



Not Missing A Beat

Unique gospel choir finds success without music.

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34 Pages This Week

"There are lots of people with lots of talents in this community who are not involved with the NAACP People look at the NAACP as having a head and no body, and that's not the case."

-- Walter Marshall

Marshall elected local NAACP head

By ROBIN BARKSDALE
Chronicle Staff Writer

There was a changing of the guard at Tuesday night's NAACP meeting as the executive board elected a new president to replace city Alderman Patrick T. Hairston.

Walter Marshall, Hairston's former vice president and a veteran NAACP member, will step in as local head of the civil rights organization.

While Marshall's appointment was expected, it was not automatic.

Under the official NAACP constitution, vacancies are filled neither by open election nor natural succession of officers. Rather, the local executive committee elects members to fill vacant posts and Marshall has been chosen to succeed Hairston, who in November resigned in the middle of his fifth two-year term.

Hairston, a retired dock worker, devoted much of his time to organizing and promoting the local NAACP branch. Marshall, who holds a full-time job as a High Point public school teacher, faces the challenge of continuing the work of the organization with much less time. However, he foresees no problems in that area.

"Time is always a factor but I don't think it's a problem," Marshall said following Tuesday's meeting. "The NAACP is so structured that the programming is not handled exclusively by one person. I won't be executive director. The organization can function if the board functions. The key is working in relation with the board and my objective is to get other folks involved."

At this point, one of the biggest challenges facing the new president appears to be increasing membership in the 76-year-old organization. Marshall says he will work to get more of the professional members of the community actively involved.

"There are lots of people with lots of talents in this community who are not involved with the NAACP," said Marshall. "I want to bring in people who are experts in a variety of fields so that we can build a strong base. People look at the NAACP Please see page A3



WHO'S NO. 1?

Who'll be the best among the black colleges this basketball season? Will David Ponton, above, and Southern University repeat in the SWAC? Will Bighouse Gaines work another miracle in the CIAA? Our prognosticators venture some answers inside in this month's Black College Sports Review (photo by Mark Gail).

King holiday approved unanimously by aldermen

Observance by city to begin this Jan. 20

By L.A.A. WILLIAMS
Chronicle Staff Writer

The Board of Aldermen voted unanimously Monday night to accept Alderman Larry W. Womble's motion designating Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s birthday as a holiday for city employees.

The 7-0 vote means that, beginning Jan. 20 of next year, the city will join the federal government in honoring the slain civil rights leader by closing its offices and the various branches of municipal government on the third Monday of each January. It will be the 10th holiday for city workers.

Before the vote, Mrs. Louise G. Wilson, retiring executive director of the Experiment in Self-Reliance Inc. and a former associate of Dr. King, spoke briefly to the board and a large gallery about the importance of observing King's birthday to the community.

"Think of what it would mean to all the children of Forsyth County, black and white, to remember a man who not only gave his life, but who gave every ounce he had to make this world a better world," Mrs. Wilson said.

"He said we can live together, and we don't have to fight, and we don't have to fight this day," she said, urging the board to pass the motion without wrangling, which it did without discussion, and without Alderman Martha S. Wood, who was absent.

Womble said he was elated. "I'm proud of the board for taking this stand," Womble said. "I really appreciate the unanimous vote. It shows that we have caring, dedicated board members. This is the first time that a black man has been honored with a holiday. It's ironic, but whites will celebrate, too, what this black man fought, lived and died for. It's the first time in the history of this country that

workers will be off on a holiday for a great black man."

In other action, North Ward Alderman Patrick T. Hairston flexed his new political muscle by motioning for 'no consideration' on the adoption of a resolution awarding contracts for city vehicles totalling \$881,098 to area automobile dealers.

Hairston noted that Twin-City Chrysler Plymouth, a minority-managed company that was allowed by the city to bid as a minority-owned firm, was underbid by only a few dollars in several categories. He



Womble's historic motion makes the King holiday a day off for city workers.

said he took the action because he wanted to look into how minority bids are evaluated.

Hairston said after the meeting that possibly the contracts can be rebid, or the law can be changed.

The board also voted to accept a request by the Rev. John C. McCollough to withdraw his rezoning request for land on Midway Road, east of Baux Mountain Rd. McCollough said he planned to place a trailer on the property for relatives. He withdrew the request when Alderman Lynne Harpe suggested that a special-use permit would allow him to locate the trailer there without the permanent rezoning order.

Into the fray

McCoy assumes new police post and the accompanying pressure

By L.A.A. WILLIAMS
Chronicle Staff Writer

As fallout concerning the quality of local police work continues, Sgt. Michael V. McCoy, 33, has been appointed to head the police department's murder investigations unit, officially called its Crimes Against Persons Section. For McCoy, the first black officer to head the unit, the move involves a lateral transfer, not a promotion.

Still, the official and public outcry over the handling, or mishandling, of the Deborah B. Sykes murder investigation, which led to his appointment, has placed some additional pressure, if not rank, onto McCoy's shoulders.

"I feel there is pressure accepting a new position during a period of such extreme controversy," McCoy said, "but I feel capable of coping with the

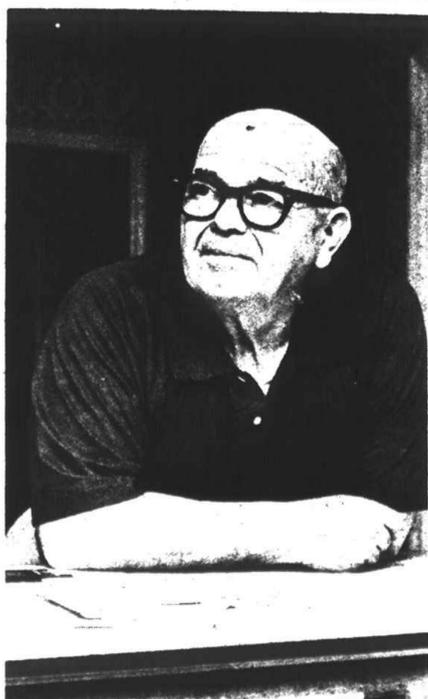
"I feel there is pressure accepting a new position during a period of such extreme controversy. I feel capable of coping with the pressure and effectively doing my job."

-- Sgt. M. V. McCoy

pressure and effectively doing my job."

One job he has is to review and reinvestigate from the beginning the controversial Sykes case, along with eight unsolved murders dating back to 1980. Police Chief Joseph E. Masten announced the moves two weeks ago in response to public and official criticism of the Sykes investigation and police protection in general.

Darryl Hunt, a 20-year-old Please see page A3



Hooper: As far as he can see, Darryl Hunt was "railroaded" for the Sykes murder (photo by James Parker).

Darryl Hunt was not the man he saw, says 'forgotten' witness

By L.A.A. WILLIAMS
Chronicle Staff Writer

William T. Hooper says he was on his way to work at Hanes Dye and Finishing Co. at about 6:20 on the morning of August 10, 1984, when he saw "two black guys with a white lady."

He slowed the car, almost to a stop, he said in an interview last week. "The little fella was shaking his finger at the lady and then the big tall one took her into his arms and kissed her -- in the mouth. I was fixing to stop. If he hadn't took her in his arms and kissed her, I would've stopped. But he threw me off. If she had hollered or put up any kind of resistance, I would've stopped."

Later that afternoon on the way home from work, Hooper, who will retire from Hanes next January at age 65, saw that the route he had travelled on West End Boulevard that morning had been closed off.

"I found out what happened," Hooper said. The body of Deborah B. Sykes had been found on a hill behind the Sunrise

Towers elderly highrise. Mrs. Sykes, a copy editor for the now-defunct *Sentinel*, had been raped and stabbed to death not long after Hooper had passed the area that morning.

He said he told a detective, "a lady detective, named Ingram," the story of what he had seen that morning. He identified Mrs. Sykes as the woman he saw from a photograph, and went to the police station to look at pictures of possible suspects. None of them resembled the two men he had seen that morning. He said he gave the police statements on the street and in the police station.

He helped a police artist construct composite drawings of both men. "They both had short hair," he said. "The tall one had slick hair. Neither one of them looked like Darryl Hunt."

"I was as close as that door to those people," Hooper explained, motioning towards a door in his home no more than 15 feet away. "Darryl Hunt was not there."

Hooper received a summons to testify Please see page A12