



HAIRSTON AWARDED LEGAL FEES!

Judge Tells Perkins, Minix, Todd to Pay \$60,000 to Pastor and Tabernacle!



After Losing Lawsuit, Plaintiffs Dealt Maybe Most Devastating Blow

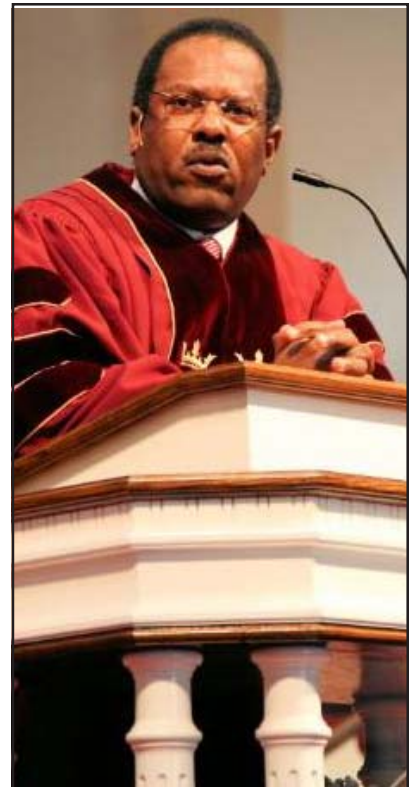
By W. ORLANDO PIERCE
Special to the Chronicle

A judge awarded the pastor and the Tabernacle Baptist Church their legal fees and costs for having to defend themselves against a lawsuit that was thrown out earlier this year.

One of the attorneys who defended Rev. Dr. Darryl R. Hairston, the pastor of Tabernacle Baptist, told the *Black Chronicle* his firm and another representing the congregation, have incurred about \$60,000 in expenses in fighting the lawsuit.

That means Eddie H. Perkins, Carol D. Minix and Melvin R. Todd (the plaintiffs in the lawsuit) must each pay approximately \$20,000 to the pastor and the church.

The ruling, issued by Oklahoma County District Judge Lisa T. Davis on Thursday, dealt what was perhaps the most devastating blow to the cadre that has been opposing Rev. Hairston as he has uncovered a large-scale misuse of funds at the church.



Rev. Dr. Darryl R. Hairston, pastor of the Tabernacle Baptist Church, preaching during worship services held last year.

Some have described the perpetrators of the misuse of funds as an elite group of church-

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'I Love This Job!'

"I just want to single out the salutatorian and valedictorian," New York City Schools Chancellor Dennis M. Walcott told a group of high school graduates on Tuesday. "If I, the C-plus student, can be the chancellor, imagine what you can do." "I love this job!," he told the graduates. The chancellor was appointed in April by Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg. (Photo/Kathy Kmonicek/New York Times)

'Why Him?,' Son Of Murder Victim Asks After Shooting

Neighbor Suspected of Killing Elderly Man Following Fight in His Front Yard

By THOMAS E. SEWARD
Special to the Chronicle



Melody Cullom

TULSA— "Why him?," one of the sons of a now dead 72-year-old man killed June 18 asked the other day.

Herman Barnes suffered with several serious ailments, and, occasionally, he couldn't even stand on his own, Tim Patrick told reporters.

So, why would someone murder him?, the son asked, seeming to be searching within himself for an answer he didn't have.

The remainder of the dead man's family is puzzled, too, Mr. Patrick said, especially since the woman suspected in the murder is someone to whom Mr. Barnes had been kind.

She was also the victim's neighbor.

Melody Rochelle Cullom, 43, has been jailed on a first-degree murder complaint in connection with Mr. Barnes' shooting death.

"We are just wondering, 'Why him?,'" Mr. Patrick said, "because, from what I under-

stand, he had been kind to the lady and her kids a few times and he helped them out."

Police said a dispute preceded the shooting, which occurred about 7 p.m. on a Saturday evening in the 1500 block of N. Frankfort Avenue.

Witnesses told police they saw Mr. Barnes and Mrs. Cullom fighting in the front yard of his home.

During the fight, Mrs. Cullom shot Mr. Barnes multiple times "after he had fallen to the ground," the arrest report stated.

There were also reports that Mrs. Cullom had kicked Mr. Barnes, according to police.

She then went back inside his house, witnesses told police. The door of the residence had been forced open, the police report said.

When police officers arrived, they saw Mrs. Cullom leaving Mr. Barnes' home and walking west on Pine Place. She refused to comply with police commands to stop and, so, officers physically detained her.

Officers then noticed an apparent gunshot wound on Mrs. Cullom's right arm, the report said, and she was taken to St. John Medical Center for treatment.

A detective said she, apparently, was injured in a struggle over



Herman Barnes

the handgun.

Mr. Patrick said he learned of his father's death from his niece.

The niece, Mr. Patrick said, had earlier asked Mrs. Cullom not to go to Mr. Barnes' home, but the son of the victim said he was unaware of any previous threats of violence between his father and Mrs. Cullom.

Mr. Barnes grew up in Beggs and retired from the Manhattan Construction Co. in the 1990's, his son said.

Besides Mr. Patrick, Mr. Barnes had another son, as well as a daughter.

Mr. Patrick's mother had lived at the home on Frankfort Avenue, the son told reporters, and Mr. Barnes moved in with her when she became ill.

After her death in 1994, he remained at the residence.

"Over the years, he pretty much became a homebody," Mr. Patrick said, "because he [was in] bad health."

The son said his father suffered from a heart condition and high blood pressure.

"He was not in any type of condition to fight with anyone," the son of the dead man commented.

Butler Is Police Captain

She Cites The Groundwork Of Others

By CHRISTOPHER V. PORTER
Chronicle Staff

Vashina Butler, 42, recently became the first Black female captain in the Oklahoma City Police Department.

Capt. Butler told reporters that her promotion is a testament to the work of so many who broke down both racial and gender barriers before she became a police officer 20 years ago.

"Had they not laid the groundwork, I wouldn't have even had the opportunity to take the test to become a captain," she said.

Her interest in being a police officer began when she was a student at the University of Oklahoma, Capt. Butler said.

She took a criminal justice class and decided she wanted to go into law enforcement, Capt. Butler recalled.

She graduated from South-eastern Oklahoma State University in 1990 and applied to become an officer.

Among the police brass on the board that hired Mrs. Butler was then-Maj. M.T. Berry.

Maj. Berry, of course, went on to become the city's first Black



Capt. Vashina Butler was recently promoted by the Oklahoma City Police Department.

police chief.

"As a 21-year-old college graduate, here I see an African-American man as a major in this large department," Capt. Butler said. "He definitely laid a lot of groundwork. I'm living proof of that."

Chief Berry held that position for a number of years, but was promoted to become "Assistant City Manager Berry." Today, one of the city department heads reporting to him is the police chief.

Assistant City Manager Berry said he was proud to see Mrs. Butler promoted to captain.

"We've come a long way in the diversity of the police department and its command structure," he said.

Reaching the rank of captain is no easy task.

Lieutenants who want to be captains get a chance to take a written test every two years. The top 15 candidates based on test scores and seniority move on to an exhaustive, multistage review

process that includes critiques from high ranking officers from other departments.

That rigorous process narrows the list.

The top candidates then have to hope at least one of the 30 or so captain positions comes open.

Capt. Butler has taken the captain's test four times.

Is it the fourth time that's the charm?

The first three times she took the exam, then-Lieut. Butler was among the top 10 candidates, but not enough spots opened up.

"You definitely feel like it's going to happen this time," Capt. Butler said. "It's about remaining diligent and dedicated in your efforts."

"This is something I wanted," Capt. Butler continued. "I always wanted to go as high in my career as I could."

