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Woman accused of larceny and forgery stirs controversy

By ANGELA WRIGHT
Chronicle Managing Editor

On February 11, 1988 Versell McDaniel Fuller of 6635 El Rancho Drive, Rural Hall, is scheduled to appear in court to stand trial for four counts of forgery for which, if convicted, she could spend five years in prison. As soon as she is able to retain a lawyer, she will also have to stand trial for four counts of larceny for which she could receive 10 to 40 years in prison.

There are two separate and distinct groups who hold more than a passing interest in her case: one is white and affluent, to whom Fuller is a culprit; the other is Afro-American and grassroots-oriented, to whom Fuller is the victim.

Her accusers are former employers who paint a portrait of a shrewd, manipulative con artist who

allegedly stole hundreds of thousands of dollars worth of their personal property over a period of several months.

Her supporters, who are ministers, educators and community activists, say Fuller is a functionally

"This is a case of a powerful, rich white woman who pretends to be a pseudo-liberal but she is trying to crush a poor black woman."

-- The Rev. John Mendez

illiterate, widowed mother of two whose civil rights have been violated.

Some of her supporters have formed a group called Black Women for Justice to "provide moral, legal and financial assistance" to Fuller. The group is

led by Dr. Dolly McPherson, associate professor of English at Wake Forest University, and was founded by Mrs. Minnie Ervin, cosmetologist and entrepreneur.

Other members are Dr. Glenda Gill, associate professor of English at Winston-Salem State University; Dr. Elwanda Ingram, associate professor of English at WSSU; Mrs. Mazie Woodruff, former county commissioner; Barbara Lee and Magdalene Watson, public school teachers.

Rev. John Mendez of Emmanuel Baptist Church and Rev. Carlton A. G. Eversley of Dellabrook Presbyterian Church actively support the group with "pastoral, moral and humanitarian support." The local NAACP is also supporting the group and Fuller.

About the only point that is not in contention is the fact that Fuller worked as a domestic for Mrs. Leigh Rose of 1040 Arbor Rd., Winston-Salem; Mrs.

Elsie Popkin of 740 Arbor Rd., Winston-Salem; Mrs. Loy McGill of 940 Partridge Lane, Winston-Salem; and Mrs. Deborah Coleman King of 2883 Robinhood Rd., Winston-Salem.

There are even contradictory accounts of how Fuller came to be in the employ of these four women. Rose said a friend referred Fuller to her after learning that Rose was in search of domestic assistance. Rose said she then referred Fuller to King and eventually to McGill and Popkin. Fuller said she knew King before she knew Rose and that after she had worked for King for about a year, King referred her to Rose and subsequently to Popkin and McGill.

The stories become more disparate. One major dispute involves the reason Fuller was initially suspected of malfeasance. Fuller said she was suspected

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800 Afro-Americans affected

AT&T plant to close

By ROBIN BARKSDALE
Chronicle Staff Writer

AT&T announced last Wednesday that it will close its North Carolina Works plant on Lexington Road, which employs 3,300 people. More than 800 Afro-Americans will be affected by the closing. Some managers will be relocated but most non-managers will lose their jobs. It is expected to affect the entire community. Company officials said the 34-year-old plant will be closed over a period of two to five years.

Ken Raschke, vice president for the plant's manufacturing division, said Tuesday that strategies for closing the plant and assisting employees with relocation, job searches and benefit packages are still in the planning stages.

"We're just starting and we've been meeting with managers from other plants that have closed," Raschke said in a telephone interview from his office. "It's still in the working process. There are a lot of questions that we're not in a position to answer right now."

Raschke did say that local company officials hope to obtain more information on what kinds of jobs are available in this area and how they can best help to train their workforce to meet the requirements of those positions. He said also that AT&T is soliciting questions and concerns from its employees and that the company hopes at some point to set up a hotline which will be available to answer employees' questions and to provide other relevant information.

Linda Jones, a member of the plant's public relations department, said that officials "hope some of the employees will be able to get jobs within AT&T," but that plans are still being worked out. She said that more defini-

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Congratulations, Coach

City and university officials turned out last Saturday during halftime of the Rams' basketball game to pay special recognition to the coach of the CIAA champion Rams, Bill Hayes. Above, Alderman Larry Wombie, left, presents a plaque to Hayes in recognition of his team's championship season (photo by Santana).

South adds Congressional seats; blacks lose them

By RANDOLPH E. SCHMID
Associated Press Writer

hands, he pointed out.

Population changes appear likely to give six more House seats to California, according to 1990 population projections done by Temple University, he added, with Texas expected to gain four seats and Florida three.

On the other hand, New York could lose three seats, and Illinois, Michigan, Ohio and Pennsylvania two apiece.

"Of the 177 Republican members of the House of Representatives, 86 percent have gained population, while only 73 percent of the current (258) Democratic members have done likewise," Brace reported.

Using Census Bureau estimates of the 1986 populations of each congressional district, he pointed out that of the 50

districts suffering the largest population losses, 44 are represented by Democrats.

And, he added, of 21 districts with 40 percent or more black residents, 16 lost population. On the other hand, he noted, of the 37 districts with 20 percent or more Hispanic populations, 33 gained population between 1980 and 1986.

Questions remain, however, about how the shifts will affect future elections.

If people moving into Republican districts adopt the outlook and politics of people there, it could benefit the GOP, Brace noted. On the other hand, shifting Democratic voters into Republican districts could change the balance in

those areas.

Brace reported that the House district suffering the largest population loss is that of George W. Crockett, D-Mich. It has lost nearly 70,000 people, a 13.6 percent decline.

Other districts suffering major losses include those of Reps. William Coyne, D-Pa.; Henry J. Nowak, D-N.Y.; John Conyers, D-Mich., and Robert Garcia, D-N.Y.

Brace said that while Democratic-held districts are more likely to be losing people, there are some notable exceptions in the farm belt including a 28,326-resident loss in Illinois' 18th district, represented by House Minority Leader Robert Michel.

THE NATION'S NEWS

Compiled From AP Wire

DJ fired for MLK racial slurs

PITTSFIELD, Mass. -- A disc jockey has been fired for making racial jokes on the air on Martin Luther King Jr. Day, a radio station announced.

Frank C. Turck was fired last week after he opened his live show with the remark, "It's Martin Luther Kind Day. Let's break out the watermelon and the chicken," according to Patrick Ryan, the program director for WBEC-FM.

NAACP apologizes to Wallace

MONTGOMERY, Ala. -- An NAACP leader said Thomas Reed's comment that God is punishing crippled former Gov. George Wallace for his past segregationist views likely hurt Reed's effort to remove the Confederate battle flag from atop the Capitol.

The state president of the NAACP will not be allowed to pull down the Confederate battle flag from atop the dome of the Alabama Capitol, Gov. Fob James Hunt said last Saturday.

Jail beatings put 3 behind bars

MONTGOMERY, Ala. -- A federal judge Monday sentenced a former Pike County deputy and two former prisoners, all three black, in the beating of a white inmate who prosecutors said was forced into a cell with other prisoners after he used a racial slur.

Activists: Impeach Mechem

TUCSON -- A noted civil rights activist implored Arizona to impeach Gov. Evan Mechem, to reinstate the King holiday and to work against racism in this country.

"The governor of the state of Arizona has sought to declare null and void the holiday for the only black man in this country," the Rev. Ralph Abernathy said Friday. "It is shameful and disgraceful. I urge you, with all your power and all your strength to impeach him ... and this is all a part of racism."

UL job placements increase

Joseph L. Dickson, chairman of the Winston-Salem Urban League Board of Directors has announced that agency programs broke all previous records in 1987 by placing 1,100 of their constituents in meaningful employment.

Dickson said, "Our General Employment Program, funded by United Way, led the way by increasing their average of placements per month to 77, which reflects a 79 percent increase over the average monthly placement rate of 43 in 1986."

Hazel E. Brown, acting administrator, said, "The overall success of our programs can be attributed to the

commitment and diligence of our staff and the increased visibility of the Urban League."

Brown went on to say that she believes the growth and success of agency programs will continue throughout 1988.

The Urban League is a non-profit United Way agency that provides a comprehensive range of services including employment assistance, education and skilled training. Youth and older adults, as well as minorities and the disadvantaged, benefit from these specialized services focused on developing social and economic independence.

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Simmons calls for unity in seeking County Board of Commissioners seat

By ROBIN BARKSDALE
Chronicle Staff Writer

Ann Simmons, who said she will run a campaign focused on uniting the residents of Forsyth County, will file Thursday as a candidate for a seat on the County Board of Commissioners.

Simmons joins nine other candidates who have filed for election to one of the three vacant seats on the board.

Simmons, a customer service representative at Wachovia Bank, said it's time that a new perspective was brought to the current Board of

Commissioners.

"You're looking at a board of five men and then you're looking at a board of five white men," said Simmons. "If they can relate to women's issues and the problems of women in Forsyth County, they haven't been doing a good job of it. And if they can relate to the problems of minorities -- blacks, women and the disadvantaged -- they haven't been doing a good job with that either."

She said her efforts will be concentrated on establishing unity in the county and running what she promises will be a grassroots cam-

paign. Simmons said she will not desert county residents who

have expressed concern about issues and who have offered policy suggestions to the board of commissioners.

Simmons said that insti-



Simmons

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