

Young & Gifted

Darren Tate: A bundle of talent

By AUDREY WILLIAMS
Chronicle Staff Writer

Darren Tate could have had a promising career in the military, especially since he was one of Hill High School's superior Junior ROTC cadets. Or he could have continued to play guard on the football team and hope for the best in athletic scholarship offers.

He gave it all up for the viola.

Darren, a muscular and wholesome-looking 18-year-old, is a senior this year at the North Carolina School of the Arts. He auditions this week for college there.

"I had choices," Darren says, "but I wanted more out of life other than becoming a soldier or a football player. I would go to summer camp at Fort Bragg and I would always wonder what it would be like going to summer camps for music," says the Winston-Salem native.

Darren took his first viola lesson as a seventh-grader at Philo Junior High School under the instruction of Jean Tripp. "Then, when I got to Hill High," he says, "there

"This new stuff, thump music and that modern contemporary music, where you have a lot of improvisation, it makes me sick ..."

-- Darren Tate

were no classes for strings, so for two years I wasn't playing."

But just being accepted into the School of the Arts, after having studied the viola for only a brief period and attending weekend rehearsals with the Young Salem Symphony, says a lot about Darren's natural talent and ability to grasp music quickly.

After being accepted into the School of the Arts as a special student, Darren says he began working harder than ever before to catch up with his musical counterparts and to impress the faculty.

The summer before entering the school, he applied to the Eastern Music Festival in Greensboro in hopes of gaining experience as violist and being instructed by one of 85 of the world's best musicians. The festival is a six-week workshop and accepts only 210 applicants out of thousands from all over the country. Only the brightest and the best were selected, and Darren -- having had only

two years of instruction -- was selected. He says he hopes to return next summer.

"After I was accepted into the Festival," says Darren, "that's when I sort of turned over a new leaf. I went from learning how to play to playing."

Unlike the violin, the viola is a larger instrument, with darker quality and sound. More effort is needed from the player to produce a good, clear, professional sound.

Even before taking his first viola lessons in junior high school, Darren says there was always something about background music that intrigued him.

"I've always loved music," Darren says. "I used to listen to the Jackson Five and Marvin Gaye all the time, but I never listened to the words. I would listen to the background music."

"A lot of Marvin Gaye's background music had strings and I would always wonder about it, then the wondering went away," he says.

In the tiny room where Darren practices daily, a cassette player is positioned on the table. The music he opts to listen to is that of Al Jarreau.

"This new stuff, thump music and that modern contemporary music, where you have a lot of improvisation, it makes me sick," he says. "Jazz or classical music is much better to listen to."

Darren says he feels fortunate that he was given the opportunity to pursue his desire to play the viola, but he'd much rather refer to his talent as a talent for learning and says the term natural talent should be reserved for the likes of 14-year-old Amandi Hummings, also a viola player at the School of the Arts.

"Now he has natural talent," says Darren, giving off an admiring sigh. "He can just pick up a viola and play. I have half his natural talent."

Darren knows that no matter what's said and done, admission into the School of the Arts college level depends on his commitment and his teacher, Sally Peck.

If admitted, Darren says he would like to earn a degree and go after all that classical music has to offer.

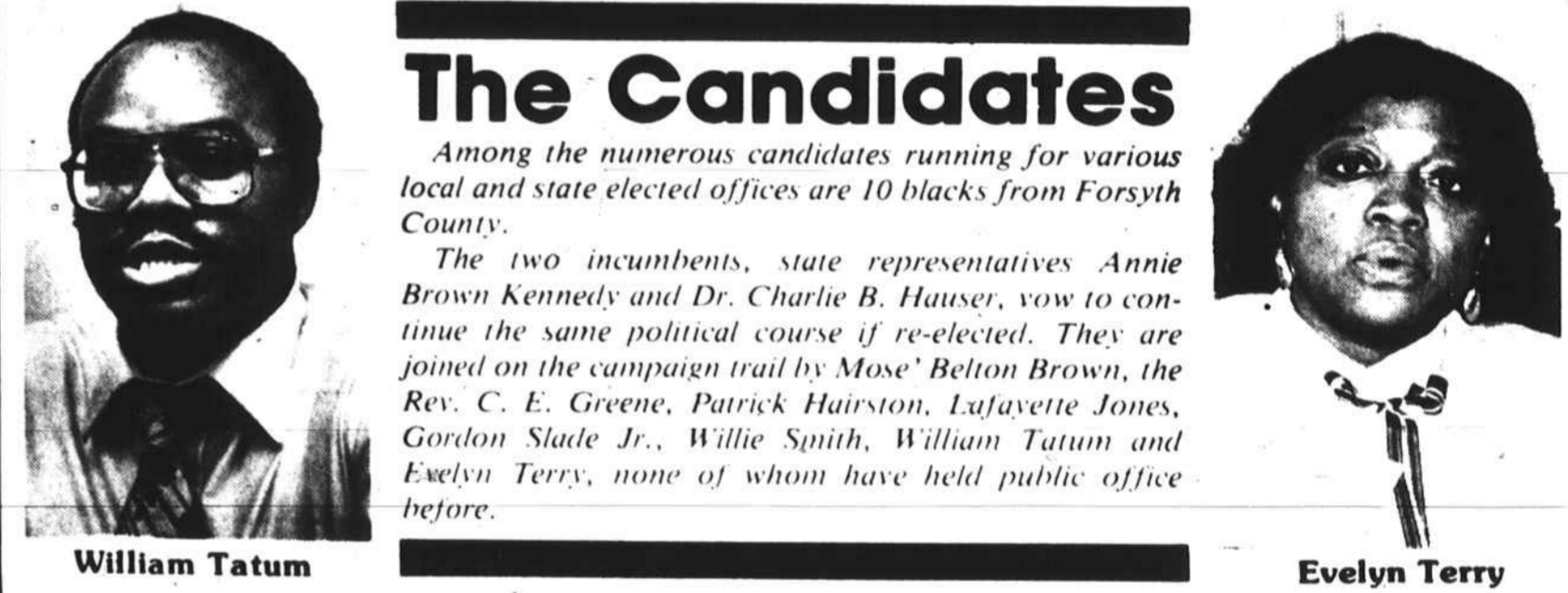
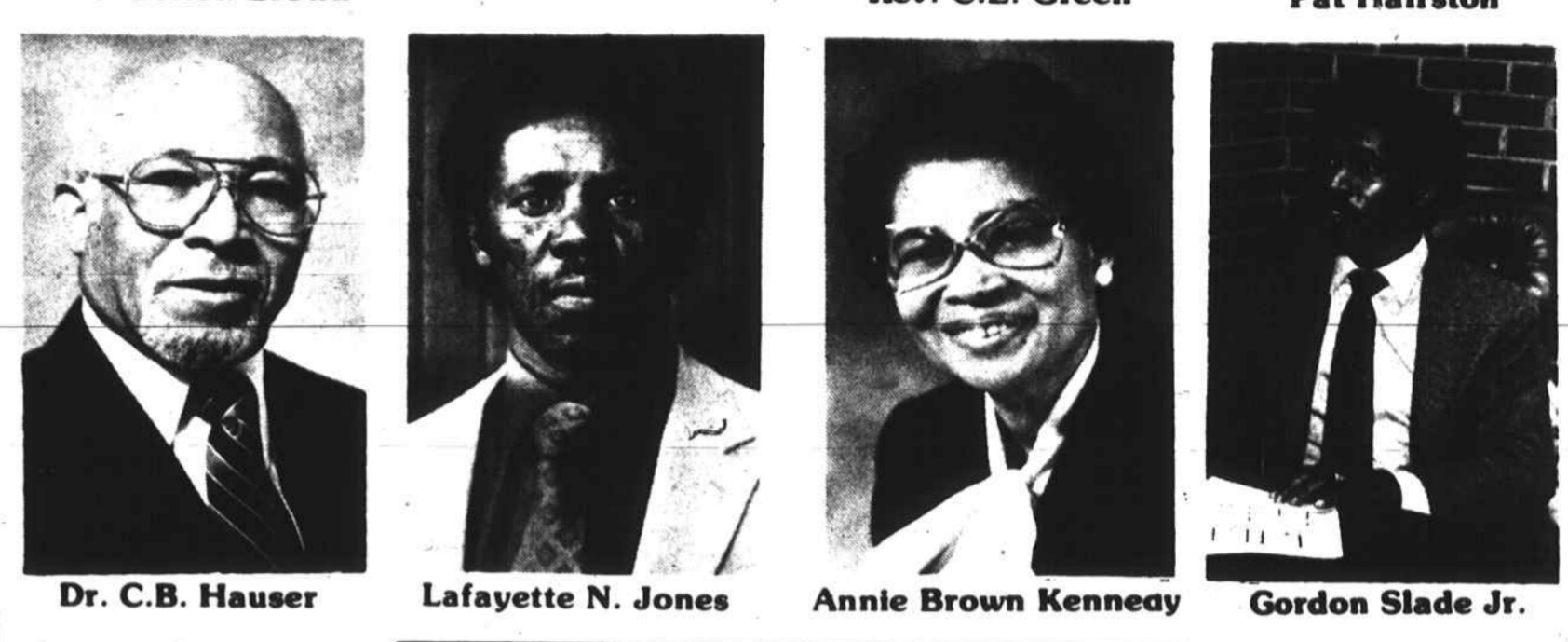
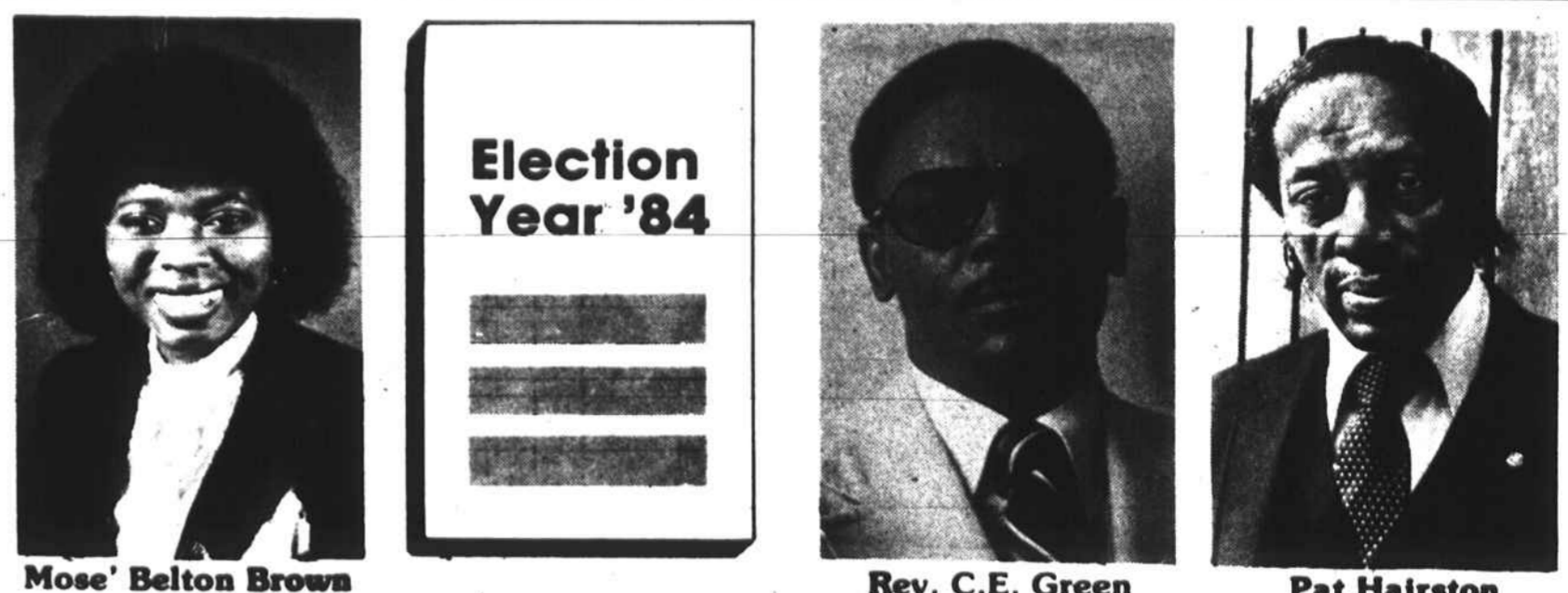
"I want to become a recording soloist," he says, "and I would love to record the Bach Six Cello Suites." His ultimate goal, which he says he hopes to attain by the time he is 40, is not shared by many of the string students at the School of the Arts. As a matter of fact, he

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Practice Makes Perfect

Darren Tate: "I had choices. I wanted more out of life other than becoming a soldier or a football player" (photo by James Parker).



The Candidates

Among the numerous candidates running for various local and state elected offices are 10 blacks from Forsyth County.

The two incumbents, state representatives Annie Brown Kennedy and Dr. Charlie B. Hauser, vow to continue the same political course if re-elected. They are joined on the campaign trail by Mose' Belton Brown, the Rev. C. E. Greene, Patrick Hairston, Lafayette Jones, Gordon Slade Jr., Willie Smith, William Tatum and Evelyn Terry, none of whom have held public office before.

By ROBIN ADAMS
Chronicle Staff Writer

At the close of the filing period on Feb. 6, 10 local black citizens, two of them incumbents, had filed to run for local or state office. Although most of the candidates are just beginning to finalize their platforms, the *Chronicle* recently asked them their reason for running and the areas they plan to emphasize.

Said Annie Brown Kennedy, a state House representative from the 39th District, on her decision to run again: "I feel there is yet work to be done and a need for diverse representation. I enjoyed my last term and I feel I was effective. Oftentimes, I presented a different point of view than that being expressed in our discussions, committee meetings or on the floor."

"I was also instrumental in causing some bills to be killed in committee," she continued. "Not only is it the job of a representative to make good laws, but also to see that the bad laws that are made are kept to a minimum."

If elected to a second term, Kennedy said she plans to "put some emphasis on employment of blacks in key positions throughout the state government."

Like Kennedy, Dr. Charlie B. Hauser, who also filed for a second term as a state representative, said he wants to continue the work he started:

"I feel I am electable," Hauser said. "I feel I did a good job the first time. I sponsored five bills and co-sponsored a total of 128 bills that deal with people issues." If re-elected, Hauser said he will "want to continue to support things that make North Carolina better, like education, civil rights, housing and the concerns

of women and children. Anything that makes for a better place to live, that's what I will be working for."

Only one black candidate, Lafayette N. Jones, filed for the state's 20th District Senate race. He is a political newcomer and said he decided to run because he doesn't like what's happening in Raleigh.

"I was looking at what's going on in Raleigh and I really don't think that we are being represented properly," Jones said.

Jones, 43, said he wants to work to increase teacher salaries and to help devise a program to benefit the large number of street people.

"I think we need to pick the six largest cities in North Carolina and build dormitories in those cities to house them (street people). Along with living in the dorms, they can have some kind of job to supplement them while living there," Jones said. "Food can continue to be provided by the soup kitchens and places like the Salvation Army."

Jones said he also wants to work to equalize criminal punishment. "A white boy from Buena Vista steals a car, he gets reprimanded and sent back to his parents," said Jones. "But if a black child steals a car, he gets sent to a juvenile detention facility."

Three blacks -- Pat Hairston, past president of the NAACP; Mose' Belton Brown, a school teacher; and Willie E. Smith, retired owner of Russell's Business College -- filed to run for the Forsyth County Board of County Commissioners.

Hairston said the "giving away" of Forsyth Memorial Hospital prompted him to run. Earlier this year, the board voted to turn the hospital's deed over to a holding company for economic reasons.

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Simmons says Winston is growing on him

By AUDREY WILLIAMS
Chronicle Staff Writer

"The first time I came to Winston-Salem," says Frank Simmons, "my eyes began watering and I began to feel wheezy on my stomach. The tobacco smell made me sick."

That was in June of last year, when Simmons and his wife Evelyn first visited the city at the request of Wachovia Bank and Trust Co. Since then, his eyes have cleared and his stomach has adjusted to the aroma of tobacco.

A planning specialist in Wachovia's corporate sector, Simmons, who received an accounting degree from Morris-Brown College and an MBA from Atlanta University, is being groomed by the bank to become a financial analysis planning consultant.

The soon-to-be father travels weekly to Atlanta to visit his wife, a former teacher at Morris-Brown. She will establish residency here once they have completely settled in Winston-Salem.

A native of Columbia, S.C., Simmons, 30, remained in Atlanta after completing his educa-

tion and began a career in the insurance industry.

"I decided that I wanted to go into banking," he says, "but banks in Atlanta weren't as strong as they are here in North Carolina, and I chose Winston-Salem because Wachovia has a reputation throughout the nation as a strong bank."

Simmons didn't want to leave the South



because "I was born, raised and educated in the South," he says.

Simmons says when he first came to Winston-Salem, his impressions of the city were bleak. But at the urging of his wife and her fascination with the shopping outlets and the city's coziness, he decided to stay.

"I had lived in Atlanta for 10 years," says Simmons, "and there were more people and quite honestly, more social outlets. But now

that I've been here a while, I believe it's conducive to raising a family and the people here appear to live relatively well."

Most of his time, he says, has been spent getting acquainted with his new job and taking a class in microcomputers at Forsyth Technical Institute.

His network for meeting people is through his fraternity, Kappa Alpha Psi Inc.

"By attending fraternity meetings," Simmons says, "I meet a lot of people and before Illusions (a local nightclub) closed I had the opportunity to mingle."

He says that a gathering place for black professionals, or at least knowing there is one, is lacking in Winston-Salem, as well as a variety of professional spectator sports.

"I'm a basketball fan," says Simmons "and I enjoyed being able to go and watch the Hawks play in the middle of the week."

"Those are the kinds of things I miss, but Winston-Salem is not Atlanta, but it's growing on me and I'm flexible," he says.

Since taking up residency here, Simmons says

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Frank Simmons says he misses the attractions and diversions of Atlanta, including his favorite basketball team, the Atlanta Hawks. But at 30, he's ready to settle in and make Winston home for him and his family (photo by James Parker).