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Democracy, like religion, never was designed to make... profits less.
Zora Neale Hurston

EASTERN NORTH CAROLINA'S MINORITY VOICE - SINCE 1981

MARCH 27 - APRIL 5, 1997

Public Hearing Set For Tuesday

Assuring Competitive Fairness and Fitness for Pitt County Memorial Hospital

Times change. Businesses change. Technology changes. Even something as basic as our lives as farming has seen tremendous change in just the last two decades. The same is true for health care.

Twenty-two years ago, Pitt County built a 270-bed hospital at the edge of Greenville. Today, 731-bed Pitt County Memorial Hospital is the hub of a health system poised at the edge of a dramatically different health care landscape.

The players are different. The rules have changed. Its a whole new ball game, one that favors flexibility and speed. Yet PCMH is playing by rules that were developed in a different era, for a different game.

That's why the leaders of your medical center are now themselves considering a change. The PCMH Board of Trustees has proposed that Pitt County transfer ownership of the hospital to a citizen-controlled, not-for-profit corporation, essentially the same entity

that has operated PCMH since it was chartered in 1953.

Such a change will mean a great deal for the business side of PCMH, allowing it to compete on a level playing field with other health care systems. In all other respects, the change will be barely noticeable. High quality, affordable patient care will continue to be available to the residents of Pitt County. PCMH will remain accountable to the public and the Pitt County Board of Commissioners under a legally binding transfer agree-

ment. And the hospital will keep its long-standing commitment to provide care to indigent patients.

With this change in status, PCMH will be a healthier, stronger hospital, assuring that Greenville and Pitt County will continue to benefit from this vital economic asset. Without it, the hospitals position in the market will in all likelihood deteriorate, resulting in loss of revenue and possibly of jobs.

This brochure has been developed to share the PCMH Board of

Trustees' position on this important issue. Please read it carefully. The PCMH Trustees and the Pitt County Board of Commissioners have been working hard to carefully consider the facts and reach a decision in the best interest of the citizens of Pitt County and the hospital. The better each of us understands this issue, the easier that task will be.

WHAT MAKES THE CHANGE IN STATUS POSSIBLE

The change in the hospital's ownership status is permitted by a 14-year-old state law specifically intended for such actions. The law, N.C. General Statute 131-E-8, originated in 1983 to allow county governments to transfer ownership of their hospital facilities to a not-for-profit corporation under the control of local citizens. Under such an arrangement, the majority of the hospital's governing body is appointed.

**Continued on Page Three.
More on Hearing - Page Ten.**

Excerpt From Harper's Weekly - April 26, 1879

HARPER'S MAGAZINE, HARPER'S WEEKLY, and BAZAR POSTAGE FREE. HARPER'S MAGAZINE, HARPER'S WEEKLY, or HARPER'S BAZAR will be sent for one year to any Subscriber in the United States, POSTAGE PREPAID by the Publishers, on receipt of Four Dollars.

Harper's Weekly.
Saturday, April 26, 1879

The ILLUSTRATED SUPPLEMENT sent our gratuitously with this Number of HARPER'S WEEKLY. contains three pages of engravings relating to SHAKESPEARE and Stratford-on-Avon, and a second installment of "THE DISTRACTED YOUNG PREACHER."

An ILLUSTRATED SUPPLEMENT will be issued gratuitously with the next Number of HARPER'S WEEKLY.

A STEP FORWARD IN REFORM THE first examination for appointments in the New York Custom-house under the regulations lately adopted has been held, and in the most satisfactory manner. The great object of such an examination is to secure appointment by proved merit, and not by mere influence. The system of appointment by influence degrades practical politics into a mercenary scramble for place, and produces incalculable political demoralization. It is, therefore, the worst possible system. Any method which serves to break it up is preferable. It would be better that all the names of candidates urged by politicians, and committees and associations were written on paper and shaken up in a hat, and the place given to the first name drawn by lot, than that the old system should continue. The evil is largely in the method of appointment, not so much

in the efficiency of those appointed; and the value of a competitive examination is that at the same time it baffles influence and tests merit. Its success depends of course upon good faith. Any scheme of examination, if it be applied dishonestly, merely strengthens the abuse to be corrected. The main value of the recent examination at the Custom-house lay therefore in its honesty. It was a perfectly honest proceeding. There was no fear and no favor. The Board of Examination had received no hint of preference of any candidate from the Collector or the Naval Officer. The sole object was to ascertain by proper tests the special fitness and general intelligence and aptitude of the applicants, and to select the first three as those from whom the appointments should be made. For this purpose various sets of papers were prepared, of which no candidate had any knowledge whatever. Twenty-six applicants, first in order of application, and as many as could be accommodated, were invited to compete, and an exceedingly intelligent-looking body of gentlemen presented themselves. The various papers were admirably prepared and proportioned for the object. They were of two kinds: one to test special knowledge of rules of computation and notation which would be immediately required in the office to which appointments were to be made, and the other to show general knowledge of the kind which every clerk in the service should possess. In estimating the relative excellence of the papers, due weight was given to time, handwriting, form, order, and the indications of general quickness and capacity. Thus it was not enough to answer the specific questions correctly. Everything was taken into account, and under the perfectly honorable conduct of the Board the candidates themselves determined who ought to be appointed. This

would seem to be as sensible a way of selecting clerks for the civil service as to appoint because of the solicitation of Senator A or Representative B, or upon the recommendation of a ward association or a county committee, none of which authorities have any knowledge or care whatever of the fitness of the men whom they recommend, and who do not hesitate to insist that the appointing power shall make places for their candidates by turning out clerks who may be most efficient, honest, and experienced. Is there any reason to suppose that less intelligent and capable men will secure places under a system of honest examination than under one of interested recommendation from politicians. Is there any reason to doubt that a man who earns his place by his proved merit will have a higher self-respect and a greater zeal for efficiency, upon which promotion depends, than one who knows that he is put in by personal favor and will be put out when another personal favor requires? It is often said that examination will not show whether a man has the necessary faculty and tact for filling a place. Very well. Will the recommendation of a member of Congress or ward committee show it? Nothing but experience will prove it, and all that can be done in advance is to select the one who shows himself to be apparently most promising, by equal tests with others, and in doing this the whole vast machine of patronage is broken up, and the people are relieved from the political despotism of office-holders.

The late examination to fill two vacancies in the Naval Office was a thoroughly intelligent and sincere step in this direction, and one in which the country is in reality hardly less interested than in the action of Congress. The ridicule which it en-

Continued on Page Seven.



HOW BEAUTIFUL IT IS FOR BRETHREN (& SISTERS) TO DWELL TOGETHER IN UNITY!!! These members of Cornerstone Missionary Baptist Church pause briefly for the 'M' Voice camera following morning worship. Shown here: (above) Brother Cliff Hickman, his wife, and children; Brother Michael Jordan, Director of the Jackie Robinson Baseball League, and his madam; and Sister Charetta Walls. (Below) Brother Tito Barrett and his madam; Sister Eve Rogers, Sister Joyce Mitchell, Sister Laura Hamilton, and others. **HAPPY, HAPPY FACES. (PHOTO: JIM ROUSE)**

Health Conference April 4 and 5

Heart Disease, Stroke, Cancer to be discussed

GREENVILLE, March 26 — "African-American women need to be more informed about the dangers of heart disease, stroke and cancer," says Milele Archibald, Vice President of The Carolina Health Group, Inc. and co-chair of the April 4 and 5 seminar entitled "AFRICAN-AMERICAN WOMEN'S WORKSHOP ON HEART DISEASE, STROKE AND CANCER."

"African-American women have a higher rate of heart disease than other women and they also develop the disease earlier in life," says Archibald. "We hope to bring together women activists who will take a leadership role in taking these serious health issues back to their communities. Our goal is to bring the message to African-American women of Pitt County that they are at greater risk of heart disease, stroke and cancer and they must become proactive in taking responsibility for their health."

The conference, to be held on April 4 and 5 in Greenville, is a joint effort by The Carolina Health Group, Inc., a nonprofit association of health care professionals, and The American Heart Association and American Cancer Society. Other supporters are ECU School of Allied Health, Pitt County Memorial Hospital Heart Center, Eastern Digestive

Disease Center, Dupont Merck Pharmaceutical, First Citizens Bank and the Office of Minority Health, DEHNR.

The keynote speaker for the Friday evening dinner is Dr. Patricia Davidson, a practicing cardiologist from Washington, DC, who is nationally known for encouraging African American women to become more responsible for prevention of the risk factors that lead to heart disease and stroke. Saturday's workshops will begin with a keynote address by local physician, Dr. Ceylon Rowland of Women's Health Center in Greenville, who also will address the importance of preventive measures in achieving a healthy cancer-free lifestyle. They will be led by Drs. Robin Taylor and Kim Johnson of ECU School of Medicine, Department of Family Medicine.

The Friday evening session is by invitation. Participants must commit to sharing the information with African-American women in their communities through follow-up outreach activities. The Saturday workshops, beginning with breakfast at 8 am at ECU's Belk Building, are open to the public.



Fleming Exxon Gas Station. Shown are Brothers who will take care of your car with a good attitude. Name these Brothers and win \$10.00 in Gas at Fleming Exxon.

(Photo by: Jim Rouse)

from the desk of **Mrs. Beatrice Maye**
GO TO THE HEAD OF THE CLASS

SOME TRUTHS:

1. Children need strength to lean on, a shoulder to cry on, and an example to learn from.
2. Every child has a right to be both well-fed and well-led.
3. A pint of example is worth a gallon of advice.
4. A good example is the best sermon you can preach.
5. Courtesy is the quality that keeps a woman smiling when a departing guest stands at the open door and lets the flies in.
6. Why are husbands and wives more courteous to strangers than to each other?
7. Be courteous to everybody. You never know who might show up on the jury.
8. The measure of a truly great man is the courtesy with which he treats lesser men.
9. Gratitude is the most exquisite form of courtesy.
10. When you think you've done your best, dig a little deeper.
11. We've lost our moral fiber. Rev. Bernece King (Montel Show, 2/28/97)
12. Christians proclaim brotherly love, love for your neighbor, peace on earth and other nations, but they often do not practice them. Hugo Borresen

THE WORLD NEEDS MEN

- ... who cannot be bought;
- ... whose word is their bond;
- ... who put character above wealth;
- ... who possess opinions and a will;
- ... who are larger than their vocations;
- ... who do not hesitate to take chances;
- ... who will not lose their individuality in a crowd;
- ... who will be as honest in small things as in great things;
- ... who will make no compromise with wrong;
- ... whose ambitions are not confined to their own selfish desires;
- ... Who will not say they do it "because everybody else does it."
- ... who are true to their friends through good report and evil report, in adversity as well as in prosperity.
- ... who do not believe that shrewdness, cunning, and hard-headedness are the best qualities for winning success;
- ... who are not ashamed or afraid to stand for the truth when it is unpopular, who can say "no" with emphasis, although the rest of the world says "yes."

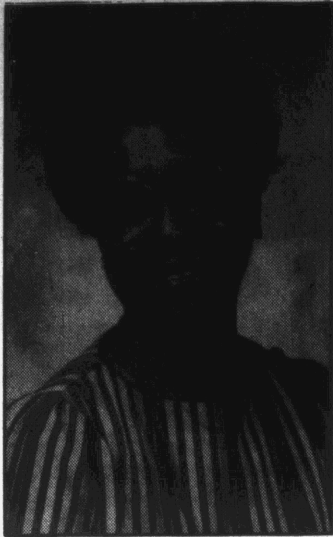
Some Good Ways to Feel Good About Yourself

- Don't wait until spring; let the end of summer give you the signal to clean out closets, attic and garage—your car's trunk, too.
- Help someone learn to read; it has been estimated that 17 to 21 million adults in the United States cannot read. Contact the Coalition for Literacy Information Hot Line at 800-228-8813 for more information.
- Get a big, colorful piggy bank, and start saving—even if it's only a dime a day—for a special splurge.
- Take a child out for an old-fashioned ice-cream sundae, and delight in his or her reaction.
- Get a professional manicure; you'll feel pampered and elegant every time you see your fingernails shimmer.
- Put the TV "on strike" for a week. Spend your newfound leisure time listening to classical music, engaging in lively discussions.
- Fill up the tub—don't forget the bubbles—and relax by taking a long, soothing soak.
- Gather old magazines and unwanted books from your own and your neighbors' homes, and donate them to a hospital or senior citizens' home.
- Pull out your high-school yearbook, and, as you page through it, indulge your imagination in some "Whatever happened to?" daydreams.
- Start a fall family tradition: Gather the kid or invite a relative over to your house to bake bread and make apple pear preserves.
- Treat yourself to luxurious new sleepwear or lingerie.
- If you've never liked poetry, buy a volume of verse, and read a poem a day. You may discover a hidden appreciation for the form!
- Stock up on postcards (museums are a great source), and mail quick notes to those you care for—even members of your own household.
- One of the biggest favors you can do for yourself is to be conscientious about your health. So, if you don't have regular checkups by your doctor, dentist and gynecologist, schedule appointments now.

COLIN POWELL'S RULES

1. It ain't as bad as you think. It will look better in the morning.
2. Get mad, then get over it.
3. Avoid having your ego so close to your position that when your position falls, you ego goes with it.
4. It can be done!
5. Be careful what you choose. You may get it.
6. Don't let adverse facts stand in the way of a good decision.
7. You can't make someone else's choices. You shouldn't let someone else make yours.
8. Check small things.
9. Share credit.
10. Remain calm. Be kind.
11. Have a vision. Be demanding.
12. Don't take counsel of your fears or naysayers.
13. Perpetual optimism is a force multiplier.

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the Black
Press
Read The
'M' Voice**



Mrs. Beatrice Maye

"Ebonics"

"We do not have to teach "Ebonics", or what we call African-American English, because the kids are already fluent in it. It is the primary mode of communication. Therefore, it's up to us to make sure that they master so-called Standard English," said Anthony Jackson, teacher, 99th Street Elementary School, from the Los Angeles Magazine, March 1997.

"Trimming the Fringe; How Newspapers Shun Low-Income Readers", by Gilbert Cranberg, from Columbia Journalism, March/April 1997.

Cranberg states: "Neglecting the poor does seem to be the trend lately, but it's a shame to see newspaper journalism as a force that increases their isolation. The notion clashes with the vision most editors hold of the newspaper as a forum for the whole community and a bulwark of democracy.

Continuing, "By the year 2010, nearly one out of every two children under five years of age will belong to an ethnic minority group. These young people are the ones the newspaper industry must learn to attract as readers and as employees".

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"TRAIL BLAZERS" ... Brother Ernest "Red" Eaton (L), retired owner and operator of Eaton's Service Center and Bishop T. L. Davis (R), Pastor of the Progressive Free Will Baptist Church, are truly testimonials of God's goodness as evidenced by their individual successes. Brothers, continue to stand tall!!! (PHOTO: JIM ROUSE)

**Murder Charge Filed in Slaying,
Youth May Get Death Penalty**

The young Russian immigrant who could face the death penalty if convicted of killing the son of one of the United States' most popular comedians was an above-average student who struggled to fit in, aspired to be a gang member and spent time in a juvenile camp, classmates and school officials said.

"We just thought he was a little white boy who wanted to be a 'cholo' (gang member)," said Olga Medina 18, a former classmate at Los Alamitos High School. "He was a wannabe, he wanted to be a gang member."

Mikhail Markhasev, 18, was charged with murder Friday for the slaying of Ennis Cosby, 27, the only son of entertainer Bill Cosby. Markhasev was also charged with attempted robbery and use of a firearm during commission of a crime.

He did not enter a plea and will be held without bail until his next court appearance March, 28.

Police say Markhasev randomly chose Cosby for a robbery attempt, shooting him as he was changing a flat tire near a freeway off-ramp Jan. 16. Police say they have recovered the gun used in the slaying and a cap worn by the killer.

The allegation that Cosby was killed during an attempted robbery is a so-called "special circumstance" that, if upheld at trial, could allow prosecutors to seek the death penalty.

Markhasev and his mother came to the United States about eight years ago from Lvov, Ukraine, an industrial and cultural center of 800,000 people. He attended a number of Los Angeles-area schools.

Students at Los Alamitos High

School in Orange County said Markhasev was called "Pee Wee" because of a perceived resemblance to the film and television character Pee Wee Herman.

Markhasev also had ties to the Varrio Los Alamitos gang, it was reported Saturday.

"He was promoting VLA as a big bad group," said Soda Davetas, 17, of Laurel High, near Los Alamitos High. "He was too fake. He walked around talking that big talk. It's not powerful when you talk like that."

Los Angeles school officials and Markhasev's boss at a North Hollywood plant store described him as an intelligent teen who didn't cause trouble.

He earned a B average, the second-highest possible, at Reseda High School, where he enrolled in 1993 after transferring from Los Alamitos.

Markhasev was hired in February as a cashier at Mainly Seconds Pottery Plants and Things near the apartment he shared with his mother. He was scheduled to work the night he was arrested, owner Jim Herzoff said.

"He just seemed like a nice kid who lived down the block," Herzoff said.

In late 1995 Markhasev spent six months in a juvenile probation camp. His juvenile record includes a conviction for marijuana possession and assault with a deadly weapon, news papers reported.

Markhasev and his mother were quiet tenants who signed a year-long lease in January for the two-bedroom apartment in North Hol-

lywood, building manager Olga Faynshteyn said.

Asked about the mother's reaction to the case, Faynshteyn said, "I guess she's shocked like everybody else. She wasn't expecting ..."

The parents of Ennis Cosby said Saturday that immigrant communities from the former Soviet Union cannot be blamed for the killing of their son.

"The Cosbys do not view him as representative of either the Russian or the Ukrainian people and they are asking and hoping that those people that are law-abiding from that community not feel any guilt about what this person has done," family spokesman David Brokaw said after talking to Bill and Camille Cosby. Some reporters have asked the Cosbys whether they would support the death penalty if Markhasev is convicted, Brokaw said.

"They just refuse to examine that issue right now," Brokaw said. "They feel that what's more important right now is for the court to do its work."

The allegation that Cosby was killed during an attempted robbery is a so-called "special circumstance" that, if upheld at trial, could allow prosecutors to seek the death penalty.

Bill Cosby on Thursday completed work for the season on his "Cosby" television show. This week, he and his wife planned to visit South Africa, where Cosby will perform three concerts, including one for President Nelson Mandela, Brokaw said.

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or controlled by the county, and the hospital must operate under conditions laid down by the statute and any additional guidelines established by the county.

The intent of the law is to enable public hospitals to be more competitive and still remain under local control. Under current law, public hospitals are restricted in pursuing some of the activities which their competitors—private for-profit and private not-for-profit hospitals—can freely engage in. These activities can be grouped into several categories:

- Activities related to business development
 - Protecting the confidentiality of competitively sensitive records, such as the prices negotiated with managed care companies
 - Forming partnerships with private entities such as physicians and managed care companies
- Activities related to financing
 - Financing facilities outside the county
 - Accessing conventional sources of financing
 - Earning the same return on investments as competitors
 - Entering into long-term leases
- Activities related to making operations more efficient
 - Streamlining the disposal of property
 - Developing streamlined purchasing and inventory systems
 - Using single prime contracting for construction projects

Since 1983, many public hospitals in North Carolina have used this law to reorganize, including some nearby competitors of Pitt County Memorial Hospital. A recent conversion occurred in 1996, when the Wake County Board of Commissioners voted to change the status of Wake Medical Center in Raleigh.

WHY THE CHANGE IS NEEDED

PCMH has enjoyed good years, both financially and in terms of expansion of patient care services, in the recent past. But that kind of success will be threatened if the hospital continues to remain at a competitive disadvantage.

With the movement of managed health care into our region, the marketplace for hospital and physician services is rapidly becoming more competitive. Pressure to operate more efficiently is intense. The new emphasis on contracting for health care services has made the price of those services more of a focal point. And large hospitals such as PCMH are having to work more closely with physicians and smaller hospitals in neighboring counties to keep their traditional patient base. At the same time, large hospitals that offer similar services to PCMH are forming business relationships that will bring patients from eastern North Carolina to their medical centers when the patients need advanced care. In most cases, these hospitals do not operate under the regulatory restrictions that burden PCMH.

In this environment, PCMH must be free to compete on an equal footing with other health care systems. But that is impossible when competitors...

...have access to the contracts PCMH

signs to provide services, yet PCMH does not have access to the same information from them;

...have far more flexibility to enter into partnerships with health care providers in this service area than PCMH does;

...have more flexibility in obtaining financing than PCMH does;

...can realize operating efficiencies that are not available to PCMH because of existing law.

WHAT A CHANGE IN STATUS DOES NOT MEAN

Becoming a citizen-controlled, not-for-profit institution does not mean that the hospital will be given away or sold. Conversion to this new status is not the same as selling the hospital. There is no intention of selling the hospital, nor to change its status to for-profit. In any case, the Pitt County Board of Commissioners will retain final authority over decisions of that nature under the new status.

Nor will the change in the hospital's status mean that employees' jobs will be threatened. For PCMH employees, this change will make their employer a more competitive health care provider in eastern North Carolina and their jobs will therefore be more secure.

Finally, the change in status would not affect the hospital's long-standing commitment to provide care to all people regardless of their ability to pay. PCMH does not receive any tax dollars to support this commitment and will not receive any under the new status, yet the hospital will remain true to its commitment to provide urgent care. Indeed, the negotiated transfer agreement between PCMH and the county will obligate the hospital to continue to provide services to patients regardless of their ability to pay.

After reorganization, PCMH will still be accountable to the public. It will still have open meetings. The majority of its trustees will still be appointed by the Pitt County Commission. And any failure to comply with the provisions of the transfer agreement will mean PCMH reverts to county ownership.

Here are several other ways that reorganization to a citizen-controlled, not-for-profit status will and will not affect PCMH:

- It will not result in staff reductions;
- It will require PCMH to operate as a not-for-profit hospital;
- It will ensure an ongoing commitment

to quality care at competitive prices;

• It will continue to allow PCMH to be self-sustaining without any local tax support.

FINALLY...

PCMH has met its commitment to local and regional health care and medical education for more than a generation. As eastern North Carolina grows and its health care needs change, PCMH must keep pace. In fact, the hospital must stay ahead of the region's needs. Becoming a citizen controlled, not-for-profit hospital is the best method to allow PCMH to meet those needs.

QUESTIONS?

HERE ARE SOME ANSWERS...

Who currently owns PCMH?

PCMH is owned by Pitt County. The county owns the land, buildings and assets, and it leases those to PCMH Inc., a not-for-profit corporation formed years ago by the county to operate the hospital.

Who will own the hospital if it becomes a citizen controlled, not-for-profit institution?

PCMH Inc. will own the land, buildings and equipment and will continue to operate the hospital.

Are citizen-controlled not-for-profit hospitals something new in North Carolina?

No. The N.C. General Assembly enacted the statute in 1983 and it allows public not-for-profit hospitals to be relieved of certain legal constraints while keeping their commitment to community health and indigent care. Many nearby hospitals such as Wayne Memorial in Goldsboro, Halifax Memorial in Roanoke Rapids and Wilson Memorial have reorganized under this statute.

Aren't there alternative ways for PCMH to address these issues of unfair competition?

Yes. PCMH has considered working with state legislators to seek changes in the laws that give its competitors unfair advantages. The problem with this approach is that it is slow and complex. The county's legal advisors have said that changes in the law in seven separate areas would be necessary to address the competitive differences. Also, it is anticipated that this

long list of amendments would be opposed by competitors of PCMH.

What will be the differences if PCMH reorganizes under this statute?

For the most part, PCMH will be no different from the way it is today. Only its corporate status will change. The hospital will not reduce its services or cut staff as part of the reorganization.

Could PCMH then sell the hospital or change itself into a for-profit entity?

No. Under this reorganization, PCMH could not sell the hospital or convert to for-profit status without county approval.

Can PCMH survive without county tax dollars?

PCMH receives no subsidy from Pitt County and, in fact, repaid the county's initial in the hospital many years ago.

How will the public know PCMH is living up to its end of the bargain? PCMH will undergo a yearly audit to ensure it is keeping up its commitment under the statute. Also, meetings of the PCMH Board of Trustees will continue to be open to the public.

Some people say that PCMH will raise prices if this change goes through.

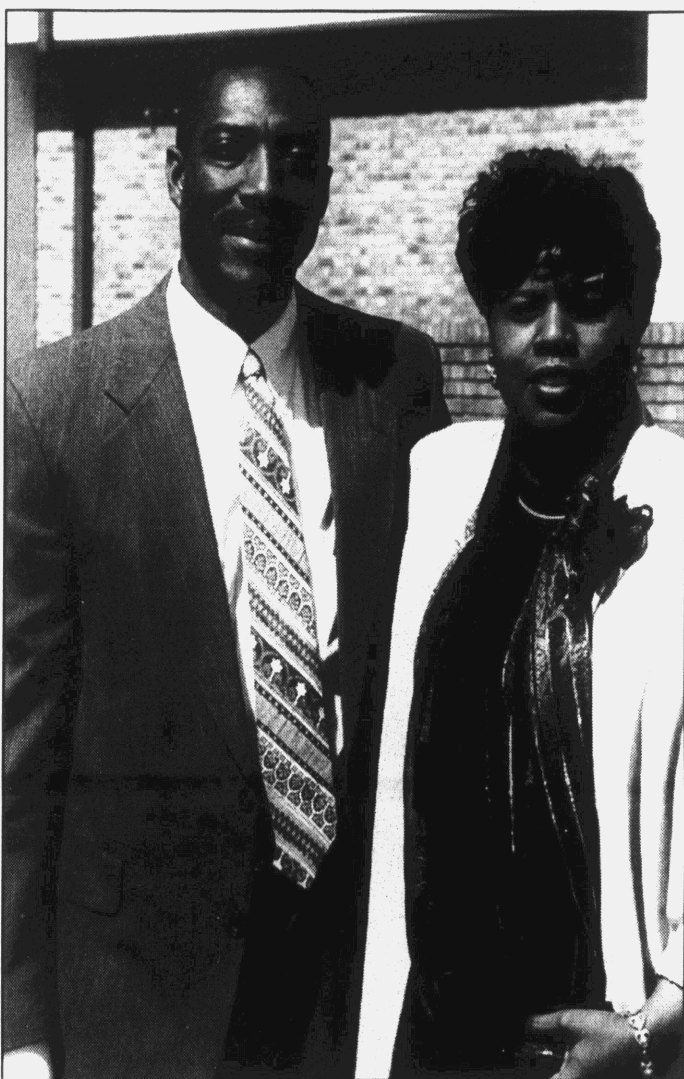
The opposite is more likely. The change in status will allow PCMH to undertake projects that make it a more efficient provider of services. So it will be better able to hold the line on rate increases, as it has done four out of the last five years.

Will this change allow hospital administrators to make big salaries?

The reorganization will have no effect on anyone's salary. But it will help to ensure the hospital is a viable employer for the more than 4,000 people who currently work at PCMH.

Why can't PCMH just stay the way it is?

No industry has stayed the same for the past 20 years. The same is true for health care. With market forces deciding what sort of health care system we will have, only those providers that are strong will survive. Becoming a citizen controlled, not-for-profit hospital will do a great deal to make sure PCMH stays strong.



MR. & MRS. BOBBY AND LOLA THOMPSON... proud parents (yet very concerned parents). Their son, an outstanding basketball star at the D. H. Conley High School got hurt; recovered; returned; but— was not allowed to play. Does anyone know why?

(PHOTO: JIM ROUSE)

Ramifications of Chavis' Conversion to Nation of Islam

Recently, Benjamin Chavis, former national Executive Director of the NAACP, announced his conversion to the Nation of Islam. Now, Minister Benjamin Chavis Muhammad, formerly ordained at the Oak Level United Church of Christ in Manson, NC, pledged to travel the country and raise consciousness and awareness about the plight of African-Americans in the country. An interview with local Minister Edward Muhammad (of Final Call Ministry on Fifth St.) focused on the implications of Chavis' conversion to the Nation of Islam and millions of African-Americans.

When asked about the thoughts on Chavis' conversion to the Nation, Minister Edward Muhammad responded, "It's a very positive move because he's a brother who's been in the struggle of trying to revolutionize the thinking of our brothers for a long time. He agrees with the concepts of nation-building and healing. So, I think it was a timely well-thought-out move." Indeed, the importance of nation-building has been echoed by numerous Muslim leaders for decades.

What does the conversion say about African-Americans and the Nation of Islam? "It says that it's possible that African-Americans can work together as Christians, Agnostics, Muslims, etc. and achieve positive things," the Minister answered. He continued, "He has admired movements that are active and steadfast. Chavis sees the viability of groups with different ideologies and philosophies coming together to build a nation."

Minister Louis Farrakhan has galvanized and mobilized droves of African Americans for many years. Will Chavis be successful? "Definitely," said the Minister. "That's been his work for years. I expect it'll increase now. He'll be a very highly visible person." Further, Minister Edward acknowledged that he will extend an invitation to Minister Benjamin Muhammad to attend the local mosque.

Some political pundits have suggested that Minister Benjamin Muhammad might succeed Farrakhan. When posed the question, Minister Edward Muhammad said "no."

He added, "I've gotten no indication that that's the case."

"There is a lot of visible black leaders that admire the unity that the Nation of Islam espouses," said the Minister. "He took the initiative to take that step. That doesn't mean that others who have not taken that step are not inspired or enthusiastic." Recognizing the significance of African-American unity, Minister Edward commented, "Our objective is to merge all black leadership into nationhood. They can be Baptists, Methodists, or whatever."

The extent to which Minister Benjamin Chavis Muhammad will make a difference in the lives of powerless, disgruntled African-American remains to be seen. Energetic, determined, and vociferous, the Minister does seem anxious to assist Minister Farrakhan in educating African-Americans about the necessity of pursuing political and economic empowerment; after all, such was the crux of Dr. Martin Luther King's vision for African-Americans after they secure what some believe to be elusive racial equality.

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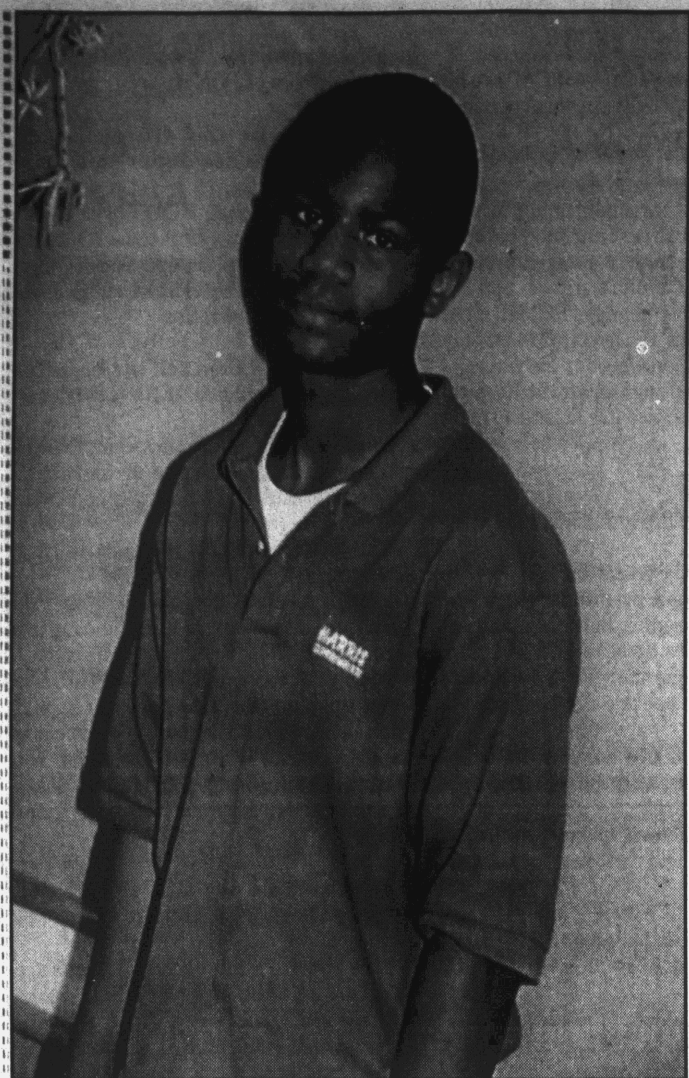
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YOUNG BROTHER WEAVER... a student at North Pitt High School, basketball star, part-time employee at Harris Super Market, young man "extraordinaire". He will be leaving for the summer for basketball camp to sharpen his playing skills and his education. **HATS OFF TO YOU, MY BROTHER!!!** (PHOTO: JIM ROUSE)

ETHNIC FOODS: SPICING UP THE PYRAMID

The Asian population is the fastest growing in every region of the United States, followed by the Hispanic population.

Food items originally considered ethnic, such as bagels and pitas, have become so common in the American diet that they are no longer viewed as ethnic products. Next on the list may be tortillas, with sales of tortillas in the U. S. continuing to rise at about 10 percent a year.

According to the National Restaurant Association, Chinese, Italian and Mexican foods are the most popular in American restaurants. *Food Arts* a food industry trade magazine, lists Italian as the most popular cuisine for fine dining, while Latino, Thai, Mediterranean and Pacific Rim are also fashionable.

A 1993 study published in the *American Journal of Clinical Nutrition* found that people who ate the widest variety of foods had a lower risk of dying prematurely than those who stuck to the same series of recipes night after night, year after year.

Americans' growing taste for ethnic flavors is reflected in climbing sales of spices such as black and red pepper, mustard and ginger. Sales of these spices have risen 73 percent over the past 20 years, with red pepper sales alone up 169 percent, according to the American Spice Trade Association.

To meet the rising demand for ethnic products, manufacturers are introducing more new items each year. Ethnic new product in-



"MO" FROM MO... Rev. Ward ministers between hair cuts.. Thanking our good Lord for his "clean cut Styles.— there are no "afro's", no dred locks, but "clean cuts" are what you get from MO'S BARBER SHOP. (PHOTO: JIM ROUSE)

troductions for the first eight months of 1996 were already 53 percent higher than introductions for all of 1995.

According to a recent American Dietetic Association survey, the average person in the U. S. eats only 8 to 10 "core" foods - regular food selections that make up 80 percent of their diets, during any

given week.

Many ethnic dishes are "combination" foods that include servings from several different food groups. For example, a Mediterranean-style "gyro" (yee-row) wrap sandwich includes grain (pita), vegetables (mushrooms, onions, pepper), milk products (yogurt sauce, cheese), and meat (beef,

chicken).

Milk and milk products are the best way to cool down your palate after sampling a spicy ethnic dish, according to Dave DeWitt, author of *The Whole Chile Book*. The reason? Casein, the main protein in milk, acts like a detergent to wash away capsaicine, the potent chemical that triggers the burning sensation in the mouth and stomach.

INVITATION TO BIDDERS

Sealed proposals will be received by the Housing Authority of the City of Greenville in the office of Authority, 1103 Broad Street, Greenville, North Carolina 27835, up to 2:00 PM, local time on Thursday, 10 April 1997, and immediately thereafter opened and read in the presence of attending bidders for the furnishing of all labor, materials and equipment for Replacing Gas Distribution System-Meadowbrook project upon the Owner's property in Greenville, North Carolina.

Complete plans, specifications and contract documents will be open in the office of H R Associates, P.A., 1200 Navaho Drive, Raleigh, North Carolina, (919) 872-6345. Prime bidders who are qualified and who will make a bid will, upon deposit of the sum of One Hundred Dollars (\$100.00) with the Architect, receive documents in duplicate. The full deposit will be refunded to those qualified prime bidders who submit a bona fide prime proposal, providing bidding documents are returned in good condition to the Architect within five (5) days after receipt of bids.

The Works consists of construction of a replacement gas distribution system for the Meadowbrook development and gas meter/regulator/riser replacement for the Meadowbrook, Hopkins Park, Newtown and Kearney Park developments.

All Bidders are hereby notified that they must have proper license under the State laws as a Utilities Contractor.

Each proposal shall be accompanied by a cash deposit or a certified check drawn on some bank or trust company insured by the FDIC in an amount equal to not less than 5% of the proposal; or in lieu thereof, a Bidder may offer a bid bond of 5% of the proposal. No bid may be withdrawn after the scheduled closing time for the receipt of bids for a period of sixty (60) days.

A Performance Bond shall be required for one hundred percent (100%) of the contract amount.

The Owner reserves the right to reject any or all bids, to waive informalities, and to award contracts in the best interest of the Owner.

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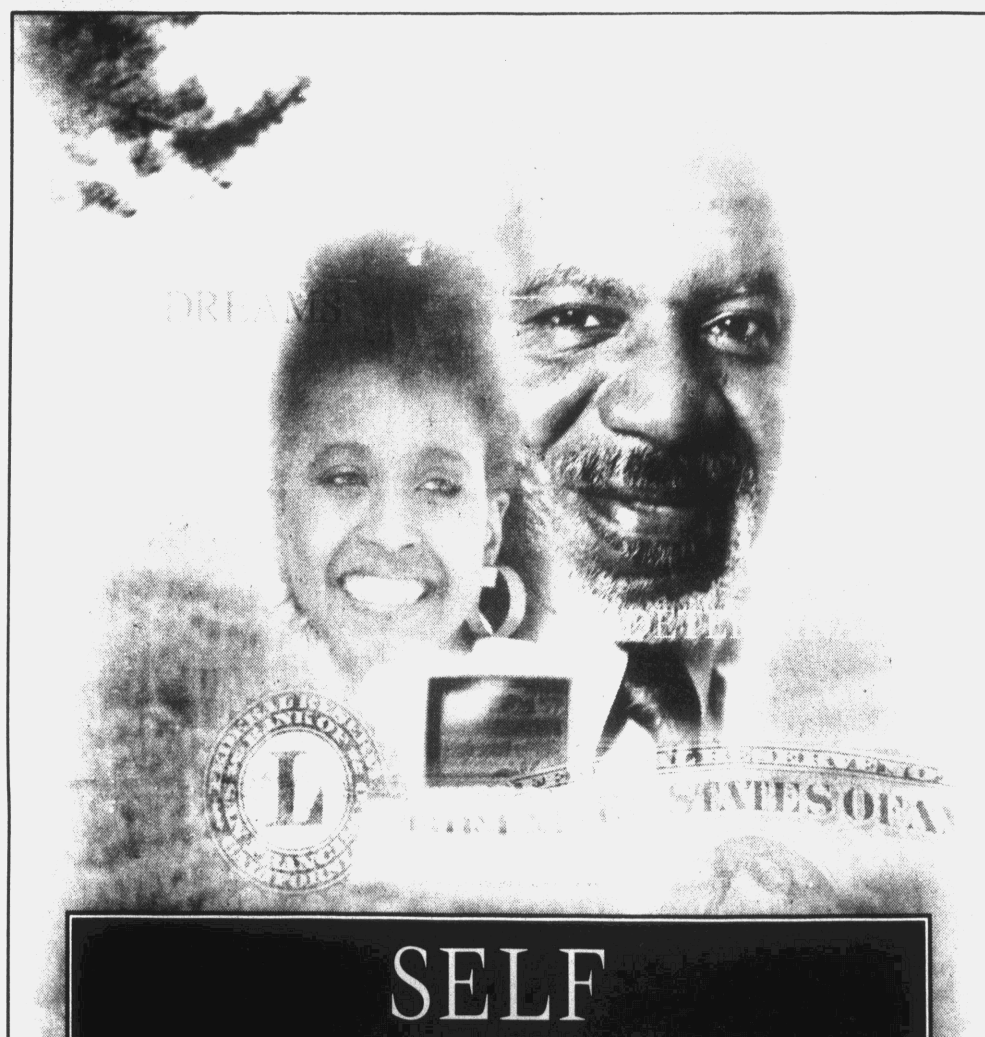
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Tips for entrepreneurs offered at African American Women on Tour

SAN DIEGO, CA (March 6, 1997) — African American Women on Tour will feature a dynamic forum focusing on the principles of Black business development, when it brings its empowerment conference to five U.S. cities this year. Presented by Allstate Insurance Company, AAWOT will tour to Oakland, CA, April 4-6; Dallas, TX, June 13-15; Chicago, IL, July 25-27; Atlanta, GA, August 14-16; and Philadelphia, PA, August 22-24.

Sponsored by Mobil Oil Corporation, AAWOT's Entrepreneur Forum will examine the challenges and realities of small business research and start-up, to budgeting, personnel, marketing and management. The forum will take an in-depth look at such issues as business plans, pricing, raising capital, franchising options, human resources, packaging and innovative ways of bringing ideas to fruition.

The Entrepreneur Forum will be moderated by nationally recognized financial consultant, Glinda Bridgforth, president of Bridgforth Financial Management Group in Oakland, California and author of The Money Mastery Workbook: A 12 Month Program for Basic Money Management. With over 20 years experience in the financial field, Ms. Bridgforth believes the busi-

ness climate is good for African Americans. "We have more resources and technology at our disposal than ever before, yet with downsizing and mergers challenging job security and affirmative action, this type of forum is extremely timely in helping to direct more African American women towards entrepreneurship."

Other panelists on the Entrepreneur Forum include San Diego, CA business trainer Gerri Norrington, author of Roads to Self-Employment: The Practical Guide to Microbusiness Development; Austin, TX lecturer Fran Harris, author of About My Sister's Business: The Black Woman's Roadmap to Successful Entrepreneurship; and Brooklyn, NY investment advisor Brooke Stephens, author of Talking Dollars and Making Sense: A Wealth-Building Guide for African-Americans.

In addition to the Entrepreneur Forum, African American Women on Tour will feature a powerful lineup of keynote speakers to include vocalist Gladys Knight, sponsored by Chrysler Corporation in all five cities; Susan L. Taylor, Editor-in-Chief of Essence magazine in Dallas, Chicago and Atlanta; talk show host Bertice Berry in Oakland and Atlanta; author J. California Cooper in Oakland; and

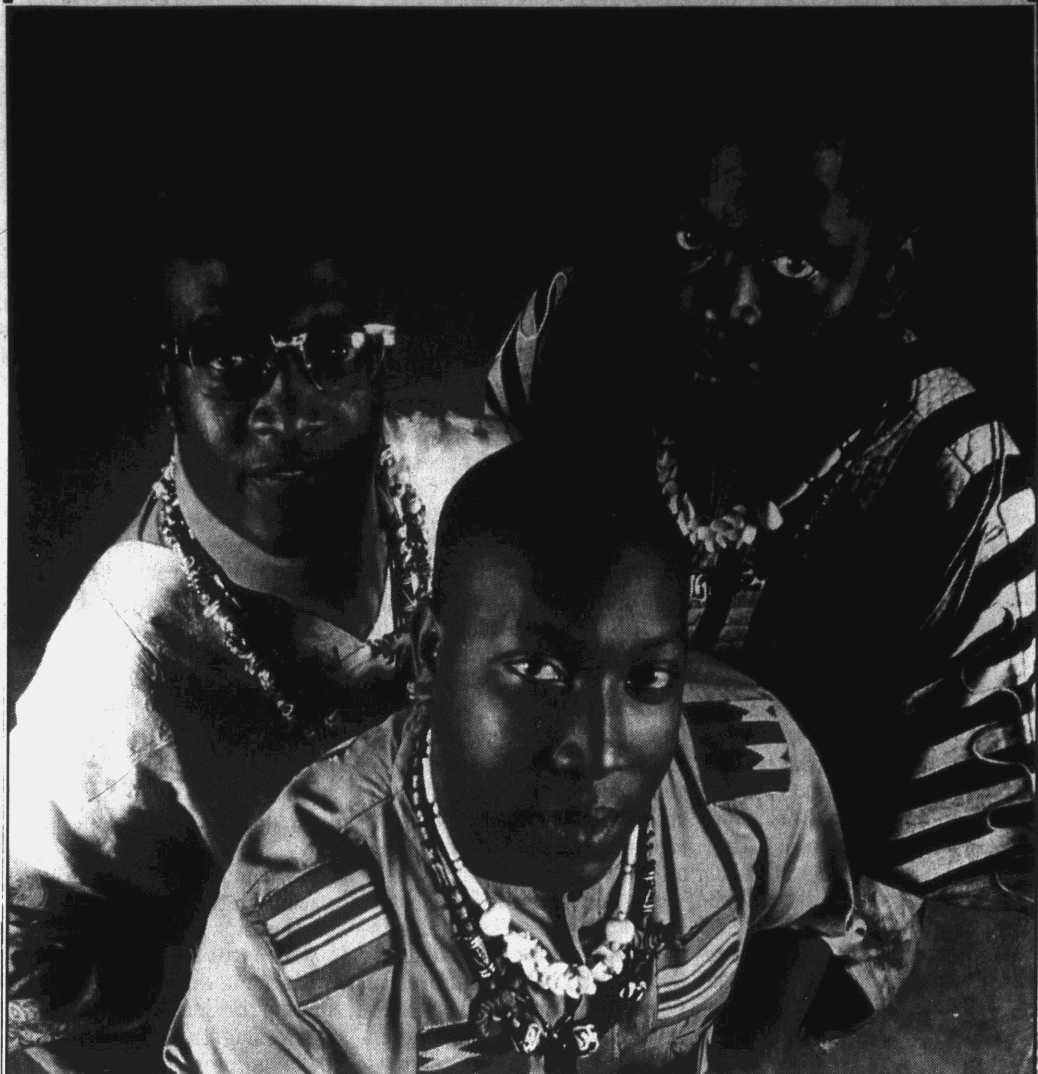
poet Nikki Giovanni in Philadelphia.

The tour also features workshops on career development, health and fitness, financial management and spirituality. AAWOT's popular Rites of Passage retreats include programs for girls ages 12-18, young women ages 19-26 and adult women. AAWOT also features Allstate Insurance Company's "Play it Safe" workshop, addressing such "real life" issues as wellness, domestic violence and personal safety; J.C. Penney's Fashion Influences show; Avon Products' Beauty Pavilion; a fitness class hosted by Reebok International; an author's book signing and jazz evening hosted by BET on Jazz and Emergence magazine; and a Village Marketplace Bazaar, which is free and open to the public.

For registration information contact African American Women on Tour, 3914 Murphy Canyon Road, Suite 216, San Diego, CA 92123; 1-800-560-AAWOT; www.AAWOT.com. Conference sponsors include Time Warner, The Coca-Cola Company, Heart & Soul magazine, Hewlett Packard, McDonald's, Union Bank, Kaiser Permanente, American Airlines, Excellence Relaxers, Hardee's and Bank of America.

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"Twins" are individuals between the childhood and teenage years, about 11-14 years old.

National surveys show that teens' diets are high in total fat, saturated fat, cholesterol and sodium. In contrast, teens often consume less than the recommended amounts of fiber, calcium, iron and vitamins A and E.

Nearly 86 percent of teenage girls and 65 percent of teenage boys are not meeting the daily calcium requirement of 1,200 milligrams, the amount in four glasses of milk, according to the United States Department of Agriculture.

Milk consumption among teens has dropped steadily since the late 1970s, while consumption of soft drinks has skyrocketed—especially among teenage boys, whose daily intake of soft drinks nearly tripled between 1977 and 1994. Nearly three-fourths of teen boys drank about three cans of soda per day in 1994, while two-thirds of teen girls drank about two cans' worth, according to the United States Department of Agriculture.

According to a recent survey by Teenage Research Unlimited, teens are averaging nearly six servings of

cookies, desserts, candy and soft drinks each day.

A study published in the Journal of Pediatrics showed that girls who increased their intake of milk and milk products developed denser bones and had improved intakes of calcium, phosphorus, vitamin D and protein. At the same time, they did not increase their total fat intake and did not gain weight.

About 15 percent of adult height, 50 percent of adult weight, and 45 percent of adult bone mass are formed during adolescence, according to Modern Nutrition in Health and Disease.

A survey published by sports Illustrated or Kids showed that 18 percent of girls and 19 percent of boys ages 9-11 have been on a diet to lose weight. Among teens ages 12-13, 13 percent of boys and 27 percent of girls have dieted.

Most kids do not eat three meals a day. In fact, in a survey conducted by the International Food Information Council, more than half of the 9-15 year old respondents said they skip breakfast, 28 percent skip lunch and 18 percent skip dinner.



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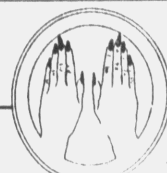
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ABCs Plan: State Board Approves High School Accountability Model

The same day President Bill Clinton was in town addressing the State Legislature on the need for high national standards for schools, the North Carolina State Board of Education took action on the same issue. The Board Thursday (March 13) unanimously approved a high school accountability model that goes in effect for the 1997-98 school year as the next phase of the statewide reform initiative called The ABCs of Public Education. Accountability and high standards are among its cornerstones.

The Board-approved ABCs plan aims to hold schools more accountable for student learning; to emphasize the basics of reading, writing and mathematics; and to promote more local control of educational decision making. The first phase of the plan, which applies to grades K-8, went into effect this school year.

Board approval of high school measures to determine a school's success follows a year of work to develop the model. Additionally, more than 1,000 people offered input in a series of statewide meetings headed by the State Board's Steering Committee for Assessment and Accountability. That group represented a cross-section of educators and received ideas from high school principals, local superintendents, high school teachers and others.

State Associate Superintendent for Instructional and Accountability Services Henry Johnson, who chaired the Steering

Committee, called the model the result of the best thinking of many educators in North Carolina.

"This model is the best that educators in North Carolina could assemble to meet the requirements of the law and to be fair at this time," Dr. Johnson said. "We fully anticipate that the plan will continue to be refined over the years." In fact, even in its final form approved Thursday, it contains two measures that will be implemented a year after its startup.

The high school model, like its elementary/middle grades counterpart, will, for the first time, measure a school against its own past performance, instead of against a statewide average, or one school district against another. Under it, a school is assigned a growth standard based on past performance. Schools that significantly exceed that standard receive incentive money for their staffs. Those that are low-performing and fail to show growth could undergo intervention by an assistance team assigned by the state. This would affect only the very lowest performing schools.

The following are the high school measurement components for 1997-98:

- Performance on the five currently mandated end-of-course (EOC) tests: Algebra I; English I; Biology; Economic/Legal/Political Systems (ELPS); and U.S. History. An EOC index of course-by-course results comparing one

year to the average of the previous two years will be used;

- Results on a high school writing test, the current English II test, using a common prompt and allowing students 100 minutes to write their responses. An EOC index and procedure will be used;
- Year-to-year comparison of percentages of students completing College Prep or College Tech Prep course of study;
- Results on a comprehensive test in reading and mathematics given in 10th grade to measure growth since eighth grade.
- SAT scores and participation rates for the last three years will be reported but not included in the school's composite score for whether or not it meets ABCs standards.

The following components will be added to the above for 1998-99:

- A component that addresses passing rates on the high school competency tests;
- Dropout rates, grades 9-12, with some adjustment for enforcing the Safe Schools Act and addressing students with chronic behavior problems.

Felt hired as new NCDA international marketing specialist

RALEIGH—Officials with the North Carolina Department of Agriculture recently announced the hiring of Emily Felt as the new international marketing specialist for Asian markets.

Felt brings with her an extensive knowledge of Asian cultures through previous work and study in Japan and Thailand. She received her bachelor of arts degree in 1994 from Stanford University and spent one year studying at the Kyoto Center for Japanese Studies in Kyoto, Japan, where she concentrated on language, economy, politics, history and public policy.

Felt is fluent in both the Japa-

nese and Thai languages and has lived seven of the past 14 years in East Asia. Her work included serving as a research associate with the Thailand Development Research Institute in Bangkok where she did extensive research on external trade and agricultural economics.

"Ms. Felt's background and experience in East Asia will be a tremendous asset to both our current and future foreign trade efforts," said Agriculture Commissioner Jim Graham. "The Asian markets continue to offer great opportunities for exporting agricultural products produced in North Carolina," Graham added.

While working toward her degree requirements, Felt also successfully completed an internship in the Political Science Department at Stanford University where she studied the domestic and foreign politics associated with large-scale retail food distribution. She's been the recipient of educational fellowships and research grants, and has authored articles in publications concerning agriculture and economics.

Felt is a native of New Orleans and Washington, D.C. and holds a second-rank black belt in Zen archery and enjoys boating and good food. She will be based in Raleigh.

1997 North Carolina boll weevil assessment decreased

RALEIGH — North Carolina cotton farmers will see a 15-cents per acre decrease in the 1997 boll weevil assessment thanks in part to an overall increase in cotton acreage and the stabilization of acreage in recent years. The assessment for 1997 will be \$3.60 per acre compared to \$3.85 in 1996.

The fees are used to maintain an intensive statewide trapping and monitoring program for all cotton acreage and to eradicate any reinfestations of the boll weevil. The assessment also supports a buffer zone along the Alabama, Tennessee and Mississippi borders.

The Southeastern Boll Weevil Eradication Foundation, comprised of North Carolina, Alabama, Florida, Georgia, South Carolina, Tennessee, Mississippi and Virginia cotton producers, finances the buffer.

"The boll weevil eradication program is one of the best investments ever made for cotton and has helped North Carolina rise to seventh nationally in cotton production," said Agriculture Commissioner Jim Graham.

Cotton, which was once called the "King" in North Carolina, be-

came a minor crop by the late 1970s due to massive boll weevil damage. North Carolina pioneered the eradication program in 1978, when harvested acreage was only 42,000 acres. Production has steadily risen since the eradication program began.

In 1996, planted acreage totaled 721,000. The state's top five producing counties in 1996 were Halifax, with 55,549 acres; Northampton, with 51,669 acres; Sampson, with 51,242 acres; Edgecombe, with 43,143 acres and

Continued on Page Eight.

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counters even from professed friends of the reform of which it is an honest part is not very appalling to those who know its sincerity. The good faith of the management of the Custom-house must be judged by what we know, not by what we do not know. Nobody can certainly know why the Collector exercises his individual discretion in a particular way, especially if from motives of kindness he declines to tell. But the perfect honesty of such an examination as we have described can be known by any one who attended and watched it, who has seen the papers, and tested the good faith of every step. We have always insisted, and experience has confirmed the belief, that the power of removal must be left very free, provided that illicit motives for its exercise are prevented. There are many just reasons for removal besides what is technically known as "cause" - reasons which are withheld upon the most honorable grounds. The friends of the old system, and especially the friends of the late management of the Custom-house, will naturally scoff at any suggestion of good faith in the enforcement of the new system. That is not surprising, and we make no generalizations and no prophecies. But we are willing witnesses for what we have seen and proved, and the late examination was an illustration of a method of selecting clerks for civil service which just so far as it is adopted throughout the service will be a signal benefit to its character and to the self-respect of its members, and an immense gain for honorable politics.

THE ARMY DEBATE IN THE HOUSE

The debate upon the Army Bill in the House was somewhat confused, because both sides were so intent upon party advantage. Mr. Garfield did not change his ground upon the last day, as was alleged, but he attacked upon the first day a position which the Democrats had not taken. Mr. Beck and Mr. Thurman, indeed, had taken it, but the house caucus merely decided to attach the repeal to the Appropriation Bill; it did not say that if the bill was not signed, Congress would allow the appropriation to fail. That was undoubtedly the plan of the extreme men, as Mr. Blackburn showed in his speech; but in opposing it as the intention of the party, Mr. Garfield forced an issue

which the Democrats were at liberty to declare that they had not joined. But when, in turn, the Democrats insisted the Mr. Garfield had denounced attaching "riders" to appropriation bills as revolutionary, he very properly showed that he had not done it, and briefly and lucidly stated the exact situation. All the Democratic talk about military supervision and coercion of elections was superfluous, because every intelligent man in the country knows perfectly well that no citizen has ever been prevented by soldiers from voting, unless, indeed, he chose not to vote because there were soldiers at the polls as a police. The "grievance" was theoretical; and conceding that the clause in question should be repealed, the "grievance" was not of a kind to justify the action which Messrs. Beck and Thurman and Blackburn announced.

The precise point can not be stated too often nor too plainly. The Democrats, having a majority in Congress, may make such purposes as they choose, and for such purposes as they choose. In considering the appropriation for the army they say that the army shall not be used to secure this end they attach to the bill a repeal of the clause that authorizes such use of the army. The President, who is bound by his oath not sign any bill which he does not approve, and to state his reasons, is thus forced, if he does not approve the repeal, to sign what he disapproves, or to allow the appropriations for all the service of all the army to fail, and practically to connive at disbanding the whole military defense of the country. He is, however, no less bound by his duty than Congress. What, then, is the situation? It is this: should the Democrats declare that if they can not prevent the army from being used for one purpose it shall be used for no purpose whatever, they virtually destroy the army. Nor this only: it would be saying that if they can not force the repeal of a law unconstitutional, the government shall come to a stand. A law is repealed constitutionally when both Houses of Congress and the Executive consent, or when, if the Executive dissents, two-thirds of both Houses agree. There is no other constitutional method of repeal. If, however, a mere majority in Congress threatens the Executive that if it does not assent to what he disapproves, and

when he persists in doing his plain constitutional duty, refuses appropriations, and "starves out" the government, it is practically as revolutionary as if it stopped the government by armed force.

The country is now to see whether the revolutionary plan announced by Mr. Beck and Mr. Thurman and Mr. Blackburn is to be carried out in case of the President's disapproval of the repeal. If he approves it, he will of course sign the bill upon which it is a rider, and his action will end this particular controversy. If he disapproves it he will probably veto the bill, and leave to Congress to decide whether the army shall be disbanded. If Congress should refuse the appropriation for the other legitimate and indispensable purposes of an army, it would be solely because a law which it considers objectionable could not be constitutionally repealed. Unless all respect for their own constitutional forms, the methods in which they choose to carry on their government, should have perished in the heart of the American people, the party which should take this action would be annihilated in every State where a free vote is permitted. If the law were actually unfair and oppressive, instead of being only theoretically inconsistent with the general division of power between State and nation, such a course to secure its repeal would be alarming. As it is, such a course would doubtless thoroughly arouse the country.

THE FLIGHT OF THE COLORED LABORERS.

The emigration of colored laborers from Mississippi, Louisiana, and Texas to Kansas is a significant illustration of the situation. Some of the Southern Papers very justly perceive that such a movement is alarming, and will result in great losses if it is not arrested. The colored people are the laboring class, and there are none to replace them. The question why they are going is one of peculiar interest, and the first fact shown by the movement is that they are greatly discontented. They are not a nomadic race, and they are satisfied with little. So general a flight shows that they are seriously suffering, or seriously alarmed. Obviously, if they had good wages and employment and felt secure of all their rights they would stay at home. It is, in-

deed, surprising how hard it is to ascertain the actual condition of the colored people in the Southern States. The letters in the newspaper have to be dismissed generally as written for a partisan purpose. Mr. T. W. HIGGINSON and other old anti-slavery men and Union Soldiers give a rather favorable account, and among foreign observers Sir G. CAMPBELL, in the last number of the Fortnightly Review, writes a very interesting summary of the condition of the late slave class. He says that in educational capacity they are apparently behind, but not very far behind. They have as yet, he says, shown very little mercantile skill of any kind, and are not as yet noted for energy or force under difficulties, nor do they show themselves to be superior artisans. But they are admirable laborers when under proper Supervision, and he notes a disposition upon the part of proprietors and leaders to rely upon colored labor as a conservative element. The colored people are not very thrifty, however, and methods of labor are often loose and unsatisfactory. But Sir G. CAMPBELL's general conclusion is one of reasonable surprise that the position of the colored people is so good, and their industrial relations with the whites so little strained and difficult. He thinks them in a fair way to become a comfortable, well-to-do population. The whites, he says, certainly can not do without them, while the whites are indispensable to them. He wisely sums up the whole matter by saying, "My advice would certainly be, to the blacks in America, 'Stay at home and make the best of an excellent situation;' to the whites, 'Do all you can to keep these people; conciliate them and make the most of them.'" This he is sure can be done if the political situation does not prevent, and that he means to consider in another paper. The Southern States are undoubtedly very poor. Every observer reports that fact. But they certainly have not more labor than is wanted. The emigration of great bodies of laborers, therefore, means that they feel insecure. The would not feel so had their treatment been fair, and the movement beyond the Mississippi is an unmistakable impeachment of the conduct of the whites. Mr. LAMAR is from Mississippi, and he must admit that if the assertions of his recent article in the North American

were accurate, if the colored people felt sure of fair wages and fair play at the polls in Mississippi, they would certainly not go by hundreds to Kansas. He and all the intelligent white leaders in the States concerned are arraigned by this great Exodus. Why have they not cultivated a public opinion which would have made all kinds of Ku-Kluxery impossible, and would have assured the colored people that they need not look North for their best friends Agents and knaves and demagogues may have promised mules, forty acres and a charming climate, but they would have been vain arguments against fair play at home. The remedy of the situation is not in Southern denunciation of the North, or in Northern talk about rebels and Confederates and slave-drivers: it is in the perception of honorable Southerners that their paramount duty is to regain the confidence of the colored people, which they have lost. This will be a work of time and of good sense. But there is no other course, and it must be heartily supported by all patriotic citizens.

CENTRAL PARK IN DANGER.

It is proposed to hold a World's Fair in New York some four or five years hence. It would doubtless be great and imposing, and of immense commercial advantage. But in these first moments of considering the project there should be universal preliminary agreement that it shall not ruin the noblest public work in the city, the Central Park. The danger to the Park is the constant proposition of encroachment. The island is narrow, the Park is a lovely open space, and every immense exhibition of every kind turns to it with greedy eyes as the most desirable site. There is constant need of an active public or to protect this breathing space and delight of the city from various incursions. Mr. LANGBEIN'S proposal to turn it into a parade ground is a gross perversion of the purpose of a park; but the proposition of devoting it to the purposes of a huge Fair does not contemplate incursion, but occupation and destruction, and ought to be stoutly resisted at its very inception.

The situation in Philadelphia was wholly different. The enormous area and form of the Park in that city admitted what is impossible in the Central Park. Our Park is narrow. It

is especially designed for effects which would be destroyed by a vast system of buildings. The space must be reconstructed to furnish proper avenues and approaches. It is, in a word, impossible to imagine such a project being carried out without covering the Park with a net-work of railroads which would annihilate the characteristic charm of the retreat; and for the business chances of a year we should have ruined the most beautiful and attractive work that New York could offer to the myriad visitors of the Exhibition. We should have squandered recklessly our finest resource for the attraction and entertainment of strangers, and without increasing the charm of the Fair, we should have sacrificed the chief charm of the city.

The Central Park is not a common; it is a careful, beautiful, and elaborate work of art, and that fact must be borne in mind constantly when we are considering the propositions for occupying it. Its especial distinction is that it furnishes the loveliest rural retirement in the midst of a city, glimpses of peaceful meadows and tranquil vistas of verdure, of lawn and grove. The Park on a pleasant afternoon is a brilliant spectacle, but its distinction, its peculiarity, is the *rus in urbe*. When that is lost its charm is gone, as it becomes only a larger or smaller city square or market place. To crowd into it the enormous buildings of such a Fair as this is designed to be, is to destroy that beautiful, verdurous exclusion of the sight of buildings and the presence of the city which is the secret of its beauty. It is a sentiment, indeed, but it is a sanitary sentiment. The great argument for laying out the Park was that it brought the country to those who could not go to the country, and that the fresh air and the rural aspect and pleasant recreation would refresh the health and rest the mind of the toiling and tired citizen. All this must be relinquished if the great spaces of the Park are to be occupied with halls and annexes and the hundreds of minor structures of a World's Fair, with all the tram ways and walks and passages which are indispensable. One abuse will lead to another. When the seclusion which it has been not easy to defend against minor nuisances should be forced to yield to this devastating scheme, there would be no limit to the revolution.

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DEADLINE NEARING FOR CLAIMING TAX REFUNDS

Federal Retirees, and their surviving heirs, have only until April 15, 1997 to claim refunds for taxes paid to the State of North Carolina on retirement or annuity income for the years 1985-1988. There is no exception or extension allowed for refund claims.

After this date those with sufficient current tax liability may utilize a three year tax credit, but this credit is of no value to the estates of deceased retirees or to those having little or no income tax liability.

Those eligible should immediately contact any State Department of Revenue Field Office, or call the Raleigh office at their toll free number, 1-800-357-0781

More information is available by writing the Federal Retiree Tax Equity Task Force at 3117 Kinnamon Road, Winston Salem, NC 27104.

This volunteer group of federal (military and civil service) retirees has been spearheading this effort since the March 28, 1989 US Supreme Court decision, known as DAVIS v. MICHIGAN. In that case the US Supreme Court determined that 24 states, including North Carolina, had violated federal law and the US Constitution by taxing state and federal retirees differently. The North Carolina General Assembly in 1996 authorized the refund/credit of only those taxes paid during any of the years 1985-1988.

New Dairy Products introduced in 1996

There were 1,345 new dairy products introduced in 1996, according to *New Product News*.

Milk and milk products provide 76 percent of the calcium in the U.S. food supply, while providing only 9 percent of the calories and 12 percent of the fat. Milk and milk products are also some of the richest sources of potassium and magnesium.

Dairy spreads were the hot dairy items in 1996- from fat free smoked salmon cream cheese to regular and light spreadable cheese blends.

Factoring into this development may have been 1996's overwhelming attraction to the bagel.

Men who drink two cups of milk a day are two times less likely to have a stroke than men who don't, according to a recent study published in the medical journal *Stroke*.

According to the U. S. Food and Drug Administration, new dairy labeling will go into effect in 1998. Among the changes: skim milk will be called fat free, because many consumers thought skim

meant devoid of vitamins and minerals.

According to a recent study in the *Journal of the American Medical Association*, pregnant women who had an increased amount of calcium in their diets showed a 62 percent reduction in the risk of getting pre-eclampsia, a disease of late pregnancy. Others decreased their risk of pregnancy-induced high blood pressure by 70 percent from extra calcium.

New research has shown that people who are lactose intolerant (they get an upset stomach from drinking milk) can adapt to the milk sugar lactose by building up tolerance over a period of time.

Flavored milks offer the same vitamins and minerals as white milk and have much less sugar and caffeine than soft drinks. Chocolate milk, for instance, has no more sugar than orange juice and only about five milligrams of caffeine. A can of cola has nine times that amount, and some other soft drinks have even more.

N.C. Mountain State Fair expanded from five to nine days

RALEIGH-- Citing steady increases in attendance, exhibits, vendors and overall interest, officials with the North Carolina Department of Agriculture announced that the 1997 N.C. Mountain State Fair will be expanded from five to nine days. The fair, which will make its fourth annual run at the Western N.C. Agricultural Center in Fletcher, will officially open on Friday, Sept. 5 at 10 a.m. and run through Saturday,

Sept. 13.

"From the beginning, the N.C. Mountain State Fair was designed as an event for the people of western North Carolina and neighboring states," said N.C. Agriculture Commissioner Jim Graham. "Last year we were able to take advantage of some major improvements at the Western North Carolina Agricultural Center including a new arena, new restroom facilities and much more parking. The suc-

cess and interest shown in this fair played a large role in our decision to extend the event," Graham added.

Themed "Up and Growing" this year, the N.C. Mountain State Fair will be open from 3 p.m. to midnight Monday through Thursday and from 10 a.m. to midnight Friday through Sunday.

In addition to special discounts and free ride days, new entertainment and exhibits are also being planned.

According to N.C. Mountain State Fair manager Louis Johnson, commercial exhibit spaces are now being rented. "Our first mailing for commercial booth spaces went out last week and the response has been terrific," said Johnson. "I would strongly encourage any company or organization interested in space availability to contact us at (704) 687-1414 as soon as possible," Johnson added.

Can you wait?

You have started to cringe when you read or hear "But Jesus is your husband..." You have carefully perused the selection of available men in your church and found it to be sorely lacking. And you have made ten taffeta quilts out of your always-the-bridesmaid dresses. Now you are starting to believe that waiting for

God's appointed "Mr. Right" has all been in vain. The world's nudge to settle for second best (or third, or fourth...) is sounding better than waiting on the Lord's timing.

Could it be that God has a plan for your time of waiting? In her new book, *What to Do Until Love Finds You*,

Michelle McKinney Hammond shares her experience as a single and as a counselor to many other single women. "If your longing is based on what God's desire is for you, then God has a man for you. Where he is and why he is taking so long, I don't know. But that doesn't mean that he's not on his way. Meanwhile...there's more than one way to wait..."

Waiting to Prevail

Using her down-to-earth perspective and her down-

from-heaven wisdom. McKinney turns to Scripture and brings to light biblical romance and God's plan for the time of waiting and preparing for marriage. She reminds you that God wants life to begin before you pick out china patterns! With humor, passionate poetry, and shared stories, McKinney draws the reader to her side as she would a best friend. Her message of God's purpose for relationships is significant for singles and married individuals as

Continued on Page Nine.

From Page Six - Boll Weevil

Martin, with 38,459 acres.

The N.C. Department of Agriculture's Plant Industry Division, in cooperation with the N.C. Boll Weevil Eradication Foundation, oversees the trapping and eradication program in the state. Private contractors install and maintain traps, with boll weevil trapping beginning in mid-summer and ending at frost or harvest.

The slated \$3.60 assessment remains below the 1990-95 average of \$4.65 per acre. North Carolina's assessment is the lowest among the southeastern states.



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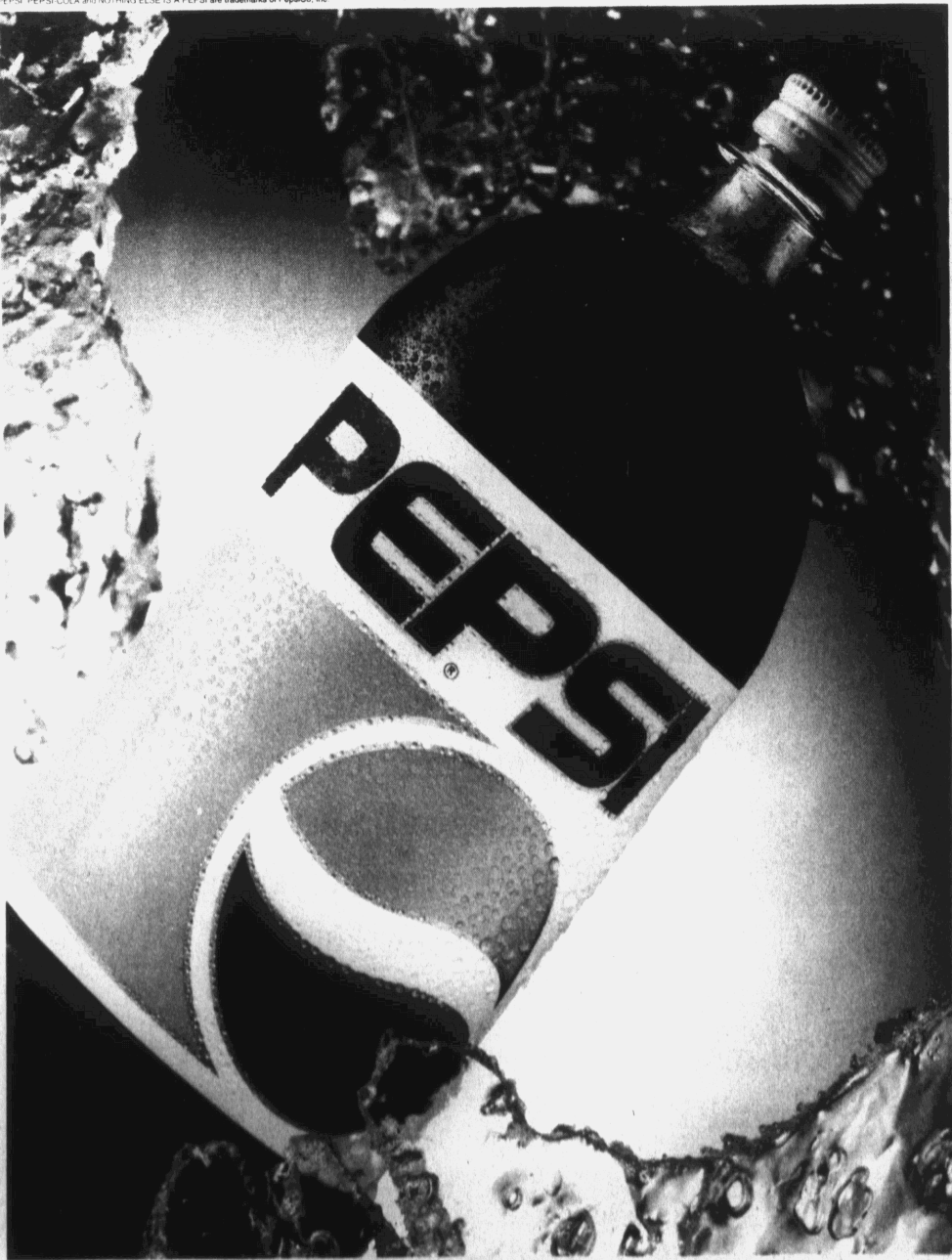
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STRANGE THINGS

What an industry

The Associated Press recently reported that many handicapped and deformed children from the village of Murshidabad, India, were being sold by their parents to middlemen who placed them in Saudi Arabian cities as beggars. For those who didn't have such children but still wanted a piece of the action, the traffickers took on private investors, offering 50 percent return within a few months.

Party poopers

Rescue workers interrupted their party to climb a Welsh mountain after a climber reported seeing a man there with a head injury. When the rescue workers arrived at the spot with the help of a helicopter, they found a 50-year-old man who explained he was a Buddhist who had climbed Cader Idris to spend the winter solstice communing with nature and told the workers to go away.

And in the Indonesian capital of Jakarta, scantily dressed entertainers were banned recently. Nightclubs in Jakarta regularly feature foreign musicians and dancers, some of them erotic, but a spokesperson for the head supervisor of foreign artists at City Hall said such bawdy revelry that takes place there is not appropriate because of the coming holy month of Ramadan. "We will bring down any foreign artists who wear a bikini on stage during this holy time."

Teacher punishment

At Bowling Green State University in Bowling Green, Ohio, university instructor Patrick Stearns, 32, was suspended after he allegedly punched a 25-year-old student in the face for showing up late to class. And the Medical Board of California issued a public reprimand against Dr. Edward A. Thistlewaite of San Marino, California, for slapping a nine-year-old boy he was treating for Attention Deficit Disorder.

Stiff rules

In Mogadishu, Somalia, Muslim clerics announced it was blasphemous for women to wear veils imported from India that feature a printed verse from the Koran that was unintelligible because of a misspelling. The error was a serious mistake, Muslim leader Sheikh Mohamed Moalim Hassan declared, but "putting it on the clothes of people is even worse. Your clothes become dirty, you use them in toilets and you may even throw them away. And there, Allah's words end up in an unsuitable and miserable way."

Biding time

The owners of radio station KZZC-FM in Tipton, California, finally ended 18 consecutive months of being an all "I Heard It Through the Grapevine" station, playing various versions of that song all day, seven days a week (except once when it played the Eagles' "New Kid in Town" for an entire weekend). That station was pending sale and the owners just needed to keep the frequency occupied, but negotiations dragged on much longer than expected.

Overreacting

World-renowned composer Jon J. Polifrone, 59, sent a letter to 2,500 colleagues in classical music announcing that he was abruptly quitting the business and limiting the availability of his works, solely because administrators at Virginia Polytechnic Institute - where he is a professor - told him he needs to spend more time on his teaching. Colleagues interviewed by the *Roanoke Times* said the VPI review was merely a suggestion and that he was not in danger of losing his job. "He simply overreacted," a colleague said.

Diminishing justice?

Because of overcrowding at the Chilliwack, British Columbia (Canada) courtroom, jury selection in a manslaughter case was removed to a local community center, but because of other court business taking place there, jury selection was further removed to the center's men's restroom. Said prosecutor Henry Walcock, "When you hold hearings in a bathroom, I fear it may diminish the respect for the justice system in the eyes of the public."

No bags!

Citing Islamic law, Taleban leaders in Afghanistan have banned paper bags. "We respect paper, whether it is written on or not," said the Taleban administration's information minister. "We have announced that people should not use paper for bags or put paper on the garbage heap."

Weight problems

Michigan state security officer Canute Findsen, 43, was shot to death in Lansing by fellow officer Virginia Rich, 51. Findsen was able to shoot Rich to death before he died. Police believe Rich was upset that Findsen had made one comment too many about her being overweight. And in Providence Rhode Island, Ricardo Guerrero killed himself rather than face prison for shooting and wounding Johnny Urbaz at a nightclub, according to police. Urbaz had reportedly precipitated the incident by referring to Guerrero as "Fatso."

Compiled by Real Times Communications, Inc., 401 North Michigan Avenue, Suite 745, Chicago, Illinois 60611.

Sulfite-sensitive asthmatics warned not to eat white tuna

RALEIGH — The North Carolina Department of Agriculture's Food and Drug Protection Division warns consumers who suffer from sulfite-sensitive asthma or other sulfite sensitive health conditions not to eat white (albacore) and light canned tuna at this time.

According to the Food and Drug Administration, some canned tuna may contain sulfites not declared on the product labels. Sulfites and sulfiting agents are added to many foods as preservatives.

"The white tuna is safe for people who do not suffer from sulfite-sensitive asthma or other sulfite sensitive conditions, but for those people with sulfite-related health disorders, it can cause serious or life threatening reactions," said Bob Gordon, director of the Food and Drug Protection Division. "We want to alert at-risk people about the possible presence of sulfites in white tuna to hopefully avoid any food-induced reactions."

The National Food Processors Association and the U.S. Tuna Foundation recently informed the FDA that sulfites had been added to a significant portion of canned tuna products inadvertently and without manufacturers' knowledge.

The sulfites were apparently contained, but not declared, in hydrolyzed vegetable protein, which is a raw material added to tuna to enhance its flavor. Manufacturers who add detectable levels of sulfites to food products are required to declare its presence on labels.

FDA is investigating, in cooperation with the industry, to determine how the situation occurred (and how it can be prevented. In the future, canned tuna containing sulfites will be clearly marked so people will know the preservative has been added.

"We have one of the safest food supplies in the world and we want to keep it that way," said Agriculture Commissioner Jim Graham. "This measure is just a precaution for people who are allergic to sulfites."

Consumers can call the industry's 1-800-283-1112 number for specific information about the presence of sulfites in albacore and light canned tuna products. -30-2,3 Contact: Bob Gordon, director, or Don Howell, administrator, Food and Drug Protection Division, N.C. Department of Agriculture, at (919) 733-7366.

Obituaries

JOHNSON

In profound sorrow Rountree and Associates Funeral Home announces the death of Ms. Dollie Lee Johnson, 45 of 506 East Gum Road, died Thursday March 13, 1997 at Richland Memorial Hospital, Columbia SC.

Funeral Services Tuesday 1:00 pm at St. John MB Church. Burial in Greenwood Cemetery. Rev. Gregory Black, officiating.

Ms. Johnson was a member of St. John Missionary Baptist Church, in which she sang with the Senior Choir. She was the manager and sang with the Junior Consolators for 32 years. She worked for Pitt County Schools and Cornerstone Childcare Center.

She is survived by Her Mother: Selma Chancey Johnson of Greenville, NC

Two Daughters: Natasha Johnson and DeRobyn Holland both of Greenville NC

Four Brothers: Robert Earl Johnson

Ivery Lee Johnson

Billy Gray Johnson all of Greenville NC

Jimmy Person of Wash-

ington DC

Four Sisters: Vonnice Lee Fleming of Baltimore MD

Eva Evon Johnson

Betty L. Johnson

Mary Darnell Barrett all of Greenville NC

Visitation Monday 7 to 8 pm at St. John MB Church, Stokes NC. Other times family will receive friends at the home of her mother, Selma Chancey Johnson, 1312-A North Vandyke Street.

Arrangements by Rountree and Associates Funeral Home. 919-757-2067

WHICHARD

Mrs. Alberta Whichard, 93, of 520 Smith St. Bethel, died Monday, March 17, 1997 at her residence. Funeral services were conducted Thursday, March 20, at Holly Hill FWB Church. She was buried in Bethel Cemetery.

Mrs. Whichard was born in Edgecombe County and reared in Pitt County. She attended the Pitt County Schools. She was a member of Holly Hill FWB Church.

Survivors include: Two daughters, Doris Whichard Montgomery

of The Home and Mary Whichard of East Orange, NJ; one brother, O.C. Knight of Greenville, NC; one grandchild, two great grandchildren, other relatives and friends.

Viewing was held at Norcott Chapel of Loving Memories. Arrangements by Norcott & Company Funeral Home, Greenville.

SHORT

Mrs. Gladys Duncan Short, 73, of 406 Paris Ave., died Saturday, March 15, 1997 at Pitt County Hospital.

Funeral services were held at Brown Chapel Church, Belvoir. Burial in the cemetery.

Mrs. Short was a native of Pitt County and attended the local schools. She was a member of Brown Chapel Holy Church.

Surviving: daughters, Jo Ann Short and Mildred Short both of the home; sons, Willie Lee Short of Bridgeport, CT, and Arlander Short of the home; sisters, Beatrice Sheppard, Mary Joyner, and Ida R. Staton all of Greenville, NC; 8 grandchildren; 15 great grandchildren.

Arrangements by Flanagan Funeral Home, Inc., Greenville.

The 14th Annual Great Pirate Purple/Gold Pigskin Pig-Out Party

The annual spring football game at East Carolina University in Greenville used to be an unknown event until a barbecue cook-off contest was added to attract regional interest. About 15 pig-roast teams entered the first year to barbecue all night underneath Dowdy-Ficklen Stadium. The next day, professional pig-roast judges awarded prizes and football fans enjoyed chopped barbecue before the Pirates took to the field for their final spring scrimmage.

Now in its 14th year, the Great Pirate Purple/Gold Pigskin Pig-Out Party has evolved into a four day "nationally recognized, family oriented carnival-style weekend", says Lee Workman, assistant athletics director. The Pig-Out, sponsored by the Eastern Carolina Toyota Dealers, offers something for everyone while raising about \$50,000 each year for the Pirate Club which exists to provide scholarships to student-athletes at ECU.

Sports fans can enjoy a variety of activities. Head Football Coach Steve Logan and his players will sign autographs at a sports card show. The Pig-Out Golf Classic includes a \$2 million Hole-In-One Shootout. The ECU softball team will battle Liberty while the baseball team challenges CAA rival

George Mason. In the football game fans can see last year's outstanding recruits for the first time including the 1995 Shine Bowl North Carolina Defensive MVP in Raymond Massey from Charlotte and offensive tackle Anthony Nobles. But there are plenty of festivities scheduled for those who don't know the difference between a first down and a touchdown. Live beach and Top 40 music will be provided by The Entertainers and the Breeze Band. A fireworks show will light up the night. Inside Williams arena the largest home and garden show east of I-95 will take place. A craft show featuring regional items is scheduled. A military equipment and vehicle display from Camp Lejeune will be included for the first time. For the young and the young at heart, a variety of carnival rides await thrill seekers. Children can look forward to kiddie games, finger printing with the Greenville Police, the Networks Showtime Ball Handling Team, numerous dance and community entertainment groups, and autographs from the ECU cheerleaders and PeeDee the Pirate Mascot.

Volunteers from the Pitt-Greenville Chamber of Commerce have had a lot to do with the success of the Pig-Out. But

the winning ways of the Pirates on the football field has made the event easier to sell. In the 1990's ECU has made three bowl trips. Last year the Pirates enjoyed an 8-3 season highlighted by a 31-6 victory at Miami.

What started out as an interesting idea has become a major regional event on par with the Michael Jordan Celebrity Golf Classic and the Emerald Isle Beach Music Festival. "This is a unique event on the college campus around college athletics. I think that the event has tried to be emulated, but I don't know that it has been equaled," says Workman.

Since its origin in 1984, the Pig-Out has become a critical fundraiser for ECU, not to mention a hit with all that have attended. "The initial purpose was to have a family oriented event in the spring in our athletic program that our fans would enjoy coming back to do and to offer a way to attract new people to our program that do not normally attend ECU athletic events. I think it's done more than we ever thought it would do," says Workman.

For event information call the ECU marketing office at (919) 328-4530. For tickets call 1-800-DIAL-ECU.

From Page Eight - Can you wait?

she shares how to:

- prepare mentally, physically and spiritually for a fulfilling marriage
- recognize your blind spots and areas of potential trouble
- talk to Jesus daily and make your relationship with Him real
- follow the guidelines for dating, intimacy, and interaction with others

- handle attractions from the first encounter to the marriage altar

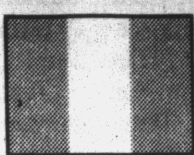
Happy and Single
No, they aren't pals of Snow White. They are self-descriptions which McKinney proves can coexist in one life. Ultimately, McKinney teaches by example how this is possible through God and through His Word as it remains relevant to the struggles, frustrations, and tempta-

tions of 20th century singles. If you say you've "heard it all before" from countless singles manuals and well-meaning friends (usually married, mind you)...this is a fresh account of life as a single the way God intends it to be. A life of joy and fulfillment knowing that you are waiting in God's will for the glorious day when Love finds you.

AFRICAN DIGEST

NIGERIA

Nobel winner charged treason

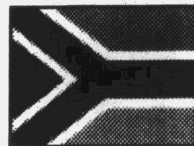


Nigeria's Nobel prize winning writer Wole Soyinka has been charged with treason in his homeland.

The charge, which carries a death penalty, came days after Soyinka said he would sue Nigerian military leader Sani Abacha for calling him a terrorist. The 1986 Nobel literature laureate fled his Nigerian homeland two years ago after learning that authorities planned to arrest him for speaking against their military rule. He is now living in London. The Abacha regime executed dissident playwright Ken Saro-Wiwa and eight others in November 1995 for speaking against the government. A year ago, Soyinka was with Nigerian opposition groups who met in Norway and agreed to form a united front against the Abacha regime.

SOUTH AFRICA

Gunfire mars protest



At the end of a Zulu protest in downtown Johannesburg this week, gunfire erupted killing

eight people. The scene was reminiscent of a scene three years ago.

South African police said that some of the weapons used were automatic, and that the sounds echoed off the downtown buildings. Most marchers carried traditional Zulu spears, clubs and shields, and it was not clear who fired the shots. Police said that at least two people were fatally shot and four others injured while the Zulu nationalists traveled from Black townships outside the capital city to take part in the march and a rally at the central library. The march was a relic of longstanding animosity between the Zulu-nationalist Inkatha Freedom Party and President Mandela's National Black Congress. Three years ago, security guards opened fire on Zulu marchers approaching the ANC headquarters, killing eight people.

ZAIRE

Protesters burn U.S. flag



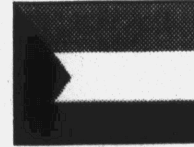
Zairian protesters burned the American flag and demanded the expulsion of the U.S. ambassador and his staff, and

the Zairian prime minister blamed everyone but France for ignoring what he called "the tragedy" in eastern Zaire.

The protesters chanted, "That's enough Clinton" and "Americans, get out!" About 200 demonstrators protested in front of the U.S. Embassy where Daniel Simpson is ambassador. Zairian soldiers moved in to break up the demonstration after the flag was burned. A travel warning has been issued by Washington for the 550 Americans in Zaire, including 320 in the capital city of Kinshasa. France is the only western power that has shown its sympathies, President Jacques Chirac said. "No one can ignore this any more, and no one can remain indifferent." The rebels have taken about one-sixth of Zaire over the past five months, prompting frequent expressions of concern from U.S. officials about the stability not only in Zaire but neighboring countries.

SUDAN

Sudanese lose 200 rebels



Sudanese rebels fighting along Sudan's northern border with Uganda and Zaire, admitted this week that they

have lost about 200 rebels, but claim Sudan's government forces have lost more.

Uganda rejected Sudan's allegations that it was aiding what appeared to be a two-pronged attack by Sudan's People's Liberation Army (SPLA) that reportedly drove government troops from several posts in extreme southern Sudan. But the country's independent daily, *The Crusader*, said that Ugandan and Sudanese forces had exchanged artillery fire across the tense border earlier this week. The SPLA said about 200 Sudanese troops and Sudan backed Ugandan fighters had been killed, including a Sudanese major-general and nine colonels. The rebels said they had captured their former headquarters of Kajo-Keji, about 15 miles north of Uganda, and were moving slightly north-westward, laying siege to Yeji.

On the western front north of the Zaire border, the rebels claimed they captured Bazi, a small trading center about 60 miles west of Yeji. Most of the Sudanese casualties occurred at Kaya, 18 miles north of the Ugandan border and 43 miles east of Yeji, where rebels destroyed four tanks and seized others.

Sudanese army spokesman Gen. Mohamed Sanousi Ahmed said this week that Sudanese troops were "courageously fighting the aggressors on all battle fronts." The SPLA rebels from the mostly Christian and animist groups have been fighting for independence since 1983.

Graham announces new loan program

calls for formation of dairy compact to help struggling producers

RALEIGH — North Carolina Agriculture Commissioner Jim Graham on Tuesday announced a new loan program for beginning farmers and called for the formation of a Southern Dairy Compact to help struggling dairy producers.

Graham, speaking at the Governor's Summit on North Carolina Agriculture, said the Farm Credit Associations of North Carolina and the N.C. Agricultural Finance Authority have agreed to participate in the lending program. The

authority is affiliated with the N.C. Department of Agriculture.

"Together they will provide long term credit for beginning farmers at reasonable interest rates," he said. "Each will provide 50 percent of the loans."

Loans from the Agricultural Finance Authority will be for 30-year terms and will be for up to 95 percent of the property's appraised value. The first year loan payment will be for interest only.

Twenty-year loans will be offered from Farm Credit with fixed interest rates. For the first three years of a loan, payments will be for interest only.

The commissioner also called for formation of a Southern Dairy Compact to help stabilize prices and the region's milk supply by encouraging local production. "High feed prices have hurt our farmers and milk prices for our producers have dropped to unreasonable lev-

els," he said.

"Immediate action is needed to address the milk pricing issue. The current federal marketing regulations are not fair," Graham said. "Prices are based on the cheese market. North Carolina like other states in the South is a fluid or milk state, not cheese."

"That's why the 15 states in the South are looking at forming a compact," he said. "Only three adjoining states have to sign on to form the compact. I encourage the General As-

sembly to make North Carolina one of them."

Graham said that dairy farmers, along with other livestock and poultry producers, are also facing a number of environmental regulations and proposals. "Protecting natural resources is important, no doubt about it. Agriculture contributes to some environmental problems but the industry is not alone," he said.

"Estimates are that 100 dairy farms, each generating

about \$1 million dollars a year, may close this year because of prices and environmental regulations. That's a \$100 million loss in our rural areas," the commissioner added.

"We need to work together, farmer and non farmer alike, to reach sound and effective solutions. Common sense needs to guide these efforts. Farmers are the original stewards of the environment and will continue to work hard to protect land, air and water resources."

PCMH forum set to resume Tuesday night

■ The first hearing on the privatization of Pitt County Memorial Hospital was dominated by speakers affiliated with the hospital, and commissioners say they want to hear what others think.

By Lloyd Whittington
The Daily Reflector

A hearing Tuesday night provides a chance for all to speak about the future of Pitt County Memorial Hospital — not only those affiliated with the hospital, county officials said.

The county will continue a March 21 hearing to Tuesday at 7 p.m. in the Agriculture Center Auditorium to discuss how to keep PCMH competitive as managed care develops in eastern North Carolina.

The county is considering changing PCMH into a private, not-for-profit hospital to bypass state laws that hinder hospitals under managed care's changes. Other options are trying to change the laws or leaving the hospital as it is.

More than 275 people attended the earlier hearing, which was dominated by speakers affiliated with the hospital. They favored privatization.

"We heard from a good many of the medical community," commission Vice Chairman Kenneth Dews said. "They are taxpayers. They are citizens and they do have jobs there and have a right to appear. But we didn't hear much from the opposing sides. If anyone has a concern, it would be a good opportunity for them to come forward and we hear those concerns."

Commissioner Jeff Savage was more direct.

"I would like to have more people from the community other than .. (those connected to the hospital) to come out and speak and share with the board their concerns, their questions and to get a feel for

what they will need to know in order to be comfortable with any decision we reach regarding their hospital."

The hearing is, however, for those affiliated with the hospital as well, County Manager Tom Robinson said.

"It's for anybody who wants to come speak. We're not trying to steer it in any direction at all," he said.

Savage is confident the public still has concerns.

"I'm still bombarded with questions from the public about this. This is still a hot area of concern. They basically want to know, 'Why the hospital needs to change? Is it a good idea? Are they going to be turning people away? Is this just a way for somebody to make more money?'"

"They can tell their neighbors and discuss it on the street, but it doesn't do any good unless it gets back to the people who ultimately make the decision. This is a government of the people."

Kenneth Dews
vice chairman
Pitt County Commission

The hospital has purchased numerous full page advertisements in The Daily Reflector, as well as distributed propaganda throughout the community responding to similar questions. The county has also purchased a tabloid in the paper using material presented by two Chicago consultants.

"I think they aren't trusting that the answers are as complete as they should be," Savage said. "It may take a different messenger."

Who might that be?

"That's a good question," Savage said. "But I think commissioners definitely need to take more of a leadership role in presenting the pros and cons of this issue."

The PCMH board of trustees has asked that the hospital be converted from a public body to a private, not-for-profit organization.

The East Carolina University board of trustees and the Greenville-Pitt Chamber of Commerce have endorsed that option.

Laws that govern public bodies put PCMH at a competitive disadvantage, hospital administrators and county consultants have said.

SHAPING UP FOR THE 21ST CENTURY

By Patricia A. McCain

In the ever-changing and fast-moving world of business and industry, how are choice-crazy consumers going to be satisfied?

By coming up with something that's new and improved. That's what gets attention and makes sales.

Industries must have better-than-ever-stuff. We need to invest in next generation upgrades that give our organization the edge.

If knowledge is to be the new source of wealth in the Information Age, then companies as well as employees will be investing in their knowledge future.

Companies are spending millions in this effort. Some are paying to reskill their workers - those who do not participate or who cannot learn are out of the loop.

Burn this into your brain: You must become a "learner" in order to stay "in shape" for

the 21st Century.

That shape will keep changing. It will not matter what business we're in or who we work for. It will continue to resize or light size (I tend to believe what one industry mogul said "All this restructuring, reorganization and redoing that industries have been doing these past 10 years, points to the fact that we didn't do it right the first time")...maybe.

Anytime a company, a nation or an employee has to redo, it generally means a re-investment and a new commitment.

Next time, "we" in the world of work will be expected to move faster and surer to embrace the changes that will occur. Our job is to help move the walls. We must do our part to help the organization stay flexible.

To earn our keep, every one of us needs to become a transformer.

It's in our best interest to make this sort of mind shift...to accept this new set of responsibilities. We end up better off because it aligns our work behavior with people's consumer behavior. It puts us in touch with the time, with where technology is taking us. Above all, it positions us to win.

Therefore, today's challenge is to help the organization adapt, accelerate, innovate, learn, and transform itself to fit constantly changing business conditions.

According to Charles Darwin, "It is not the strongest of species that survive, nor the most intelligent, but the one most responsive to change."

"It has been estimated that 80% of the jobs in the U.S. within 20 years will be cerebral, and only 20% manual, the exact opposite of the ratio in 1900...there are already more computer-literate first graders than there are computer-literate first grade teachers. (Jennifer James, Thinking In the Future Tense.)

Finally we must not be of-

fended by change...and not go around looking for bad guys to blame.

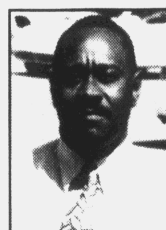
Employees and employers alike must be ready and willing to adapt to the swiftly changing technology of the 21st Century.

Patricia McCain is the owner of McCain Employment Services, Inc. of Kinston, NC.

She began the business in 1987 and it has grown to the leader in employment services serving Lenoir and surrounding counties. Mrs. McCain is also involved in the community as well as serving on the Governor's Work Force Preparedness Commission and other boards throughout Eastern NC.



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A Notorious End

Some Say Brooklyn's B.I.G. was victim of West Coast Retaliation

By VINETTE K. PRYCE

Special to the AmNews

LOS ANGELES—Biggie Smalls probably did not know what hit him when four bullets pierced his Chevrolet Suburban outside the Petersen Automotive Museum. The 24-year-old reformed Bad Boy from Brooklyn soared to music industry heights when he recorded his first album, "Ready To Die," two years ago. Smalls was hit as he sat in the passenger side of the vehicle late Saturday night after making his last public appearance on national television during the previous night's "Soul Train" Awards.

Although hundreds of people milled about when the fire department reportedly stopped the party, no one has volunteered eyewitness

accounts to the Los Angeles Police Department. Smalls, also known as Notorious B.I.G. in the rap industry, was called Christopher Wallace in the Brooklyn neighborhood of Bedford-Stuyvesant.

Smalls had been making the rounds at numerous Los Angeles radio stations promoting his next album due in stores on March 24. Titled "Life After Death . . . 'Til Death Do Us Part," Smalls capped his promotional visit with an on-camera presentation at the "Soul Train" Awards.

"What's up, Cali?" he asked the crowd.

Up in the balcony where the non-music industry audience watched, the response was a resounding boo.

That response could have been at-

tributed to his talking candidly on BEAT radio about his reaction to the death of rival rapper Tupac Shakur by saying he was too absorbed in his own problems to really mourn.

Smalls said he had an accident and was going through a divorce and was unable to focus on Shakur's demise. Revered as a tragic hero, Shakur's music is heard hourly on the BEAT. His "To Live & Die In L.A." is in heavy rotation, along with other recordings which hail the West Coast as "the best coast." Allegedly, threats were made to Smalls at the aSoul Train" Awards. One reportedly warned him not to attend the Vibe event. Neither Smalls nor his label's founder, Sean "Puffy" Combs, seemed intimidated by the disre-

spect shown at the awards.

The previous year, Combs was allegedly accosted by Shakur and Marion "Suge" Knight at the same ceremony. At that time Combs quietly left Los Angeles on the first available flight.

When Shakur was gunned down in a similar style in Las Vegas, Smalls remained silent. He did not attend the memorial tribute which invited rappers and fans. This gesture caused speculation in the rap community as to Smalls' feelings for his West Coast competition even after death.

Since that time, Smalls has been travelling back and forth to Los

Angeles without incident. Smalls visited the city in December '96 while restricted to a wheelchair. Combs accompanied him on that trip.

This visit to Los Angeles and the "Soul Train" Awards tested public response when Shakur's former labelmate Snoop Doggy Dogg walked on stage at the

Shrine Auditorium to make a presentation. The balcony responded with cheers and shouts of USSSSnnnnnooop."

Similarly, Shakur received a standing ovation when he was announced as the winner in the R&B Soul or Rap Album of the Year category for his "All Eyez On Me" Death Row recording.

Rap Violence blamed on white willies who control hip hop music industry

By VINETTE K. PRYCE

LOS ANGELES—Two of the biggest names in rap music were murdered six months apart and the blame for their deaths should be heavy-handedly placed on the men at the top who fund distribution of negative rhetoric. These men who have rerouted the derogatory messages when radio failed to play the recordings by releasing under ground/club-tracks are the culprits. Most of these men have no contacts with the Black community and care little if the messages denigrate Black women, incite negative behavior or influence family disunity.

Some Black radio station owners have been responsible in siphoning violence and negative lyrics from their play list.

However, their numbers are not increasing and in response new stations are emerging which encourage foul language, disrespect and negative behavior.

Here where Biggie Smalls was gunned down early Sunday morning, not one radio station reported the detailed news of the killing. Up until press time not

one radio station has described how Biggie made it to Cedars-Sinai Hospital. None stated the name of the driver of the GMC Suburban. Not one named the other passengers in the vehicle or even mentioned whether or not Biggie was leaving or entering the party.

As a matter of fact, the stations which claim they are "up" on hip-hop news copied television reports by saying the party at Fairfax and Wilshire was the "Soul Train" after-party, which it was not. Vibe Magazine will be launching a television show in August. The Quincy Jones/David Saltzman production is what invited New Yorkers and Californians to the Peterson Automotive Museum, not Don Cornelius' "Soul Train." "Soul Train" after-parties were held the very night the "Soul Train" awards aired. Two parties were held at the Century Club and the House of Blues. Radio has not addressed their misinformation to the public.

CNN reported the murder before rap radio. Here Power 106

acted responsibly by opening their phone lines for callers who wanted to vent. A majority of callers were remorseful, offering condolences to Biggie's family. Although the Baker Brothers, the hosts of the show, denounced the East/West rivalry, callers repeatedly mentioned the competition which pits New York's Bad Boy Records with the Los Angeles-based Deathrow Records.

In addition, music which filled the show was all reflective of inciteful Westcoast rivalry. When asked about the responsibility of radio programmers, a Power 106 personality said "I don't think we need to babysit rappers . . . this is what the people want to hear. The Baker Brothers said rap is why they are on radio, therefore they could never denounce the genre. However, no one took responsibility for programming violence or disparaging lyrics to the audience of impressionable youths most of whom are, at best, high school graduates.

While Knight and Combs enforce rap radio. Here Power 106

labels, a closer examination should be made of the money which backs their ventures.

Many rappers are uneducated, high-school drop-outs who believe "being real" is cursing and glorifying thug life. For their fans the message becomes "real" when they carry out the message in the lyrics.

Major record companies can stop the killings, the rivalry and the jealousy - coast to coast. But why should they when annually rap grosses one billion dollars? MCA reportedly invested \$200 million in Death Row when they became equal partners with Marion "Suge" Knight after Time Warner bowed to pressure and dropped the controversial label. Similarly, Arista with the Bartelsman Music Group backs Bad Boy Records. However, throughout all the controversy it has been Sean "Puffy" Combs who has taken the heat.

These behind-the-scenes profiteers should be made to accept the responsibility of murdering Black men who die before reaching age 30.

Notorious B.I.G.: Another Hip Hop Tragedy

By C.D. E RAZIER

In the echo of the Tupac shooting six months ago, the Notorious B.I.G. fell victim to a fatal driveby shooting in Los Angeles on March 9. His was not only tragic, but a loss to the entire music industry that will definitely have an impact on the future of hip hop. "Big was one of my closest friends. Words can't express my pain. He was one of the greatest artists I have ever had the pleasure to work with. I love him and will always miss him," said Sean "Puffy" Combs, Bad Boy CEO.

The 24-year-old "Soul Train," Source Magazine, and Billboard Award winner, was due to release his latest album, ironically entitled, "Life After Death . . . 'Til Death Do Us Part," this spring. In a quote taken from Biggie's latest biography, he said: "When I did the first album I was in a living hell, stressed and depressed. I was more relaxed making this one and I'm proud of what I came up with. I want to live up to my name and prove to everybody that there is really life after death."

Mainstream America labeled him a gangster rapper, but he wasn't. People fail to realize that, in hip hop, you're not considered a gangster rapper unless you are gang banging on wax. Like most hip hop artists who are indigenous to their environment, Biggie made underground hits about the life of his urban peers. It was these underground hits, a not so positive past, and an intense rivalry with Tupac that fueled the fire for the media to unjustly create rumors about an East Coast/West Coast war. "It's a terrible fact that we've had three casualties connected to this concocted situation that's much bigger than rap and hip hop. It shows how the problems of the Black community-Black on Black crime that has been in dialogue in the art form for so long, has floated to the top and is out of control," said Chuck D of Public Enemy.

These hip hop classics, along with radio dance hits like Mary J. Blige's "Real Love" and Biggie's

Los Angeles police earlier this week declined to discuss whether the Crips street gang is under investigation for the killings of rival rap pers Notorious B.I.G. and Tupac Shakur.

In its latest issue, Time magazine reports that police are investigating the Crips in connection with the March 9 drive-by shooting in Los Angeles of 24-year-old Notorious B.I.G., also known as Biggie Smalls and born Christopher Wallace.

But a spokesman for the Los Angeles Police Department said he could not confirm whether detectives are investigating such a nexus.

Time also reports that Las Vegas police believe a member of the Crips killed Shakur, 25, who was fatally wounded in a car-to-car at tack there on Sept. 7. Shakur was in a car that night driven by supposed Bloods member and Death Row Records chief "Suge" Knight, who since has been packed off to prison for nine years for probation violation.

A Las Vegas homicide lieutenant informed of the Time report disputed it. Speculation was rife in the aftermath of Wallace's murder this month that it was a retaliation hit for the murder of Shakur.

What was known is that Wallace and Shakur had once been friends, but Shakur had blamed B.I.G. after being nearly killed during a robbery in New York City in 1994.

Shakur also had bragged on a CD—in graphic terms that he had slept with Wallace's wife, which she has denied.

All that added up to a supposed rivalry between East and West Coast rappers, one Snoop Doggy Dogg alluded to during an awards show a year or so ago.

According to the Time article, there are officially no suspects in Shakur's murder, "but police say they have identified a member of the Crips gang who they believe is responsible.

"Because Death Row (Shakur's label) has links to the Blood street gangs—bitter rivals of the Crips— and because Bad Boy (Entertainment, B.I.G.'s label) had hired Crips and bodyguards during their West Coast visits, some observers speculate that the Wallace murder involved re-

venge by the Bloods on behalf of Shakur. But sources tell Time that the LAPD is focusing its investigation on the same group of Crips that Bad Boy used as body guards."

Meanwhile, the fight between a black Democratic legislator from Los Angeles and a white Republican lawmaker from Granada Hills over whether to honor Notorious B.I.G., a former Brooklyn crack dealer, continued.

In a recent op-ed essay, Assemblyman Tom McClintock, R Granada Hills, said it would be wrong to adjourn the lower legislative chamber in memory of the slain rapper.

"It is a sad milestone in the downward spiral of society that such an honor would now be contemplated for a convicted drug dealer and thug, whose glorification of rape, murder and drugs had made him famous," McClintock wrote.

But Assemblyman Kevin Murray, who calls his motion to adjourn the mourning after the rapper was killed a "routine procedure" said McClintock needs to "concentrate less on partisan bickering and more on his district and California issues.

"Maybe he would have a more substantial package of legislation this session? Nevertheless, the problem is much larger than Assemblyman McClintock's objections," the Los Angeles Democrat said today.

"What I am asking all Assembly members to remember is the violence and what it leaves...grieving families, more violence and a devastating impact on our urban communities. We should not be focusing on the person, but on solving the problem. Any legislator should not be focusing on the person, but solving the problem. Any legislator should support those issues," Murray said. Notorious B.I.G.'s first album "Ready to Die" sold more than one million copies. His second album, "Life After Death," is due out March 26. One of his songs from the forth coming album is called "You're Nobody." On it, he raps: "You're nobody/Till somebody kills you."

"Big Poppa" propelled him into stardom. Soundtracks, movies and TV made him affluent and famous. When it came to the consensus, the overall decision was that Big Poppa was "mad cool." But there were those who thought that he could have portrayed street life from a positive point of view. Many believe that the industry as a whole will take a different direction after the latest chain of events.

The media has many speculations on what led to his unfortunate demise. Reflecting on the news coverage on TV, it seemed as though they felt that his death was inevitable. "Half the problem with some of the media coverage is that we, the hip hop community, can see the whole world but the world only sees a small fraction of the hip hop community," said Dane Webb, rap editor for the Urban Network, Los Angeles.

One would think that Americans might have used the Tupac shooting as an example and stopped the senseless violence surrounding hip hop.

"I saw the movie 'Rosewood' the night before. I came out of the movie putting everything in per-

spective and then when the Biggie incident occurred, I started thinking that we have taken a step backwards," screamed Billy Johnson, managing editor of Rapsheet.

The rap industry as a whole needs to become a worldwide mechanism designed to be a tool for the empowerment, enlightenment and the elevation of the community of color. In the past, too few entertainers have tried to reconcile dispute and/or address socio-political issues in their music. Those attempts have been unsuccessful in the battle against violence in hip hop. There needs to be a consistent effort from every artist in hip hop," explains DJ Jam, "It's like when your mother used to tell you not to do something over and over again, after awhile the message became subconscious.

One thing is for certain, Biggie still has fans that love him and many colleagues that respect him. For the most part he was a positive example of how someone who once succumbed to the allure of the streets, turned his life around and became successful in the music industry.



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Straight Answers to Your Questions About the Future of PCMH

Q For more than a generation, Pitt County Memorial Hospital has been a health care leader in eastern North Carolina. But acting with the speed and flexibility that leadership demands today is much more difficult because of state regulations that restrict how a public hospital operates. That's why PCMH has proposed a plan to become a private not-for-profit hospital under local citizen control. This change would be invisible for most people, but would help PCMH tremendously as the hospital works to develop a health care delivery system for eastern North Carolina. Naturally, such a proposal has raised questions among the public. Below are some of those questions, along with their answers.

If PCMH becomes private, will any patients be denied care?

No. PCMH proposes becoming "private" under corporation law, but it will remain a hospital that is open to everyone, regardless of a person's race, religion, health insurance status or ability to pay. Its meetings will be open to the public, just as they are today. Many organizations are privately owned, yet they are open to all people. The Ronald McDonald House comes to mind. A private PCMH will not be an exclusive PCMH. It will remain committed to providing care for all. The PCMH you have today is practically identical to the PCMH you would have if this reorganization takes place. But it would be stronger.

Is this kind of change new?

No, not at all. In 1983, the N.C. General Assembly recognized that public hospitals may need to reorganize to better compete with private hospitals. So it passed a law allowing public hospitals to become private not-for-profit hospitals under citizen control. If PCMH reorganizes under this law, it will be subject to all the guidelines put forth by the General Assembly, as well as any other guidelines established by the county. Nearby hospitals that have taken this step are Wayne Memorial in Goldsboro, Wilson Memorial, and Halifax Memorial in Roanoke Rapids. Wake Medical Center in Raleigh took this step last December.

Why is this change necessary?

In our regional service area, private hospitals have an unfair competitive advantage over PCMH. They can finance facilities outside of their home counties, have more flexibility in forming partnerships with physicians and other providers, and can force PCMH to disclose the terms of contracts and other competitive information while keeping theirs secret. Changing Pitt Memorial's status will create a level playing field for all competitors.

If Pitt County doesn't own the hospital, then who will? Is this move really a sale in disguise?

PCMH property and assets will be transferred to the same corporation that has operated the hospital since it was chartered in 1953, Pitt County Memorial Hospital Inc. PCMH is not now and will not become a profit-seeking, dividend-paying corporation. Also, this reorganization is not the same as selling the hospital. If, in the future, a proposal is made to sell the hospital, final approval of the sale and its terms would require the approval of the county commissioners as well as the hospital board.

Who will control the hospital if this change goes through?

Ultimately, the citizens of Pitt County will, just as they always have. A majority of the hospital board members will be appointed by the county, just as they are now. The people of Pitt County, through the Pitt County Commission, will be in control of the hospital. PCMH will truly be a citizen-controlled hospital.

What other methods could PCMH pursue to improve its competitive position?

PCMH has considered going to the N.C. General Assembly with a list of law changes—approximately 10 of them—needed to put public hos-

pitals on a level field with private ones. However, the legislative process can be slow and the outcome uncertain. Also, PCMH's competitors could lobby lawmakers to vote against any changes that would improve the position of public hospitals.

If PCMH makes this change, will it still have to provide charity care?

Yes. Last year, PCMH provided more than \$17 million in care to patients who were unable to pay their bills, and it will continue to provide this care under any circumstances. In addition, the Pitt County Commissioners could require PCMH to provide a set dollar amount of charity care if the hospital changes from its public status. Remember that part of the PCMH mission is to provide quality care to all citizens of Pitt County, and that mission will continue.

Will this reorganization cause prices to go up at PCMH?

Just the opposite is more likely. For two straight years, the average patient bill at PCMH has declined slightly, and the hospital has not had a rate increase in four years. Already, its prices are lower than the state average. PCMH's future success will depend on its ability to keep prices competitive.

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How will the public know PCMH is living up to its end of the bargain?

As is the case now, PCMH trustees' meetings will be open to the public. In addition, a yearly audit by a well-known accounting firm will ensure that PCMH is meeting all performance guidelines set by the county. Audit results would be published in the hospital's annual report. If PCMH fails to meet those obligations, the county could resume ownership.

Will employees be laid off as a result of a PCMH reorganization?

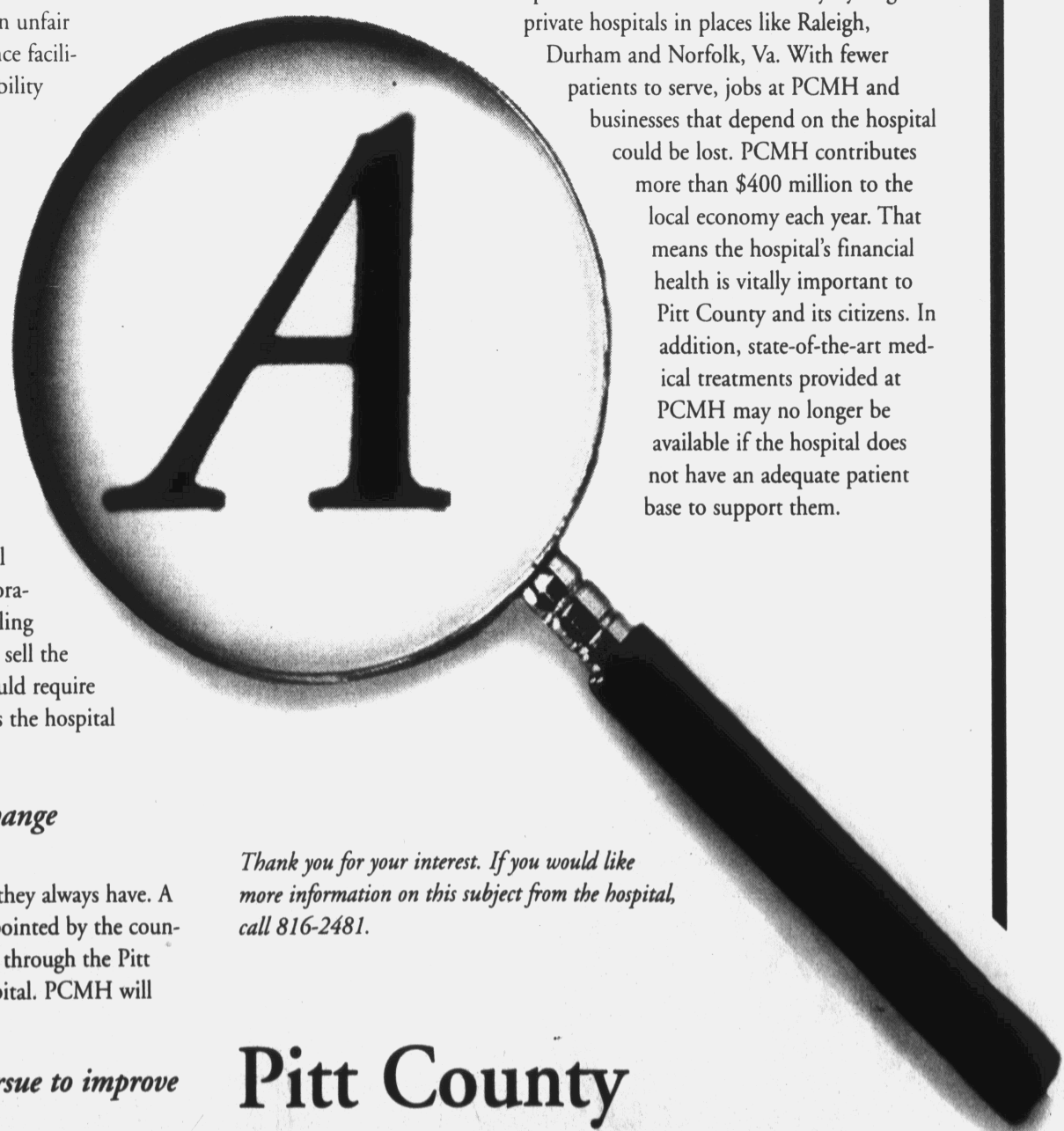
No. Again, just the opposite is more likely true. This change will make PCMH more competitive, so jobs will be more secure.

Can PCMH survive without county tax dollars?

PCMH receives no subsidy from Pitt County and will receive none under this reorganization.

What will happen if PCMH stays like it is?

PCMH's patient base could be taken away by large private hospitals in places like Raleigh, Durham and Norfolk, Va. With fewer patients to serve, jobs at PCMH and businesses that depend on the hospital could be lost. PCMH contributes more than \$400 million to the local economy each year. That means the hospital's financial health is vitally important to Pitt County and its citizens. In addition, state-of-the-art medical treatments provided at PCMH may no longer be available if the hospital does not have an adequate patient base to support them.



Thank you for your interest. If you would like more information on this subject from the hospital, call 816-2481.

Pitt County Memorial Hospital