


OP/ED



ERNEST H. PITT	Publisher/Co-Founder
ELAINE PITT	Business Manager
RICHARD GILLESPIE	General Sales Manager
T. KEVIN WALKER	Managing Editor

Election '14

Rarely does the end of the election filing period bring good tidings; this year was quite the exception.

Since four Republican members of the much-maligned School Board failed to file for reelection, we know that nearly half of the board's seats will be filled by newcomers.

Hallelujah!

Among those leaving the nine-member board is Jane Goins – the board's Methuselah. Goins joined the board when Apples were just something students ate – not used to complete assignments and communicate with the world.



Judge Hartsfield

Those of you with long memories may wonder why we are faulting Goins for her nearly 30 years on the School Board when we recently praised Mayor Pro Tempore Vivian Burke for her longevity. The answer is Goins was just a seat-filler for much of her reign – a show-horse trotting about when a work-horse was desperately needed. And her board colleagues did the school system a grave disservice when out of deference they chose Goins to replace Donny Lambeth – the ultimate work-horse – as chair of the board instead of a more capable member like John Davenport Jr.

Buddy Collins, Marilyn Parker and Jill Tackabery are the other Republicans exiting. The new board will invariably still be Republican-controlled, but we hope the new members have the grit to take a stand for teachers and students instead of toeing the GOP line. Most on the current members lack spines. While school boards

in Guilford, Durham and other counties fight tooth and nail to maintain the dignity of their teachers and safeguard the futures of their students, our folks equivocate, offering only subdued objections to repressive policies for fear of offending the Republican gods.

In other filing news, none of the incumbents on the 21st District Court bench will face challengers this fall. This means Judge Denise Hartsfield is all but assured another term on the bench. About two years ago, when Hartsfield faced specious ethics charges, many predicted her demise. She never wavered, though, from her commitment to service. Even as she served a short suspension, Hartsfield continued to build bridges by volunteering, mentoring and taking every opportunity to warn young people about the perils of being entangled in the criminal justice system.

Her service became her penance. Her faith and the support of the community – those who knew and loved her long before she was "Judge" Hartsfield – was steadfast. As a result, like the mythical phoenix, Denise emerged from the ashes to soar even higher. Let her story be an example to all of us who have or may find ourselves down for the count.

Movement

from page A6

open to the public.

"I'm excited to collaborate with others to get as many people in our community writing at the same time on a common theme," said White, OCOF coordinator for the Triad. "Writing provides an avenue for creativity, inspiration and profound change. My hope in doing this is that those who participate will walk away from the experience having met new people and found a deeper relationship with their own voice. Writing truly is transformative and I hope people feel that through OCOF." In addition to attend-

ing writing workshops and discussion groups, participants may submit their writings online at www.poetryheals.com/one-city-one-prompt-events.html. Visit www.poetryheals.com/ocop-calendar.html for a calendar of OCOF events and registration information.

Upcoming events will include Saturday, March 8's "Begin Again: The Writer's Journey," with noted local poet Ismael Khatibu. It will be held at the Community Arts Cafe, 411 W 4th St., from 2-4 p.m. Admission is \$20 and RSVPs must be received by March 7 via www.press53.com/workshops.html.

White will be featured at a roundtable held by the Women Writers' of the Triad on Sunday, March 9 2-3 p.m. in the Deep Roots Community Room, 600 N Eugene St. in Greensboro. She will also be featured on Monday, March 24 from 7-8:30 p.m. at the Community Arts Cafe for a gathering hosted by Winston-Salem Writers. White will lead a 90-minute workshop that will focus on the "Begin Again" theme.

For a complete schedule of events or to learn more about the project, visit www.poetryheals.com.

Davis

from page A1

"The reality of what the law was and what the law could achieve was exposed to me," he told the students. "...I knew from this moment in Philadelphia that I wanted to be a lawyer and that was what I was here on earth to be."

While an aptitude for the material is important, being passionate about the work is an essential component of becoming a good lawyer, Davis said.

"Love the law," he advised the audience of mostly law students. "Pursue your studies as an act of love, because it will empower you to achieve just incredible, incredible things, for yourself and for your family."

Davis, who celebrated his 65th birthday last month, is now a senior judge – a pre-retirement status. He said he was attracted to serving as a judge, which he calls "an extraordinary honor and privilege," because of his desire to teach and mentor the next generation of legal minds. As a law student, Davis said he was inspired and empowered by the example set by the late Harry Cole, a former state senator and the first African American to serve on the Maryland Court of Appeals. Cole, who passed away in 1999, was appointed in 1977, while Davis was in law school at the University of Maryland. The news of his appointment inspired Davis.

"I needed that to happen. I really needed that to happen, to affirm my prospects," Davis said. "Even though I had great prospects, I needed to know what was possible, and the way you learn what is possible is to see what is. That is why I am here at the Wake Forest law school."

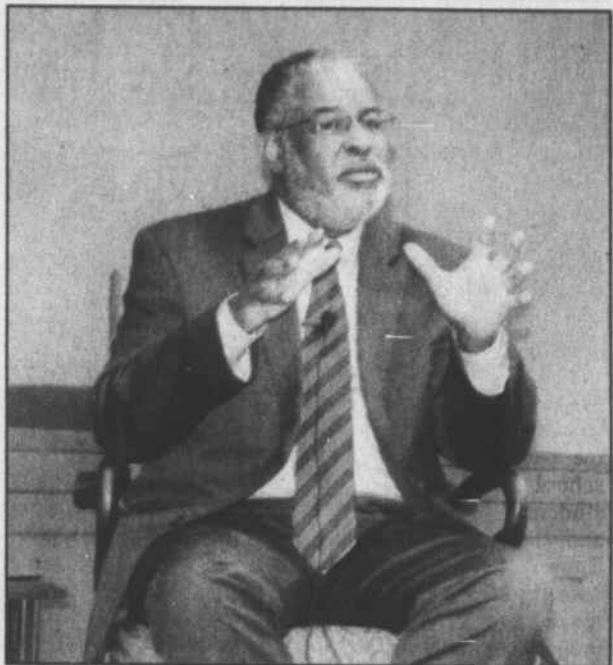
Davis implored the students not to let any obstacle deter them from their hopes and dreams.

"The world is open to you, if you work hard, if you seek out the mentorships and the guidance that you need," he intoned. "Don't let anybody tell you that you can't achieve your dreams."

Davis addressed the issues of race and racism in the criminal justice system after being probed by Parks.

"In so many ways – some quite positive, but far too many negative ways – race is the defining feature of the American criminal justice system," Davis declared. "The mass incarceration that we see, and the impact that it's having on the African American community specifically and other communities of color in general, has been a blot on our criminal justice system for decades. It's absolutely outrageous."

In order to effect positive change with respect to race and race relations, African Americans must be willing to serve on both sides of the aisle – as both prosecutors and defense attorneys, Davis said. He challenged his



Photos by Layla Gamm

Judge Davis is now a senior (no longer full-time) judge of the Fourth Circuit Court of Appeals.



WFU Law Dean Blake Morant addresses the crowd.



Tony Ogw

audience to employ their skills and expertise to eradicate institutional racism and build a more equitable system for their successors to inherit.

"Much of the problems of race in the criminal justice system would be, if not resolved, seriously addressed if more people of color and people committed to civil rights and social justice became prosecutors," he stated. "...The law is a wonderful institution, and for people who care about social justice and equality, we need those people at every segment of the law."

First-year law student Tony Ogw was impressed by Davis' candor.

"I was surprised by how socially-conscious he was," the Dallas, Texas native said, noting that many African American judges exhibit more conservative values. "...It's cool to know that there isn't one black opinion in the judicial courts, there are multiple different views."

Ogw, an aspiring business consultant, said he was taken by Davis' engaging, eloquent manner of speaking.

"I could listen to him talk for hours," the 23-year-old declared. "He seems like a great guy."

WFU Law Dean Blake Morant said it's essential that law students are exposed regularly to working professionals like Davis.

"There's such an intertwining between the doctrine of law that we teach and the practice of law," he said. "...What Judge Davis does is really an important part of the entirety of what we do in our profession."

Make God Colorless



Irshad Hasan

Guest Columnist

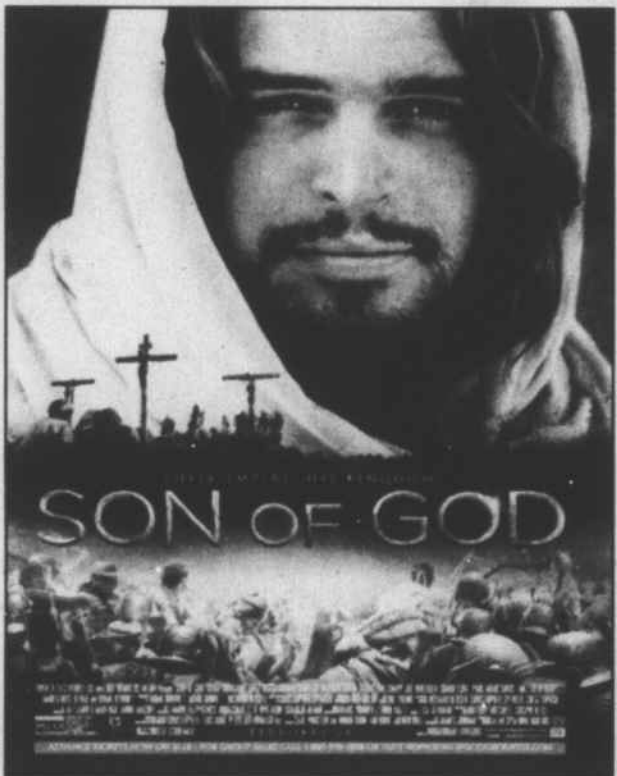
On Feb. 28, Hollywood released a new movie, "Son of God."

Obviously, it is a story about the great Christ Jesus, whom some say is God and others say is the son of God. Most Christians believe that Jesus is both God and the Son of God.

Jesus Christ has been portrayed for hundreds of years as Caucasian, a white man. Until recently, he has mostly been shown with blond hair and blue eyes. Today, you may see him pictured with brown hair and brown eyes, but almost always, still as a Caucasian man.

If Jesus is God and Jesus is white, then God is white. If Jesus is the Son of God and Jesus is white, his father's white; therefore, God must be white. This is the undeniable message that is communicated when God is portrayed this way.

In the early to mid 1970s, an African American Muslim leader named Imam Warith Deen Mohammed asked several serious questions, including, "What do you think would happen to the world's white people if they sat in churches from the time they were children until the day they died, generation after generation, for 400 years, with the image of a black man in front of them as the God who died to save them? What do you think this would do to their minds?" He also posed this –



"What do you think it does to the minds and hearts of white people who are taught from time they are children, generation after generation, for thousands of years, that Jesus is God, and they see that God looks like them and not like the darker people of the world? What does this do to their minds?"

Mohammed's answer was that it would consciously and subconsciously promote feelings and thoughts of superiority in white people and inferiority in non-white people.

If we cannot remove racism from religion, how can we remove it from society and the world?

The obvious solution is to stop portraying God in this way in pictures, statues and movies. The image that is used for Jesus is not even the real image of the historical Jesus.

Dear people – Christians, Jews, Muslims, Caucasians,

Latinos, Asians and Africans – it is not right to put God into a color, to say that He is in the image of one people to the exclusion of others. This cannot be moral. This is not godly. Let's make no image of God.

It is our appeal to the Higher Voice within you to stand against this kind of thing. (I am) not asking anyone to stay away from the movie, but to be conscious of this wrong.

Some people think the images are harmless, but corporations spend millions of dollars for 30 seconds of advertising to get images of their products before your eyes. There is indeed an impact.

Let's stand against racism in religion. Remove images portraying God as white or any other color.

Irshad Hasan has led Winston-Salem's Masjid Al-Muminun as imam for more than 20 years.

Discover the **AFFORDABLE** solution for your stairs. Over 300,000 customers already have!

LIMITED TIME OFFER!
\$250 OFF*
 PURCHASE OF A NEW STAIRLIFT!
 EXPIRES May 31, 2014

1-800-862-9614

CALL NOW TOLL-FREE **ACORN** STAIRLIFTS

OLD Bathroom TODAY, NEW Bathroom TOMORROW!

CALL NOW to Find Out How

- Affordable Styles For Every Budget!
- Includes Lifetime Written Warranty!
- Senior Discount And Financing!

Call Now For FREE Details!
800-770-3576