

HAIL TO THE (NEW) CHIEF

Oath administered to Scott Cunningham during City Hall ceremony

BY TODD LUCK
THE CHRONICLE

Scott Cunningham took a solemn oath Friday as he became the Winston-Salem Police Department's 13th police chief.

City leaders expressed confidence in Cunningham, who replaced the retiring Chief Pat Norris, as the new chief made the vow to protect and serve.

"(I was) looking for someone with new ideas, whether they were from the inside or outside," said City Manager Lee Garrity, who hired Cunningham a few weeks ago.



Garrity

Cunningham has the distinction of being the first police chief hired from outside the department since 1980. Garrity chose him over three other finalists, including two from within the department. Cunningham served for 24 years with the Tampa Police Department in Florida, where he eventually became an assistant chief. Most recently, he spent two years as police chief of Cary.

Garrity said he chose Cunningham for his intellectual approach to policing and his reputation as a "cop's cop." Garrity said he had "a lot of help" from the public, police officers and city officials in making his decision.

The city manager believes that Cunningham is best suited to address the growing crime rate in Winston-Salem and implement the recommendations of recent reviews of the department. Last year, for example, a citizen committee released a report on the police department's role in the wrongful conviction of Darryl Hunt, and recently Risk Management



Scott Cunningham is surrounded by his family last week as Superior Court Judge Todd Burke administers the oath.

Photo by Todd Luck

Associates did an independent review of the department. A racially-charged case involving a 1995 beating at local floral shop is currently being investigated by a citizen committee.

Mayor Allen Joines said he was impressed with Cunningham's personality, qualifications and his sensitivity to the complex issues that the department often faces. He said the new chief is joining a great department.

"We have extraordinarily good folks within our police department, we have a great leadership there," said Joines. "However I think, occasionally, it's good to bring in new

ideas, new experiences from across the country that may be helpful to us."

Mayor Pro Tempore Vivian Burke, the longtime chairman of the city's Public Safety Committee, also sang the praises of the WSPD. She said that having an outside chief doesn't reflect badly on the department.

"We have trained our police so well and they have taken the opportunity to excel in what they're doing," said Burke. "And I believe that (Cunningham) will learn from them because our police department has been used as an example around the country."

Burke said she felt the last outside chief, Lucius Powell, did a good job. She promised to spend lots of time with the new chief. She hopes that he can formulate a plan to deal with the recent increase in robberies and increase police involvement in troubled parts of the city.

Cunningham greeted his new job with enthusiasm, saying he planned to be Winston's police chief for many years. He said the job presented him with the perfect combination of issues that will challenge him both personally and professionally. He said he saw no "glaring problems" that gave

him concern about the department, but felt that he could make it even better.

"I think I can add value to it; I think I can add value to the community and the police department. I think it's a good agency and community," said Cunningham.

He was sworn in by Superior Court Judge Todd Burke, Mayor Pro Tempore Burke's son. Cunningham's wife, Amy, and their two sons, Chase and Caige, stood beside him as he put his hand on the Bible and took his oath. He promised that it was one oath he wouldn't take lightly.

AIDS program planned for older people

SPECIAL TO THE CHRONICLE

A HIV/AIDS program designed for people over 50 years old will be held Tuesday, July 15 at the Glade Street YWCA.

"HIV/AIDS 101," which will take place from 12:30 - 2 p.m. is being hosted by the YWCA of Winston-Salem/Forsyth County and led by Julie Meyer, the executive director of Positive Wellness Alliance.

There has been a surge in HIV cases among people over 50 in North Carolina and across the nation.

"Nationally, the Centers for Disease Control indicate a 15 percent increase in numbers of people over 50 with HIV/AIDS, due to better medical treatments and number of newly diagnosed infections," Meyer said. "Among women, and particularly women of color, the numbers have climbed dramatically, mostly due to unprotected sex with infected men."

In North Carolina in 2007, 222 men and 111 women over 50 years of age were identified as HIV-positive, Meyer said.

Meyer, whose HIV/AIDS awareness agency serves Forsyth, Davidson, Yadkin and Davie counties, said that her talk will include a detailed overview of the pandemic, including definitions, myths about contracting HIV, risky behaviors, and talking openly about how people become infected.

Meyer said that AIDS and HIV are high among N.C.'s teenagers, too, and that awareness among this population is critical. "Even if you are not sexually active, you need to know about the disease so you can make your kids aware."

"An estimated 31,000 North Carolinians are HIV positive," Meyer said. "The scary thing about those stats is that two-thirds of them know it, and one-third of them don't."

"HIV/AIDS 101" is open to the public. For more information, call the Glade Street YWCA at 336-722-5138.

North Carolina's integration pioneers honored

Reynolds High's first black student among those celebrated in Raleigh

CHRONICLE STAFF REPORT

The woman responsible for integrating the city-county school system was among those honored last week in Raleigh by lawmakers and Gov. Mike Easley.

Gwendolyn Bailey Coleman, who made history as a teenager when she enrolled at all-white Reynolds High School, was among a group of former students

and a school administrator feted at the Governor's Mansion during a ceremony to mark the 50th anniversary of the integration of public schools in North Carolina.

"It took determination and courage for these individuals to do what was right during a turbulent time in history and in the face of tremendous adversity," said Easley. "What could



Governor's Office Photo

Dorothy Counts Scoggins, from left, Brenda Florence, Girvaud Roberts Justice, Delois Huntley, Gov. Mike Easley, Josephine Boyd Bradley, Gwendolyn Bailey Coleman, Jimmy Florence and Dr. Craig Phillips.

have been just another hot September school day was so much more for these children. They had a date with destiny and today we honor their bravery."

Josephine Boyd Bradley, Brenda Florence, Jimmy Florence, Dorothy Counts

Scoggins, Girvaud Roberts Justice, Delois Huntley along with Bailey Coleman were among the first to integrate the Greensboro, Charlotte and Winston-Salem school systems during the 1957-58 school year. Craig Phillips, who was superintendent of the Winston-

Salem schools at that time, worked with Benjamin Smith in Greensboro and Elmer Garinger in Charlotte on the plans to integrate those three school systems. Phillips later served as superintendent of the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction from 1969-

1989. Smith and Garinger are both deceased.

Easley presented each of the former students and Phillips with an Old North State Award and a proclamation recognizing the 50th anniversary of school integration. The proclamation notes

that "the path to social justice is oftentimes difficult and in constant need of individuals determined to advance its cause."

State Rep. Larry Womble used the occasion to push a resolution through the General Assembly that praised the group for the brave actions they took that led to integration.

Womble can clearly remember the day that Coleman changed the Winston-Salem/Forsyth County School System.

"We are all very proud of her," he recalled. "The whole black community was behind her and proud that she was able to do so well."

In 1954, the US Supreme Court ruled in *Brown v. Board of Education* that segregated schools were unconstitutional and ordered all schools to proceed to integrate "with all deliberate speed." At that time, segregation had a stronghold in North Carolina and throughout the South.

While the issue was debated for the next three years, no North Carolina public school integrated until Phillips, Smith and Garinger developed plans for their schools.

On Sept. 4, 1957, the students broke the color barrier and attended schools in Greensboro, Charlotte and Winston-Salem. All North Carolina's public schools were not fully integrated until 1970.

Williams

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round in 2005. By his second season, Williams proved all of his critics wrong, earning a starting cornerback slot. During the 2006 season, he made 86 tackles, snared four interceptions, returning one for a touchdown.

On Jan. 1, 2007, just hours after his last game of the season, Williams was inside his rented Hummer limousine just south of downtown Denver when another vehicle pulled up beside and several shots were

fired. One bullet struck Williams in the neck, killing him instantly as he slumped on the lap of teammate Javon Walker. Williams was 25 and left a son, Darius, 8, and a daughter Jaelyn, 5.

The shooting was believed to be spurred from a verbal altercation at a New Year's Eve party, where Williams was a guest, held by Denver Nuggets player and Duncanville native Kenyon Martin. Williams was not involved in the altercation.

Willie Clark, a known member of the Crips gang, is the leading suspect in Williams' death, arrested the



Kenyon Martin

next day on other unrelated drug charges. On May 30, the Rocky Mountain News reported it had attained a letter which contained a confession by Clark.

While family and friends are interested in seeking justice, they've become focused more on developing long-term proactive measures to curb gang and youth violence by giving them more alternatives through the Darrent Williams Foundation.

Terry Bell was particularly hit hard by D-Will's death. Her son, Tatum, a former DeSoto High School football star,

played three years with Williams at Oklahoma State and two years in Denver. Tatum now plays with the Detroit Lions.

Bell is also a member of the National M.O.M. Squad, an association of mothers of major league athletes and high-profile entertainers. Also present were M.O.M. Squad president JacQuetta Clayton, mother of Baltimore Ravens receiver Mark Clayton; Priscilla Murray, mother of actor/singer Tyrese Gibson; Carolyn Smith, mother of actor/rapper Will Smith; Sherry Williams, mother of Tampa Bay Buccaneer

running back Carnell "Cadillac" Williams; Debra Jones, mother of Dallas Cowboy Adam "Pacman" Jones; and several others.

The Darrent Williams Teen Center was opened in Denver on May 28 as a first major step of the Foundation's mission, with plans of opening up teen centers in every major city in the country. Fundraising efforts are going strong, indicated by a gala and silent auction, held the night before the parade and festival at the Legends of the Game Museum inside the Ballpark in Arlington.