

On the niceties of corporate gifts

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'Church that could' observes anniversary

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# Winston-Salem Chronicle

The Twin City's Award-Winning Weekly

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"This dress is new, this hairstyle is new. ... But people who are perceptive and have a conscience don't judge me by the outside. If there's one thing I can be really proud of, it's that I haven't compromised my principles."  
-- V. Jean Burkins

## Jean Burkins returns 'home'

By ROBIN BARKSDALE  
Chronicle Staff Writer

V. JEAN Burkins bowed her head and smiled as she approached the podium. Though bittersweet memories remained, the struggle had long been over. She was "home."

Ms. Burkins, a former assistant district attorney and candidate for a District Court judgeship in Winston-Salem, was one of four honorees at a banquet sponsored last Saturday night by black law students at Wake Forest University. Standing before the crowd at the Hyatt Hotel last Saturday evening, Ms. Burkins thanked her friends, old and new, for a warm welcome.

### Good to be back

"There's nothing like coming home and seeing friends," she said, glancing around the room and nodding acknowledgment to familiar faces. "I can't believe how good it is to see you. I'm really happy to be back in Winston-Salem and to see you again. I really, really thank you for caring."

Ms. Burkins, a York County, S.C., native who practices law privately in Columbia, left Winston-Salem in 1980 after an unsuccessful campaign for District Court judge. Her candidacy had been



Above, Jean Burkins, seated, and her aunt, Carolyn Burrell, admire the award Ms. Burkins received from the black law students at Wake Forest University (photo by James Parker).

marred by allegations, and, ultimately, her own admission, that she had lied about her handling of two parking ticket summonses issued against her. When all was said and done, she had lost not only the election, but her job as an assistant district attorney.

### Looking inside

Now she was back, the object of a standing ovation. Wearing a turquoise silk dress and sporting a trendy shag hairstyle, Ms. Burkins asked the audience to look beyond her outward appearance.

"This dress is new, this hairstyle is new. But a

dress is just a dress, and a hairstyle is just a hairstyle," said Ms. Burkins, who does not tell her age. "But people who are perceptive and have a conscience don't judge me by the outside. If there's one thing I can be really proud of, it's that I haven't compromised my principles."

As she accepted the honor from the students at her *alma mater*, Ms. Burkins took the opportunity to update her friends on her career. After leaving Winston-Salem, she became a staff attorney with the South Carolina State Employment Discrimination Department. From 1983 to 1985, she worked as a clerk for Judge Jasper Cureton of the South  
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## COVER STORY

# Burke's hiring doesn't stop critics of DA

By CHERYL WILLIAMS  
Chronicle Staff Writer

One is not enough, say critics of District Attorney W. Warren Sparrow, many of whom supported him in his campaign for office.

One black assistant on his staff shows no more of a commitment to affirmative action than his predecessor's, they say.

Sparrow announced last week that a black man, Logan Todd Burke, 26, would join his staff.

Burke, the son of Northeast Ward Alderman Vivian H. Burke and state House Rep. Logan Burke, received his undergraduate degree in political science at Morehouse College in 1983 and his law degree from North Carolina Central University's law school in 1986.

He has worked as an assistant district attorney in Kinston.

Loretta Biggs, however, who was previously the only black assistant district attorney, was recently appointed a District Court judge by Gov. James G. Martin, keeping the black presence on the staff at one.

"I'm disappointed that he does not have any more black assistant DAs," said the Rev. Carlton A.G. Eversley of Sparrow. Eversley said he had been a strong supporter of Sparrow in the primary election in May but had remained neutral in November's general election. "I think the community deserves one more or at least two more black assistant DAs. The people who supported him in the general election need to make that known."

Southeast Ward Alderman Larry W. Womble, who quietly supported Sparrow in both the primary and the general election, said that he, too, is disappointed that there is only one black assistant district attorney.

"I'm hoping that Sparrow sees fit to appoint more blacks in his office ...," Womble said.

If the appointment of Burke represents more blacks to come, then that's OK, Womble said. "If it's not the beginning," he said, "then I have some serious concerns about that. I'm hoping that Mr. Sparrow will respond in a positive way to making his staff reflect the makeup of this community."

But Sparrow said Tuesday that his staff is representative of the community. "I think we are well-representative of the community," he said. "We have capable lawyers interested in building up the community, and I think they are doing an excellent job."

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## Covington's firing blocked

From Staff and Wire Reports

HUNTSVILLE, Ala. — Gov. Guy Hunt removed five members from the Alabama A&M University Board of Trustees as the panel met in executive session last Thursday, a sweeping change that reportedly occurred as the board considered firing the university's president, Dr. H. Douglas Covington.

In a related matter, Covington, a former chancellor of Winston-Salem State University, has filed a \$1.1 million lawsuit against a Decatur black weekly called *Speakin' Out*, alleging that a letter to the editor in

the paper libeled him.

The *Huntsville Times*, quoting unnamed sources, said a majority of the 11-member A&M trustee board was prepared to fire Covington, a Winston-Salem native, when Hunt sent word by telephone that five members were no longer trustees.

Board Chairman Herbert Gray of Huntsville, one of the five ousted by Hunt, said later that day that he was withholding comment on the advice of legal counsel. Covington, who was in a meeting last Thursday afternoon with top A&M officials, declined comment on the developments.

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Covington

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## In surprise move, Sweat named police chief

By CHERYL WILLIAMS  
Chronicle Staff Writer

The appointment Monday of George L. Sweat as the city's new police chief abruptly ended speculation that a black man might be hired — and kindled both resignation and lukewarm support among black elected officials.

NAACP President Walter

Marshall said he would have preferred someone else.

Someone like Morris A. Robertson.

Since Assistant Chief O.D. Redd, who is black, withdrew his application two weeks ago, Robertson, another assistant chief who is white, would have made a good choice, Marshall said.

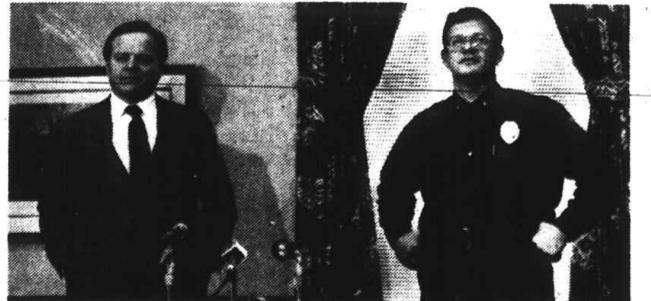
"I was disappointed in the pro-

cess," said Marshall, who has criticized the police for using excessive force, especially when dealing with blacks. "We could have been real satisfied with Robertson. He made his mark during some real critical times -- during the riots. He came in and sat with the community. He wasn't afraid to come to Liberty and Dunleith streets and talk to us. He earned my respect and he

earned the support of a lot of blacks."

Although he is not pleased with the selection of Sweat, Marshall said, he plans to work with him. "Even though we don't have the most positive opinion of him at this time, we want to work with him to make him the best chief," he said.

Northeast Ward Alderman Vi-  
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Chief Sweat, right, and the city manager (photo by James Parker).

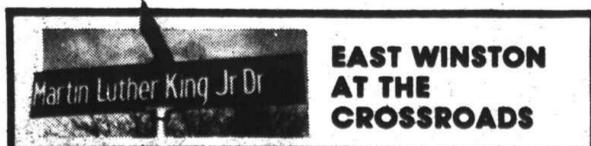
## Economic development corporation: It has been tried here before

By CHERYL WILLIAMS  
Chronicle Staff Writer

■ This article continues a series on the East Winston Area Plan. This week, a look at previous attempts at one of the plan's recommendations -- an economic development corporation in East Winston.

East Winston and economic development groups are not strangers. The community had two such groups in the early '80s, but both came and went quickly, and neither worked very much with the other, despite common goals, say former members.

One was a committee led by East Ward Alderman Virginia K.



EAST WINSTON AT THE CROSSROADS

Newell, the other an economic development corporation headed by local attorney R. Lewis Ray.

The Committee to Promote Black Ownership, an ad hoc committee composed of a group of businessmen, ministers, attorneys and doctors, was formed in 1980 to promote economic development in East Winston, Mrs. Newell said.

The group was instrumental in getting Mechanics and Farmers Bank to locate here, she said.

From the ad hoc committee grew a steering committee that went on to form the second organization, christened the East Winston Local Development Corp. The group was incorporated in November 1980, Ray said.

"In order to develop a shopping center, we felt we needed a vehicle, and that vehicle was the development corporation," Ray said. "We needed it in order to make a proposal to the city."

Both groups had basically the same primary goal: to get a black-owned and -operated shopping center in East Winston.

But never did they work together, said former County Commis-  
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