

Confab To Hear Ms. Angelou

Maya Angelou To Address N.C. Women Writers Conference Emphasizing Sisterhood Of All Women.
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Keeping The Blues Alive

B. B. King And His Band Receive Coveted W.C. Handy Award For Keeping The Blues Alive.
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This Week

In December 1930, a concert was performed at New York's Carnegie Hall. "From Spirituals To Swing: An Evening of American Negro Music. Produced by John Hammond, it featured boogie (See THIS WEEK, P. 2)

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Improving The Environment

School Dropout Rate Declines In State

North Carolina's school dropout rate has declined dramatically in the last three years.

"The programs we have commissioned to keep children in school are working," State Superintendent Bob Etheridge said as he released the latest figures.

The latest figures show that the

combined rate has dropped to 5.6 percent, the first time it has dropped below six percent.

Based on a typical school bus's capacity, North Carolina has kept in school about 80 busloads of students who would normally have dropped out, based on prior years.

Etheridge said the rate for the last

four years has dropped dramatically. The rate in 1987-88 was 7.7 percent in grades 9-12. It fell to 6.6 percent in 1988-89 and to 6.4 percent in 1989-90.

"The tragedy is," Etheridge said, "that even with the decline in the rate, we still lost 17,858 students who dropped out of school. These

young people are in danger of not being equipped for the technological age of the future."

Etheridge praised local educators and communities for their efforts to keep students in school by improving the school environment, raising awareness of the need for education and stressing regular school atten-

dance. "This good news is the result of sustained hard work and attention over the past several years by schools and entire communities. Local educators have focused on prevention and on changes to instruction that better serve students with different learning styles and

different needs. All children can learn, and schools are being reorganized with that in mind."

Dropout prevention is a priority of the Basic Education Program, the state's major reform effort begun in 1985. The BEP provides about \$30 million for dropout prevention. (See DROPOUT RATES, P. 2)

Squeezing Family Dollar

Activists Confront Company

BY WINFRED CROSS
Special to The CAROLINIAN

Friction between Family Dollar Stores, Inc. and members of the African-American community over a gift to a Duke University research center may ease soon.

Charlotte Attorney Charles Jones, spokesperson for Citizens Advocating Reconciliation and Reciprocity (CARR) said the two sides have met and things look positive.

"We are waiting for discussions which will reach a meaningful and satisfactory position on the reinvestment in the community," Jones said in the Charlotte Post. "We're very pleased that they are listening to the dialogue and want to reach some common accord. We think it speaks well of the management skills that have brought their company over the last few years to a major growth company."

The friction started when Leon Levine, the largest stockholder in Family Dollar, recently gave a personal gift of \$10 million to the Science Resource Center to be housed at Duke University. Jones said CARR believes much of Levine's money comes from his Family Dollar stock and that chain gets most of its money from working and black people.

"Our position is that money comes primarily from the black community. We think it's extremely important that Family Dollar explore ways to reinvest monies in those communities that provide its primary source of income black or white," Jones said.

George Mahoney, executive vice president of Family Dollar Stores, Inc. said Levine chose to give the money to the research center "because of the benefit to all of mankind — to whites, blacks, Hispanics — to all people, really."

"It should do a good deal of advancement to scientific research to benefit all people," Mahoney said.

(See CONFRONT Co., P. 2)



SHARING CONTRIBUTIONS—Dr. Benjamin Carson, renowned pediatric neurosurgeon is a shining role model for African-Americans. Dr. Carson gained worldwide recognition in 1987 for the first successful separation of Siamese twins joined at the back of the head. Here, he is seen sharing moments with N. C. State University Chancellor Larry K. Monteith, during an annual Brotherhood Dinner where Dr. Carson and six African-American students were honored.

NC Housing Finance Agency Offers Mortgages At Record 6.95 Percent

First-time home buyers can soon obtain home mortgages at 6.95 percent, the lowest rate in the North Carolina Housing Finance Agency's history, Gov. James G. Martin announced last week.

The \$62.1 million in 30-year, fixed-rate mortgages will be available statewide beginning Dec. 19 from 24 lenders and their branches. The loans will assist approximately 1,130 home buyers with moderate and low incomes. Lenders can now begin placing eligible borrowers on waiting lists.

"Including these new loans, the

North Carolina Housing Finance Agency has now provided more than \$2 billion in capital for housing in our state," said Martin. The governor said that the agency's sale of tax-

exempt bonds had financed first homes for more than 28,000 families and had enabled developers to build 8,400 affordable apartments. The (See HOUSING, P. 2)

Inside Africa

Africa Seeks A Chance To Develop

An Analysis \$270 billion! This astronomical figure represents the amount which sub-Saharan black Africa owes to various governments of the world.

There are several reasons for this galloping indebtedness. Africa's debt rose seriously during the 1980s, at the time when its economic problems mounted substantially. By 1990, the continent's total debt was 2 1/2 times greater than in 1980. At the same time that debt increased with interest, the price of its commodities worldwide tumbled.

Recently at the United Nations Day for Africa, convened by UN Secretary General Javier Perez de Cuellar and chaired by the visionary Dr. Leon Sullivan, several high government officials as well as the presidents of General Motors and Colgate-Palmolive participated. All agreed that it is simply not possible for the sub-Saharan African countries to develop further, with their debt burden exceeding \$270 billion.

Therefore, the chairman and others vigorously called for debt forgiveness. Dr. Sullivan, in an extraordinary statement, pointed out that "If the seven big nations can forgive the debts of Israel, Poland

and Egypt, then certainly they can forgive the debt in sub-Saharan or black Africa."

Specifically, his proposal is for

forgiveness of 80 percent of governmental debt, 20 percent would remain for 20 years. The interest on the 20 percent and the freed reve-

nues on the 80 percent would go for children, the poor, education and (See INSIDE AFRICA, P. 2)

Jackson Blasts Bush For Economic Racism

SHREVEPORT, La.—Blaming the nation's economic disparity on divisive racial policies of President George and former President Ronald Reagan, the Rev. Jesse Jackson launched a grassroots effort to forge change in a summit of Northwest Louisiana black religious and political leaders here last week.

He publicly blasted President Bush for the nation's economic imbalance, stating that the president and David Duke are very similar. "They use racial politics to divide the country."

"They both play on the political fears of Americans by pushing phony issues and stereotypes."

Jackson slammed Duke for using White House tactics in his unsuccessful bid for governor in Louisiana. "Duke used the stereotype of a

black woman as a welfare queen the same way that Bush used Willie Horton, a black convicted rapist, to



REV. JESSE JACKSON polarize blacks and whites," he said. Duke plans to run for president next year.

"What we saw in this campaign was a well-defined use of an ideology that Reagan and Bush used for three (See JESSE JACKSON, P. 2)



TEAM BUILDING — Raleigh Nursery School staff at a recent team building exercise. Pictured are left to right Burnell Pridgeon, Nancy Cozart, Pauline Wesley, D. Vanessa Roberson, Clara Pulley, Kathy Johnson, JoAnne

McLamb, Valerie Lindsey, Mattie Harris, Brenda High Sanders, and Andre Stancel. Raleigh Nursery School is a United Way Agency. Not shown are Leasia Pemberton, Lisa Copeland, Saltzsteen Brown and Andre Pridgeon.