

The Park's Ministries is 'something special' to Pastor **Claude Alexander/5B**



SUPER SATURDAY

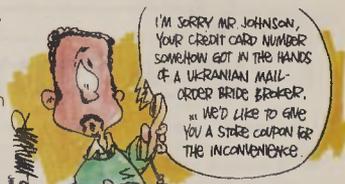
Three Mecklenburg teams aim for state football titles/1C

Independence High QB **Darryl McFadden**



IDENTITY THEFT SOLUTIONS

Businesses have an obligation to resolve issues for customers/6C



The Charlotte Post

The Voice of the Black Community

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WEEK OF DECEMBER 7-13, 2006



PHOTO: CURTIS WILSON

Wynonna Mims of Charlotte hands fliers to passersby in Charlotte last week in support of workers at Smithfield Packaging Company's Tar Heel, N.C. plant. Activists rallied here to bring attention to abuse of laborers at the world's largest hog-processing facility.

HIV risk higher despite safe sex

Study: Blacks still more likely to become infected

THE TRIANGLE TRIBUNE

CHAPEL HILL — Young black adults are far more likely to be infected with a sexually transmitted disease, including HIV, than young white adults, even when they engage in the same or even safer behavior, according to research released last week.

The study, electronically published by the American Journal of Public Health, found that African Americans aged 18 to 26 years engaging in low-risk behavior — no sex in the past year and little or no alcohol and drug use — are nearly 25 times more likely to be infected than whites engaging in the same behavior. Young black adults who have few sex partners and low alcohol and drug use in a year are seven times more likely to be infected than whites with the same behavior.

The survey of 8,706 participants found that young black adults generally engage less in risky behavior that could result in the transmission of STDs. Additionally, condom use among blacks is above 50 percent, while it's only one-third for young whites. However, because the prevalence of STDs is so much higher among young black adults, the risk of coming in contact with someone with an STD is exponentially greater, according to study author Denise Hallfors, Ph.D., a senior research scientist at the PIRE Chapel Hill Center.

"To combat this disparity, we need a much more aggressive public health strategy to reach all young black adults," Hallfors said. "It's not enough to recommend safe sex and testing for individuals, we need a media

Please see HIV/7A

Blood, sweat and fear

N.C. activists rally against unsafe conditions, abuse at Smithfield pork plant

By Erica Singleton
FOR THE CHARLOTTE POST

At Smithfield Packaging Company's Tar Heel processing plant, more than pigs' blood is shed.

Lenora Bailey said she complained to Tar Heel supervisors of arm pain and "was given a heat pad and sent back to work." Bailey, who began work with

the plant in 2001, was diagnosed work-induced tendonitis and was put on light duty for a while. But after undergoing surgery for other health issues, including gallstones, she was fired.

"I busted my stitches one day trying to get up there to give them another (doctor's) note," she said.

Bailey then joined the United

Food and Commercial Workers International Union to get workers at Tar Heel, including her husband C.J., unionized.

"The more we say to Smithfield we don't need to work so close...we don't need to have so many injuries...the more the continue to do what they've always done," she said. "We say no more. Whatever it takes to let

Smithfield know they've treated us unjustly...do it."

Protesters from across the state stand vigil outside Harris Teeter supermarkets, holding signs that read "SMITHFIELD BACON: Packaged with Worker Abuse @ Tar Heel, N.C. Plant."

Clergy, civil rights and union activists have joined forces to

Please see SMITHFIELD/3A

Neighbors honored for improving their communities

By Herbert L. White
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Some of Charlotte's best neighbors have earned more than thanks from the communities they live in.

Bank of America Corp. honored recipients of its third annual Neighborhood Excellence Initiative awards to recognize individuals and organizations

who work to improve communities. In three years, Bank of America has committed over \$1.3 million through the initiative in Charlotte.

"The impetus behind the Neighborhood Excellence Initiative is to increase the impact of our giving by building partnerships with non-profit organizations, recognizing distinguished

volunteers and cultivating the next generation of community leaders," said Graham Denton, BofA's North Carolina president. The Neighborhood Excellence Initiative provides support through:

- Neighborhood Builders, which will disburse: \$200,000 in grant funding and leadership training over the course of two

years; Charlotte Emergency Housing, which provides families and single adults with short-term emergency housing.

The organization, which owns a 14-room facility in downtown Charlotte, works to provide services and stability so working families can eventually move into long-term housing.

Please see HOPE/6A

In Congo, superstition breeds wave of homeless kids

By Scott Baldouf
THE CHRISTIAN SCIENCE MONITOR

KINSHASA, Congo — Three months ago, Kisungu Gloire considered himself fortunate.

A 13-year-old refugee, he had a house to sleep in, food to eat, and a stepmother who took care of him as one of her own.

Then one day, Kisungu's fragile world fell apart.

His stepmother delivered a baby that was stillborn. She blamed Kisungu, calling him a witch. She had a dream that Kisungu was trying to kill her, and then tried to burn him with a flaming plastic bag. She took him to a priest to perform an

exorcism, but when that appeared to have failed, she finally stopped feeding him and told him to get out.

"When I would ask for food, she refused," he says. "Another time I asked for food, she took a kitchen knife and cut me in the eye. When I talked with my brother, he said, 'Just drop it.' So then I moved out onto the streets."

Stories like Kisungu's are by no means rare, and are one of the most difficult challenges faced by aid workers and the new Congolese government as they collectively begin the

Please see CONGO/2A



CHRISTIAN SCIENCE MONITOR PHOTO: SCOTT BALDOUF

Ntumba Tshimanga, a 16-year-old orphan, came to Kinshasa to flee fighting in eastern Congo. His extended family initially took him in, but later kicked him out, accusing him of witchcraft.

the box

NEWS, NOTES & TRENDS

Librarian closes book on 40 years

By Cheris F. Hodges
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The year was 1966 and Kings Mountain resident Pearlle Brown had a chance to leave her job at Carver High School in Spindale to return to Gaston County to get in on the ground floor at Gaston Community College.

"This job was a blessing for me," said Brown, who is retiring this month after 40 years of library service. Brown has seen a lot of changes at the school and library-moving from the card catalogue system to computers, seeing the campus grow from two buildings to today's sprawling layout. But one thing has remained a constant is Brown's willingness to help students.

When she was hired in the 1960s, Brown was the only African American on staff at GCC.

"When I first got the job, they only

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INSIDE

Life 1B
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