

# Sumler sentenced

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minimum-security correctional facilities on Wednesday, September 16.

Immediately after the sentencing, former alderman Larry Little denounced the investigation itself.

"This kind of thing is customarily done. As a former alderman, I can say that a lot of us used influence to try to push things, to get people to use black businesses. I thought that was my job."

Textile mogul and philanthropist Gordon Hanes, who appeared as a character witness for Hairston, called the trial and sentence "a gross miscarriage of justice." Before the three were sentenced, he told the judge that 68-year-old Hairston was "completely honest" and that "I find it hard to believe that public interest will be served by sending this nice old man

to jail."

The prosecution argued that Sumler's belligerent attitude during the investigation and during the trial was proof that he was not reticent. Sumler sought and received a court-paid attorney, but prosecutor Doug Cannon said that during the trial, Sumler had bought a house in his wife's name.

Osteen said he was "mystified by this defendant's behavior during the trial. I saw no support for the argument that Mr. Sumler is indigent. If he did falsify that information, that's a separate indictment. I'm setting it aside now. I'm not going to consider it here."

Mack's witnesses included her former employer, Winston-Salem Urban League CEO "D" Smith, who praised her work with black families and compared her to Fan-

nie Lou Hamer and Ida Wells.

"Because of Ms. Mack's encounters, her direct influence, we have had women become drug-free, reconnect with their families, and seek and gain employment for the first time," said Smith. "She is the elder who continues to carry the torch."

The judge noted that he was influenced by the many letters of support he received from the community on behalf of all three defendants. One letter, from Sumler's own mother, was particularly long and sad, he said. "If you think that doesn't have an influence on a sentencing judge, you're wrong."

Most supporters asked that they be put on probation.

"Under the most favorable conditions, I couldn't do that," said Osteen.

## What the defendants said . . .

▲ Before sentencing, the Rev. Lee Faye Mack, Patrick Hairston and Rodney Sumler delivered these words to the Court

*Your Honor, I just want to say that the only thing I ever did was to serve this community, and I did it with honor, and for no gain of my own. At no time did I do anything I knew was wrong. I may not have understood everything, but I did not do wrong intentionally.*

*(Turning to face the courtroom) I want to apologize to the community for even bringing them into this. I am sad in my heart for the community.*

*You do what you have to do. I want to say this to this room: you have to be strong for this community. I want my children to be strong. Everything I did and said was the truth. They made me a criminal.*

*(To the judge) Whatever you decide, I will abide by it. Thank you so much.*

—the Rev. Lee Faye Mack

*I know it's not going to happen, but I'd like you to say, "dismissed," so I can go home.*

*I stand here, not guilty. But I don't want this to tear up the neighborhood. I want my people to get together and work out our differences.*

*I'm sorry to come to this at my age. Had I been*

*guilty, I would have come to you and said so. My brothers and sisters, we need some economics.*

— Patrick Hairston

*I'd like to apologize to the Court, my family, and the community for my conduct that brought me to this point. I didn't run my business like the Harvard Business School, but that doesn't make me a criminal.*

*I'm guilty of poor management, poor record-keeping, and poor judgment, but I worked hard in the community to give back. My family and I have chosen to live in neighborhood where there are serious problems with crime, and we have tried to make a difference.*

*Mrs. Mack has been an inspiration to me, and I'd like to apologize to Mrs. Mack for any trouble to her. But I am proud of the Back To Life Center, and now there is a church where there was none, and where souls are being saved.*

*I thank God for Mrs. Mack and the Back To Life Center.*

— Rodney Sumler

## Who's Killing the Chickens?

Part one of two parts . . .

A few years ago, a distinguished black clergyman wrote a book entitled, "Who Is Killing The Church?" There were the usual suspects including the deacons, trustees, missionary society, usher board, senior choir and even the BTU — all suspected of having a hand in the untimely death of the Church.

As I recall, there was a right-plenty of finger pointing, but nobody actually confessed, leaving the author to speculate as to who might the real killer be?

Now if that brother had asked, "Who is killing the chickens?" instead of who is killing the church, everybody — members and visiting friends included — would have stood up proudly declaring, "We are! We are the ones killing the chickens."

And they'd be dead right too, because it is a known fact that Black folks are killing chickens left and right, morning noon and night — especially on Sunday afternoon.

Do I lie? Why, just this past Sunday one local Baptist congregation placed an order for over 200 chickens, a Holiness church ordered 300, while one Episcopal church saw fit to order some 30 hens. Multiply that number by the number of Black churches you know of and already you can see the magnitude of our consumption. Why in just 10 years time, we black folks will have slaughtered nearly 10 billion chickens.

### Why are we killing so many chickens?

Our consumption of chicken has been calculated to be the equivalent of 3.2% of this nation's GNP. In fact our demand has reached such proportion that, as one brother recently told me (while I sat in the barber shop), white chicken producers have gone to producing chickens using steroids so that the birds will be ready in six weeks instead of the usual six months it used to take for them to grow naturally. It was either use steroids or get prepared for a riot by blacks all over this country.

Yes, good Christian brothers and sisters, it is we who are leading these innocent birds to their slaughter. It is we who are killing Chanti-

clear the Rooster, Henny Penny and the little Red Hen.

Now, was it that these chickens had sinned, as indeed we have? Nooooooooh. Was it that their parents had sinned, as did our parents? Nooooooh? Well what exactly is it that compels us to conduct this weekly mass slaughter, this chicken genocide on truly one of God's kindest creatures — a poor and defenseless bird?

Did I hear somebody say that bird tastes good? Yes sir, and did I hear a second? Yes my friends. is

around outside in the barnyard stepping in and out of the you-know-what. All of which is of no concern to the chicken-feet-eaters.

As one older gentleman told me recently, "Son, I don't worry none about where them feet's been today, it's where them feet going tonight that I'm concerned with!" Yes, let the word get out that somebody is frying chicken feet and you are bound to draw a crowd. But even the feet don't tell the whole story.

There are chicken gizzards and



## ON THE AVANT-GARDE

By TANG NIVRI

there any finer bird than the barnyard pimp? None. No question about it, it's the taste that got chicken in trouble in the first place.

The bird simply tastes too good to leave it alone. Fry it and it tastes good. Boil it and it tastes good. Bake it and it tastes good, too.

Chicken is so good that even uppity-buppity, high society, bridge playing, nouveau riche' black folks eat chicken, albeit, chicken caserole, Cordon-Bleu, Teriyaki, Hawaiian, or Chicken Cacciatore.

It's a universal truth — young and old, rich or desperate — black folks everywhere know how to eat themselves some chicken.

### The Whole Chicken Tastes Good

And it ain't just the breast, leg, thigh, or wing that really drives folks crazy. If you want to sho' nuff start something, you get folks to talking about eating chicken feet.

Yes, chicken feet, those scrawny little toes that probably spent half-a-lifetime pecking

chicken livers. Never mind what liable to be found IN the gizzard, there are plenty of folks who under no circumstances will ever let the gizzard pass without a fight. And livers, "Yes ma'am, I'll take a pound of those chicken livers, please."

But neither chicken feet, liver, gizzard, or the neck can touch the chicken back. If you really want to see something funny, get a bunch of older sisters together and serve them some baked chicken. One by one, while nobody is looking, they will motion for you to come over to the side and whisper in you ear something like, "Honey, now you save me that back, you hear me?"

Which means that they want the chicken booty for themselves — nobody else. Once they get their hands on that chicken back, you talking about somebody really being happy then.

And for the rest who missed out on the back, there's always the chicken neck, whose bones make for mighty good after dinner sucking.

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