

Campaign Notes

The Black Political Awareness League has endorsed presidential hopeful Jesse Jackson. Page A10.

Election Year '84

Cookies!!!

Evelyn Burney has her eyes set on turning a family recipe into a fortune. Magazine Section, B1.



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Klan-Nazi verdict: No one's surprised

By ROBIN ADAMS
Chronicle Staff Writer

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After only three days of deliberations, an all-white federal jury found nine Klansmen and Nazis not guilty of violating the civil rights of five Communist Worker's Party members killed in a shootout in Greensboro on Nov. 3, 1979.

Found not guilty on all 14 counts were Virgil L. Griffin, 40, of Mount Holly; Edward Dawson, 65, of Greensboro; Raeford Milano Caudle, 41, and Jack Wilson Fowler, 33, of Winston-Salem;

"The Klan is done. They have had it."

-- Edward Dawson

David Wayne Matthews, 29, of Newton; Coleman Pridmore, 42, of Lincolnton; Jerry Paul Smith, 36, of Maiden; Roy Clinton Toney, 36, of Anderson, S.C., and Roland Wayne Wood, 39, of Winston-Salem.

The verdict, said Dawson, one of the nine defendants, was a relief but came as no surprise.

"It (the not-guilty verdict) was great," Dawson said earlier this week in a telephone interview. "It was like a ton of bricks being lifted off your head. It was a tremendous ordeal to go through and I'm glad it's over. From now on, I will be minding my own business."

The final arguments in the three-month-old case were given last Thursday

and the \$1 million trial concluded with Judge Thomas A. Flannery reading the jury 78 pages of instructions. Last Friday morning, the jurors began their deliberations at 8:30.

The five-person prosecution team tried to prove that the nine men interfered with the demonstrators' rights to free speech at a government-sanctioned march, that they were motivated by racism and that their actions led to the deaths of five of the demonstrators.

Killed were Sandra Smith, Cesar V. Cauce, William E. Sampson, Michael Nathan and James Waller.

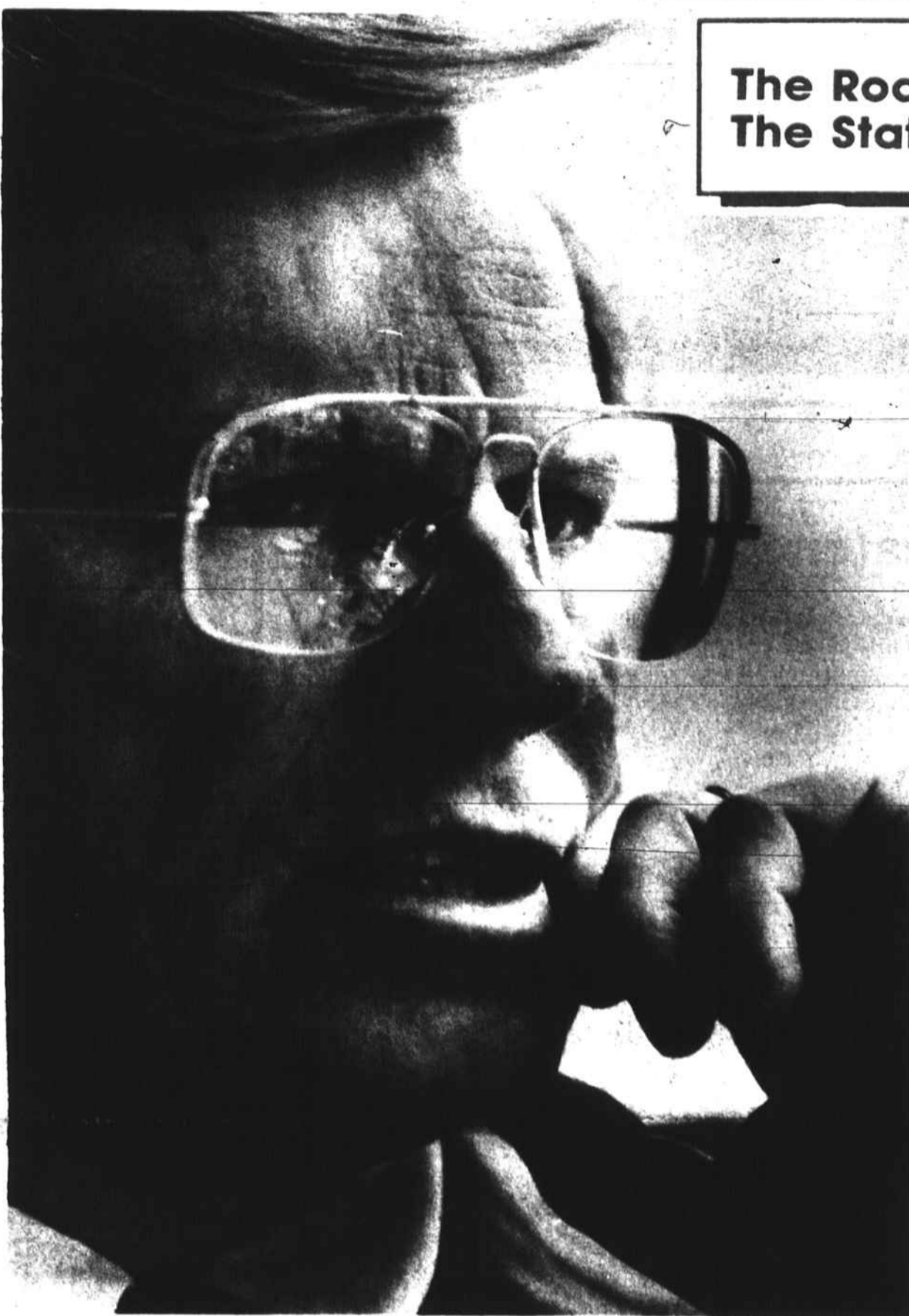
The nine defense attorneys based their argument on the same one used during the state trial four years ago in Greensboro, when five Klansmen and Nazis charged with murder were found not guilty: that the Klansmen and Nazis acted in self-defense and were motivated by patriotism to go to the rally.

In the end, the defense team prevailed. The jury has been silent since the decision, saying only that the prosecution did not prove, beyond a reasonable doubt, that the nine were guilty.

While they were not particularly surprised by the verdict, say local black leaders, the trial's outcome will give the Klan a green light to continue its racist activities.

(After the reading of the verdict, defendant Virgil Griffin, who serves as grand dragon of the Invisible Empire Knights of the Ku Klux Klan, said he would continue fighting communism and that the "KKK is here to stay.")

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The Road To The State House

Knox: Proof's in his record

By ROBIN ADAMS AND JOHN SLADE
Chronicle Staff Writers

This year's crowded gubernatorial race may not be as bitterly fought as the Senate battle between Jim Hunt and Jesse Helms -- or as inspiring to the black masses as Jesse Jackson's quest for the presidency -- but the fireworks are still there.

Among black leaders in Winston-Salem, former Charlotte Mayor Eddie Knox and state Attorney General Rufus Edmisten have rallied large numbers of black supporters, and in fact, appear to have split prominent black political leaders roughly down the middle.

Knox, slightly hoarse and a bit weary from his campaign regimen during a recent stopover in Winston, says his long list of accomplishments and his track record of being fair to minorities and women justifies his support among black voters.

The 47-year-old Davidson County native cites experience, sensitivity, "caring" and economic management as attributes that he feels make him the most qualified candidate for the governor's mansion in November.

Moreover, he says, "I'm the only candidate who has been a chief executive ... and I know what it's like to run a government."

Knox then points to his minority economic programs, his strong stand on housing and his political appointments of blacks while mayor of Charlotte, which totaled 36 percent, though only 26 percent of Charlotte's population is black.

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Eddie Knox: "I'm the only candidate who has been a chief executive... I know what it's like to run a government" (photo by James Parker).



Aspiring, But Safe, Actresses

Susie Vickers and Lashonda Fields hold their positions before moving out of them as part of the human fire safety slogan they're helping to make during Fire Education Awareness Week. Susie and Lashonda are part of a skit titled "Stop, Drop and Roll" that was presented at Hanes Mall last Saturday by a group of youngsters under the direction of Larry Leon Hamlin, who also wrote the skit (photo by James Parker).

Financially-troubled radio station will come back strong, says Sumler

By ROBIN ADAMS
Chronicle Staff Writer

WSMX-AM, a local church-owned radio station plagued by money problems and inexperienced management, has teetered on the brink of financial disaster in recent months.

But Rodney Sumler, president of Gospel Media Radio Inc., which now owns and operates the station, insists WSMX will come back strong.

"The board of directors of Gospel Media Radio Inc. has taken control of the station and has decided that we are going to run the station as a business ought to be run," Sumler said. "We will stop all the begging and negative talk ... and we are going to put forth the position that God has blessed us and we have the same opportunities to operate a station that anybody else in the radio business has."

"We plan to sell what we have to sell -- radio time and marketing. We will improve on every facet of our operation."

Those goals won't be easy to achieve. The station has no more money than it had last June, when Macedonia True Vine Pentecostal Holiness Church of God Inc., the station's owner, defaulted on a \$1.4 million bond it had secured to buy WSMX at a cost of \$600,000, pay off

mortgages to several local banks for the church sanctuary, and purchase Macedonia Arms Apartments (formerly Skyland Place Apartments).

Two months ago, the church filed for bankruptcy. "This was done as a protective move and to reorganize and pay debtors off," Sumler said.

"We don't have the money. We still have the same kinds of problems. But the problem has never been mismanagement. It has been new, inexperienced, ignorant management. We have learned. We are using the resources that we have better."

What has changed, Sumler said, is the attitude of the station's owners.

"We are a licensed, profit-making station and we will start acting like that," he said. "We are going to do positive things."

One of the first things the station did was to fire manager Bea Swisher, Sumler said.

Next, WSMX's office was moved from Link Road to the church on Old Greensboro Road.

When the church lost control of the station last May and a management firm -- Flessing, Pirtle and Associates of Roseville, Calif. -- assumed responsibility for the station's day-to-day operations, four WSMX employees

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Schools' policy of hiring employees' children: Standard procedure

By AUDREY L. WILLIAMS
Chronicle Staff Writer

Only after it was brought to his attention, says Deputy Superintendent Jim Dew, did he realize that most of the students hired for the city-county school system's summer employment program are children of school system staff members.

Parents of the students hired are employed in positions that range from the administrative level to the custodial level.

"I just didn't recognize those names," said Dew.

"My job is just to make sure all the technicalities and legalities are clear. When I went through the list, I just skimmed through."

One of the names Dew said he didn't initially recognize was the son of city-county school Superintendent Zane Eargle.

College students and several teachers are usually hired by the system for summer employment, said Earl Sanderfur, assistant superintendent for personnel.

Sanderfur said college students on summer break

are hired mainly because of the heavy work required, including painting, grounds maintenance and housekeeping.

Of the 67 students hired, 14, or 20 percent, are black, said Steve Clodfelter, the system's director of personnel.

"We don't encourage or discourage applications from local employees' children," said Sanderfur. "There are no laws that say children of staff members can't be hired."

School board member Beaufort Bailey said his ma-

ior concern isn't whose children had been hired, but how many black students were hired.

"I wasn't trying to make an issue out of who was hired," he said. "My main concern was the number of blacks hired. I just wasn't satisfied with 20 percent and I don't understand why more blacks didn't apply because I was told that every black student that applied got a job."

"I just wonder if it was advertised enough," Bailey said, "especially with as many black folk as there are"

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