



U.S. Rep. Mel Watt bags groceries during a recent campaign stop in Winston-Salem. Watt faces a challenge in this year's shortened election.

75 cents

Watt: same man in different district

By JOHN MINTER
CONSOLIDATED MEDIA GROUP

Mel Watt is the same man who has represented the 12th Congressional District for the past six years, but it's tough to consider him the incumbent.

While the 12th is still overwhelmingly Democrat, its makeup has changed immensely.

Gone are the days when the 12th meandered from mid-Mecklenburg County to Durham. Over the past, it has gone from being a predominantly black district designed to elect an African American to just over 35 percent black. Watt, a Charlotte attorney who

sits on the House Judiciary Committee, is being challenged by Rowan County dentist Scott Keadle. Keadle, who upset two Mecklenburg Republicans in the September primary, did not return a request for an interview last week.

From his Rowan County base, Keadle's viewed a strong challenger for Watt in a majority white district.

"This is Watt's strongest challenge" said state Rep. Frank Ballance. "He is running as hard as he can to make sure he will be safe, but you don't know until the night of the election."

Watt's campaign has been hampered by a shortened election season due to the legal

maneuvering by opponents of a majority black district and Congress' extended session.

But as Nov. 3 nears, the campaign is heating up. The candidates have had two televised debates this week. Keadle was joined by the Republican's No. 2 man in Congress, Rep. Dick Armey for several stops Monday.

His campaign rhetoric follows the Republican line. "If we swap me for him in the U.S. Congress, we'll have lower taxes," Keadle said during a televised debate with Watt last week.

Keadle is a native of West Virginia who moved to Rowan County in the 1980s. He's a member of the Rowan County Board of

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Audit details HAWS' financial problems

By KEVIN WALKER
THE CHRONICLE

It started with a bang but then abruptly ended.

The restoration of Oak Creek Apartments—located in a secluded section of Ogburn Station—was supposed to provide over 40 Section 8 units for city residents. But construction on the project, which was started as a joint venture between HAWS and the city of Winston-Salem, came to a complete standstill last summer during its final stages.

Neglected lawns and parking lots, boarded-up windows and doors along with unfinished electrical wiring have rendered the complex unfit for human habitation.

According to documents seen by The Chronicle, the Oak Creek debacle and HAWS' attempts to reduce the city's role in the effort, was one of many issues the board of commissioners considered before firing Executive Director Marie Roseboro last Tuesday.

According to documents, HAWS failed to adequately communicate with the Winston-Salem Housing & Neighborhood Services Department on the project. And last summer, for reasons unclear, HAWS boarded up the units just as they were beginning to be wired for electricity.

Richie Brooks, director of the neighborhood services department for the Winston-Salem Housing & Neighborhood Services Department, said his agency will now complete the project with HAWS, but that HAWS did stop the project.

"The housing authority stopped all activity on the project for a couple of months. I don't know why they decided that," Brooks said.

Brooks said that once William Andrews became chairman of the HAWS Board of Commissioners, work on the year-and-a-half-old project began again.

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Group set to take steps to bring Roseboro back

By KEVIN WALKER
THE CHRONICLE

With a little help from her friends, Marie Roseboro may soon rebound from her firing last week.

Monday night during a meeting held at First Baptist Church, Roseboro supporters laid out a plan of attack aimed at possibly getting Roseboro her job back.

According to sources who attended the meeting, Roseboro—the former executive director of the housing authority—was noticeably absent. But many prominent city leaders were on hand.

According to sources, included among the 15 to 20 people who attended the meeting were members of a local Muslim organization, Forsyth County Commissioners Walter Marshall and Earline Parmon; board of education member Victor Johnson; Dolores Smith, head of the Winston-Salem Urban League; James Grace, head of the East Winston Community Development Corporation; D.D. Adams, a former HAWS commissioner; community activist, the Rev. Lee Faye Mack; and Ellen Hazzard, who sits on the current HAWS board which dismissed Roseboro.

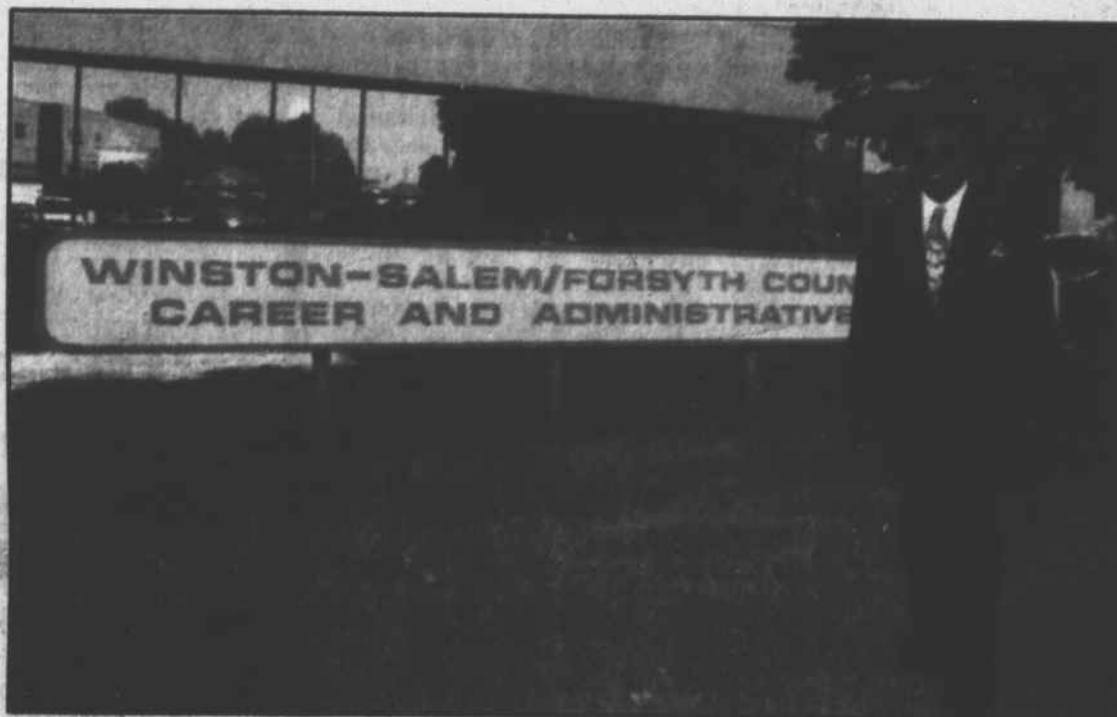
Supporters were urged to contact members of the board of aldermen, the mayor, Housing and Urban Development officials and members of the U.S. Congress to voice opposition to Roseboro's dismissal.

The group also discussed the formation of a "legal committee" to advise Roseboro on possible legal matters and sites for future picketing, sources said.

Roseboro was terminated after a majority of the five member HAWS

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Opposites attract



Victor Johnson (top) and Geneva Brown (bottom, left), both retired educators, are the school board's only African American representatives.

Photos by Bruce Chapman and Kevin Walker

Board's only blacks vow to serve city

By KEVIN WALKER
THE CHRONICLE

It angers Sharlene Davis that most of the members of the city/county school board don't look like her or her children.

As an African American resident of the Northern side of the city, Davis feels there is not anyone to speak up for issues unique to black children in her area.

"The board is just not fairly representative," she said. "A white person doesn't know how to talk for our children, most of them want to see our children expelled or put out of school."

Davis says she is not overreacting.



In fact, she said many board members were unresponsive when she tried to move her kids out of a "pearly white" school into one more racially diverse.

And although there are three at-large spots on the board—for which every citizen in Forsyth County gets to vote—they are continuously filled by whites.

Davis said she is so fed up that she doesn't know where she will choose to send her kids in the future.

"I really don't want to be bothered with the Winston-Salem/Forsyth County Schools and their prejudices. We need our own representation, we just can't keep bombarding Mr. (Victor) Johnson and Ms. (Geneva) Brown with all our issues," Davis said.

Come Nov. 3, unless Davis moves many miles and several zip codes away, she will not be casting a vote for either Johnson or Brown.

But voters in their mostly black East Winston district won't have to make any hard choices; they are

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Alston running for seat

By DAMON FORD
THE CHRONICLE

It was a proud Nigel Alston who came to his grandfather with trophy in hand and head held high.

The high school senior had just received the athlete of the year award from R.J. Reynolds and couldn't wait to tell his grandfather.

"I expected a pat on the back," Alston said.

But that wasn't what he received.

"He looked at me and said 'I'm not surprised you received that, I would have been surprised if you had not,'" Alston said.

Alston's inflated chest sunk a little then, but today the 46-year-old—who's vying for one of three at-large seats on the Winston-Salem/Forsyth County School Board—says those words could help solve the problem of underachieving students in classrooms.

"We should expect our children to do well in school," Alston said. "Our children will achieve more once teachers begin to expect more out of them. Children are our future, but I don't think we put enough interest in it as we should."

This is the second go-round for Alston who's spent the past 24 years at Integon Insurance. Alston lost a hotly contested school board race in 1994.

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Black voters crucial in battle for Senate

By JOHN MINTER
CONSOLIDATED MEDIA GROUP

African Americans voters could very well send Democrat John Edwards to the U.S. Senate and elect other N.C. Democrats in dozens of political races on Nov. 3.

That's assuming enough of them vote.

With Election Day fast approaching, political pundits are predicting a low turnout in an "off year" election. That makes the state's black voters, who usually vote Democratic, the margin of victory in any close race.

And a grassroots effort is underway to mobilize blacks, especially for Edwards, the Raleigh trial lawyer challenging the state's junior senator, Lauch

Faircloth, a conservative Republican.

Edwards, a boyish political newcomer, has been running a careful campaign since announcing last year his run for the senate. But he's been unable to appear too pro-black and liberal in a state known for electing conservatives.

Some blacks wonder if Edwards strategy has been able to excite blacks, though.

Edwards, for his part, says he speaks for all voters who have not had a voice in

Washington with Faircloth and Jesse Helms, in the U.S. Senate. Both are conservatives.

Since the white vote in N.C. often splits about equally among liberals and conservatives, the black vote is the balance of power, particularly when it approaches 50 percent.

"Basically I'm out there working as hard as I know how in all parts of the community, also in the African American community. I've got to get the message out there," Edwards said Tuesday. "Me doing it in person is the best way, the most effective way."

"We're also organizing the most effective way we can in all parts of the community from a grassroots perspective. We have put together a great 'get out the vote' effort. The grassroots effort is very



Edwards

important. This election is going to be decided by turnout...getting people to polls."

Edwards said Faircloth's negative ads are aimed at depressing the turnout of Democrats, particularly African American voters.

A Faircloth aide was quoted recently as saying the negative ads worked because many voters were not smart enough to discern truth from innuendo, half truths and untruths.

Faircloth, who has lost ground in recent weeks, has hired Arthur Finkelstein, a hard-ball strategist from New York to replace pollster Neil Newhouse, just two weeks from Election Day. Political pundits think Finkelstein, who has

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