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28 Pages This Week

Upshaw pleads guilty in case

By JOHN HINTON
Chronicle Staff Writer

Larry V. Upshaw, the city's former assistant to the director for public works, was given a 30-day suspended jail sentence and was placed on probation for two years after he pleaded guilty to misdemeanor larceny in District Court Tuesday.

Judge James A. Harrill also ordered Upshaw, 34, to pay court costs and perform 48 hours of community service. "We are human beings," Harrill said as he sentenced Upshaw. "We all make mistakes."

Upshaw was charged with taking \$9 from the purse of his secretary, Mary Ruth Vogt, on June 5. Upshaw resigned from his position after he was arrested later that same day.

Miss Vogt attended the trial, but declined to comment on Upshaw's conviction. "I am sorry, but I am not going to get into it this time," she said.

Three weeks ago, Miss Vogt denied reporting to police that an unspecified amount of money was taken from her purse. But her name was indicated on a police arrest report as the person filing a complaint against Upshaw.

Upshaw showed no emotion while Harrill was sentencing him. He did not speak during his 20-minute trial.

R.A. Spillman, a detective with the Winston-Salem Police Department, testified that \$245 was taken from the public works office on nine other occasions, but Upshaw was not charged with these thefts.

"Those cases are still open," said Capt. G.G. Cornatzer of police department's Criminal Investigations Division. "Those cases have not been connected."

Defense attorney Michael A. Grace told the judge that Upshaw already has been punished. "This man has forfeited a lifetime of work," Grace said. "It will be tough for him to be hired in a position of trust again."

Upshaw joined the city as its assistant to the director of public works in July 1985. The position

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Little Miss Liberty

Little "Lady Liberty" Alecia West, 7, dons torch and tablet for Thursday's Independence Day parade on Wheeler Street. The parade was sponsored by St. Matthews Child Day Care and Educational Center (photo by James Parker).

"When I went to A&T, people were aggressively recruiting black teachers."
-- Dr. Marcia Epstein

Number of local black teachers lagging behind black enrollment

By CHERYL WILLIAMS
Chronicle Staff Writer

LAST YEAR, blacks comprised only 25 percent of the teachers in the city/county schools, while black students comprised nearly 38 percent of the enrollment. The number of black teachers isn't likely to increase next year, either.

Dr. Marcia Epstein, the school system's assistant superintendent of personnel, said there will be fewer vacancies during the coming school year, so room for increases in the number of black teachers will be limited as well.

Ms. Epstein said that the number of available positions in the school system has decreased appreciably between August 1984 and June 1986.

During this period, the school system hired 120 secondary education teachers and 121 elementary education teachers, she said.

Only 33 were classified as minorities. Ms. Epstein said that fewer vacancies are positive in that they indicate low turnover.

"Teachers are staying in the classroom longer," she said. "We must be doing something right."

The school system also employs more black teachers than the overall percentage in the state.

The latest data from the Department of Public Instruction show that, in 1984-85, 19.5 percent of the state's 56,040 public school teachers were black.

Ms. Epstein said the school system actively recruits minorities at black institutions in the state as well as at other colleges. Males and blacks are in

the most demand, she said, and the system makes efforts to find them.

But the system is up against not only other school systems in the state but systems in other parts of the country, Ms. Epstein said.

"When I went to A&T, people were aggressively recruiting black teachers," she said.

Ms. Epstein said that one problem recruiters have faced in recent years is that the best students have not chosen teaching as a profession. Teaching is not a competitive field, she said.

In science and math, blacks are just not there, she said. The reason is that those blacks interested in math and science choose other, more lucrative fields.

Mike Lee, a personnel administrator who handles the recruitment of secondary teachers, agrees with Ms. Epstein.

Although the school system is competitive with other school systems when it comes to starting salaries, it can't compare with salaries from big businesses, Lee said.

The starting salary for teachers here is \$16,900.

Lee said the only way teaching will be able to compete with other fields is if the General Assembly increases starting salaries. A starting salary of \$24,000 would help, he said.

"The way it is now, we don't have a chance," Lee said.

Lee also said that there is a surplus of qualified blacks seeking teaching jobs in physical education

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Parents: Young bus drivers, not passengers, are the real problem

By CHERYL WILLIAMS
Chronicle Staff Writer

Several parents of children injured in a recent school bus accident feel that discipline on the school bus is not so much a problem as having 16- and 17-year-old bus drivers who aren't experienced or mature enough to handle the children.

Student bus drivers came under sharp attack recently following the June 6 Old Town Elementary School bus accident that injured 35 children.

James Greg McCormick, the 16-year-old bus driver, was criticized by parents and school officials for his handling of the situation.

Parents and officials said that it was the last day of school and that some rowdiness on the part of the students could be expected. McCormick, they say, overreacted.

David L. Farrell, a white parent who had two children injured in the accident, said that it was very cruel of the school system to put the young driver into that situation.

He said that the situation was that McCormick was a substitute driver who was unfamiliar with the route and the children.

"He was a very young kid," said Farrell, who has headed a petition drive calling for all adult bus drivers. Farrell

"As far as I'm concerned, there is no difference between driving a school bus and driving a Greyhound. They don't let 16-year-olds drive Greyhounds."

—JAMES HENRY JR.

said that the petition drive netted 1,200 signatures.

"He looked like a baby," Farrell said. "When I got to the accident scene, I couldn't believe that this was the young man."

He said that although some of the blame can be placed on the children on the bus because of their behavior, the

young driver's actions caused it.

Farrell said that the children could have behaved better, but discipline problems should have been expected on the bus that day since it was the last day of school.

"Those kids were at full steam," he said. "The last day of school is kind of a bad time to pick about manners on the bus."

Farrell said that he could recall some discipline problems on the bus during the year. He said that once or twice the bus had to be turned around and the children taken back to school.

Annette Beatty, a teacher at Southwest Elementary School, has suggested that parents take more responsibility for their children's behavior.

Farrell said he has done just that and has warned his children against misbehaving on the bus.

Joyce Bailey, the grandmother of 9-year-old William Isiah, who was injured in the accident, said she feels that teaching a child about behavior begins at home. But she

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New program begun to help children involved in abuse cases

By CHERYL WILLIAMS
Chronicle Staff Writer

Jody Bennett has been an advocate for children for a long time. So it seems only natural that she should head a program for adult volunteers who protect a child's interest in child abuse and neglect cases in the county.

The program, which is called the Guardian ad Litem program, has been in the county since January. "Guardian ad litem" is a legal term meaning a guardian for the trial.

Mrs. Bennett, whose job it is to coordinate the program, said that before volunteers were used, an attorney served as guardian ad litem, or GAL, conducting investigations and making recommendations about what was best for the child.

She said that in 1977, the N.C. General Assembly mandated that whenever child abuse or neglect petitions came before the

court, a GAL had to be appointed. At that time the GAL had to be an attorney, she said.

This was modified in 1979 when the Legislature said that the GAL did not necessarily have to be an attorney but could be a lay person.

By allowing volunteers to do the investigations and footwork that were previously done by attorneys, money is saved, Mrs. Bennett said.

Mrs. Bennett said that two attorneys, Alice E. Patterson and Pamela H. Rabil, are appointed for this county and aid the volunteers with any legal questions. They also appear in court with the volunteers.

The organization presently has 18 volunteers, she said.

"We are appointed by the court," she said. "The judge signs a court order that gives us the authority to go out and conduct investigations."

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Young: "I will stick it out to the end ... I was treated unfairly" (photo by James Parker).

Woman: County fired her unfairly after argument

By JOHN HINTON
Chronicle Staff Writer

A black Winston-Salem woman was fired from her job recently in the Forsyth County Department of Social Services after she had an argument with a white receptionist.

Constance Young, 24, an eligibility specialist, was notified by letter on June 20 that she was being fired because she allegedly used profanity in an argument with Debbie Boles, a receptionist in the department.

"I am fighting this because I am being discriminated against," Miss Young said. "That white girl is still working, and I want my job back."

Miss Young's duties include interviewing clients for food stamps, Medicaid and Aid to Families with Dependent Children. She had worked at the department for about three months.

Walter Marshall, president of the city's NAACP chapter, said he is investigating the case. Officials in the department have refused to discuss Miss Young's case with him, Marshall said.

The argument began on June 16 when Miss Young asked Miss Boles to take information from a client, Miss Young said. She said she also asked Miss Boles why she didn't

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