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Judges: 4 N Carolina House districts break redistricting ban

By Gary D. Robertson
 RALEIGH (AP) - More redrawing of North Carolina legislative boundaries would be required next year if the Nov. 2 ruling by state judges striking down four state House districts stands.

A three-judge panel Friday, Nov. 2 agreed with advocacy groups and voters that several alterations to Wake County districts last year violated North Carolina's constitutional prohibition against mid-decade redistricting.

The four districts are being used in the Nov. 6 election, but the ruling won't stop those races and could be appealed.

In their unanimous decision, the trial court judges told Republican mapmakers to fix the problems and approve a new Wake County House map by July 1 - or sooner if next year's legislative session ends before that date - for use in 2020 elections.

The plaintiffs want those districts returned to how they were initially drawn in 2011. Their attorneys argued Republicans changed three of the four districts to improve chances for Republican election victories this fall. The seats are important to Democrats trying to end the GOP's veto-proof majority in the chamber.

Provisions in the state constitution say state legislative districts "shall remain unaltered" until the release of each decade's census numbers. There are exceptions when courts order changes, as they have this decade.

Maps for legislative and congressional districts drawn by the GOP-controlled General Assembly have been litigated for most of the decade. Congressional boundaries originally were struck down for racial gerrymandering, then later on claims of excessive political bias. The U.S. Supreme Court received briefs this week from groups asking that they hear partisan gerrymandering claims.

The Nov. 2 ruling "brings us closer to the day that, for the first time this decade, the voice of the voters and not politicians' illegal manipulations will determine the outcome of elections," Allison Riggs with the Southern Coalition for Social Justice, the plaintiffs' chief attorney, said in a release.

(Continued On Page 10)

If House leaders change, black Dems want 1 of 2 top posts

By Alan Fram
 WASHINGTON (AP) - The Congressional Black Caucus served notice Nov. 1 that the influential group wants a black lawmaker to hold at least one of the House's two top Democratic jobs next year if Nancy Pelosi or other party leaders don't retain their posts in the new Congress.

Caucus Chairman Rep. Cedric Richmond, D-La., wrote colleagues that despite the party's "celebration of diversity," a black lawmaker has never held one of the two top jobs. "It's time we walk our talk," he added in letter obtained by The Associated Press.

The effort is an example of behind-the-scenes jockeying already under way to fill the party's top jobs in the Congress that convenes in January. Many in both parties believe Democrats will likely gain the 23 seats they will need to win House control in Tuesday's (Nov. 6) elections.

House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi, D-Calif., wants to reclaim the job of speaker she held when Democrats last controlled the chamber from 2007 through 2010. She has strong support among liberal and female Democratic lawmakers and is believed to have a solid shot at winning the job, for which she will need at least 218 votes, a House majority.

Yet it is unclear if she will be able to do so. Many Democrats say it is time for fresh faces to replace Pelosi and other party leaders, who are all in their late 70s, and say GOP efforts to

demonize her as an out-of-touch liberal have made her a liability for the party.

It is widely believed that if Republicans retain their hold on the House, frustrated Democrats would replace Pelosi, No. 2 leader Steny Hoyer of Maryland and No. 3 leader Jim Clyburn of South Carolina.

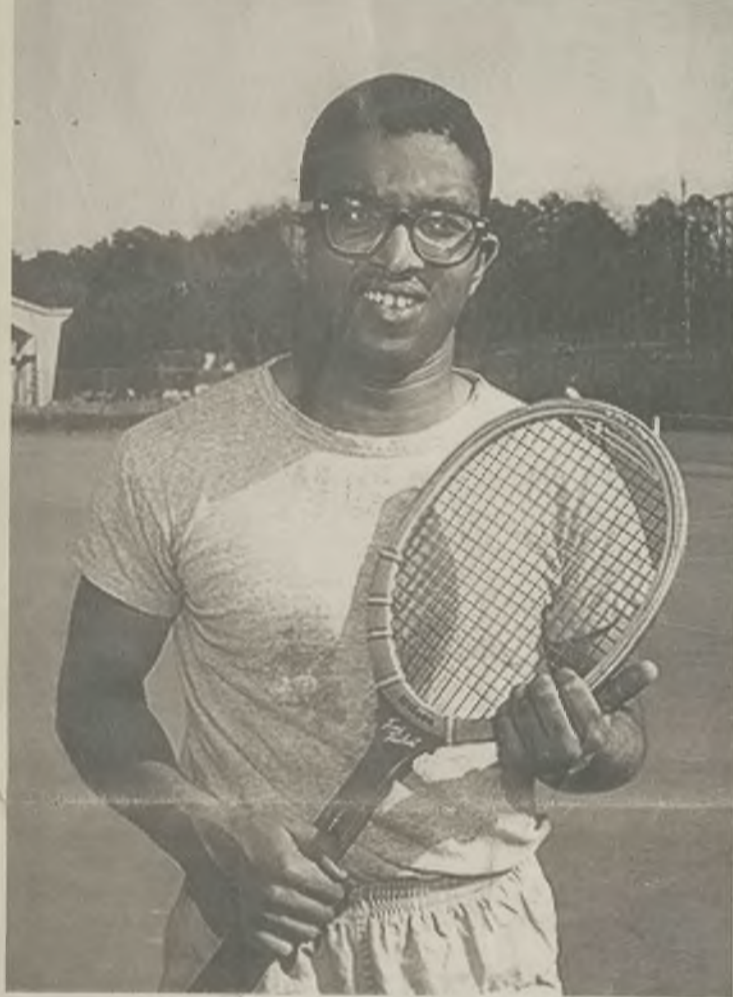
The caucus' letter does not name who it wants to see move into the two top jobs.

Clyburn is black and has expressed an interest in moving up, according to many Democrats speaking on condition of anonymity to describe private discussions. Richmond and Rep. Hakeem Jeffries, D-N.Y., are also mentioned as potential

didates for top jobs. More than 40 of the current 193 House Democrats are members of the caucus. Both figures are likely to grow in next year's Congress.

Some Democratic challengers who are likely to win their races have publicly said they would not vote for Pelosi to become speaker. That, along with disgruntled incumbents, might be enough to topple her if the Democratic victory margin is slender.

Spokesmen for Pelosi and Jeffries declined to comment on the letter. Aides to Clyburn and the black caucus did not immediately return phone calls and emails seeking comment.



Irwin Holmes on tennis court in the 1950s. NCSU Named a building for Holmes. See story on page 3.

Suspect in grocery store shooting indicted on murder charges

By Bruce Schreiner
 LOUISVILLE, Ky. (AP) - The white man accused of opening fire in a Kentucky grocery store and parking lot, killing two black people, was indicted Oct. 31 on murder charges, but it's too soon to determine if the death penalty will be sought, a prosecutor said.

The suspect, Gregory A. Bush, was indicted by a grand jury on two counts of murder, one count of criminal attempted murder and two counts of first-degree wanton endangerment stemming from the attack at a Kroger store in suburban Louisville last week.

Jefferson County Commonwealth's Attorney Tom Wine told reporters Oct. 31 that he first wants to talk to the victims' families before deciding whether to pursue the death penalty against Bush, 51.

"Quite frankly, it is too early to talk to them about that weighty decision," Wine said.

The prosecutor said he'll talk to the families "at the appropriate time," after they've had time to grieve.

Bush's indictment means his case will proceed to Jefferson County Circuit Court in Louisville.

Bush was seen on surveillance video trying to enter a historically black church minutes before the Kroger shootings but was not able to enter the church, police said. The police chief of the town outside Louisville where the shooting happened said he believes the killings were racially motivated.

Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell, R-Ky., on Oct. 29 denounced the Pittsburgh synagogue massacre and Kentucky grocery store shooting as hate crimes and said the death penalty should be applied.

Meanwhile, prosecutors on Oct. 31 identified the man they say first confronted Bush during the shooting as Dominic D. Rozier. The attempted murder charge against Bush stemmed from their exchange of gunfire, authorities said.

Rozier does not face any charges for firing at Bush, Wine said. "There is no indication that he acted other than in self-protection for himself and for others," Wine said of Rozier.

The wanton endangerment charges stemmed from the threats posed against Rozier's wife and the 12-year-old grandson of one of the victims during the shooting, prosecutors said.

According to an arrest report, Bush walked into the Kroger, pulled a gun from his waist and shot a man in the back of the head, then kept shooting him multiple times. The report says Bush then reholstered his gun, walked outside and killed a woman in the parking lot. Each victim died of multiple gunshot wounds.

The victims were identified as Maurice Stallard, 69, and Vicki Lee Jones, 67. Bush, who is being held in a local jail, did not know either victim, Wine said.

Federal investigators are examining if there were any violations of federal law, including potential civil rights violations such as hate crimes, U.S. Attorney Russell M. Coleman in Louisville said.

Coleman said in a statement Oct. 31 that the investigation will be "thorough and prompt, aimed at collecting the evidence necessary to meet the standards required for charging under the federal hate crimes and related laws."

Woman no longer employed at hospital after blackface pic

KANSAS CITY, Mo. (AP) - A Kansas City hospital says an employee who posted photos of herself and another person in blackface no longer works there.

Saint Luke's Health System spokeswoman Laurel Gifford says its Saint Luke's East Hospital became aware of the photos and an investigation was initiated. KCUR obtained a screen shot of the Facebook post, showing the employee and a man in blackface, dressed as Beyonce and Jay-Z. The woman's Facebook page has since been removed. She doesn't have a listed phone number.

Gifford says she can't comment on personnel matters, other than to say that the individual is no longer an employee.

The situation arose after Megyn Kelly was fired from her NBC morning show after suggesting it was OK for white people to wear blackface at Halloween.

Man who flashed gun at FAMU students avoids prosecution

TALLAHASSEE, Fla. (AP) - A Florida man who flashed a gun while trying to prevent four mostly African-American college students from getting on an elevator with him has avoided prosecution by agreeing to serve 50 hours of community service and pay a \$100 fine.

The Tallahassee Democrat reports that prosecutors announced the deferral of prosecution agreement Oct. 29 for 49-year-old Don Crandall Jr. He also agreed not to possess any firearms for six months.

Police charged Crandall last month with improper exhibition of a firearm. Crandall, who is white, was videotaped trying to stop a group of mostly black young men from entering an elevator at the apartment building, claiming they didn't belong in the building without a key. The men were students at Florida A&M University.

After the video went viral, Crandall was fired from his job as

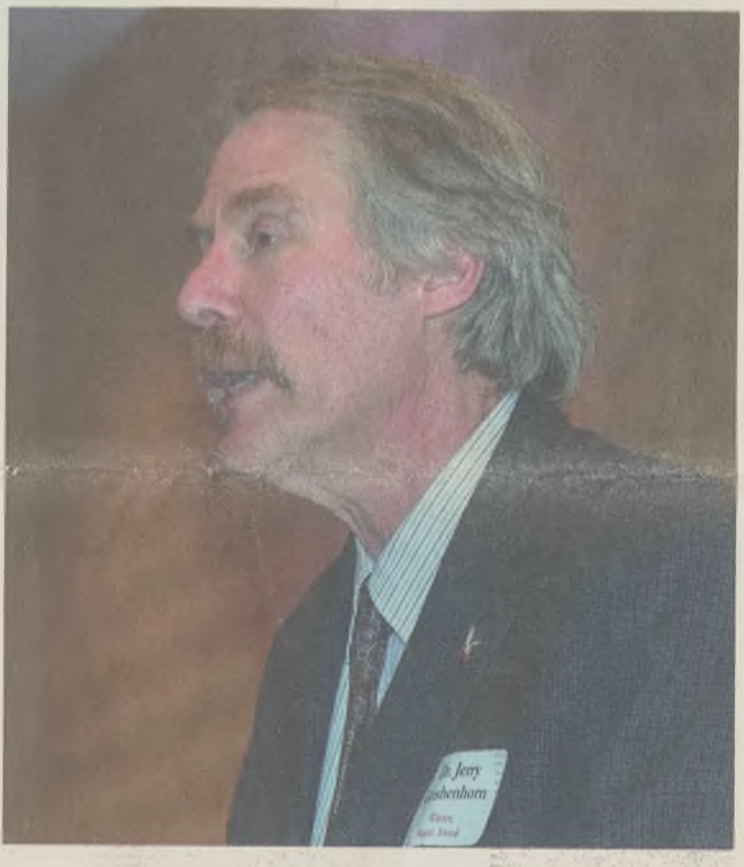
CNN not commenting on Lemon's remark about white men

NEW YORK (AP) - CNN isn't commenting about Don Lemon's statement that white men represent the biggest terrorist threat in the country.

Lemon's statement, on his show Monday, Oct. 29 attracted criticism in conservative circles. He was talking about the negative attention given to a caravan of potential refugees in Central America. Meanwhile, white men are the suspects in recent shootings of two blacks in Kentucky and at a synagogue in Pittsburgh.

Lemon said that, "we have to stop demonizing people and realize that the biggest terror threat in this country is white men, most of them radicalized to the right, and we have to start doing something about them."

A CNN spokeswoman said Oct. 31 neither Lemon nor the network would speak more about it.



Dr. Jerry Gershenhorn
 Courtesy Dept. of Cultural Affairs

N.C. Book Awards Presented to State's Outstanding Authors

Book on Louis Austin Tapped

GREENVILLE. - North Carolina's long literary tradition lives on and was celebrated with presentation of the North Carolina Book Awards Friday, Oct. 26. The awards are presented annually by the North Carolina Literary and Historical Association and honor the year's best achievements in the categories of fiction, nonfiction, young people's literature and poetry.

Receiving the Old North State Award for Nonfiction was Jerry Gershenhorn of Durham, for "Louis Austin and the 'Carolina Times.'" The title details Austin's work as publisher of the "Carolina Times" weekly, and his championing the struggle for civil rights and African American equality. Gershenhorn is a history professor at N.C. Central University.

The Sir Walter Raleigh Award for Fiction recipient was Wiley Cash of Wilmington, for "The Last Ballad," the tale of textile worker Ella Mae Wiggins, tensions around union organizing in Gastonia in 1929, and the tragic end for a single mother seeking a better life. Cash teaches at UNC-Asheville.

Heather Ross Miller of Badin received the Roanoke-Chowan Award for Poetry for "Women Disturbing the Peace," in which she examines women who disturb the peace and seek their rightful place in the world. Miller is retired from teaching creative writing and literature at several universities.

Carole Boston Weatherford of High Point received the American Association of University Women Award for Young People's Literature for "Schomburg: The Man Who Built a Library." The title examines Afro-Puerto Rican Arturo Schomburg's efforts to share the history of Africa's sons and daughters. He donated his collection to the New York Public Library, which formed the Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture. Weatherford teaches writing at Fayetteville State University.

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