

# Coach arrested, charged with writing racist graffiti

VIRGINIA BEACH, Va. (AP) - A black former high school basketball coach charged with defacing a school with racist graffiti held a press conference to insist he was innocent and charge that he had been framed.

"Someone had to be named, someone had to be tagged. I am that person," Glenn M. Veasy, 26, said during a Christmas Eve press conference at his home.

"I am innocent and feel that way strongly," Veasy - who had coached for First Colonial High School - said he buckled during an "enormous interrogation" by police, and he made statements he shouldn't have made.

Asked if detectives thought they had a solid case, police spokesman Lou Thurston said: "Most definitely. The investigation was

extensive, and detectives gathered a tremendous amount of evidence."

Veasy was charged with painting racist messages directed at himself, his basketball team, and First Colonial administrators.

The graffiti was first discovered at the high school Dec. 1. Three more incidents followed the first vandalism, including one at First Colonial on Tuesday, the day Veasy was arrested.

In an interview given shortly after the first incident, Veasy said the vandal was "someone who has a problem that we have an abundance of black players on the basketball team." During Wednesday's press conference, he read from a two-page, handwritten statement, and broke into sobs.

"To my players, keep playing hard," he said. "My thoughts are with you always. ... To

the real criminals, you have ended my coaching career, and any career in the school system. You've taken a lot from me, but you can't take my spirit."

He said he was told to resign as First Colonial's basketball coach. But school spokesman Joe Lowenthal said Veasy's resignation was voluntary. Veasy is a teaching assistant at Seatack Elementary School, but he said he no longer considers himself a school-system employee.

However, Lowenthal said "there has been no administrative action taken whatsoever pending investigation."

Thurston said the police investigation into the graffiti at First Colonial and other similar cases was continuing. Anti-black graffiti also was discovered at Seatack Elementary and at Virginia Beach Middle School.



Trey Williams of West Forsyth drives against East Forsyth in the opening round of the Frank Spencer Classic (above). (below) Ben Petty of Carver goes up for a shot against Parkland.



## Ninth-grade tournament bracket pairings and times changed

Due to a scheduling conflict, Parkland's ninth-grade team will not participate in this year's Lash/Chronicle Tournament. The Mustangs, the defending champions, will be replaced by South Rowan. However, the pairings for the tournament have been changed and the dates have also. Reynolds will play against Greensboro Smith in the opening round of the tournament on Friday (Jan. 2) at 10 a.m. Mount

Tabor will take on South Rowan at 12 noon. The championship game of the ninth-grade bracket will be held on Saturday (Jan. 3) at 12 noon. The consolation game will be held at 10 a.m. on Saturday. With those changes, the consolation game in the junior varsity bracket will also change. That game will be played on Monday (Jan. 5) at 6 p.m.

## Wendell Scott, black pioneer on NASCAR circuit, honored with street name

DANVILLE, Va. (AP) - When Wendell Scott was a race car driver, he had more to worry about than simply crossing the finish line first. The first black driver in the history of what is now NASCAR also had to defend himself against his fellow racers. Scott - who died seven years ago - was commemorated this week when Keens Mill Road was renamed Wendell Scott Drive in his honor. The green signs, which bear an emblem reading "NASCAR Racing Legend," along with Scott's Number 34 race car, were put up at intersections along the length of the street. Carl "Collie" Simpson, a Gretna resident, was a friend and racing contemporary of Scott's, who witnessed firsthand some of the indignities suffered by NASCAR's first black driver. "We raced together many years ago," said Simpson, who met Scott in 1951. "They (white drivers) would run him off the track in the beginning. But those that

did that began responding to his ability years later. "A lot of hearts were changed." Simpson also recalled having to purchase food for Scott in restaurants that would serve only whites. Through it all, Simpson said, Scott remained undaunted. Scott's family was pleased that Tuesday's ceremony finally recognized his accomplishments. "The timing is beautiful in that this is the day my father passed away seven years ago," said Scott's daughter, Sybil Scott. "We're seeing a dream being realized at a time of year that can usually be a down time for us." City Councilwoman Joyce Glaise, who first proposed the name-change in October, said the honor for the Scott family was overdue. "But anytime we can recognize someone who has put so much into their chosen field as Wendell did, it's a good time," she said. "It's always good to be recognized by your hometown."

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