

What's Up

Bicycle racing

If Lance Armstrong's feat in the Tour de France whetted your appetite for bicycle racing, you won't want to miss Sunday's Round 2 of the Defeat Crossroads Cycling Classic for Hospice of Iredell County in Mooresville. Four days of professional bicycle racing throughout the Southern Piedmont began with a downtown Mooresville on Thursday, and on Sunday the Lakeside Park business park will be host to the Race City Critérium. The event, with continuous races beginning at 9 a.m., will feature some of the top pro cyclists in the U.S. Admission is free.

Boats, boats, boats

A weekend-long show of pontoon and deck boats, plus entertainment and a fishing tournament, will be held today through Sunday at Queens Landing, sponsored by Houseboat Magazine. Admission is free. Hours are: Today, 4-9 p.m.; Saturday, 9 a.m.-6 p.m.; Sunday, 9 a.m.-1 p.m.

Siren test

Sirens located around the McGuire Nuclear Station on Lake Norman will be tested Tuesday, Aug. 14 between 10 a.m. and 2 p.m.

Helping schools

For the 2001-02 school year, Kmart is launching the "School Spirit Program." Shoppers enrolled in the program can donate a portion of their sale to a school of their choice. Twice a year, the enrolled schools will be sent checks. The company hopes to donate \$10 million to schools nationwide during this school year. Details are available at the Mooresville Big Kmart.

Parents' Night Out

A "Parents' Night Out," a fund-raising effort for the Mooresville Family YMCA, will be held Saturday, Aug. 18, from 5:30 to 9:30 p.m. Your children will be cared for by trained staff, and entertained with a movie, snack, crafts and games. The cost is \$20 for the first child of members, \$5 for each additional sibling (\$35 maximum), or \$24 for the first non-member child, \$6 for each additional sibling (\$42 maximum). Pre-registration and pre-payment required. Call 716-4000.

Eat to help kids

A hickory-smoked chicken and fish sale to benefit the Masjid al-mu-muminun Youth Association will be held Saturday, Aug. 11 from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. at the Car Doctor, at the corner of McLeiland Avenue and Main Street.

Rec programs

The Mooresville Recreation Department will offer five weeks beginner- and intermediate-level shag lessons every Thursday, beginning Aug. 16. Beginner lessons will be held from 7 to 8 p.m., and intermediate lessons will be held from 8 to 9 p.m. All lessons will be at the War Memorial. The cost is \$25 per person. For more information, call (704) 664-3756 or (704) 663-7026.

Correction

An incorrect showtime was listed in Wednesday's Tribune for an upcoming presentation of the musical comedy "Tom Sawyer" at the Mooresville Citizens Center. The play will be presented Friday, Aug. 17 at 7 p.m.; Saturday, Aug. 18 at 3 p.m.; and 7 p.m.; and Sunday, Aug. 19 at 3 p.m. Tickets are \$5 at the door.

Hospital

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"We should postpone the purchase of the old hospital property until we're ensured adequate funds are in hand," he said.

Commissioner Steve Johnson, who cast the lone vote against purchasing the old hospital building in March, said he was skeptical that the county would be in a position to buy and renovate the hospital any time soon. "The prospects of an improved economy certainly don't seem to be in any hurry at this time," he said.

Although commissioners did not rescind their previous decision to purchase the facility for \$1.9 million, it remains to be seen when the plans to turn the building into a courthouse and office space will proceed.

Officials with Lake Norman Regional Medical Center declined to comment on the county's decision until they've had time to study it.

When commissioners voted to purchase the building in March, County Manager Joel Mashburn said it would take roughly 90 days to finalize the sale and an additional 6 months to design the renovations. Move-in by the county, he estimated at that time, would likely be in early 2003.

It is not yet known how the commissioners' most recent decision will affect the previously scheduled move-in date.

The old hospital building, which is located on Center Street just outside of

downtown Mooresville, was to include a courtroom in which to hold district court proceedings currently held in the Mooresville Town Hall. Also, the facility was likely to hold offices for Crossroads Behavioral Healthcare Center, the county health department, and the sheriff's department.

As expected, commissioners also unanimously agreed to kill an effort to build a new administrative office building for the Iredell-Statesville Schools. The building, which would have cost \$1.3 million, was taken off the table by commissioners because of the financial crisis enveloping the school system.

"It shouldn't even be a matter of consideration to talk about a school administration building," said Commissioner Steve Johnson. "I'm not even willing to consider it when teachers aren't getting a pay raise and programs are getting cut."

And in a rebuff to several school board members who said last week that they didn't know they would have to "be policemen" when serving, Johnson said that was exactly their role. "Yes, you are the policemen. You're the watchdog," he said.

The school system revealed last week that it incurred a \$1.8 million deficit for the 2000-2001 fiscal year. Also, \$3 million in previously approved expenditures for the 2001-2002 school year need to be cut due to inaccurate revenue and expense projections.

The school board has tentatively

agreed to cut teachers' pay supplement from 8 to 6 percent this year — a reduction of hundreds of dollars per teacher — and to postpone the implementation of the academically rigorous International Baccalaureate program, which was to begin this year at South Iredell High School and Statesville High School.

Commission Chair Sara Haire Tice agreed with Johnson. "I don't see how this board can take any action until the school board gets the results of the investigation," she said.

Vaughn Sprinkle, chairman of the Iredell-Statesville school board, said he couldn't argue with the commissioners' decision. "Under the current climate, I can understand the feelings of the commissioners," he said.

Dr. Julia Williams, an assistant superintendent who on Wednesday was named acting superintendent when Supt. Howard Coleman was suspended indefinitely, said the grading work that has already been done on the site can be preserved and will not have to be completed again, should the project proceed in the future. The school board previously approved \$178,520 for the grading work.

In other business, commissioners awarded a land-use study contract for the Brawley School Road peninsula to the Centralina Council of Government and passed a resolution opposing any state effort to allow counties to raise their sales tax rate.

UNCC aiming to enhance first year

Next week, 38 freshmen at UNC Charlotte will christen a brand new program designed to help them be successful students, form long lasting relationships and become active members of the university community.

The 38 newcomers are the first students to participate in UNCC's Freshman Learning Community (FLC). Open to students who are undecided about a major, the program offers some of the benefits of a small college while exposing students to the broad range of opportunities found at a large university.

Students participating in the FLC will live in the same residence hall and enroll in specific courses with other FLC students. They will work closely with faculty and academic advisers who will help the students identify their particular interests and needs. The FLC students also will participate in service projects and be introduced to a variety of cultural and social activities in the Charlotte region.

"I wish my children were old enough to participate," said Bill Hill, associate dean of the College of Arts and Sciences and one the FLC program coordinators.

"I really believe it's going to be a great program. If needed, the students will get extra tutoring in math and physics. All of their courses will be integrated, meaning their professors have shared their course plans. Each instructor will know what sort of assignments and reading the students are doing in their other classes, which presents opportunities to carry themes across different courses," Hill said.

The fall semester FLC courses will include English composition, advanced algebra, history, a fine arts class and a freshman seminar that will emphasize writing and oral presentations. Some of the FLC courses will be offered in the FLC residence hall — Hawthorn Hall. FLC students also will have a computer lab in Hawthorn set aside for their use.

"The successful completion of the first year is critical to a student's continuing success in college," said Denise Trauth, UNCC provost and vice chancellor for academic affairs. "The Freshman Learning Community has been designed to help participants excel during this important first year."

"Many students who leave universities early do so simply because they are never able to feel truly connected to campus, faculty and other students," Trauth explained. "The more students can feel like valued members of the university community and the more meaningful relationships they can establish as freshmen, the greater the chance that they will stay in college, do well and graduate."

fall) is not due to missing money, rather it is because of incorrect budgeting," he said.

Sprinkle also announced that the system's finances will not be discussed at the board's next meeting, to be held this Monday. The district's new finance officer, Terry Haas, needs more time to examine the finances before recommending further cuts for this year, Sprinkle said.

The board also decided Wednesday to form a committee — consisting of Sprinkle and board members Keith Williams and Ralph Staley — to hire an outside firm to conduct an audit of the system's finances. Once hired, the board said the firm should complete its audit within 60 days.

The committee will also consult with N.C. Rep. Frank Mitchell of Olin about any role the state's auditor will play in the audit.

The board also voted to hire a law firm to handle any legalities that may be discovered during the audit.

plement increase. "Why were we spoken for?" he asked.

"I'm a professional and should be treated as such," said another middle school teacher. She added that if the school district's administrators didn't respect teachers, then the students and parents won't respect them either.

One woman who works for the school system and who has children in it said she was concerned about the impact the current financial crisis will have on students. "I hurt for my kids ... My kids only have one shot at education," she said.

She added that she thinks the community doesn't have faith in the school system any longer. "We don't know who we can trust and who we can't."

School board phone numbers

Here is a listing of telephone numbers for the Iredell-Statesville Schools Board of Education members, which was inadvertently left out of Wednesday's Tribune.

Vaughn Sprinkle: 704-592-9675.
Tara Cashion: 704-664-2886.
Dr. David Cash: 704-876-6712.
Jim Head: 704-528-5993.
Dr. Mary Bruce Serene: 704-873-7154.
Ralph Staley: 704-871-9247.
Keith Williams: 704-878-6559.

Coleman

Continued from page 1A

and that the board's priority was to not harm the education children receive.

Board chairman Vaughn Sprinkle also said the board wanted the investigation to be brought to a timely conclusion. "Our goal is to bring these budget problems to a swift conclusion," he said.

Cannon told the audience that the school board could not suspend Coleman without pay at this time because the investigation into the school's finances and the possible role Coleman played in their mismanagement is not complete. The board was authorized to suspend Coleman with pay, Cannon later said, because, "reasonable cause existed to believe that there may be incompetence and/or misdeed on the part of the superintendent."

After being named acting-superintendent, Williams made brief remarks about fulfilling the school system's mission.

"Our task is to provide an optimal learning environment where each child can be successful." She also said that the school system's staff would focus their energies on teaching children, while letting the school board handle the problems surrounding the district's finances.

"We need to restore the lost confidence," Williams added.

Board chairman Vaughn Sprinkle agreed Williams' concerns. "The public trust in our school system is at stake," he said.

Sprinkle also clarified the financial troubles the school system is facing. He emphasized that although the district ran up a \$1.8 million deficit during the 2000-2001 fiscal year, there is not a \$3 million deficit for the 2001-2002 fiscal year, as some media outlets have reported.

Instead, the \$3 million that the school board is in the process of cutting is due to inaccurate budget projections, he said. "This (\$3 million projected short-

Teachers

Continued from page 1A

they are unhappy, the flyer asks teachers to wear black shirts every Friday "to show our solidarity in our beliefs that the way we are being treated is grossly unfair."

Other teachers at the meeting shared the frustration of those at Brawley Middle.

Regarding the statement of some school board members at last Thursday's meeting that teachers supported the proposed cut in teacher supplement pay, one kindergarten teacher said that sentiment is simply not true. "Everybody was misrepresented," she said.

She also said she thought the school system's administrators were being guided by something other than concern for education. "Education isn't about education for these people. It's about money and personal gain."

All the teachers the Tribune spoke to asked that their names not be used, saying they feared retaliation from administrators for speaking out on the current crisis engulfing the system.

An elementary school teacher also thought teachers do not want the pay supplement cut, as board members said. "We're very disturbed the board has presented it that teachers favor the

cut," she said.

Still another teacher said that personnel were told prior to last week's Thursday morning board meeting at which board members tentatively agreed to cut the supplement that every effort would be made to retain the pay increase.

An e-mail message sent early last week to all school system personnel from Cathy Davidson, the school system's public information officer, stated, "(The school board's) goal is to retain the 2 percent increase in teacher supplement at all costs." Davidson also wrote that if the 2 percent increase could not be retained, "the executive staff proposed drastic central office cuts to ensure at least a one percent increase."

One middle school teacher at Wednesday's meeting said he thought teachers were carrying the burden for mistakes made in the system's administrative office. "We feel we're being penalized for something the central office did," he said.

Another middle school teacher said he thought the school board was pitting personnel against each other by offering to save the pay supplement increases or save jobs — but not both. He also wondered who told the school board that teachers favored cutting the sup-

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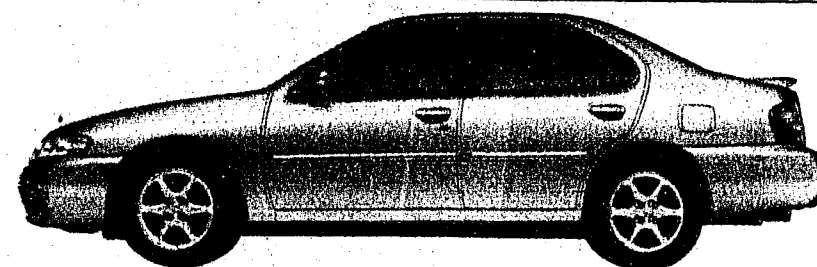
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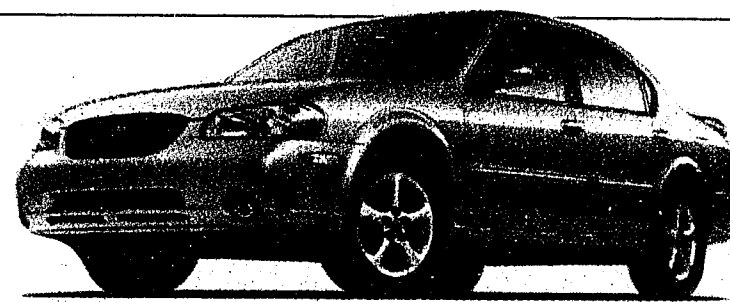


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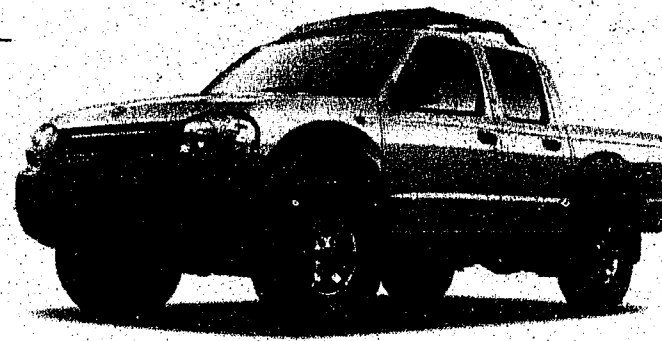


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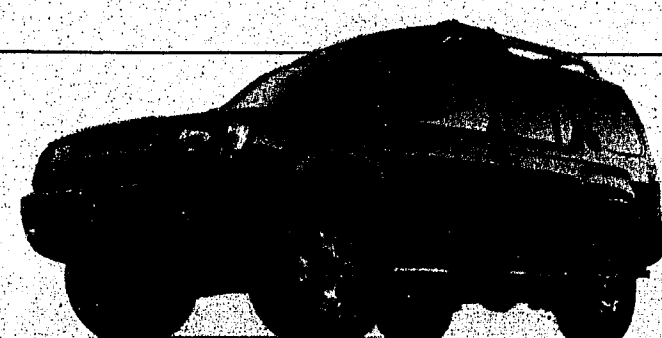


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