



A I K E N Standard

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Braves look
for split
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Clinton arrives
in China today
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Vol. 132, No. 176 Aiken, South Carolina

Thursday, June 25, 1998

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Verdict brings life term

By CARL LANGLEY

A newspaper found in a jury room forced a judge into the unusual step of questioning each juror in a criminal trial, but Judge William Keesley found nothing to indicate a fair verdict could not be reached.

The newspaper was brought to the judge late Wednesday, minutes before the jury was to begin deliberations in the trial of Willie Bernard Frazier, 20, who faced a sentence of life without parole as a violent offender.

But after an investigation that included questioning the jurors and reading the newspaper article, Keesley refused defense attorney I.S. Levey Johnson's plea for a mistrial.

The jury took only 45 minutes to find Frazier guilty on multiple counts stemming from a home invasion that resulted in the robbery of Nancy Bonnette, a prominent Wagener widow and the town librarian.

Frazier was convicted on counts of armed robbery, burglary, weapons possession and criminal conspiracy and was ordered to spend the rest of his life behind bars.

Assistant Solicitor Patricia Corey said state law mandated the life sentence because of the defendant's past record of violent or most serious offenses.

Frazier's record includes armed robbery, attempted armed robbery, burglary, forgery, assault, grand larceny and pointing a firearm. He was scheduled to face trial on two other armed robbery counts.

"I am pleased with the verdict," Mrs. Corey said. She said the other charges against Frazier will be put in limbo by the life sentence. The prosecutor's office

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Going down!



Staff photo by Scott Webster

Charles Weigle gets some last second instructions on rappelling from instructor Chris Medlin in the climbing wall on Price Avenue. Charles was part of the Fire School Cadet Camp sponsored by the Aiken Department of Public Safety. Standing below waiting for him to rappel are other members of the class.

Wal-Mart boosts reward for murder information

By SHARON TAYLOR

AUGUSTA — The Wal-Mart Corporation has raised the reward to \$100,000 for anyone who can provide information leading to an arrest in the kidnapping and murder of Sam's Club's assistant manager David Holt.

"We are outraged by this intolerable act against David and his family and the store at the Augusta location," said Charlie Wagner, director of operations for Sam's Club.

Wagner announced the raising of the reward money from \$25,000 to \$100,000 at a press conference Wednesday afternoon at the Richmond County Law Enforcement Center in Augusta.

David Glass, Chief Executive Officer of Wal-Mart Stores Inc., issued a statement saying that more money will be added to the reward if necessary.

"We will provide additional



financial, technological and human resources required to serve justice in this case," he said. "Let there be no mistake that Wal-Mart will not tolerate despicable acts of this kind against our associates and our company."

In addition, Wal-Mart has established a trust fund to help the future educational expenses of David's two sons, ages 14 and 12. Contributions to the David Holt Family Trust Fund may be sent to NationsBank Investments Inc., 3509 Wheeler Road, Augusta, Ga. 30909. Money may also be

given to any NationsBank under the name of David Holt Family Trust Fund.

The press conference was led by Richmond County Chief Deputy Ronald Strength, Aiken County Sheriff Howard Sellers and Jody Rowland, chief deputy for Aiken County.

"We cannot get into specific details," Strength said. "But we have developed a lot of leads from interviews with employees."

Wal-Mart employees will hold a candlelight vigil in memory of Holt in the parking lot of Sam's Club on Bobby Jones Expressway tonight at 9. The public is invited to attend.

Richmond County authorities are primarily investigating the armed robbery portion of the crime, while the Aiken County Sheriff's Office is investigating Holt's murder.

(Please see WAL-MART, page 6A)

Economy as good as it gets Low jobless rate benefits S. Carolina

Associated Press

NORTH CHARLESTON — It just doesn't get any better than this — at least that's the way the economic experts see it.

They say it would be hard to improve upon South Carolina's low unemployment rate and booming economy.

"It's probably as good as it's going to get," economic forecaster Donald Ratajczak said Wednesday.

Ratajczak, director of Georgia State University's economic forecasting center, told a statewide teleconference on the economy that it would be hard to lower the current 2.9 percent unemployment.

"We don't have the capacity to do any better. We can't drive the unemployment down to 2 or 1 percent," he said.

He said that with such a low unemployment rate, the only people left in the labor pool are those who refuse to realize their training is inadequate or people with poor work habits.

"There's no way of fundamentally changing that group, and that's really what we are down to," he said. "If we can get people who are willing to show up and willing to listen to their boss, we can get them a job right now."

The widespread prosperity is something new for South Carolina, said other experts on the program that was beamed to technical colleges across the state.

"We have never seen this before — this type of economic climate," said Frank Hefner of the College of Charleston's business school. "We're trading new ground."

Lucy Reuben, dean of South Carolina State University's busi-

ness school, said prosperity must be used to help rural areas that may not have benefited by the boom.

"How do we use this as an opportunity to go forward?" she asked. "We still have areas in South Carolina that, while benefiting, do not benefit as much as other areas."

Harry Miley, chairman of the State Board of Economic Advisors said many small businesses have jobs but no one to fill them.

In years past, South Carolina looked in envy on the rapid economic development in Georgia, North Carolina and Florida, the panel agreed. But now the state has caught up.

"The fact we were lagging so long compared to our neighbors was to our advantage because we were seen as a ready labor pool," Hefner said. But now, the labor pool in South Carolina is much smaller.

"My suggestion for employers is to look at your employees and build their skills," said Janet Rankin, regional commissioner for the Bureau of Labor Statistics in Atlanta. "Make them want to stay with you because they are very attractive to your neighbors."

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◆ Deaths

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◆ Ga. lottery

Wednesday's winning numbers:

- Cash 3 Midday: 8-8-7
- Cash 3 Evening: 5-2-7
- Cash 4: 9-9-2-0
- Fantasy 5: 2-4-15-17-23

Attorney keeps his chin up despite ailments

By BILL BENTGTON

Norman Vincent Peale carved a place for himself in history with a best-selling book called "The Power of Positive Thinking."

Aiken attorney Jim Greene, 56, could write a sequel.

Since age 21, the native of Trinidad has been dealing with ankylosing spondylitis — a form of arthritis that has fused the bones in his spine and made many simple tasks much more challenging. He walks with a cane.

When Greene goes to work in a weight room, heads turn and eyes open wide, but it has nothing to do with his handcap which once confined him to a routine of pity and pain pills. He has overcome.

"Mr. Greene's in phenomenal condition," said Shaun Smith, co-owner and general manager of Gold's Gym in Aiken. "When he's in the club working out, there's always some excitement, because he's in such good shape. It's amazing to watch his workouts, because he does things that 95 percent of the people in the rest of the club couldn't do."

Among other eye-popping feats, the 5-

foot-7, 130-pound Greene performs one-armed chin-ups one after another. For two-armed chin-ups, he may hang a 45-pound weight from each hip before he gets down to serious business.

"He's an extraordinary man," said Jeff Britt, who also frequents Gold's Gym. "Some of the things he does in the gym are beyond most people's capabilities. All you have to do is look at the guy and you can see it."

In addition to lifting stacks of iron "cookies" alongside men one-third his age, Greene is eager to share his outlook with senior citizens, whether couch potatoes or serious athletes.

"I don't see men and women my age taking an interest in exercise," he said. "They figure because they get to 45 or 50 years old, they have to stop and sink into some kind of pattern and wait for death. It's not so. The second half of your life, I think, should be even better than your first half, because you have wisdom, you still have your body, and what you need to do is improve that body."

For the sake of improvement and maintenance, he follows a few basic guidelines. It is not, he emphasizes, a grueling

matter of three or four daily hours of pumping iron. Discipline and dedication are the key, and the process can build upon itself.

"The body repairs itself through exercise," he said. "Through exercise, you have a consciousness that you start to improve yourself. If you improve yourself, you start to eat properly, you eat the right things, and if you have self-destructive habits like smoking and drinking and stuff, and you see some improvement, then chances are your conscience will get you a little bit, and you start to drop these bad habits one at a time."

When doctors first diagnosed his problem, they advised Greene to quit "straining his joints" through vigorous exercise such as weightlifting. They prescribed pills, and Greene went along with their advice.

"I quit, and I stayed quit for a while, because quitting is an easy thing to do," he recalled.

Greene began using crutches, and a tailor added more padding, suggesting that he put foam padding in his jacket to disguise

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Staff photo by Bill Bengtson

Jim Greene does one-handed pullups.