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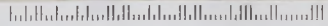
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PHOTO: BRANDI WOODSON

Basketball hall of famer Earvin Johnson talked AIDS prevention last week in Charlotte. HIV and AIDS affects African Americans disproportionately, with blacks accounting for half of new HIV cases.

## Magic's AIDS message

Basketball legend lends personal experience to educating African Americans

By Brandi Woodson

THE CHARLOTTE POST

Earvin "Magic" Johnson is urging African Americans to take the stigma out of AIDS.

The basketball hall of famer brought the "I Stand with Magic" campaign to Charlotte last week with a series of events, including a town hall

meeting at Little Rock AME Zion Church and an educational summit at Johnson C. Smith University to send a message of prevention to students.

In 1991, Johnson announced to the world that he was HIV positive and retired from the NBA's Los Angeles Lakers, where he played on five cham-

ampionship teams.

"I never hid my status and after I got over the initial shock of it, I had to tell my wife," said Johnson. "That was the hardest part."

More than 15 years later, Johnson is sharing his story to help stop the spread of the disease among the black commu-

nity. "At the time it was a gay white man's disease," said Johnson. "Now it's basically a black person's disease."

Blacks make up 13 percent of the U.S. population but account for 50 percent of new HIV cases in 2004. Johnson, who launched an HIV educa-

Please see **MAGICIS/2A**

“I never hid my status and after I got over the initial shock of it, I had to tell my wife. That was the hardest part.”

Basketball legend Earvin Johnson on being diagnosed with HIV

## Charlotte family's goal: Put Africans on their feet

Collecting shoes for S. Africa mission

By Brandi Woodson

THE CHARLOTTE POST

The Porter family is collecting hundreds of shoes to put Africans on their feet.

It was while attending a special service at Park Wood CME Church that Tard Porter heard about the need for shoes in Africa. Porter and wife Josephine started collecting shoes with the help of Samaritan's Feet, an international non-profit organization that changes the lives of

youth through sports and recreational activities under the direction of the Rev. Emmanuel Ohome. Each month this organization takes a trip to a different place in the world to give shoes to those in need. Samaritan's Feet hopes to put shoes on the feet of 10 million children over the next 10 years.

"It got to a place where I had so many shoes, that they asked me to go to Africa," said

Please see **MISSION/3A**



PHOTO: PAUL WILLIAMS III

The Porter family — Josephine, Taharqa, Tahir and Tard — is collecting shoes for needy South Africans. They'll leave Charlotte on March 15 for two weeks of mission work.

## Tournament week brought traffic snarls and smiles

By Cheris F. Hodges

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Working in Uptown Charlotte was no party last week.

CIAA basketball tournament fans enjoyed the games and parties, but people like James Wood had to go to work.

"Parking wasn't too bad," the Bank of America employee said. "Over the weekend it was clogged up."

Wood said that he normally parks about four blocks away from the BB&T Center where he works and he didn't experience any problems.

"On the last two days, traffic was a little bit busy," he said.

But Wood, who attended Winston-Salem State University,

Please see **CIAA/6A**



PHOTO: CURTIS WILSON

Abraham Mitchell — also known as "Mr. CIAA," greets Miss St. Augustine College Christhauna Thomas.

More CIAA events appealed to young adults, families

By Brandi Woodson

THE CHARLOTTE POST

A decade ago, the CIAA basketball tournament was losing its luster with the young and hip.

Not anymore.

The tournament is about more than basketball now. Now it has become one of the most anticipated events of the season and uptown is always full of sports lovers and party goers. "I love when CIAA comes around,"

Please see **EVENTS/6A**

## thebox NEWS, NOTES & TRENDS Time digs into Myers Park banishments

By Erica Singleton

FOR THE CHARLOTTE POST

The possible banishment and mis-coding of Myers Park High School students during the 2004-2005 school year is the subject of a national magazine article.

On Wednesday, Time was scheduled to publish a story on its website, resulting from their own investigation into the allegations. The Post broke the original story last August and reported last week Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools completed an investigation of the allegations.

In North Carolina during the 2004-2005 academic year, there were more than 20,000 dropout events recorded statewide for grades 9-12, with African American student rates among the highest. For CMS, the total was 1,108 with blacks accounting for 555. Data from a sample group of 49 Myers Park transfers and dropouts obtained by The Post showed 16 were coded incorrectly and 12 of those were African American. Among 16 correctly-coded

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