, Kaufman hired a life coach. The two met regularly for almost eight months. Kaufman had assignments. Research other jobs. Find a writing mentor. Think about life goals.

In the end, about \$2,500 later, her life coach helped her to decide to stick it out until she could stop working full-

time, she said.

"I found out for jobs I was capable of doing without more school, I would either have to travel a lot, which would make my second lifestyle more difficult, or I would make less money," said Kaufman, who finally stopped working last year. "I did feel better knowing that. Coaching was very helpful. I did a lot of introspection. I learned more about myself and my goals."

Kaufman is one of a growing number of people hiring coaches to help them define and achieve any number of goals. And there aren't just life coaches any more. There are coaches for weight loss, relationships, attention deficit disorder, spirituality, health and, of

course, love. There are coaching schools, and colleges, including New York University and John F. Kennedy University in California, are offering classes. You can even watch variations on coaching in action on prime time: ABC has aired "How to Get the Guy" (romance coaching); and TLC offers "Shalom in the Home" (family and relationship coaching) and "Honey, We're Killing the Kids!" (nutrition coaching).

The 11-year-old International Coach Federation, a nonprofit membership organization, estimates there are 30,000 coaches in the world. More than 10,000 are in the ICF, a 300 percent increase since 2000.

Study: Candy lovers also partial to fruit

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

ALBANY, N.Y. — Cookie lovers seem more likely to eat apples and other fruits than salty snacks, suggests a new study.

If true, that finding might be useful in encouraging healthier eating, according to the lead author of the study. In other words, maybe that sweet tooth could be satisfied by fruit instead of sugar.

A group led by Cornell University marketing professor Brian Wansink looked at the eating habits of thousands of people and concluded the craving for something sweet spans both candy and fruit. The study published in the journal Appetite found people who eat candy, cakes and other sweet snacks eat more fruit than people who prefer salty snacks like nuts and chips.

"I think it shows there is

some hope for the typical dieter," he said. "Maybe you're not just a sugar-eating machine—that there are some redeeming traits to your diet."

The researchers analyzed self-reported eating habits of more than 14,000 Americans contained in U.S. Department of Agriculture surveys. They also relied on information from 405 people who responded to their own mailed survey.

Analysis of the USDA data suggested the link between sugary snacks and fruit while the survey showed that fruit lovers eat more sweets than vegetable lovers.

Wansink said parents and public health officials could use this information to encourage the phase-in of more fruits among kids and other people with a sweet tooth



PHOTO/STOCK MARKET

"I think it's something that can be done a little bit at a time at the dinner table," he said.

Cynthia Sass, a dietitian with a private practice in Tampa, Fla., said she has been doing exactly that with clients trying to control their sweet tooth. They might use unsweetened applesauce on waffles instead of syrup, or put berries on their cereal instead of spoonfuls of sugar.

"All of these have worked really well for people who

come in saying, I have trouble controlling my sweet tooth," said Sass, a spokeswoman for the American Dietetic Association.

Dr. Beverly Tepper, a professor of food science at Rutgers University who does taste research, criticized the study's execution.

She said it was difficult to interpret the results since the study was vague in defining terms like "fruit lovers" or what specific salty and sweet snacks were con-

Please see CANDY/2B

