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Compromise reached on Forsyth County election plan Commissioners consent to amended version of Kennedy-Burke proposal

By ANGELA WRIGHT
Chronicle Managing Editor

Two Forsyth County state legislators and the county's Board of Commissioners have reached a compromise on a plan for electing commissioners to the board.

State Reps. Annie B. Kennedy and Logan Burke said they have agreed to amend their plan for a nine-member board to a seven-member board. In turn, the commissioners' proposal for a five-member board would be killed in committee.

The agreement was reached Tuesday after months of controversy over the two proposals.

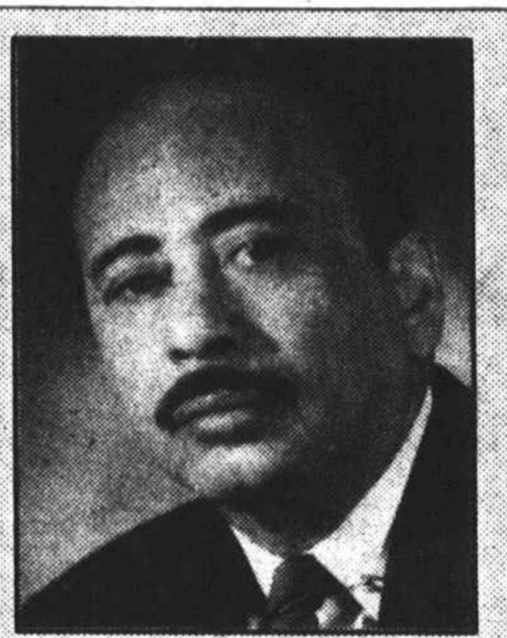
"We have agreed to take our plan and remove two of the at-large positions and to combine districts B and C," said Mr. Burke. "As far as I'm concerned, it's settled."

The election plan compromise would divide Forsyth County into two districts, one a predominantly Afro-American district and the other predominantly white. Two commissioners would be elected from the predominantly Afro-American district and four would be elected from the larger district. One commissioner would be elected at-large.

The two original plans evolved as the result of a lawsuit filed by the



Kennedy



Burke

National Association for the Advancement of Colored People against the Board of Commissioners. The lawsuit charged that the at-large, staggered term election method diluted the black vote.

County Commissioner John Holleman and NAACP President Walter Marshall agreed to a settlement the night before a scheduled court appearance. The result of the settlement was a plan which retained a five-member board and at-large general elections, but allowed for primary nominations by district. One district would have been 92 percent Afro-American.

Many Afro-American commu-

nity leaders opposed the plan as not going far enough to guarantee black representation.

Mrs. Kennedy and Mr. Burke introduced an alternative plan to increase the board to nine members and to eliminate staggered terms in response to a request from their constituents. Their plan called for the county to be divided into three districts, with each district electing two members, and three additional members elected at-large.

"Logan (Burke) and I basically decided that our main interest had to be representing our constituents," said Mrs. Kennedy. She said that

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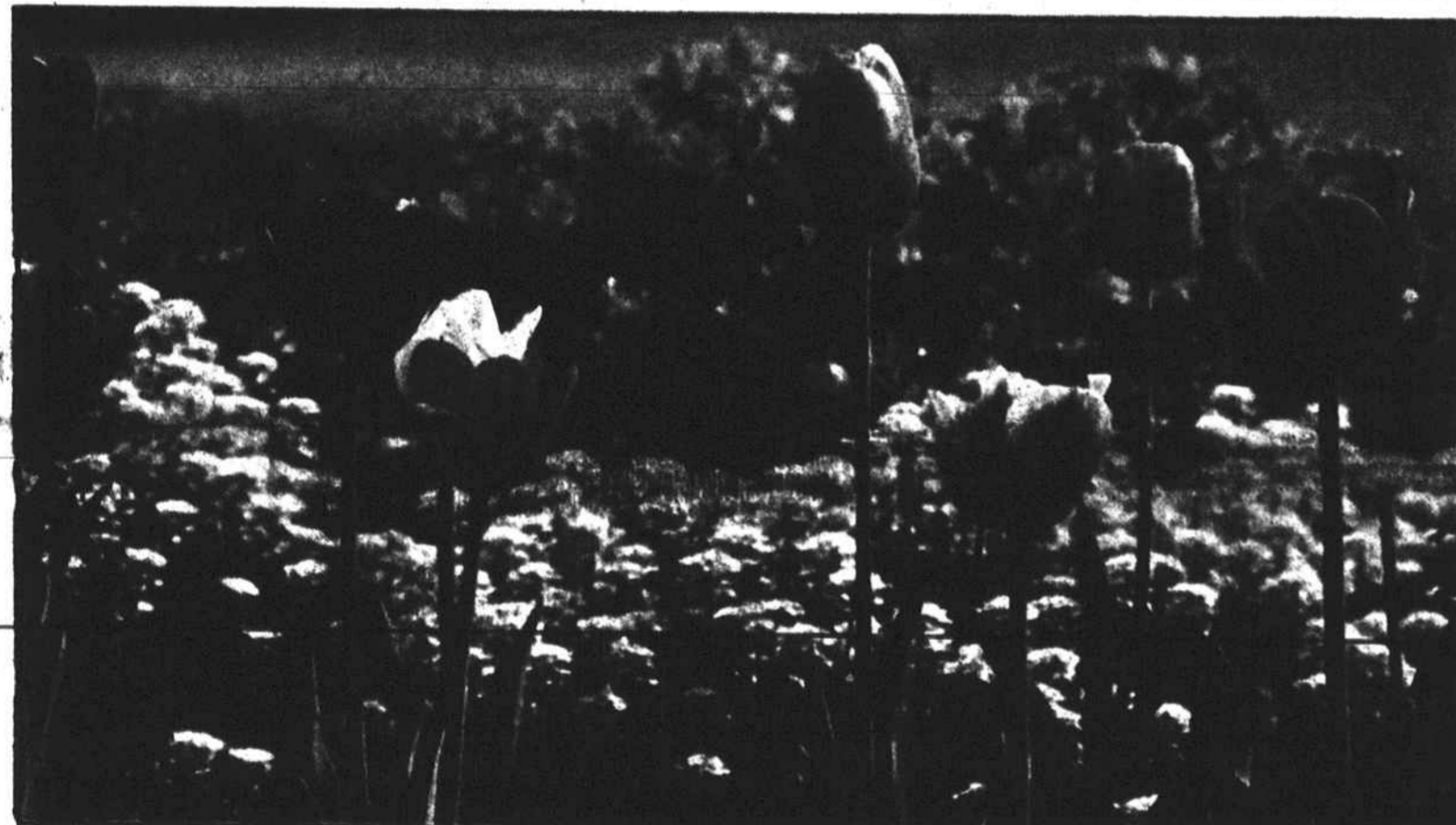


Photo by Sonja J. Cowing

Tiptoe Through The Tulips

Colorful tulips at the entrance of the Winston Lake YMCA bask in the sunny spring weather. The flowers were planted by the Prince Feather Garden Club.

Drew honored as myth clears about his death

By KATHY HOKE
Greensboro News & Record

HAW RIVER, N.C. (AP) -- For more than three decades, the story about the death of Dr. Charles Drew went like this:

Drew, a pioneer in blood research and teacher of black surgeons, was allowed to bleed to death in 1950 because doctors at the all-white hospital in Burlington refused to treat blacks.

It's a lie that a national medical group wants to debunk for good.

About 50 members of the Society of Black Academic Surgeons gathered recently at the place where Drew was fatally injured in a car crash April 1, 1950, on N.C. 49, two miles north of Haw River. They laid a wreath at a six-foot monument erected in 1986 at the scene of Drew's accident.

"It's in the public interest to break this myth," said Dr. Onye Akwari, a

surgery professor at Duke University Medical School and coordinator of a society seminar at Duke. "Historical truth should be very clearly documented. It's especially important for young people to know the truth."

The false story of Drew's death began shortly after the accident. No one knows exactly how it started, according to historian Charles E. Wynes of the University of Georgia. Wynes has written a book, "Charles Richard Drew: The Man and the Myth," published last year.

But the story about the Southern hospital refusing to give Drew adequate treatment wound up in history books, newspapers, magazines, an episode of the "MASH" television series and countless conversations.

"The entire nation, and not just the South," Wynes wrote, "was no stranger to stories about how blacks had been turned away from hospitals for all sorts of facile stated rea-

sons: no money, no room, 'too serious for our limited facilities,' and so on -- when the real reason was race.

"Sadly, some of those stories were true, and perhaps because they were, they somehow became attached to Drew. He became a black martyr -- the symbol for all those who actually were turned away because of their race."

The true story, Wynes and others say, is that Drew received proper treatment for his severe injuries.

Drew and three black doctors from Washington were driving through Alamance County on their way to an annual clinic at Tuskegee Institute in Alabama when Drew lost control of the car just after dawn. The car skidded into a corn field, threw Drew out and rolled over him.

About 15 minutes later, an ambulance arrived to take Drew and Dr.

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Afro-Americans, children most likely victims of handgun violence

By TONYA V. SMITH
Chronicle Staff Writer

An Afro-American man, who arrives home later than usual, refuses to tell his wife of his whereabouts. A heated argument ensues, a gunshot is heard and he lies dead.

A 16-year-old goes to his parents' room before school and later kills a substitute teacher and wounds two students because he received a failing grade in history class.

A 6-year-old and his 9-year-old brother home when they discover a handgun nestled between mattresses in the master bedroom. In their experimentation with what they think is a toy, the gun goes off and the nine-year-old boy is killed.

The preceding scenarios represent a very small portion of the more than 20,000 Americans killed in 1983 with handguns used in accidents, suicides and homicides, according to statistics from Handgun Control Inc. in Washington, D.C.

In 1988, 19 people were victims of homicides in Winston-Salem. Eight of those people were killed with handguns. Three others died from shotgun wounds. Ten of the people killed with either a shotgun or handgun were Afro-Americans.

"An area of increasing concern among America's national and local black leaders is the growing crisis of black-on-black violence, especial-

ly with handguns," said Dennis Smith, director of public education for the Center to Prevent Handgun Violence.

That concern arises from other statistics which indicate that one of every three Afro-American males who die, ages 15-24, are victims of homicide. Forty percent of all murder victims in the United States are Afro-Americans. That figure is more than three times the ratio of Afro-Americans to the total population of America. (Afro-Americans make up 12 percent of the country's population.)

"Blacks have historically had higher homicide rates than whites, but that has not always been the case," wrote Ramon G. McLeod in his report, "Young Black Men 'Endangered' -- Steep Rise in Violent Death." "After reaching a peak in 1980, the number of black victims declined until 1985, when the figures began to rise again. . . ."

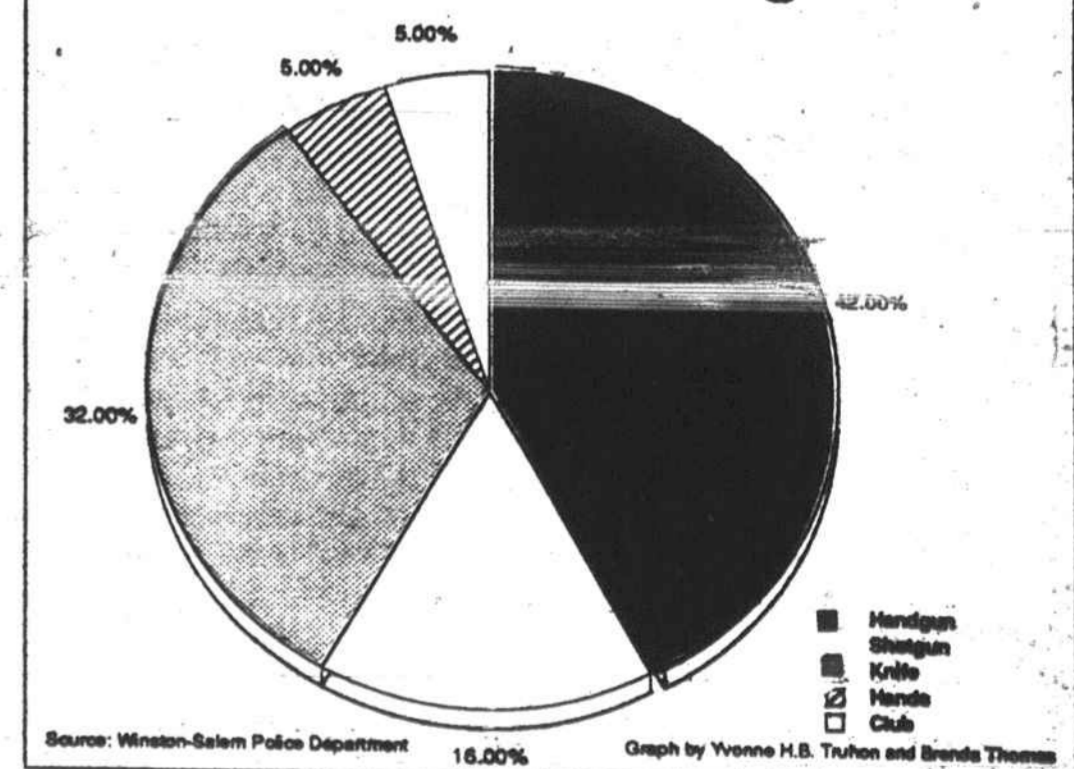
Firearms are the fifth-leading cause of unintentional death among children, ages 14 and under, in the United States, according to the National Safety Council.

In an effort to gather information about how the deaths occur and how to prevent them, the Center to Prevent Handgun Violence in Washington, D.C., examined 266 unintentional handgun shootings of children -- 140 deaths and 126 injuries -- from January 1986 to May 1988.

"The Center found that while the victim's home was the most com-

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Weapons Used in Homicides Occurring in Winston-Salem During 1988



Holton

New Democratic Party chair: Aggressive action is needed

By TONYA V. SMITH
Chronicle Staff Writer

With Walter C. Holton holding the leadership reins, the Forsyth County Democratic Party will be a well-oiled machine with finances and other resources that will enable the average working person -- Afro-American or white -- the opportunity to run for and be elected to office, said the new party chairman.

"What scares me is that the political process may be some-

thing only the very wealthy can participate in the way it's headed," said Mr. Holton, who was elected chairman April 22. "We need cafeteria workers and teachers. We need those people in government as elected officials. We don't need only businessmen and wealthy people as elected officials, because they don't represent the majority of the people."

Mr. Holton replaces Michael Wells who had served as chair for two, two-year terms -- the maximum number for the Democratic

Party.

Mr. Holton is a city native, graduating from R.J. Reynolds High School in 1973. He did his undergraduate studies at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and graduated from Wake Forest University's law school in 1984. He practices criminal law out of his private office in the Business and Technology Center at 1001 South Marshall Street.

Mr. Holton is a third-generation attorney and said he followed the lead of his father and grandfa-

ther because a law degree opens doors to other opportunities in public service. However, he added, a law degree is not a prerequisite to one's ability to contribute to his community although it is helpful.

Admitting he could aspire to higher political heights in Raleigh or the District of Columbia, Mr. Holton said he likes calling Winston-Salem home.

"I'm from Winston-Salem and went to Brunson (Elementary School), Wiley (Middle School)

and Reynolds, and I live here and intend to live here and don't intend to move," said Mr. Holton, 33. "I feel like I can contribute something to the community, hopefully, and I think in politics it's very important to maintain extremely close ties with your home community."

While the party's agenda is not finalized, Mr. Holton said the basic structure of what the party hopes to accomplish over the next two years has been outlined. He

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