

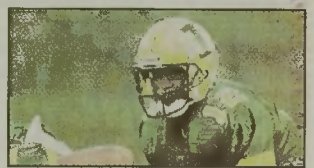


Program builds business, lives/8A

Scout's honor: Eagle badge/13A



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# The Charlotte Post

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## Gales case attracts defense

By John Minter  
THE CHARLOTTE POST

African American attorneys Frank Creft and Terry Sherrill are trying to help a brother out.

Marion Anthony Gales, in an O.J. Simpson-like case, in being sued in civil court for a murder he hasn't been convicted of. But Tuesday, Creft and Sherrill said they would represent Gales at no charge. Two other lawyers, including a recent law school graduate, also volunteered to help Gales.

Though found innocent in criminal court, Simpson lost a civil wrongful death lawsuit in the death of his ex-wife Nicole Simpson and her friend Ronald Goldman. Lawsuits were brought by the Goldman family.



Creft

Gales is being sued by Dr. Ed Friedland, the husband of Kim Thomas, who was found dead in her Churchill Drive home in 1990. Friedland was charged with murder by police, but charges were later dropped, touching off a bitter dispute between the doctor and the police about whether or not he is a likely suspect.

Gales is serving a 24-year sentence on a 1995 conviction for an unrelated burglary.

Unlike in criminal cases, Gales is not entitled to an attorney and none will be provided by the state. If he loses the civil suit, Gales won't face prison in Thomas' death, but could have to pay damages to Friedland.

When jury selection began Monday, Gales, chained and shackled, represented himself in Mecklenburg County Superior Court.

Friedland and Gales were the only known suspects in Thomas slaying.

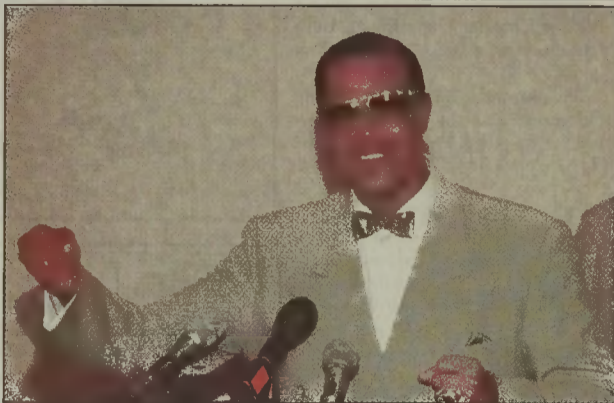
Friedland filed suit against Gales in an effort to establish his own innocence. He has also filed a malicious prosecution lawsuit against Charlotte police.

Thomas was found handcuffed and stabbed to death in 1990.

Police focused on Friedland after they learned he was having an affair. A grand jury indicted him in 1994, but prosecutors dropped the charges the following year.

Gales had done yard work at the Friedland's home and was also a suspect early in the investigation.

A jury was selected in the case Tuesday and testimony was expected to begin Wednesday before Creft and Sherrill volunteered to take Gales' case.



Nation of Islam leader Louis Farrakhan makes a point during a press conference in Charlotte Wednesday. He is touring the country to publicize a national Day of Atonement Oct. 16.

## Farrakhan: Atonement

By John Minter  
THE CHARLOTTE POST

Nation of Islam leader Minister Louis Farrakhan has called for Charlotte to take part in a Day of Atonement next month.

Farrakhan, who spoke Wednesday at Owens Auditorium, said blacks, whites and supporters of all religions should shut down the city on Oct. 16, which he declared a holy day. The day of absence from work, school and play, should be comparable to other holidays,

Farrakhan said. He noted schools and businesses are closed on Christmas, and Jews do not go to school or do business on Yom Kippur, a Jewish holy day.

"What is your holy day," Farrakhan asked.

"America can be healed," he said. "The racial divide can be healed. But we can never heal the ills among us until we first come back to God and heal our relationship with him. Because of this, I am touring America, calling for a holy day of reconciliation...a day of atonement."

This year's event, focused on youth, will be followed by annual events leading up to a Million Family March in the year 2000, Farrakhan said. At that march, Farrakhan said he will remarry wives and husbands and hopes to marry at least 10,000 new couples. Next year's events will focus on the elderly, while the 1999 date will focus on women.

Farrakhan said he also fully supports the planned Million Woman March in Philadelphia in October.

See DAY OF on page 3A

## New life for Polk and White neighborhood



Polk and White community resident Mary Barringer, center, discusses the future of the neighborhood with Mike Thornwell, Mecklenburg County's community development resource coordinator and Katrina Brown, the county's community development director. Polk and White is undergoing a community improvement program sponsored by the county and UNC Charlotte.

## Community reclamation starts

By John Minter  
THE CHARLOTTE POST

Take a ride out Harris Boulevard, cross I-85 and hang a right on Mallard Creek Road.

About a mile or so along the way, on Polk and White Road, is what's one of the few remaining glimpses of what life was like before Charlotte exploded into a major metropolitan area.

The Polk and White community is a tiny African American neighborhood of about 30 homes which Mecklenburg County is trying to save from bulldozers. A community improvement project kicked off this week.

Donald Barringer grew up in the

community and moved back last year after living 20 years in Charlotte proper. His parents moved into Polk and White from nearby about 38 years ago, when he was little more than a year old.

"The majority of this was just farming," Barringer recalled. "It was just real peaceful. There were only two cars on the street...a dirt road."

Polk and White was named for Barringer's grandfather and his best friend, who helped develop the community and built a dirt road.

"They were about the first two to move here," Barringer said. "My grandfather's name, on my mother's side, was White. One of his

good friends was Polk. They just named the road after them."

His parents grew garden crops and did a lot of canning, Barringer said.

"Back then, when I was coming up, it was real close-knit," Barringer said. "When you talk about a country setting, this is what it was."

"I just recently moved back here. I do like it. It still has a lot of the close-knit. Neighbors are willing to help each other. There's not a lot of traffic. We still have that old country setting where you have friends for neighbors and not just neighbors."

That special something is what county officials want to preserve.

With the aid of UNC Charlotte students, work has finally begun on the renewal of Polk and White. Twenty houses are targeted for rebuilding or renovation. The project will also include landscaping, lighting and transportation improvements. Six dilapidated homes were torn down last week and rebuilding began Monday.

The first home to be rebuilt is that Barringer's parents, John Henry and Mary Barringer, who moved in with their son down the street.

Polk and White slipped into decay while the surrounding University City area blossomed

See POLK on page 2A

## Dictator Mobutu dies

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

RABAT, Morocco - Mobutu Sese Seko, the Zairian leader toppled in May after nearly 32 years of autocratic rule that left his country in shambles, died Sunday. He was 66.

Mobutu, who for decades was a strong anti-communist ally of the United States in Africa, died of prostate cancer at the Mohamed V military hospital in Rabat, said two hospital workers who spoke on condition of anonymity.



Mobutu

The Maghreb Arab Press agency said only that Mobutu had died at 9:30 p.m. local time "after a long illness."

He had been living in exile in Morocco since May, following his ouster by the rebel forces of Laurent Kabila, who restored the country's old name of Congo.

Zaire was in ruins when Mobutu was deposed, and while his fortune was estimated in the billions, he died with neither a title nor a country.

A family member in Kinshasa, capital of Congo, said Mobutu had informed his family he wanted to be cremated and have his ashes scattered over his old country.

In Congo, there was no immediate mention of Mobutu's death on either radio or TV.

Mobutu arrived in Morocco on May 23, after searching for a country that would take him. King Hassan II agreed to host him for a "few days," but the deposed leader ended up staying over three

See MOBUTU on page 6A

## Literacy is worth celebrating

By John Minter  
THE CHARLOTTE POST

When Marilyn Carter came to Charlotte last year, one of the first things she looked for was a place to volunteer her time.

She thinks she has found the perfect place.

It's Central Piedmont Community College's ABLE program at 1609 Allegheny St. ABLE stands for Adult Basic Literacy Education and includes adult high school classes and GED, or general equivalency diploma, certification. But a lot of the work is teaching adult basic math

and reading skills.

Carter began tutoring Diane Robinson in February.

Robinson is a typical student in many ways. She is middle-aged and has raised a family. But she wants to better herself and perhaps get a better job. And she has more time for herself now.

"I think the students are very courageous because they are adults and they are asking for help," Carter said. "My student is encouraging me to strive for my goals because she is

striving for hers."

This is National Literacy Week, a celebration of those who decide to learn to read and those who volunteer to help them. There are 170 volunteers in the CPCC program.

Carter was a speech therapy major at Old Dominion University in her native Virginia, but decided to change careers.

"I thought Charlotte would have opportunities and would be a nice place to live as well," said Carter. See LITERACY on page 2A



PHOTO/DIANNE CURTAIN

Marilyn Carter, right, works with Diane Robinson at Central Piedmont Community College's ABLE program.

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