

NEWS CLIPS

ATLANTA COMPANY WANTS MORE COMPUTERS 'IN THE HOOD'

Thirteen Scribes, Inc. (TSI), an Atlanta-based software engineering firm, recently announced "Computers in the Hood, From the Underground Railroad to the Information Superhighway." The grass roots campaign will make personal computers affordable to economically disadvantaged African-American consumers. The campaign is designed to prepare today's generation for tomorrow's jobs by encouraging computer ownership and filling the technological gap. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, African-Americans accounted for only 5.3 percent of the nation's 561,000 programmers and 6.2 percent of the nation's computer systems analysts and scientists in 1997. TSI's goal is to equip two million more African-American homes with inexpensive personal computers and increase computer literacy by Dec. 31, 1999. Today, only 11 percent of African-American homes have a computer which means only one-third of African-American students have access to a home computer. More than five million African-Americans have accessed the World Wide Web compared to 41 million Whites.

AFRICAN-AMERICAN CONFERENCE ON THE FAMILY SET

The Fourth Annual Conference on the African-American Family will be held Nov. 20-22, in Huntsville, Ala. Dr. Na'im Akbar, acclaimed by Essence magazine as "one of the world's preeminent psychologists and a pioneer in the development of an African-centered approach in modern psychology," will deliver the keynote presentation at the Knowledge is Power Luncheon. The conference will feature other nationally known speakers, including Dr. Claud Anderson, president of the Harvest Institute, and Kwame Ronnie Vanderhorst, outreach director of Prepare Our Youth, Inc. There will be concurrent workshops, a family recognition awards dinner, a youth-young adult talent showcase, exhibitors and children's programs. The conference will also feature a panel discussion with the Youth at Risk Education Tour, featuring Gus and Odessa Smith, the parents of 24-year-old Kemba Smith, whose legal plight is a test of the federal policy of mandatory minimum sentencing.

HHS SAYS WELFARE CASELOAD DECLINING, AWARDS GRANTS

Health and Human Services Secretary Donna E. Shalala recently announced that as of June, welfare caseloads have declined to approximately 8.4 million recipients and slightly more than three million families. Shalala also announced grants to 13 states to help improve job retention and career advancement for parents on welfare. Since January 1993, the number of recipients on welfare has dropped by more than 41 percent, including a decline of more than 30 percent since the enactment of the welfare reform law in August 1996. There are 5.7 million fewer recipients on the welfare rolls since President Clinton took office and 3.8 million fewer welfare recipients since the passage of the 1996 law. The rate of decline remains strong, the secretary reported, with nearly two percent reductions each month, almost double the rate for the same period in 1997. Thirteen states have received \$50,000 each to provide technical assistance on sharing information about existing job retention strategies for welfare recipients and the methods for evaluating these strategies with current and former welfare recipients. The 13 states are: California, Illinois, Maryland, New Jersey, North Carolina, Ohio, Rhode Island, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia, Washington and Wisconsin.

FETAL DEVELOPMENT LINKED TO CORONARY HEART DISEASE

HOUSTON — A new study provides evidence that poor fetal growth could permanently alter cholesterol metabolism. Researchers studied the levels of high-density lipoprotein (HDL) apolipoprotein A1, an independent predictor of coronary heart disease, in Jamaican children whose mothers were not nourished properly during pregnancy. High levels of HDL are usually correlated with a reduced risk of coronary heart disease. "We found the lower the birth weight, the lower the HDL apolipoprotein A1 level in these children," said Dr. Farook Jahoor, an associate professor of pediatrics at Baylor College of Medicine. The low levels of HDL means their ability to transport cholesterol back to the liver for excretion is impaired. Hence, plasma cholesterol is elevated and may increase their risk of cardiovascular problems. Jahoor believes the finding will enable pediatricians to use HDL apolipoprotein A1 as a screening tool to determine those children who are at greater risk of coronary heart disease later in life.

School district abandons preferences in hirings

Special to Sentinel-Voice

DENVER (AP) — Denver Public Schools has settled a reverse-discrimination suit filed by a white-owned construction company and agreed not to consider minority status or gender as factors when it hires contractors.

Bassett & Associates sued the school district in 1997 after a contract to build a new elementary school was awarded to a black-owned Lakewood firm, Blackinton & Decker. Bassett & Associates submitted the low bid by \$120,000.

In a settlement reached Tuesday, Denver Public Schools agreed to pay Bassett \$180,000 and to abandon affirmative action considerations when hiring contractors.

"The matter is settled and as part of that, we agreed that we needed to make some revisions to our policy on awarding contracts, and we did that," school board President Sue Edwards said.

The school district had goals of up to 20 percent participation by "historically under-utilized businesses," or primarily minorities. It did not have quotas, DPS attorney Mike Jackson said.

The policy shift comes as the district is seeking a \$305 million bond issue in the Nov. 3 election, in part to build nine new schools and renovate more than two dozen existing ones.

According to court documents, Bassett & Associates, Blackinton & Decker and a third company

submitted bids in 1996 to build Maxwell Elementary School, which is opening in the Montbello area next month.

In February 1997, DPS staffers told Bassett it was likely to win the contract. Bassett was the low bidder and had more experience in school construction.

When the deal reached the board, its only black member, Bennie Milliner, questioned the weight given to experience in building schools, which black contractors said was elusive because of the low number of school projects.

The district increased the weight given to firms owned by minorities and women in comparison with experience and other factors, and Blackinton & Decker won the

contract.

Milliner said the district should help minority-owned businesses that have been shut out in the past. He suggested contract awards should reflect Denver's population, which is 13 percent black and 22 percent Hispanic.

Scott Detamore, an attorney for the Mountain States Legal Foundation, which represented Bassett, praised the settlement, saying the school board "should be commended ... for doing the right thing."

Mountain States is also challenging Denver's minority contracting system. The city wants construction companies to give an average of 16 percent of their work to minority-owned firms and 12 percent to firms owned by women.

Former boxing champ in fender bender

By Nancy Zuckerbrod
Special to Sentinel-Voice

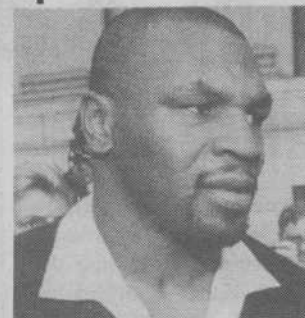
GAITHERSBURG, Md. (AP) — Mike Tyson was involved in a minor car accident Monday and had to be restrained by his own bodyguards from fighting the driver of the other car, police said.

Tyson was a passenger in the Mercedes convertible driven by his wife, Monica Turner, who apparently struck the car in front of hers, said Derek Baliles, a spokesman for the Montgomery County

police. Tyson got out of the car and "appeared to want to fight the other driver," said Baliles. "He was restrained by his wife and members of his security detail who were traveling in a second car."

Nobody was injured in the accident, described by police as a "fender-bender," in this northern Maryland suburb near Washington. No one was arrested and the driver of the other car was not identified.

Because a passersby called to report the accident, police stopped Tyson and his wife a



Mike Tyson

short time later, he said.

Tyson, complained of chest pains, but once the ambulance arrived, he refused to be taken to a hospital.

It is up to the other driver to decide whether to make a complaint to police, and it was unclear if he wanted to pursue the matter, Baliles said.

Tyson is scheduled to appear Sept. 19 at a hearing before the Nevada Athletic Commission to determine if the state will let him box again.

Tyson was banned by the commission in July 1997 after biting Evander Holyfield's ears during their heavyweight championship fight. His license was revoked and he was fined \$3 million.

Doctor loans black artists' work to museum

Special to Sentinel-Voice

OCEAN SPRINGS, Miss. (AP) — Dr. Walter O. Evans didn't jump into the world of art — he was drawn in a little at a time.

And a little at a time over the past quarter century he's amassed more than 1,000 pieces of what is considered one of the world's finest privately owned collections of African-American work.

Visitors to the Walter Anderson Museum of Art have an opportunity through Oct. 25 to view 83 of the pieces. The show opened August 15 and features such renown African-American artists as Margaret Burroughs, Elizabeth Catlett, Richard Hunt, Romare Bearden, Jacob Lawrence and Mississippi native Richmond Barthe.

Evans, 55 and a general surgeon, is on the staff of Harper Hospital at Wayne State University in Detroit.

He said the exhibit "tells people African-Americans have a talent they may not realize and that this talent has been there for a long time. This work deserves to be shown in museums and it should be shown."

As a young sailor serving in the Navy in Philadelphia, a chance invitation to visit an art gallery piqued his interest.

"A friend took me to an art gallery," he said. "So as not to be so ignorant," he started reading about various artists such as Monet, Degas and Michelangelo.

"And then I sort of left it alone," he said. "It wasn't until after I finished residency,

which would have been in the mid '70s, that I began collecting."

It was in Detroit when he said a buddy opened a gallery which led to his purchasing 22 prints by Jacob Lawrence called the John Brown Series. Subsequently he added works by Romare Bearden and Elizabeth Catlett. He said Bearden and Lawrence drew him further in to the world of art.

Later he was asked to host a reception for Catlett at his home and ended up purchasing two pieces. His method of collecting finally took direction and it was after that he began defining what he was collecting.

Evans, a native of Savannah, Ga., plans to retire within five years on the coast

of South Carolina where he's purchased some acreage.


He said as a youngster he and his family, including four siblings, moved to Beaufort, S.C., when he was four. His dad was a carpenter, his mom a nurse.

After his father was killed in an automobile accident five years later, the family subsequently moved to Hartford, Conn., where his mother worked as a nurse in doctor's offices and hospitals.

He said the fact that his mother was a nurse "certainly had some influence" on his entering the field of medicine.

He graduated from high school in Hartford in 1962 and then went into the Navy for three years. Undergraduate work followed at Howard (See Loans, Page 15)

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