

- Our new business section debuts: B1
- Foot patrols and the black community: A5
- Garber-Lash Tournament winners: B1
- Black Rep plans Darryl Hunt play: A1

A Master

Ann P. McRae has coined the term "jill-of-all-trades." Page B8



Winston-Salem Chronicle

The Twin City's Award-Winning Weekly

VOL. XI NO. 52

U.S.P.S. No. 067910

Winston-Salem, N.C.

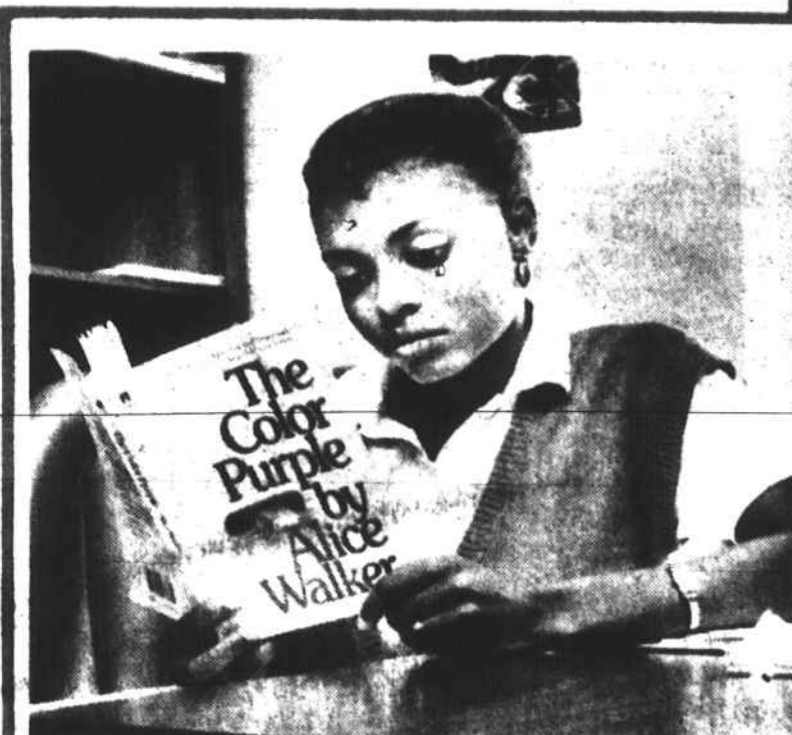
Thursday, August 22, 1985

35 cents

30 Pages This Week

Her derring-do opens some doors

Maria Howell, right, sings a tune in a local production; below she contemplates her role in Steven Spielberg's "The Color Purple," adapted from Alice Walker's novel (photo by James Parker).



It's been a dreamy August for spunky Maria Howell

By ROBIN ADAMS
Chronicle Assistant Editor

Diminutive Maria Howell began to live a dream 14 days ago and she hasn't awakened yet. In just two weeks' time, the 5-foot, one-half-inch Howell, who only appears to be shy, has managed to sing on-stage at a concert with Patti LaBelle, meet and be kissed by composer-musician Quincy Jones, party with comedy star and actor Whoopi Goldberg; and land a part in Steven Spielberg's new movie, "The Color Purple." Pretty wild stuff for a bubbly, 24-year-old biology major from Gastonia. It all started when Howell, a job developer in the cooperative

education department at her alma mater, Winston-Salem State University, read about auditions in Greensboro for the movie, which is being filmed in the state. Like hundreds of other star-struck young ladies, Howell decided to give it a try. But she knew she'd have to do something to get noticed. "I didn't come all the way to Greensboro for nothing," said Howell. "I wanted to make an impression on the talent scout so she could take my 8x10 glossy and resume and remember me." Unfortunately, the scout needed only one look at Howell to decide she wasn't right for the part. But Howell didn't give up. Please see page A3

Report: Public faith in police is on the line

Study lists concerns, questions involving Hunt trial, Sykes murder

By ROBIN ADAMS
Chronicle Assistant Editor

A report sanctioned by Alderman Vivian H. Burke concludes that "serious questions" surrounding the Deborah Sykes murder case must be answered to restore public trust in the Winston-Salem Police Department. Burke presented the seven-page report, prepared by the Rev. Leonard Lassiter Jr., to City Manager Bill Stuart last week. The report addresses six areas of concern with most of the questions surrounding Johnny Gray, alias Johnny McConnell, one of the state's key witnesses, and the procedures the police department used in its investigation, which led to 20-year-old Darryl Eugene Hunt's arrest and conviction. Hunt was sentenced to life imprisonment in June. Stuart, who has had the report for a week, could not be reached for comment. Lassiter said he interviewed more than 200 people and spent more than 40 hours preparing the report. Lassiter said his interviews revealed "legitimate concerns and fears" from all segments of the community. Of the 200 people he interviewed, said Lassiter, 70 percent of them were black. "I thought it was a good report," said Burke. "He gave us

something that was fair and very detailed." Lassiter said the report is no meant to indict the police department, Johnny (Gray) McConnell or anyone else, but that it simply asks questions. "I'm not an investigator. I'm not an attorney or a policeman... but I am a full-fledged, concerned citizen of Winston-Salem," said Lassiter. "Burke asked me to put together something that would hopefully be objective. What I wound up with represents legitimate concerns by a good part of the community." While Lassiter said his report isn't scientific, it does identify areas that should be addressed. Among the questions the report asks are:
• Why did the police give so much credibility to witness Johnny (Gray) McConnell's information in the ongoing investigation?
• Why didn't a police dispatcher whom McConnell called to report Sykes' murder use more care in asking information about so serious a crime?
• Did McConnell receive money from the Winston-Salem Police Department during the time he was being considered as a witness in the Sykes case?
• Why and by whom was the tape recording of the police's conversation with McConnell on

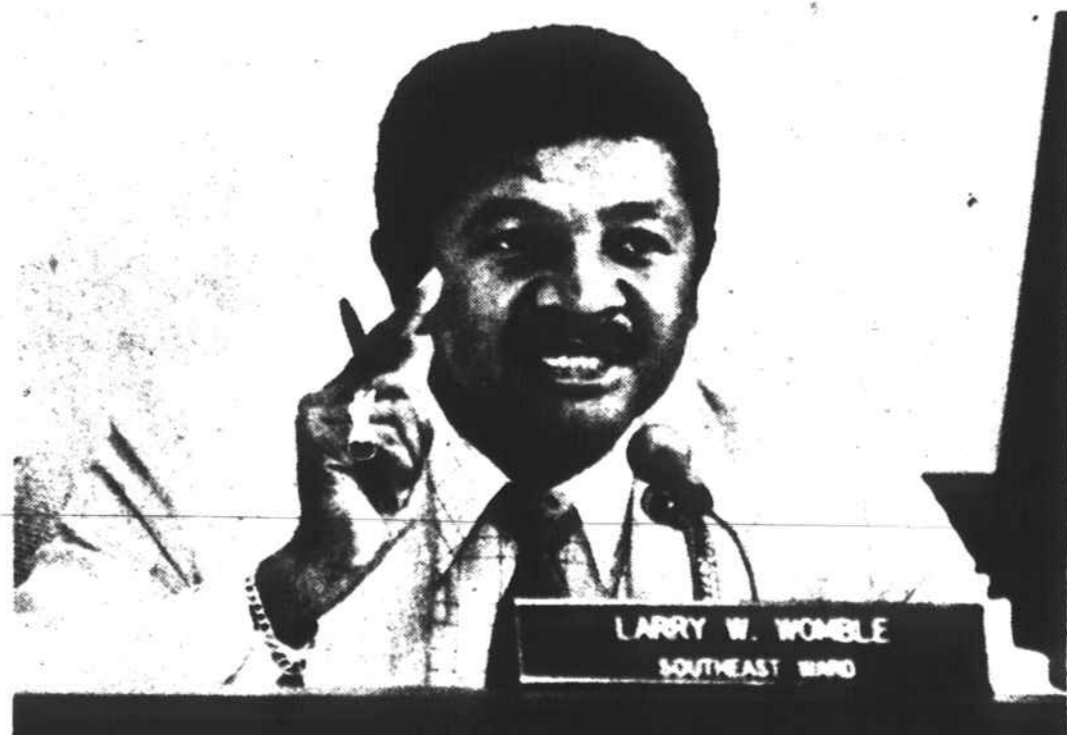
Campaign Notes

Bailey to run in North Ward

By ROBIN ADAMS
Chronicle Assistant Editor

Democrat Eugene Bailey, son of school board Vice-Chairman Beaufort Bailey, has filed to run for North Ward alderman. Bailey, 27, said he decided to run to increase the participation of younger people in ward politics and city government. "The real reason I chose to do this... is because I think I can serve as a motivator," Bailey said. Bailey joins fellow Democrat Patrick Hairston and Republicans Diana Williams

Henry and James Knox in the North Ward race. The most important issues in this election, said Bailey, will be increased services, improved roads and zoning. Bailey said he realizes that his age and strong opposition may hinder him, but he intends to make this a good race. "I want to, right here and now, challenge the opposition to some form of a debate," said Bailey. "When and where doesn't matter." Bailey said two-term Democratic incumbent Please see page A3



Womble: Sticking around for round two (photo by James Parker).

Black Rep plans Darryl Hunt play

By ROBIN ADAMS
Chronicle Assistant Editor

The North Carolina Black Repertory Company plans to perform a play based on the Darryl Hunt trial. Larry Leon Hamlin, the company's artistic director, says he has written the play, which will make its points using humor. "Based on the research I have done, it (the trial) lends itself to comedy," said Hamlin. "It will be as factual as possible but the facts are so humorous we should have our audience cracking up." The play will deal only with the trial and not with Please see page A10

Leadership program picks new class

By DAVID R. RANKIN
Chronicle Staff Writer

Forty-one community, business and civic leaders, including 11 blacks, will comprise Leadership Winston-Salem's second class. The class was chosen from a pool of 200 applicants, said C. Edward Pleasants Jr., president of the organization's Board of Directors. "It's not that all those people (the 200 applicants) are not leaders. It is when can they be molded into a class of leaders?" he said. Pleasants said the class seeks to increase communication among a diverse group of leaders. Class members are picked from large and small business, the professions, elected officials, non-profit organizations, human services, education and community volunteers, Pleasants said. This year's class will discuss the environment, business and industry, education, race relations, prejudice, government and the political process,

health and human services and criminal justice. Class members will attend programs planned by volunteer committees of professionals and lay experts in the various topic areas and provide information from all points of view on the issues, said Pleasants. They will attend two weekends and seven days of workshops and discussions, he said. The 11 black 1985-1986 Leadership Winston-Salem class members are:
• Thomas J. Elijah, president of the Winston-Salem Urban League.
• Lester E. Ervin, chief of the Winston-Salem Fire Department.
• The Rev. Carlton A.G. Eversley, pastor of Dellabrook Presbyterian Church.
• Verlee J. Fowler, owner of Fowler Realty Coy.
• Irené P. Hairston, a retired teacher from the Winston-Salem/Forsyth County School System. Please see page A15

Friends grill Hairston

By ROBIN ADAMS
Chronicle Assistant Editor



Hairston: Friends remember his 39th birthday (photo by Art Blue).

They called him a beggar. They said he had "narcolepsy." They talked about the way he keeps house. They joked about his singing, saying he taught James Brown everything he knows. They laughed at his family and they told dirty jokes about his personal life. And through it all, Pat Hairston laughed as much as anyone else, as friends and family gathered Tuesday night to roast the NAACP president and mark his "39th-and-holding" birthday. The roast, held at Beneath the Elms, opened with Mayor Wayne Corpening's proclamation of Aug. 20, 1985, as "Pat Hairston Day." It went downhill from there. Kenneth Rocker, one of Hairston's friends, talked about the day the two met. Rocker said he came home for lunch and found Hairston at home with his wife. Alone. Rocker went on to explain that the two had merely stopped by Please see page A3