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Fallen Panther still with team he left behind

Sam Mills providing inspiration on eve of championship game

By C. Jemal Horton
FOR THE CHARLOTTE POST

Football has made these festive times in Charlotte.

The Carolina Panthers play their biggest game of the season in Seattle on Sunday, and they're within a game of making their second trip to the Super Bowl in three seasons.

People are downright giddy. The players are the talk of the region, the Carolinas are their oyster.

And somewhere, the Panthers believe, Sam Mills is smiling.

"You know he'd love the fact that we've come together and played so

well as a team," Carolina safety Mike Minter said. "We're playing his style."

Mills, a former Panthers linebacker and coach, died at age 45 last April after a valiant bout with intestinal cancer.

Mills was the team's linebackers coach when the Panthers made the Super Bowl at the end of the 2003 season. Having just undergone chemotherapy treatment, Mills joined the Panthers in Houston the Thursday before Super Bowl XXXIX.

Not having Mills along for this ride to the NFC Championship game — and beyond? — cuts deep for the

Panthers.

"We just wish he was here," Minter said softly. "We wish he was here to enjoy the moment with us."

Minter paused.

"But his spirit is here. It will never leave this stadium. And we definitely take that very, very seriously."

Though he's no longer on the sidelines giving instructions, nor in the weight room lifting more than some of his players, Mills still has a powerful impact on the Panthers.

Players say a major reason there has been no off-the-field controversy Please see PANTHERS/7A



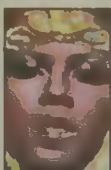
FILE PHOTO
Former Panthers linebacker and assistant coach Sam Mills still provides inspiration for players and coaches as Carolina readies for the NFC Championship game Sunday. Mills died in April.

1970s R&B star has papers

Betty Wright alleges WBAV misrepresented appearance

By Cheris F. Hodges
cheris.hodges@thecharlottepost.com

R&B singer Betty Wright has filed a \$10,000 lawsuit against WBAV (101.9 FM) and CBS radio alleging that



the station damaged her reputation when they said she didn't show up for a concert performance.

According to the suit, CBS Radio, then Infinity Broadcasting, advertised a March 4 concert saying Wright was scheduled to perform. Wright says in the suit that she had never signed a contract and her likeness was used without her permission.

"Ms. Wright continues to be extremely upset about the situation," attorney Ken Harris, who is representing Wright, said in a statement. "Many of Ms. Wright's fans attended the concert expecting to see her and were sorely disappointed. These circumstances make it extremely difficult, if not impossible for Ms. Wright to return to this marketplace and perform in a successful manner."

Wright, whose hits include "Clean Up Woman," "Tonight's The Night" and "She's Got Papers," found out that her name was being used to promote the concert when a relative called her and told her about the event.

"Ms. Wright said a relative asked her about her arrival time to Charlotte because she heard an advertisement for the show," Harris said.

Management at WBAV See R&B/2A

CELEBRATIONS WORTHY OF KING LEGACY

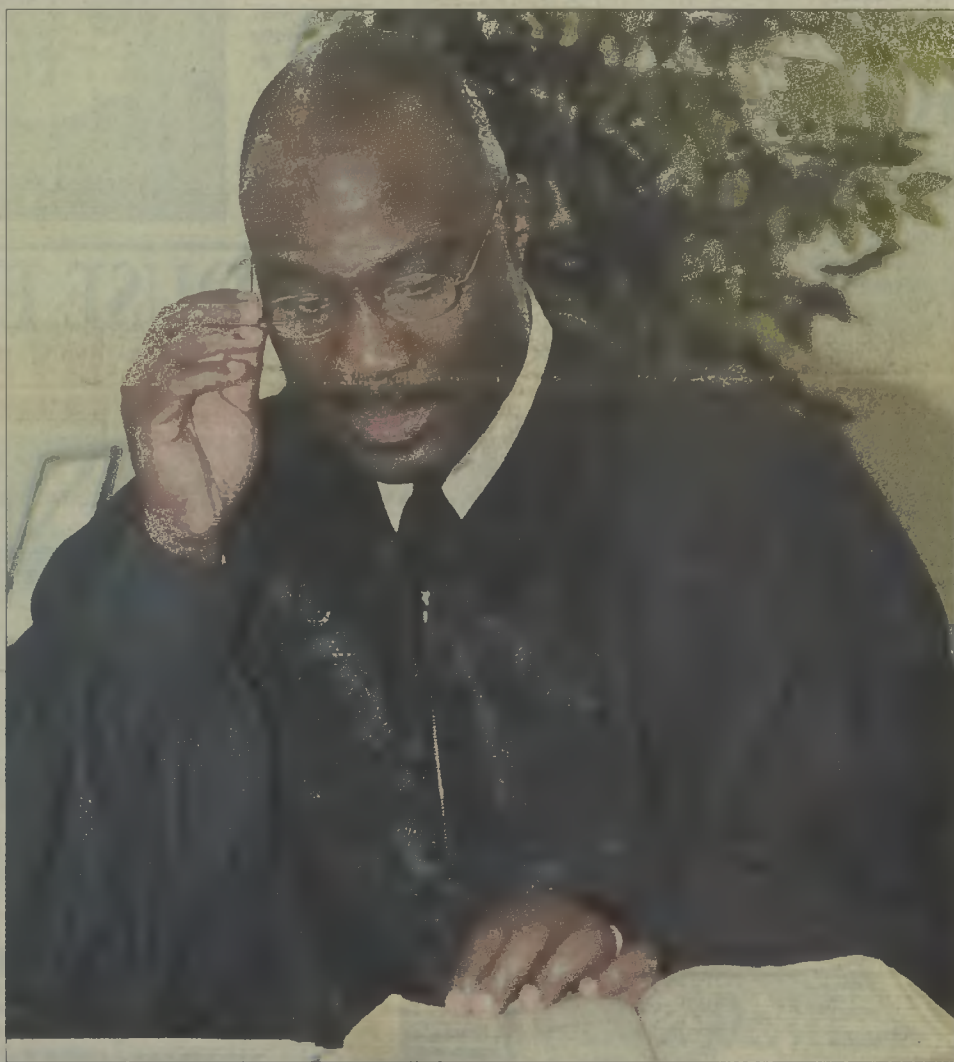


PHOTO: CURTIS WILSON

Tracy Moore, director of enrollment and student services at Central Piedmont Community College re-enacts a sermon given by the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. during CPCC's MLK Challenge. The event celebrated King's life by challenging students to complete service projects across Mecklenburg County.



PHOTO: HAROLD TYSON

In Chester, S.C., children lined the street to catch a glimpse of the annual MLK Day parade.

Across Carolinas, a dream is shared

Americans gathered across the nation this week to celebrate the life and legacy of Martin Luther King Jr. and the Charlotte region was no different.

From a parade in uptown Charlotte last Saturday to a day of service at Central Piedmont Community College and prayer breakfasts, people of all colors, religions and political leanings gathered to pay homage to the slain civil rights leader's accomplishments in bringing a measure of equality to all Americans. A prevalent, yet simple theme resonated: There's always time to serve the cause of justice.

Herbert L. White

Life on Black Wall Street

Durham boosters want to revitalize business district

By Sommer Brokaw
THE TRIANGLE TRIBUNE

DURHAM — At a recent city council meeting, the Parrish Street Plan to revitalize the area once known as "Black Wall Street" was approved.

Will this spur black business growth?

Bill Kalkhof, the president of Downtown Durham, Inc., certainly hopes so.

"I think it would be very cool if most of the businesses located on Parrish Street were the new wave of African-American entrepreneurs who would stand on the shoulders of the African Americans who came before them," he said. "If a lot of properties on Parrish Street are not owned by African Americans, then that to me would be a lost opportunity."

Developer Carl Webb agrees that this is an opportunity to increase African-American enterprise.

"I think there's a real opportunity for black-owned firms, and, in particular, larger African-American firms outside Durham to look at Durham as a place to relocate."

Parrish Street established its reputation as "Black Wall Street" because of the success of black businesses there during the Jim Crow era. Among those businesses were North Carolina Mutual Life Insurance and Mechanics and Farmers Bank. Kelly Bryant, a member of the Parrish Street Advocacy group, said their focus is on bringing back businesses into the area in general, but African Americans should definitely be included in that process.

Group Chairman Nathan Garrett agrees.

"We want to let the whole world know about capitalism Durham style, which is an inclusive one," he said.

Garrett added that the block known as "Black Wall Street" was born out of the vision of African-American entrepreneurs.

"It's not that someone allowed us to Please see BLACK/2A

Pregnancy issues are often different for black women. A book can help you cope. 1C



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