



Ronald Nelson is overcome with emotion as he surveys the charred remains of Matthews Murkland Presbyterian Church's old sanctuary last Sunday in Charlotte. A 13-year-old white girl was charged with setting the fire that destroyed the church.

## Authorities arrest 13-year-old

From AP and Chronicle Staff Reports

CHARLOTTE — A 13-year-old white girl was arrested this week on charges that she set fire last week to the predominately black Matthews Murkland Presbyterian Church.

Authorities have withheld the name of the girl because she is a minor. They called the girl "troubled" and said privately that she practiced witchcraft.

Charlotte police said they found no evidence of a conspiracy involving the teenager, who was charged with setting the fire last Thursday at a sanctuary used to store pews on the grounds of the Matthews Murkland Presbyterian Church.

The Rev. William Hill, pastor of the Matthews Murkland church, which owned the 87-year-old structure, said he is glad the burning was not racially motivated, but is just as troubled that it occurred.

Hill also said he was concerned about how the Charlotte incident will affect the debate about previous fires.

"I have some deep concern for my fellow brothers whose fires were racially motivated," Hill said. "I don't want this whole issue to cloud the fact that those other 30 are not racially motivated because this may not be."

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# Winston-Salem Chronicle

••C007 The Choice for African-American News and Information

THURSDAY, June 13, 1996

icated to the Memory of Clarence E. Nottingham: 1903-1995

VOL. XXII, No. 44

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## 400 march to U.S. Justice Department

▲Protesters deliver 1  
million letters to Reno

By BRIDGET EVARTS  
Special to the Chronicle

WASHINGTON, D.C. — More than 400 people marched to the U.S. Justice Department offices recently to hand-deliver one million letters to Attorney General Janet Reno, demanding a new trial for Philadelphia journalist and death row inmate Mumia Abu-Jamal.

As if on a mock guided tour of Washington, they wound their way from Howard University to pause, first in front of the offices of National Public Radio on Massachusetts Avenue, and then outside the massive building that houses the FBI. The two stops on the march called attention to both organizations' involvement in Abu-Jamal's case.

Under the covert Cointelpro surveillance program, the FBI amassed a 700-page file on Abu-Jamal, beginning when he was a 15-year-old minister of communications for a Philadelphia chapter of the Black Panther Party.

NPR signed a contract with Abu-Jamal to air his commentaries last year, but canceled the "Live From Death Row" broadcasts under pressure from the Fraternal Order of Police. The Prison Radio Project and Abu-Jamal recently filed a \$2 million lawsuit against NPR for breach of contract.

Abu-Jamal was arrested in 1981 for the shooting death of police officer Daniel Faulkner, and the ensuing murder trial has been called a "miscarriage of justice" by Abu-Jamal's supporters. Reno has said that she would grant Abu-Jamal a new trial if evidence of a conspiracy was found in his first trial.

Abu-Jamal was sentenced to death in 1982 by Judge Albert Sabo. Sabo, described as a "prosecutor in robes" by members of the

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Otis Sellers, left, Dionne B.K. Jenkins and Hubert Lash were among the nine African-American plaintiffs of the Bethania Town Lot Committee who won a permanent injunction preventing the city of Winston-Salem from annexing 2,100 acres of Bethania.

## Bethania annexation nixed

By JOHN HINTON  
Chronicle Senior Staff Writer

Forsyth County Superior Court Judge Todd Burke issued a permanent injunction this week preventing the city of Winston-Salem from annexing 2,100 acres within the town of Bethania, giving the plaintiffs a rare victory over a local government.

The state law "An Act to Revive the Charter of the Town of Bethania," which reduced Bethania's boundaries from the 2,500-acre lot to 400 acres, was unconstitutional, Burke said in his ruling. The N.C. General Assembly passed the act last year.

"We won this baby," said Annie Brown Kennedy, whose son Harvey Kennedy argued the case of the Bethania Town Lot Committee, the plaintiffs, before Burke in a packed courtroom on Monday. Burke's ruling returns the town of Bethania to its original 2,500-acre lot.

There was no reaction to Burke's ruling immediately inside the courtroom as he warned the crowd of 120 people, mostly Bethanian residents opposed to the annexation, to discuss the case outside the courtroom.

After Burke had ruled, several plaintiffs hugged and congratulated the Kennedys. It is rare for a citizens group to prevent a city from annexing neighboring communities, said a smiling Harvey Kennedy.

"That is the end of it, unless the city appeals," he said. "We won."

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## Watt demands apology from

▲House speaker  
spreads rumor

By JOHN HINTON  
Chronicle Senior Staff Writer

U.S. Rep. Melvin Watt, D-N.C., joined other Congressional Democrats in demanding an apology from House Speaker Newt Gingrich for spreading rumors that Commerce Department staff might have shredded documents following the plane crash that killed Secretary Ronald L. Brown.

"Newt Gingrich's remarks are reprehensible and out of line," Watt said in a statement from his Washington, D.C., office. "To demean the memory of an individual who died in service to our country takes irresponsibility to a new level."

Gingrich spokesman Tony Blankley confirmed last week that, in a closed meeting with other Republicans, Gingrich had suggested there might have been a cover-up to get rid of Brown's papers after he died. Brown had been under investigation regarding his finances.

Brown and 34 others were on a trade mission when their Air Force plane crashed in Croatia on April 4.

The allegations were first made by the American Spectator, a conservative publication. Gingrich repeated them last Tuesday in a closed meeting with several hundred GOP directors of congressional districts.

Blankley said Gingrich was unapologetic.



U.S. Rep.  
Mel Watt



House Speaker  
Newt Gingrich



Commerce  
Secretary  
Ron Brown

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This Week in Black History

June 13, 1967  
Thurgood Marshall, U.S. solicitor general, named to the Supreme Court by President Johnson. He was confirmed by the Senate on August 30 and became the first black Supreme Court justice.



## New Generation opens avenues for youth

By MAURICE CROCKER  
Community News Reporter

Several men from Winston-Salem are trying to change the image of the African-American community and the destructive trends of the community's youth.

They have founded the "New Generation Social Club," which consists of 10 African-American men ranging in age from 26 to 34.

"We were basically just sitting around, looking at the ways of our youth, and decided to do something," said Willie McLendon, vice president.

Besides looking at what the youth were doing, the organization's members also analyzed

their participation and decided to get involved, McLendon said.

"A lot of people are talking about the youth and their problems, but those same people aren't helping out," he said.

According to McLendon, the primary focus of the organization is to show the youth that a life of crime is not the only choice available.

He also said the youth need to know and understand that there are some repercussions to selling drugs and committing other crimes.

"What we want to do is show our youth a better way to succeed, rather than just making fast money," McLendon said.

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At left, Durrelle Ingram, president of the "New Generation Social Club," stands with Willie McLendon, vice president. The project is geared toward helping youth.

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