



HAWS executive director Marie Roseboro took her usual seat by board chairman Bill Andrews Tuesday. After a heated discussion, board members voted to dismiss Roseboro.

Roseboro ousted after split board vote

By KEVIN WALKER
THE CHRONICLE

After it was all over—a room full of grassroots supporters, words of praise from elected officials nor a rousing sermon by the Rev. Lee Faye Mack could save Marie Roseboro's job.

The executive director of the housing authority was fired Tuesday night after a 3-2 vote by the HAWS board of commissioners. The vote was split along racial lines with white commissioners Ellen Hazzard and William Benton voting to keep Roseboro at the helm and African American members William Andrews, Ernie Pitt and Louise

Davis voting for her dismissal.

In a statement, Andrews, the board's chairman, said he appreciated the job Roseboro did during her tenure, but that the board needed to seek an executive director better equipped with "education" and "training" for the position.

"The purpose of this board action is to immediately provide the expert management and leadership that this agency requires. The areas of financial management, HUD Contractual Relationships, Business and Community Relationships and Human Resource Management are of particular focus and concern," the statement read.

Roseboro sat beside Andrews through the

board's regular meeting, her last as executive director, before the board went into a three hour closed session to discuss her future. She told members of the press that she felt "betrayed" by the vote.

Roseboro—who often said her goal was to stop families from making public housing a generational cycle—has been ensnared by detractors, both in and out of the agency, since she took over the post almost two years ago.

Most recently, Roseboro has come under fire after a tenant went on a wild shopping spree after cashing a \$28,054 check sent to her

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Black lawmakers demand apology for bumper sticker

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

RALEIGH — Some black lawmakers are demanding that a state senator apologize for a bumper sticker he distributed this week describing his sentiments on welfare.

During the selection of 21 counties allowed to experiment with their own welfare programs on Wednesday, Sen. Hugh Webster distributed bumper stickers proclaiming "Can't Feed 'Em, Don't Breed 'Em."

"I think that's the essence of welfare reform," said Webster, R-Caswell. "I want to help the unable, but damn the unwilling."

Rep. Toby Fitch, D-Wilson, said Webster humiliated poor people.

"What bothers me the most is that Senator Webster felt comfortable enough to personally hand such garbage out to the press," Fitch said Friday.

Rep. Mary McAllister, D-Cumberland, said the sticker was an insult to women of all ethnic groups.

Webster was traveling to Nevada to attend his son's wedding and was not available for comment Friday.

The head of the Robeson County NAACP issued a statement saying the sticker "simply demonstrates the sickness in many Caucasian conservatives regardless of party."

"After Africans in this country endured years of breeding by white masters, we must now listen to Caucasian conservatives remind us of the sting of slavery," said the Rev. Franklin Bowden Jr. "Though I

See Bumper sticker on A11

SCLC founder vows to continue mission

By DAMON FORD
THE CHRONICLE

The Rev. Fred Shuttlesworth has fond memories growing up on a farm outside Birmingham, Ala.

He and his two brothers and six sisters woke up early in the morning to feed the chickens and milk the cows and later in the heat of the day they would head out to the fields to pick peas and collards.

Life was filled with hard work but young Shuttlesworth enjoyed doing "all the things a country boy does."

But there was always another desire to fulfill—a life in the ministry. "Since my youth I have always wanted to be a preacher," Shuttlesworth said.

And he's done just that for more than 50 years as founder and pastor of the Greater New Light Baptist Church in Cincinnati. But at the ripe old age of 76, some observers would call Shuttlesworth more than a preacher, they would call him a legend in the civil rights struggle.

Shuttlesworth was in town last weekend to celebrate the 15th anniversary of Emmanuel Baptist Church pastor John Mendez.

"I don't consider myself as a legend," he said. "I consider myself chosen by God to fulfill a task such as Moses or Paul. God knew He would need a tough individual in Birmingham, Alabama."

Shuttlesworth was thrown in the fire in the 60s when members of the Klu Klux Klansmen bombed his home. Fear never entered his heart though he knew his wife and five children could have been hurt. Instead of running away, Shuttlesworth joined with the Rev. Martin Luther

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The long way to school



Photo by Bruce Chapman

Russell Freeman, Monta White and Erich Forte (left to right) have all been suspended from North Forsyth High School. The youth and their parents allege school officials are targeting youth from the Georgetown subdivision. "If I didn't live in Georgetown, I probably still could go to North," White said.

Parents up in arms over suspensions

By KEVIN WALKER
THE CHRONICLE

Finding a seat on a bus pulling out of the Georgetown community bound for North Forsyth High School isn't much of a chore.

Over the years, a large number of African American male students in the middle-class community adjacent to Old Town have been booted out of the school, with at least six Georgetown students expelled already this school year.

Under school system policy, students who commit serious offenses can be expelled from one school and reassigned to another.

According to Georgetown residents, officials at North Forsyth know the rule well. In fact, only a handful of black males in the neighborhood still attend the school, residents say.

"Education is supposed to be free, but I'm paying for it. I have to come up with

gas money every week so my son can go to school at Glenn (High School)," said Gloria-Jean Freeman, whose son Russell was kicked out of North after a fight last month.

Last weekend — during an event to address problems within Georgetown and the neighboring community of Stonewall — parents, students and city leaders questioned the growing trend.

Among those raising their voices the loudest were Katie and Johnny Forte.

The couple has been on a crusade ever since their son Erich was suspended from North Forsyth early last month, after they said school officials accused him of being a "gang leader."

"I can't let it die...I refuse to just give it up," Katie Forte said.

True to her word, Forte has rallied support from community leaders and Georgetown parents, many of whom are in the same boat.

While Erich Forte and two of his

friends continue to make the 45-minute trip to Glenn High School, his parents are fighting his yearlong suspension on charges the grounds that North Forsyth officials have not substantiated the charges.

On Sept. 1, according to a school document seen by The Chronicle, Erich Forte was seen by a North Forsyth employee "standing over" a fight between a group of students before school.

The document confirms that Erich "was not involved" in the altercation.

The following day, Erich Forte was seen on the school's surveillance camera leading "a group to confront another group in the hallway before school. Again, Erich was not involved in a physical fight, but school officials said they believed he would have been if an assistant principal had not stepped in."

Katie Forte charges that the video of

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Judge rules discrimination suit class action

By DAMON FORD
THE CHRONICLE

Last Friday thousands of black farmers who have filed a \$3 billion discrimination suit against the Department of Agriculture got a shot in the arm when U.S. District Court Judge Paul Friedman ruled it as a class action suit.

The 26-page ruling by Friedman allows black farmers who filed discrimination complaints against USDA between Jan. 1983 and Feb. 21, 1997 to do so as a group thereby bettering chances farmers will receive the compensation they desire.

"The court concludes that the class action vehicle is the most appropriate mechanism for resolving the issue of liability in this case," Friedman wrote.

The suit claims discrimination through denial of farm loans, crop subsidies and other benefits. The trial is scheduled for Feb. 1, 1999.

"Our prayers have been answered," said Tim Pigford, a black farmer in Riegelsford, who is lead plaintiff in the case. "This ruling is very encouraging to a lot of families in the South. We hope the government will go ahead and settle this case with dignity and pay us the compensation we justly deserve."

Alexander Pires, the lead attorney for the black farmers, estimated the class could be as large as 4,000, almost 10 percent of the 50,000 black farmers in the country in 1983.

"It is a significant step for black farmers," said U.S. Rep. Mel Watt, D-N.C. "We have worked very hard in writing the bill to prevent the statute of limitations from expiring. Hopefully these farmers will receive their correct compensation."

The judge's ruling comes as a provision waiving the statute of limitations for black farmers, makes its way through Congress. The waiver is attached to the Agriculture Spending Bill, which is expected to be passed in the next few days.

U.S. Rep. Eva Clayton, D-N.C., who

has championed the farmers' cause, hailed the ruling.

"It will give farmers the right as a class to expand and settle quickly," Clayton said. "A large number of farmers will get relief earlier, rather than just one by one. This is good news."

Clayton helped arrange a White House meeting of black and other minority farmers with President Clinton in December. She also

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