E-mail

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suit, because everything that's in the suit is correct, we are doing." Marshall stated. "My oath said I was sworn to uphold the laws of the land as they're presently stated. Presently, from the rules we got, sectarian prayer is against the law."

Marshall, who has served as a county commissioner since 1997 and was president of the Winston-Salem Chapter NAACP prior to his initial election, is no stranger to public opinion and the many forms it can take.

But he said an e-mail sent by a local man crossed the line. The e-mail came on the heels of an article that was in the *Winston-Salem Journal* tracking the growing debate on the board.

The article, published in early April, detailed the various events of the board meeting, including the premature exit that Marshall made when the topic turned again to the issue of whether or not to seek legal counsel on behalf of the board.

In the e-mail, which was unsigned but came from a Time Warner Roadrunner e-mail address belonging to Jerry McDowell, Marshall was criticized for his "smart-ass attitude," and bombarded with racial epithets.

"You just showed your black ass by walking out on prayer," the e-mail reads. "You are nothing but a racist, bigot, and about five years out of the damn treetops."

The racial language continues: "Why don't you raise hell about your forefathers selling you to those evil white traders that bought your asses at port where your forefathers had you for sale?"

It went on to call Marshall "mean spirited," "scumbag," and a "brain-dead political slut," among other things. The e-mail ends with, "You suck boy."

Marshall says he followed the procedure when dealing with particularly objectionable correspondence. He forwarded the e-mail to the Forsyth County Sheriff's Office, as well as to the Winston-Salem Police Department. The Chronicle has learned that the FBI has also been contacted regarding the e-mail.

Capt. F. Brad Stanley, of the Forsyth County Sheriff's Office, acknowledged that the case was under investigation.

"We do take this serious, as it is an elected official," he commented. "We are investigating to determine what, if any action (can be taken)."

Because it is still an open case, Stanley declined to comment on the specifics of the e-mail or its sender. He did however, express his regret that the incident occurred.

"People have feelings as to the way they feel their community should be governed, and when topics come to this, with regard to heated or controversial type topics, obviously people react differently," he said. "We would hope that they would not react in these types of manners, but unfortunately they do."

Marshall is undaunted by the derogatory nature of the e-mail.

"This guy is just a part of the problem. He's not the problem. I'm not interested in pressing any charges against him – I just feel like it should be exposed," said Marshall, who has been circulating copies of the e-mail this week to show the community that racism and ignorance is still alive and well.

The only Jerry McDowell listed in Forsyth County was contacted by phone Tuesday evening. He first said that he was unsure of which e-mail the reporter was referring to. He then said that he had no comment he wished to be printed in the paper and abruptly disconnected the phone.

But on Monday The Chronicle had sent an e-mail to the same address that the message to Marshall had come from, seeking an interview for this story. After McDowell's hastily-ended interview Tuesday evening, The Chronicle received a reply to its e-mail.

"I have no idea what e-mail you are referring to," it said.

At the County Commissioners meeting Monday evening, board members voted unanimously to postpone consideration of the issue until the May 14 meeting.

This year's Juneteenth events are already slated

SPECIAL TO THE CHRONICLE

The Triad Juneteenth Festival Committee, headed by Rep. Larry Womble and Cheryl Harry, is preparing for a major celebration this year.

Juneteenth, the oldest known celebration marking the end of slavery in the United States, takes its name from June 19, 1865, the day federal troops arrived in Galveston, Texas to enforce the Emancipation proclamation. Not until two and a half years later did slaves learn of their freedom. The Triad Juneteenth Festival Committee is planning a series of programs that will help educate area residents and visitors to the Triad about this historic event in American history.

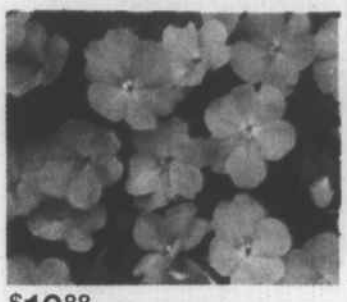
Mack

According to Womble, "our Juneteenth Celebration is not only an event that African Americans should attend, but it's an event that our entire community should celebrate because it's American history."

The festivities will start on Sunday, June 10 with the Juneteenth Art Exhibition "Liberation of a People." There will be Roundtable Dialogue on Thursday, June 14. The dialogue will include a forum for young adults. Juneteenth will culminate with the festival, at Rupert Bell Park, on Saturday, June 16 from 11 am – 5 p.m. The festival will include entertainment that reflects African-American history and culture through dance, and music such as jazz, blues, gospel, hip hop, and story telling. A visual arts exhibition of original artwork, community displays a youth "fun and learn" area, a roundtable dialogue and a marketplace for vendors will also be offered.

The other Juneteenth advisory members are Mütter D. Evams, Maurice Horsey, Sir Walter L. Mack, Jr. and Mel White. The Winston-Salem Human Relations Dept., Winston-Salem Recreation and Parks, the Winston-Salem/Forsyth County Arts Council and Mayor Allen Joines are event partners.

For more information, including details on how to volunteer, make a donation or become a vendor, visit www.triadjuneteenth.net , or Harry at email:charry@eleganteventz.net. She can be reached at 788-1665.



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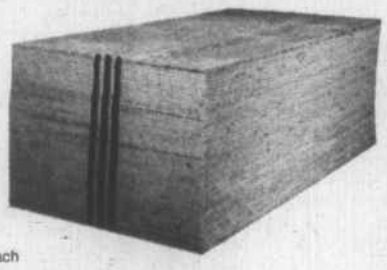

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