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Mitchell arraignment scheduled for Monday

By TONYA V. SMITH
Chronicle Staff Writer

Sammy Lee Mitchell, the man charged earlier this week in the 1984 stabbing death of Deborah B. Sykes, is scheduled for a first court appearance Monday, said District Attorney Warren Sparrow.

Mr. Mitchell, 34, is scheduled to be arraigned - called before the court to hear the formal charges against him and respond to them, but he could waive that process, Mr. Sparrow said.

"He has the option of signing a

waiver which says the judge or the DA does not have to read the formal charges to him," the district attorney explained. "But most of the time, when the death penalty could be imposed, there is an arraignment."

Darryl E. Hunt, a close friend of Mr. Mitchell's, was tried and convicted of raping and stabbing Mrs. Sykes in 1985, but that conviction was overturned by the state Supreme Court last May. Surry County District Attorney H. Dean Bowman has yet to decide whether

he will retry Mr. Hunt on charges that he killed Mrs. Sykes.

The North Carolina Bar excused Mr. Sparrow from the case after it ruled that his involvement would constitute a conflict of interest because two of his assistants, Todd Burke and Vincent F. Rabil, were members of Mr. Hunt's defense team.

Prosecutors must now decide how Mr. Mitchell will be tried, Mr. Sparrow said. If Mr. Bowman decides to retry Mr. Hunt, the two defendants in the case could be tried

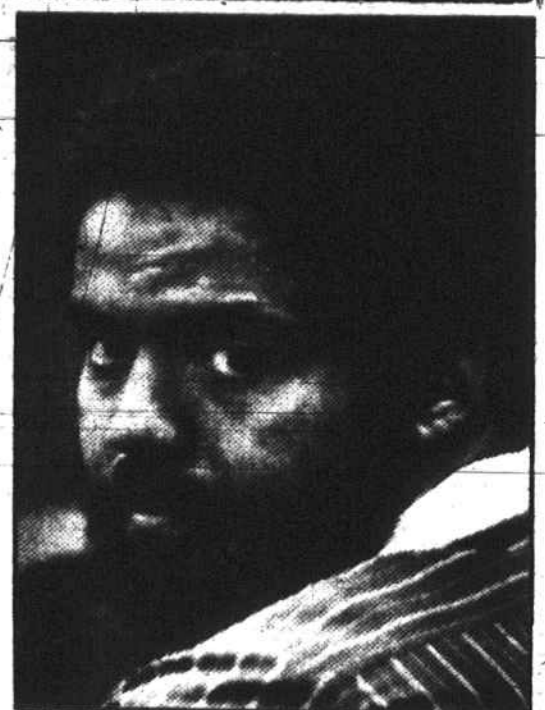
together. Or, Mr. Sparrow could represent the state against Sammy Mitchell.

"That's something we haven't made a final decision on," Mr. Sparrow said. "At this point we're discussing it. We don't have a target date."

The most recent charges pair the two friends, Mr. Hunt and Mr. Mitchell, together again. Both were convicted in 1983 in the beating death of Arthur Lee Wilson. Mr. Mitchell was serving a 50-year conviction in the Randolph County

Prison and Mr. Hunt was in the Southern Correctional Institution in Troy. Mr. Hunt's conviction in the Wilson case was overturned by the state Court of Appeals, but Mr. Mitchell's was upheld. Mr. Hunt was serving a life in prison term for the second degree murder of Mrs. Sykes before he was released on bond last November.

On Aug. 10, 1984, the day Mrs. Sykes was killed, Mr. Mitchell said he and Mr. Hunt were together at a friend's house. He provided that



Sammy Mitchell

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More blacks vie for county seat

23-yr-old seeks state office

By TONYA V. SMITH
Chronicle Staff Writer

A first grade teacher, former law student and the county's first Afro-American commissioner are among those who've recently announced their bids for public office.

Annette Beatty, an educator at Southwest Elementary School, filed earlier this week and will challenge Chairman John S. Holleman Jr. for his seat on the Forsyth County Board of Commissioners.

"I have decided to run for two particular reasons," said Miss Beatty, 38. "First, I'm real concerned about the quality of life in Winston-Salem. The quality of life includes the environment, the development of social and economic standards and procedures. And a good quality of life is necessary to ensure the progress of Forsyth County.

"I'm also concerned about the attitudes of Forsyth County residents because I believe attitudes that are prevalent in our community have a direct bearing on

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Associated Press Laser Photo

Remembering Dr. King

Coretta Scott King, widow of slain civil rights leader Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., looks on Monday with her daughter Bernice, left, as Martin Luther King III places a wreath at the grave of Dr. King at the Martin Luther King Center in Atlanta. The ceremonies were part of King Week '90.

Aldermen hear panel's report, OK drug policy

By TONYA V. SMITH
Chronicle Staff Writer

Two housing projects, designed to lure upwardly mobile Afro-Americans back to East Winston, a shopping center and a business park could metamorphose a blighted area into one that's competitive and financially lucrative for Winston-Salem, consultant Clifton W. Henry told the city Board of Aldermen Monday night.

In response to his presentation, on behalf of the East Winston Economic Development Task Force, the aldermen directed the city staff to prepare a comprehensive implementation and funding plan for the four projects. Staff will report back to the aldermen in March.

For nearly two years, the mayor-appointed task force has been developing a strategy to promote economic development in East Winston. About a year ago, the task force retained the services of Hammer, Siler, George Associates, a consulting firm in Silver Spring, Md., and

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Local NAACP officials get share of hate mail

By ANGELA WRIGHT
Chronicle Managing Editor

The local branch of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People has not received any mail bombs, but president Walter Marshall said recently that hate mail is a constant.

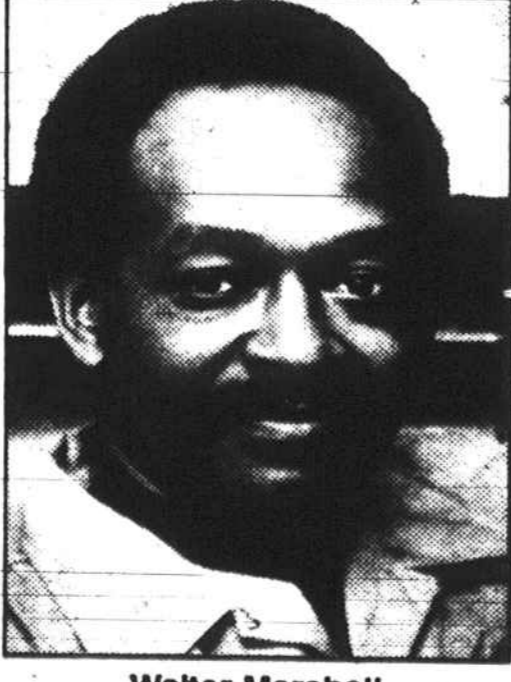
Mr. Marshall said that the FBI recently advised him and other NAACP officers to scrutinize incoming mail carefully and to call authorities if they find any suspicious packages.

A rash of mail bombings last month in Alabama, Florida and

Georgia prompted FBI agents to alert NAACP officials across the Carolinas to the possibility of danger.

One of the bombs was discovered at the NAACP headquarters in Jacksonville, Fla. It was safely removed. Two other bombs exploded, one killed a federal judge in Birmingham; the other killed a lawyer in Savannah.

Mr. Marshall recently revealed a sample of the type of hate mail received in the local office. It is a voluminous package - more than 200 pages - of racial insults and



Walter Marshall

news clippings highlighting stories that identify suspects and criminals

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Black enrollment up at N.C. schools

GREENSBORO (AP) -- The number of black students in North Carolina's universities has gone up, officials say, while across the nation black enrollment has been declining.

Officials at North Carolina's universities say their intensified efforts aimed at recruiting black students has led to a black enrollment increase of 22 percent at the state's 16 public university campuses between 1976 and 1986.

"The rise in black enrollment is good news for all North Carolinians," UNC President C.D. Spangler said in a report to the Board of Governors in November. "I am heartened that our efforts to encourage them to continue their education is paying off."

Meanwhile, across the rest of the nation, the line is going in the opposite direction, especially for low- and middle-income blacks.

An annual survey by the American Council on Education released Monday shows that college enrollment for blacks and Hispanics has dropped significantly since the mid-1970s.

The report says that since 1976 the enrollment of 18-24 year olds who are dependent on their families is up 3.6 percent for whites, but is down 12 percent for blacks.

The study describes those figures as "an educational failure rate of intolerable magnitude."

But this academic year, black enrollment in the University of North

Carolina system increased slightly faster than the overall student population, officials told the Greensboro News & Record.

While total enrollment for 1989-90 rose 2.9 percent, black enrollment increased 3.3 percent, UNC officials said.

Black enrollment in the UNC system rose 4.2 percent at the five historically black schools and 1.8 percent at the predominantly white institutions.

It's difficult to pinpoint the reasons North Carolina colleges are having such success in attracting blacks.

Admissions officers interviewed Monday offered these possibilities:

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Darryl Eugene Hunt: Trying for a new lease on life

By ANGELA WRIGHT
Chronicle Managing Editor

He now goes by the name Muhammad Atibah, and he still wears a broad-faced grin that shows no hint of anger or resentment.

The man, who is better known as Darryl Eugene Hunt, is calm, friendly and humble, despite a five-year incarceration for crimes that many people say they believe he did not commit.

Mr. Hunt has been "free" just short of two months. He was released from prison on the eve of Thanksgiving, after the two murder convictions for which he was imprisoned were overturned.

He said recently that he has spent most of the time since his release just readjusting to the outside world.

"It was hard, at first, actually realizing that I'm out. It took at least a week for it to really dawn upon me that I was actually out," he said.

It is a tenuous freedom, haunted by the threat of being retried for both murders.

In June 1985, Mr. Hunt was convicted of the August 1984 murder of Deborah B. Sykes, a copy editor with the now defunct Winston-Salem Journal-Sentinel.

The case fueled racial tensions in the city. Mr. Hunt's supporters argued that he was being railroaded because prosecutors were eager to punish an Afro-American man for the murder of a white woman.

"I want to give back to the community the support they have given me. I know I'll never be able to do it. It will take me two or three lifetimes. I give deepest thanks to this community."
-- Darryl Hunt

Two years later he was convicted of second-degree murder in the 1983 stabbing death of Arthur Lee Wilson.

In May 1989, the state Supreme Court ruled that prosecutors improperly used hearsay evidence to obtain a conviction in the Sykes case. The court overturned that conviction.

In October 1989, the N. C. Court of Appeals overturned Hunt's conviction in the Wilson case.

Members of the Darryl Hunt Defense Committee subsequently posted a \$50,000 bond and called on District Attorney Warren Sparrow to drop the charges against Mr. Hunt in the Sykes case and reopen the investigation.

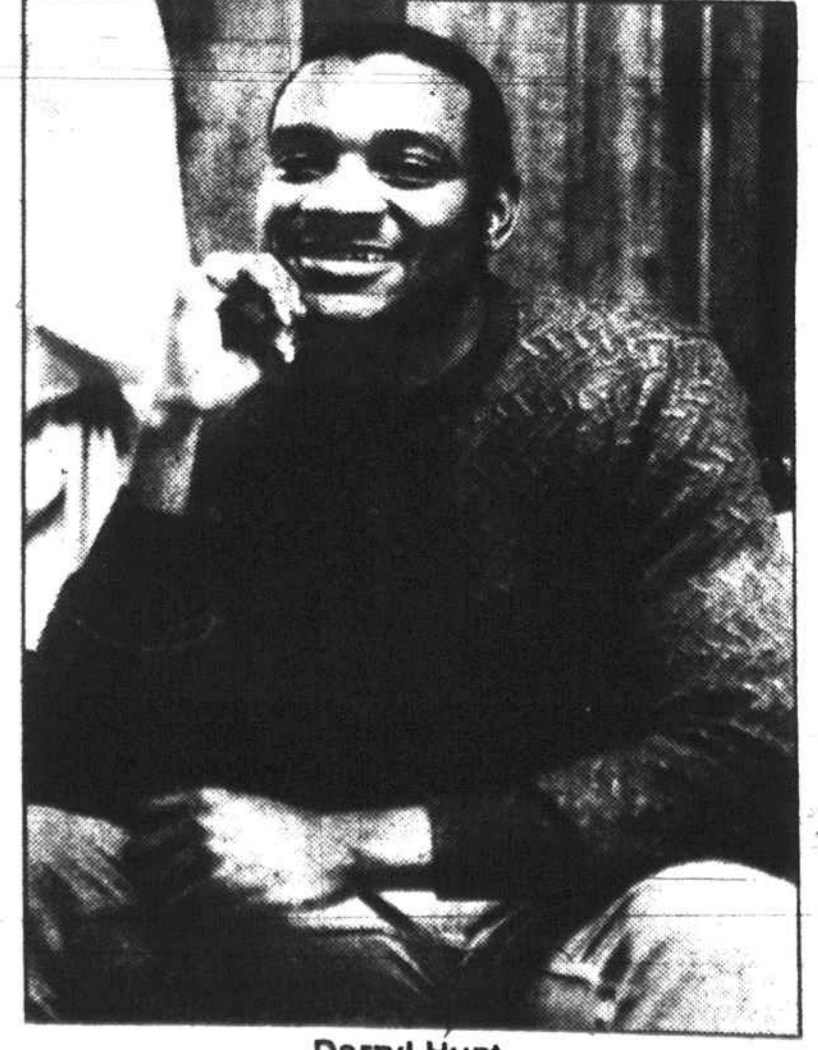
Mr. Sparrow, however, turned the Sykes case over to Surry County district attorney H. Dean Bowman, who has not

decided whether to retry Mr. Hunt. Mr. Sparrow has said that he intends to retry Mr. Hunt for second-degree murder in the Wilson case.

The possibility of being retried doesn't seem to bother Mr. Hunt, who becomes quite philosophical when asked about the matter.

"That's typical," he said calmly of Mr. Sparrow's announcement. "It's a political thing. I'm being used as a pawn to keep him (Sparrow) a job. He knows I'm innocent, but he's just doing his job."

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Darryl Hunt