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N.C.'s Semi-Weekly

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Successful Accomplishments

Black Legislators Celebrating 20 Years As General Assembly Members

The N.C. Black Legislative Caucus will celebrate its 20th anniversary as members of the N.C. General Assembly with a legislative conference weekend June 16-17 at the Raleigh Crabtree Valley Marriott Hotel.

Rep. H.M. Michaux, Jr. of Durham, chairman of the caucus, said that

N.C. Supreme Court Justice Henry Frye of Greensboro was the first black elected to the N.C. General Assembly since Reconstruction. He was elected in November 1968, and began serving in January 1969.

Rep. Michaux further stated that the Black Legislative Caucus' fifth annual Legislative Conference

Weekend will honor Justice Frye and all other former black members of the N.C. General Assembly. Michaux went on to say that the theme of this year's conference is "Lifting As We Climb: The Legislative Legacy—20 Years Later."

In addition to honoring former members of the General Assembly,

two national leaders will address the conference. U.S. Rep. Edolphus Towns of New York and Julius Chambers, director/counsel of the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund, will be featured.

Michaux said that both of these na-

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Court's Precedents

Court Strikes At Civil Rights

"Racial Imbalance" Justified

BY CHESTER A. HIGGINS, SR.
NNPA News Editor

WASHINGTON, D.C.—Early this spring the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund, Inc.'s director-counsel, Julius L. Chambers, glumly assessed the Croson vs. City of Richmond U.S. Supreme Court decision, and declared:

"I'm afraid if we have many more decisions like this, Title VII of the Civil Rights Act" and ultimately Brown vs. Topeka, Kan. Board of Education itself will be reversed without ever actually being challenged or revisited. Croson struck down the City of Richmond's minority contract set-aside program because, according to Justice Sandra Day O'Connor, who wrote the majority opinion—"It failed essentially two tests—it was not based on proof of prior discrimination against minority contractors, and it failed to prescribe narrowly tailored remedies to overcome that specific discrimination."

Last week, the U.S. Supreme Court in a 5-4 decision struck at the very heart of Title VII by ruling against Alaska Salmon cannery workers of Filipino, native Alaskan and Asian descent who claimed two fish packing companies restricted minorities to lower-paying jobs. The Supreme Court decision in effect told employers they can justify "racial imbalance" (whites were concentrated in skilled jobs in those canneries) in their workforce by showing it was for "valid business reasons." So statistical numbers are out and it will now be difficult if not impossible for many who are discriminated against to "prove" they are victims of discrimination.

Justice Byron R. White, who came to maturity in rigidly segregated America as a 1937 All-America football player for the University of Colorado, wrote the majority opinion. He said the plaintiffs in the case, which was brought to court 15 years ago, had the burden of proving that the

(See SUPREME COURT, P. 2)



LIBRARY RENOVATED—Ms. Sandra Chambers, branch manager at Richard B. Harrison Library stands in the recently renovated facility on New Bern Avenue. The branch reopened June 12. (Photo by Talib Sahir-Calloway)

Unemployment Rates Highest For African-American Teens In N.C.

Although the unemployment rate in the Triangle is among the best in the state and nation, the average jobless rate for African-Americans across the state remains nearly three times higher than that for Caucasians.

Ms. Janet Rankin, assistant regional commissioner of the federal Bureau of Labor Statistics office in Atlanta, said latest available data show the overall unemployment rate for North Carolina minorities to be 7.2 percent.

That figure is exactly double the 3.6 percent unemployment rate for Caucasians.

Jobless rates, broken down into categories, are 6.4 percent for black males, 8.1 percent for black women; 2.4 percent for white males, and 3.1

percent for white women.

Hardest hit by joblessness, however, are black teenagers 16 to 19 years. The rate for that category is 23.5 percent, as compared with 9.2 percent unemployment for white teenagers in the same age group.

"It seems to be a nationwide phenomenon among young black people," Ms. Rankin says of the group's high, out-of-proportion jobless rate.

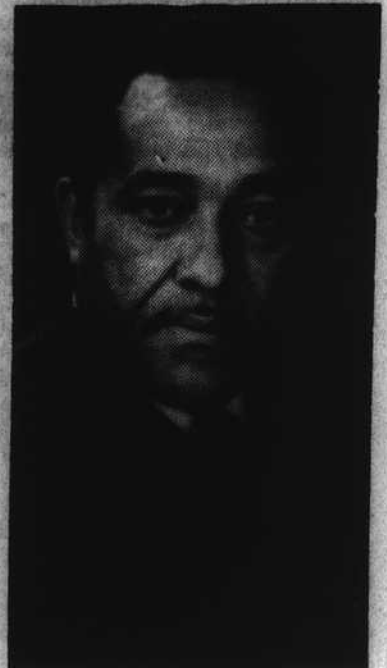
The Bureau of Labor Statistics, she says, has no explanations for its data and does not attempt to cite reasons for variance in the jobless rate. But, she adds, studies by others in the past have indicated that "young black people often are localized in areas where job opportunities are not available."

A percentage of unemployed black teenagers do not work, studies have shown, because of a lack of transportation to and from jobs; other studies, she says, have indicated that minority families often have not prepared their young people to go to work and teenagers find they need better work skills.

Ms. Rankin says she believes better employment programs are needed nationwide to help prepare and encourage young blacks for the job market.

The North Carolina Employment

(See UNEMPLOYMENT, P. 2)



JUDGE HENRY FRYE

Pilot Project Helping Small Business Plan

The backbone of North Carolina's economy does not lie in the merging of gigantic conglomerations, or in the intense debate over the rise and fall of the price of pork bellies—its strength lies in its small businesses that are expected to generate 900,000 additional jobs by the year 2000.

The N.C. community colleges have been essential in the testing of a Lotus 1,2,3 software package that will assist small businesses nationwide in managing and evaluating their financial resources.

Al Stoddard, manager of market development for the Lotus Development Corp., presented the N.C. Community College System with 50 software packages at a State Board of Community Colleges meeting recently. Stoddard commended the work of Dr. R. Jean Overton, director for

(See PILOT PROJECT, P. 2)

Gov. Martin Says Excise Tax Creates Problems

In an in-depth interview in the May-June issue of Philip Morris Magazine, Gov. Jim Martin re-emphasizes his opposition to higher consumer excise taxes on tobacco products.

Boosting consumer excise taxes on tobacco and other products, Martin says, can create more problems for states than solutions. North Carolina is the nation's leading tobacco-growing state.

Martin said he was pleased to have received a letter from George Bush during the 1988 presidential campaign. Bush stated his unequivocal opposition to tax increases: "I am

(See EXCISE TAX, P. 2)

Marka Fleming Makes History At Broughton

Marka Binta Fleming was recently awarded her diploma as a member of the graduating class of Broughton High School. That in itself was not unusual. More than 400 other students received a similar diploma.

There was, however, an unusual element. She was the first student in the history of the school to finish the four-year prescribed high school course in three years. She was able to accomplish that history-making feat by taking a majority of advanced courses each semester.

Marka's short educational history has been spiced with variety. Her first five years of schooling were spent at Eno Valley Elementary School, Durham. She studied during the sixth, seventh and eighth grades at Felton Laboratory School on the campus of South Carolina State College, Orangeburg, S.C.

Marka's three years of high school saw her attending her freshman year at Orangeburg Wilkinson High School in Orangeburg, and her next two years at Broughton in Raleigh.

At Orangeburg Wilkinson, she was a member of the Les Charmes Club, the Student Council (class representative), and Program for Academically Talented Students.

At Broughton, she has participated in the African-American History Club (secretary), the National Honor Society, the Minority Leadership Group, and Project Graduation (1988-89).

Her awards have included the highest class average (sixth and eighth grades), and awards in mathematics and science. She maintained an honor roll average through elementary and high school.

(See HISTORY MAKING, P. 2)

School Chief Finalist Notes Basics

Dr. Robert Wentz, former superintendent of Clark County, Nev. schools, met community leaders county and city officials and school employees this week as the first of four candidates for the job of Wake County school superintendent.

The Wake County Board of

Education welcomed Wentz and his wife, Dr. Janice Wentz. Dr. Wentz has 21 years of experience as superintendent, including the last seven years with the Clark County School District in Nevada.

Henry C. Knight, school board member, issued the following

statement about the candidate:

The Clark County School District in Nevada is the 18th largest school district in the nation, with 105,000 students. He has also served as superintendent of schools for the St. Louis Public Schools, the Pomona Unified School District in California,

and the Penn-Harris-Madison Schools in Indiana.

His experiences include successful accomplishment of many of the challenges that face Wake County today or that we have faced in the past. Those include:

Directing the growth of a school district from 89,000 students to 105,000 students in six years.

Developing a five-year strategic plan for the 18th largest school district in the nation.

Securing a 75 percent increase in the district's general operating budget.

Leading the desegregation of the St. Louis schools.

Implementing a successful magnet program.

Building strong alliances with the business community.

Dr. Janice Wentz also is an educator and has a broad base of professional experience. She is a Realtor and owns a private computer consulting firm specializing in training in word processing and desktop publishing.

In addition, Dr. Janice Wentz is a computer instructor at the University of Nevada at Las Vegas in its extension division. Prior to moving to Clark County she was an elementary school principal, a junior high school teacher, and a school district administrator.

We have arranged several opportunities during the next several

(See SUPERINTENDENT, P. 2)



PROSPECTIVE CANDIDATE—Dr. Robert Wentz (far right) was brought to the attention of local media. Wentz from Clark County in Nevada is a candidate for Wake County Public School Superintendent post vacated by Dr. Robert

Bridges. Wentz appears with his wife Dr. Janice Wentz and school board member Henry C. Knight (center). (Photo by Talib Sahir-Calloway)



DUO HIT—Attorneys Robert Burford and Yvonne Pugh are a big hit as husband and wife law firm in Raleigh. Attorney Burford has been practicing law for approximately 15 years and Attorney Pugh for nearly 12 years. (Photo by Talib Sahir-Calloway)