

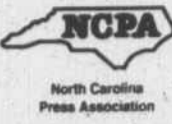
OPINION

THE CHRONICLE

Winston-Salem Greensboro High Point

The Choice for African-American News and Information

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Appointments of Frye, Freeman, McDevitt and Holman are good choices

The appointment of Henry Frye to become the first African American to head the N.C. Supreme Court would have been news within itself, but the subsequent appointments have themselves become sources of interest and inquiry.

Henry Frye's appointment to chief justice left a vacant position on the court. That position has been filled by Hunt's chief of staff, Franklin Freeman. Freeman is no stranger to the legal profession. He is an attorney by training and has served as head of the Administrative Office of the Courts and was a district attorney before becoming part of the Hunt administration as secretary of the Department of Corrections. Freeman had served as chief of staff for Hunt since the departure of Ed Turlington in 1997.



Frye

Freeman's post will be filled by Wayne McDevitt. McDevitt was appointed by Hunt and confirmed by the state Senate to head the Department of Environment and Natural Resources.

McDevitt's departure from DENR left the door open for the appointment of Bill Holman as secretary of DENR. Holman's appointment is significant because he is considered to be a dyed-in-the-wool environmentalist and an enemy of the business community — in other words Holman is a "tree hugger."



Holman

So, how do we move from Henry Frye to a "tree hugger?" Very cautiously. Administrative appointments always cause a domino effect. The smart administrations always know what the last appointment is going to be before they make the first one.

That saves a lot of headache, embarrassments and bad press.

I give the Hunt administration good press on these appointments.

The appointments of Frye, Freeman, McDevitt and Holman are good for the administration, for African Americans and for all the people of North Carolina.

— Val Atkinson

Letter to the Editor:

To the editor:

This year's National Black Theatre Festival has come and gone, and Winston-Salem was again treated to a week of theater and excitement. Most communities should be so lucky. Everyone associated with the festival, starting with Larry Leon Hamlin, should be very proud.

As usual, much of the success of the festival was due to the loving work of the hundreds of volunteers. There seemed to be more volunteers than ever before, all ready to help or provide information, and there were many times when they were really needed.

The volunteer co-coordinators, Sylvia Sprinkle-Hamlin and Joyce Elem, did a special job this year. They certainly deserve thanks from those who enjoyed either attending the festival or working with it. To all the festival volunteers, congratulations on a job well done!

Dave Fergusson
Winston-Salem

To the editor:

Yvonne White's letter to the Winston-Salem Journal was long overdue. I have dedicated a good portion of my life helping students safely to and from school every day. As a school crossing guard, I can attest to everything Ms. White said in her letter. School crossing guards are never included in the awards ceremonies or other activities/functions that are put on by the Winston-Salem/Forsyth County School System.

School crossing guards have a dangerous and responsible job. Yet the position is taken very lightly by the public and more specifically the Winston-Salem/Forsyth County School System. There have been numerous articles in the newspaper addressing child safety. The child's safety does not rely solely on the school bus. This is not to discredit the importance of school bus safety, but rather put some emphasis and focus on the following: a) safety of the children as the buses are being directed in and out of the school grounds; b) safety of the children not being bused (dropped off by parents, children walking, etc.). These children are directed across the streets by school crossing guards.

There are a number of things that could not be carried out properly if we did not have dedicated and experienced school crossing guards.



Another issue is the lack of communication, lack of meetings and lack of concern for the guards. We should be made aware of openings at other posts. Experience and seniority should be one of the main criteria in filling open positions. The safety manager as well as the Winston-Salem/Forsyth County School System should review these concerns and issues and do something about them. Dedicated and experienced employees are few and far these days.

— Jessie McCollough, school crossing guard

been dismissed and receive pay for at least 30 days. I believe taxpayers are due an explanation.

Beaufort O. Bailey
Winston-Salem

Editor's note: According to a release issued by the university, Cone's last day is Sept. 30. The release also states she resigned.

To the editor:

In response to your editorial on July 29, 1999, I wanted to express my opinion about "The Whitewashing of Woodstock '99."

Most, if not all, of the school and job-site massacres have been committed by white males? Isn't it interesting that black males are so feared by white society that it can take the extensive measures that you mentioned to protect entire towns against the imaginary threat of a group of black youths and remain naive of the tendency in white kids to be incredibly violent?

White society has been far more violent over the centuries than those made up of people of color. The

very nature of slavery in this hemisphere was spawned in hatred and its resulting violence by whites.

The slaughter at Wounded Knee and the cruelty of the Trail of Tears cannot be traced to anything related to people of color except that they were the slaughtered and the tortured.

I am well aware of the struggle that African American communities have with crime, and I am not writing to you out of some urge to ease a sense of white liberal guilt.

But I spent 12 years as a jailer in the old Forsyth County Jail when its conditions were horrible and (the jail was) packed with black men. One of the inmates stopped me one time and said, "Do you know what 'justice' means, Sgt. Bradstock? It means, 'just us.'"

As I looked around the jail that day, I realized the truth in that statement.

Ken Bradstock
Pastoral minister
Jamestown Friends Meeting
Jamestown, N.C.

The bad mood of black America



Earl Ofari Hutchinson

Guest Columnist

In June Newsweek magazine boasted that many African Americans are living better than ever before in America. They are better educated, make more money, live in better neighborhoods, and own more businesses. The message is that since things aren't nearly so bad as many blacks make it out to be, stop complaining about racial ill-treatment. But many do complain, and complain loudly. And there are good reasons why they do and should.

Many blacks are subjected to poor (or no) service, bad seating, long waits, special cover fees and prepayment requirements in restaurants. Even if the lousy service has nothing to do with race — it's difficult to determine whether it is deliberate discrimination by management, inattentive waiters, or short-handed help — the experience is deeply unsettling for many blacks who suspect that the mistreatment has everything to do with race.

Then there's the perennial problem with cabs. Many blacks shake with rage as cabs ignore their signals and then stop a few feet in front of them to pick up whites. Some cab drivers privately admit that they won't pick up blacks. They claim they fear being robbed or assaulted.

But when was the last time a cab driver was assaulted by a black business person dressed in a suit and tie or designer dress with an attaché case in hand?

Despite an ocean of federal and state laws that prohibit redlining in lending and the heated denials from banks and savings and loans that they discriminate, many banks still reject far more black housing loan applicants than whites. Their explanation: More blacks had bad credit, shaky work records and little collateral. In many instances, these were dodges or flat-out lies.

More black students are trapped in crumbling, dilapidated public schools with more ill-prepared teachers, indifferent administrators,

and outdated texts and equipment than two decades ago.

Even President Clinton at the commemoration ceremony in 1997 marking the 40th anniversary of the Little Rock school desegregation battle shamefacedly admitted that the schools in Little Rock and other cities were nearly as segregated as they were 40 years ago. These are the towering obstacles that no amount of cheery talk about how much progress blacks have made can erase. And that's why many blacks are still in such a bad mood.

Earl Ofari Hutchinson is the author of "The Crisis in Black and Black." His e-mail address is ehutch344@aol.com.

VOICES FROM THE COMMUNITY...

The NAACP announced at its most recent national convention that it may file suit against the major four networks—NBC, CBS, ABC and FOX—because of the lack of black characters on the new fall shows. According to the organization, of the dozens of new shows this upcoming season, none feature blacks or other minorities in lead roles. We asked local people whether they are more inclined to watch a show if it contains characters that look like them.



Sharon Jones

"Being black I can't relate to white sitcoms, because most of the time they don't really talk about the things we talk about. I want my son to grow up to know that black people do have positive roles, so we should not just have black sitcoms but black lawyer shows, doctor shows. We have more going for us than sports and comedy."



Gwen Shaw

"As an African American I relate to other African Americans, and therefore, when I look at television, I want to see someone that looks like me. So I think there should be more black actors on shows and more shows that feature African Americans."



Shirley Rollins

"Yes, I just feel that black people need to be promoted. We need to be recognized. We need to be moved up and focused. I really feel that African Americans should watch and support black shows."



Darryl Wilson

"I like to see black characters in high positions so that it can give young people something to strive for. If a young kid sees an African American on television, that is more prone to give them ideas of things to do."



Kenneth Dobbins

"It feels good just to see some of us on television. It lets me know that they appreciate us enough to try to give us a chance to be seen and heard."