

# White supremacist admits two more killings

*Special to Sentinel-Voice*

PITTSBURGH — He admits shooting *Hustler* magazine publisher Larry Flynt in 1978, but he was never prosecuted.

He says he shot former civil rights leader Vernon Jordan in the back two years later, even though a jury acquitted him.

Now Joseph Paul Franklin, a former white supremacist, has admitted to killing two more people, an interracial couple as they walked down a street in 1980.

Suspected in 12 killings in addition to the five for which he was convicted, Franklin convinced investigators recently that he is the one who shot Arthur Smothers and Kathleen Mikula.

"He gave us information that could only be supplied by the perpetrator that was never in the paper that corroborated the physical evidence,"

District Attorney David Tulowitzki said.

Smothers, 22, and Mikula, 16, were crossing a bridge together when they were shot in Johnstown, about 60 miles east of Pittsburgh.

"He's not remorseful," Johnstown police Chief Robert Huntley said. "You could actually see him get excited when he described the murders. He gets louder and he gets a little fidgety in the chair."

Tulowitzki will not try Franklin, 47, in the killings because he already is serving several life sentences and moving him could pose a security risk.

Franklin has escaped briefly twice, once during one of his many extraditions and again during a recess in his murder trial in Utah, authorities said.

"This was purely a random killing," Tulowitzki said. "He just took a position on the

hillside and was going to shoot the first people that fit his category."

A primary category was interracial couples. Franklin has said he no longer holds the white supremacist beliefs that he expressed by attacking blacks, Jews and interracial couples.

He is imprisoned — heavily guarded and wearing shackles — in Chattanooga, Tenn., and is awaiting transfer to Missouri, where he is to be executed for shooting a man attending a Jewish function in St. Louis in 1977.

Prosecutor Kelly Callihan and Detective Jeannine Gaydos learned last fall that Franklin had spoken about the Johnstown killings. For three months, they talked with him on the telephone and established a rapport.

Eventually, he invited them to visit and he confessed, Huntley said.

Born James Clayton Vaughn, Franklin

legally changed his name to honor Benjamin Franklin and Nazi propaganda minister Joseph Goebbels.

Franklin's first known attack was the bombing of Beth Shalom Synagogue in Chattanooga, Tenn., in July 1977. From then until September 1980, he is believed to have killed 17 people — three interracial couples, seven black men and boys, three female hitchhikers and a Jewish man.

Flynt survived his shooting but was paralyzed. Jordan, who was head of the National Urban League when he was shot, recovered and became a prominent Washington lawyer and close friend of President Clinton.

During his spree, Franklin survived by robbing banks and selling his blood.

He was arrested in October 1980 at a blood bank in Lakeland, Fla.

## Racial incident draws split verdict, upsets Philly's blacks

*Special to Sentinel-Voice*

PHILADELPHIA — A common pleas court judge on Monday found three white men guilty of rioting and ethnic intimidation in an incident last February in which they kicked in the front door and broke the windows of a black family's house in the Grays Ferry neighborhood, a mostly white section of south Philadelphia. The incident polarized the community.

So did a split verdict of

Judge Albert J. Snite Jr. who on Monday also convicted three other whites of simple assault and acquitted another three of all charges.

Snite knew the split verdict wouldn't sit well with everyone.

"No matter what I say, neither side is going to be happy," Snite told a packed courtroom where blacks and whites congregated amongst themselves. "But I cannot accept that there was a grand

conspiracy, although there might have been small pockets of it."

The Philadelphia chapter of the NAACP and the local leader of the Nation of Islam disagreed.

They called the verdicts "a step forward in the right direction," but said all nine men deserved conspiracy convictions.

Infuriated by the incident, about 500 blacks marched through the working-class

neighborhood denouncing racial violence.

Many white residents stood on their front steps and turned their backs.

Nation of Islam leader Louis Farrakhan and Mayor Ed Rendell addressed an interfaith gathering about a mile away from the march.

On Monday, the nine men rose to hear their verdicts as the victims — Annette Williams, 34, her son Raheem, 18, and her nephew Warren, 18 — looked on.

The Williamses, who are black, had testified in the two-week nonjury trial that the men attacked them without provocation in a brawl that moved down the street to their house at 1:30 a.m. on Feb. 23, 1997.

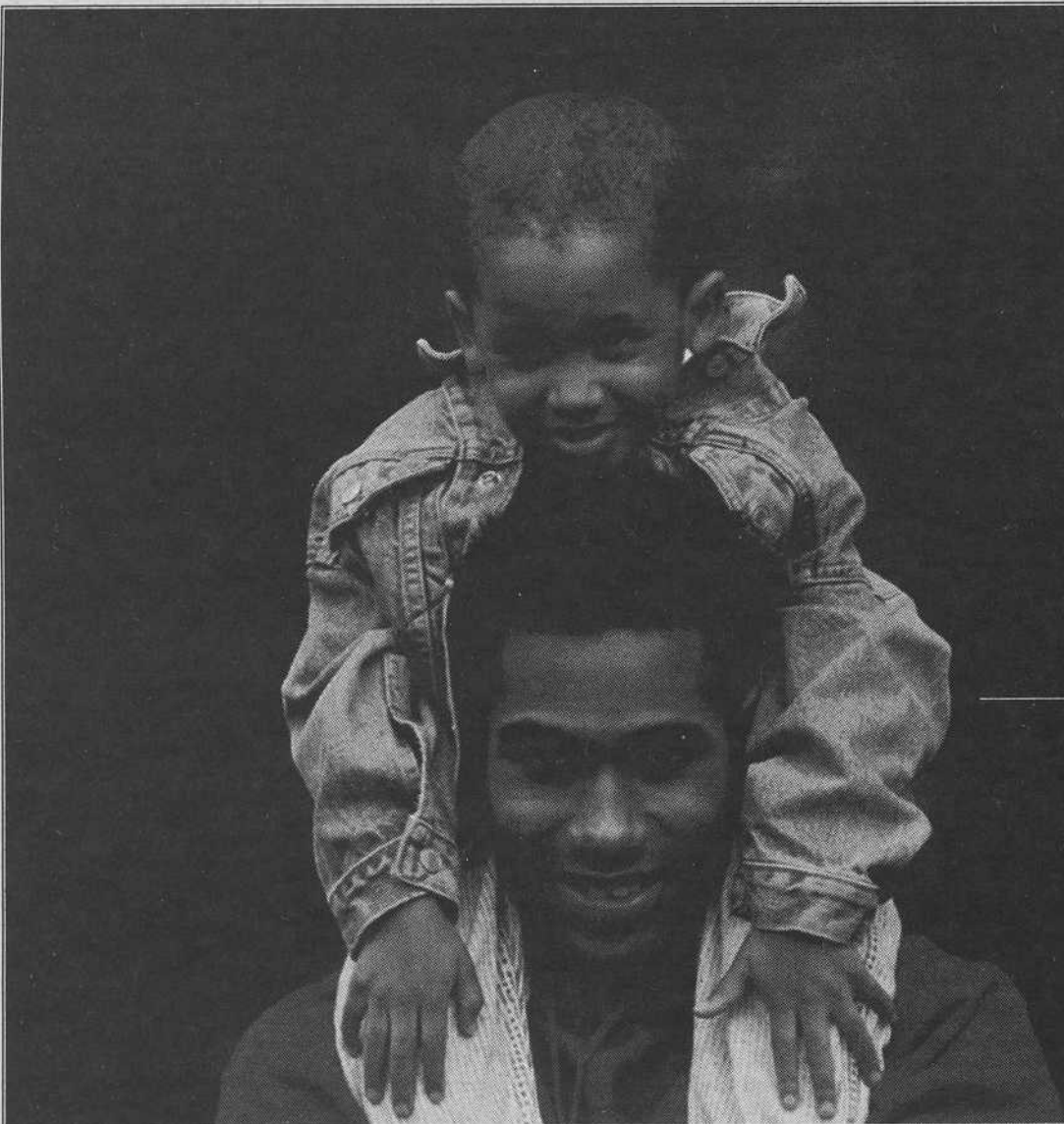
Though Annette Williams said afterward that she was "somewhat pleased with the verdict," she said, her voice trembling, that, "No one was there but my son, myself and my nephew. And no judge felt the fear and the pain that we

went through that night."

During the trial, defense attorneys for some of the men said the incident was a fight blown out of proportion.

The prosecution said the fight began after one defendant directed a drunken slur toward the two cousins, hassling them "basically because they were black," and it soon unfolded into "an ugly incident."

The six will be sentenced April 2. District Attorney Lynne Abraham said her office will seek jail time.



*Do you recognize these eyes, full of*

*hope for a life soon to be birthed?*

*They follow a historic line of self*

*reliance and strength that blossoms*

*into our future doctors, lawyers,*

*Presidents and chemists!*

The Regional Transportation Commission of Clark County and Citizens Area Transit celebrate the African American Image.

