

Lawsuit

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in the Forsyth Clerk of Court office to "... sign a guardianship appointment in his favor on May 1, 2007 without giving notice to Mary Thompson and her next of kin as it is required ..." by state statutes. The suit further claimed that because evidence of incompetency was not initially presented, as legally required, attorney Thompson knew that the "... guardianship appointment in his favor was fictitious... [and] used it to fraudulently obtain possession and control over the assets of Mary Thompson in May of 2007."

The Clerk's Order of Incompetency on Mary Thompson was not, in fact, issued until May 3, 2007, two days after attorney Thompson's appointment, the suit maintains. In addition, because none of the Clerk's orders were properly file stamped and entered into the court record as required by state statutes anyway, the N.C. Court of

Appeals in February 2014 found that "... all of attorney Thompson's actions regarding the estate of Mary Thompson ... were without legal authority."

Forsyth County Clerk of Superior Court Susan Frye reacted to that February 2014 appellate court ruling by issuing a "Findings of Fact" in the Mary Ellen Thompson case in April of that same year, acknowledging per the appellate decision that "... the orders were not properly entered ..." thus creating "... an inadvertent defect..."

Frye decided she could deal with that seven-year-old "inadvertent defect" by simply declaring that the orders could be belatedly entered per the legal principle of nunc pro tunc, which is Latin for "now for then," meaning that if a court made a mistake in a previous order, it can simply correct it after the fact.

She ordered all of the orders to be re-entered under their original dates nunc pro tunc, except the order authorizing attorney

Thompson to become the ward's estate guardian. On that one, realizing the conflict of dates, she had that changed from May 1, 2007 to May 3, 2007, to match the original date of the incompetency order.

Frye's orders were appealed, however, and found to be procedurally improper in Superior Court. She appealed that decision to the state appellate court, which has yet to rule.

In October of that same year Mary Thompson died, legally halting most issues dealing with her estate.

The lawsuit "... seeks all of [Ms. Thompson's] assets [valued at \$1,486,415.49] returned to the estate and holds liable estate guardian attorney Thompson; the Office of Forsyth Clerk of Court; guardian ad litem Fred Flynt; along with two insurance companies on the bond issued to protect Mary Thompson's assets as required by law; and two other attorneys for their alleged roles in what the suit maintains was a case of

fraud," The Chronicle reported Oct. 23.

In her legal answer filed on behalf of Bryan Thompson, Forsyth Clerk Susan Frye and the other defendants named in the lawsuit, attorney Whitlatch introduced several motions to dismiss, among them technicalities for alleged improper service of process, improper process, and failure to state a claim per allegations of fraud.

"The allegations that \$1.4 million in assets were obtained by fraud and allegations of a RICO (Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organization) enterprise used to purportedly defraud the Plaintiff of more than \$1.6 million in assets are in bad faith and for improper inflammatory purposes," attorney Whitlatch wrote in her answer and counterclaim. "Plaintiff (estate administrator Calvin Brannon) and his counsel knew or should have known that the assets were worth a fraction of such amount, and have made misleading allegations implying that

Defendants took such assets for their own benefit when in fact, the assets were used for the benefit of Mary Thompson."

"Accordingly, Defendant [Bryan] Thompson moves to strike these allegations, and further moves pursuant to Rule 11 of the North Carolina Rules of Civil Procedure for sanctions in that the allegations are frivolous and baseless," attorney Whitlatch continued.

Further on in the document, which also contained other counterclaims and motions to strike, it is stated "On information and belief, prior to 2014, it was the practice of the Forsyth County Clerk of Superior Court not to file stamp any Orders that had been prepared and executed by representatives of the Clerk of Superior Court."

In her answer, attorney Whitlatch doesn't say why the Forsyth Clerk's office was not in compliance, or even allowed to not be in compliance, with the state mandate by the Administrative Office of

the Courts to file stamp all court orders, but she maintains that attorney Thompson "acted in good faith in carrying out duties under the Orders ..." effectively saying that he did nothing wrong, and relied on the directives of the Clerk's Office.

Attorney Whitlatch also asks the court in her answer that if the appeal on the April 2014 nunc pro tunc order by Clerk Frye to effectively post-date the non-file-stamped orders is not upheld, that attorney Thompson should still be considered the "de facto guardian or trustee" of Mary Thompson's estate, and not be punished for doing his job accordingly.

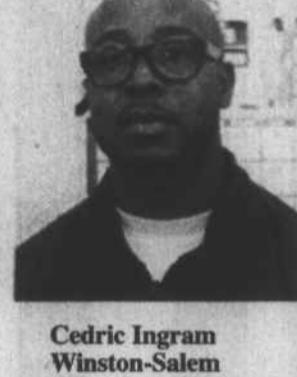
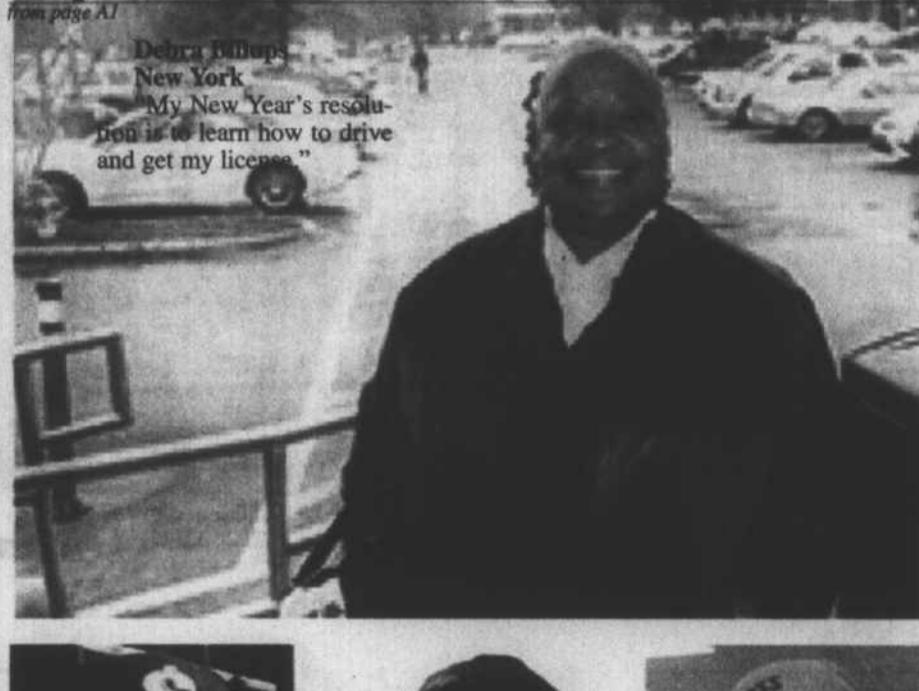
In conclusion, attorney Whitlatch seeks dismissal of the lawsuit "with prejudice; judgment be entered against the plaintiff and in favor of defendant on all claims and counterclaims;" attorneys' fees paid by the plaintiff; and a stay of the lawsuit pending a decision by the NC Court of Appeals regarding the nunc pro tunc matter.

People

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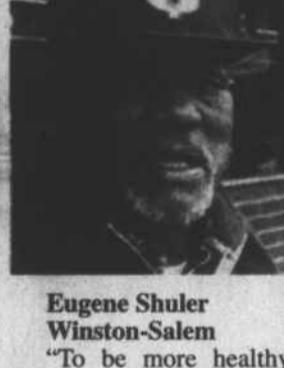
Debra Billups
New York

"My New Year's resolution is to learn how to drive and get my license."



Bertha Grant
Winston-Salem

"My New Year's resolution is to stay healthy and interested in God."



Eugene Shuler
Winston-Salem

"To be more healthy and to stop taking so much medication."



Ray Cole
Winston-Salem

"My New Year's resolution is to spread peace and harmony."



Robert Harriston
Winston-Salem

"My resolution for the new year is to be a better father."



Cedric Ingram
Winston-Salem

"My New Year's resolution is to spend more time with my family."



Oz Brown
Winston-Salem

"I like to keep it simple. My New Year's resolution is to be a better person in 2016 than I was in 2015."



Zach Leonard
Winston-Salem

"My New Year's resolution is to be more organized."



Ex-Globetrotters star Meadowlark Lemon dies

SCOTTSDALE, Ariz. (AP) Meadowlark Lemon, the "clown prince" of basketball's barnstorming Harlem Globetrotters, whose blend of hook shots and humor brought joy to millions of fans around the world, has died. He was 83.

Lemon's wife and daughter confirmed to the team that he died Sunday in Scottsdale, Ariz., Globetrotters spokesman Brett Meister said Monday.

Meister did not know the cause of death.

Though skilled enough to play professionally, Lemon instead wanted to entertain. His dream of playing for the Globetrotters was hatched after watching a newsreel of the all-black team at a cinema house when he was 11. Lemon first contacted the Globetrotters before his high school graduation and joined the team in 1954.

What followed was a run, by his calculations, of more than 16,000 straight games that took him to places he never could have imagined.

Lemon ended up becoming arguably the team's most popular player,



Lemon

a showman known as much for his confetti-in-the-water-bucket routine and slapstick comedy as his half-court hook shots and no-look, behind-the-back passes.

A sign of his crossover appeal, Lemon was inducted into both the Naismith Basketball Hall of Fame and the International Clown Hall of Fame.

Lemon played for the Globetrotters during the team's heyday from the mid-1950s to the late-1970s, delighting fans with his skills with a ball and a joke. Traveling by car, bus, train or plane nearly every night, Lemon covered nearly 4 million miles to play in over 100 countries and in front of popes and presidents, kings and queens. He averaged 325 games per year during his prime, that luminous smile never dimming.

Meadowlark was the

most sensational, awesome, incredible basketball player I've ever seen," NBA great and former Globetrotter Wilt Chamberlain said shortly before his death in 1999.

"People would say it would be Dr. J or even (Michael) Jordan. For me it would be Meadowlark Lemon."

Lemon spent 24 years with the Globetrotters, doing tours through the racially torn South in the 1950s until he left in 1979 to start his own team.

He was one of the most popular athletes in the world during the prime of his career, thanks to a unique blend of athleticism and showmanship. Playing against the team's nightly foil, the Washington Generals, Lemon left fans in awe with the nifty moves he put on display during the Globetrotters' famous circle while "Sweet Georgia Brown" played over the loudspeaker.

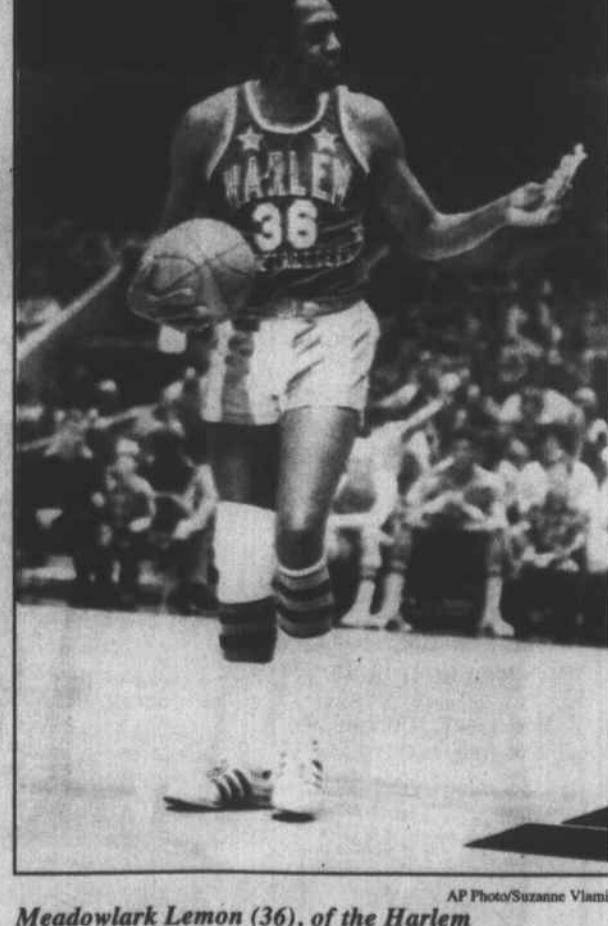
Lemon became an icon in the 1970s, appearing in movies, including "The Fish That Saved Pittsburgh," numerous talk shows and even a stint in

the cartoon "Scooby Doo," with Scatman Crothers doing his voice. Lemon spent the last years of his life trying to spread a message of faith through basketball. He became an ordained minister in 1986 and was a motivational speaker, touring the country to meet with children at basketball camps and youth prisons with his Scottsdale-based Meadowlark Lemon Ministries.

"I feel if I can touch a kid in youth prison, he won't go to the adult prison," Lemon said in 2003.

Born in 1932, Meadow George Lemon III - he lengthened his name after joining the Globetrotters - didn't have money for a basketball when he was young, so he rigged up a makeshift hoop in his backyard in Wilmington, North Carolina. Using a coat hanger and onion sack for the basket, he made his first shot with an empty milk can.

"I was one of the most fortunate athletes that ever lived," he said. "I was able to watch history."



Meadowlark Lemon (36), of the Harlem Globetrotters basketball team, offers a pretzel to a referee during a game at New York's Madison Square Garden, Sunday, Feb. 18, 1978.

AP Photo/Suzanne Vlamin