

# Western N.C. is fertile ground for racists extremists

**Special to Sentinel-Voice**  
ANDREWS, N.C. — Juxtaposed against nature's beauty sits a place a few miles outside of town, about a half-mile up a dirt and gravel road, which has served as fertile ground for breeding ugly racist and anti-Semitic dogma for better than two decades.

The mountaintop retreat — actually a fortified compound — is called Northpoint. And it is in this remote and rugged area near the Great Smoky Mountains that authorities have been searching for Eric Robert

Rudolph, the suspect in the nation's first fatal abortion clinic bombing who vanished into the hills of Cherokee County.

Situated where North Carolina, Georgia and Tennessee meet, Cherokee County is popular with white-water rafting enthusiasts, hunters, rock climbers and others who enjoy the outdoors.

Extremists probably flock to the area for the same reasons: isolation, privacy and a low cost of living, says Monroe Gilmour, founder of Western

North Carolinians For An End To Institutional Bigotry.

"It is a place you can hide and do paramilitary training," said the Black Mountain resident. "It's more of a base, a place to raise a family."

It is also nearly all white, and a place which welcomes extremist leanings.

About 10 miles up the highway to Murphy is the home of the late Nord Davis Jr., a notorious racist who led an extremist paramilitary group called Northpoint Tactical Teams and espoused a white

supremacist religion called Christian Identity.

Locals have heard rumors of a bunker stocked with weapons on his 200-acre property, an idyllic setting from which Davis published anti-Semitic and anti-homosexual literature. Once an IBM executive from Massachusetts, Davis died in September of cancer.

The Southern Poverty Law Center in Montgomery, Ala., which monitors militia activities and hate groups, says it has strong evidence that

Rudolph was a follower of anti-Semitic Church of The Creator in tiny Otto, near the Georgia state line. One of his followers was convicted of killing a black sailor in 1991, and two soldiers influenced by Klassen's writings were convicted of killing a black couple in Fayetteville in 1995. Klassen died in 1993.

Ben Davis, the dead leader's son, told *The Atlanta Journal-Constitution* last week that he did not know Rudolph would turn him in if he saw him on his property.

But officials fear there are others in this land of thick forest and dark hollows who would help him hide.

They could include followers of the late Ben Klassen, a former Florida legislator who set up his racist,

anti-Semitic Church of The Creator in tiny Otto, near the Georgia state line. One of his followers was convicted of killing a black sailor in 1991, and two soldiers influenced by Klassen's writings were convicted of killing a black couple in Fayetteville in 1995. Klassen died in 1993.

The CAUSE Foundation — described by the Southern Poverty Law Center as a hate group — also moved to Black Mountain from Houston in 1992.

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## N.C. fires hit white churches

**Special to Sentinel-Voice**

CHARLOTTE, N.C. — Speaking in a church gym-turned-pulpit last Sunday, the Rev. Michael Horne tapped arson as his sermon topic which was fitting because the main building had been burned down.

"We're not the only people in need," he told about 85 church members Sunday. "We pray for these other churches."

Recently, five church arsons in two North Carolina counties have occurred, including two over the weekend. Horne's Sunset Forest Baptist Church in Gastonia was the worst hit.

Authorities believe the fires might be connected. All were set intentionally near doors or entrances at the predominately white churches. Officials said they did not know of a possible motive.

The fires come after a similar slate of arsons at predominately white churches in southwestern

Pennsylvania in late January. Federal authorities are helping out in both cases because they have investigated all church fires since a series of arsons at predominantly black churches in the South during the past two years.

The first North Carolina fire, which happened Feb. 8 at First Baptist Church in Stanley, was quickly contained. The next arson happened Tuesday at Horne's church, causing at least \$150,000 in damage.

Damage estimates were between \$2,000 and \$3,000 each in the three fires in the Charlotte area — Garden Memorial Presbyterian Church on Thursday, and Moore's Chapel United Methodist Church and New Apostolic Church just hours apart Saturday night.

"We kind of feel it a lot more now that we're watching others go through it," said the Rev. Michael McCrorey of Garden Memorial. "We're in prayer for those who are doing it."

## Judge moves trial date in Va. beheading case

**Special to Sentinel-Voice**

INDEPENDENCE, Va. — A judge on Monday set a new trial date for one of two white men accused of burning a black man alive and decapitating his corpse last summer.

Because some evidence from the scene of the slaying is still being analyzed at the state crime laboratory, Emmett Cressell's attorneys asked for a delay in the trial which had been scheduled to begin Tuesday, Circuit Judge J. Colin Campbell acquiesced.

Cressell, 37, could be sentenced to life in prison if convicted when his trial on first-degree murder and robbery charges begins March 23.

His co-defendant, Louis J. Ceparano, 43,

will begin his murder trial April 1. He could be sentenced to death if convicted.

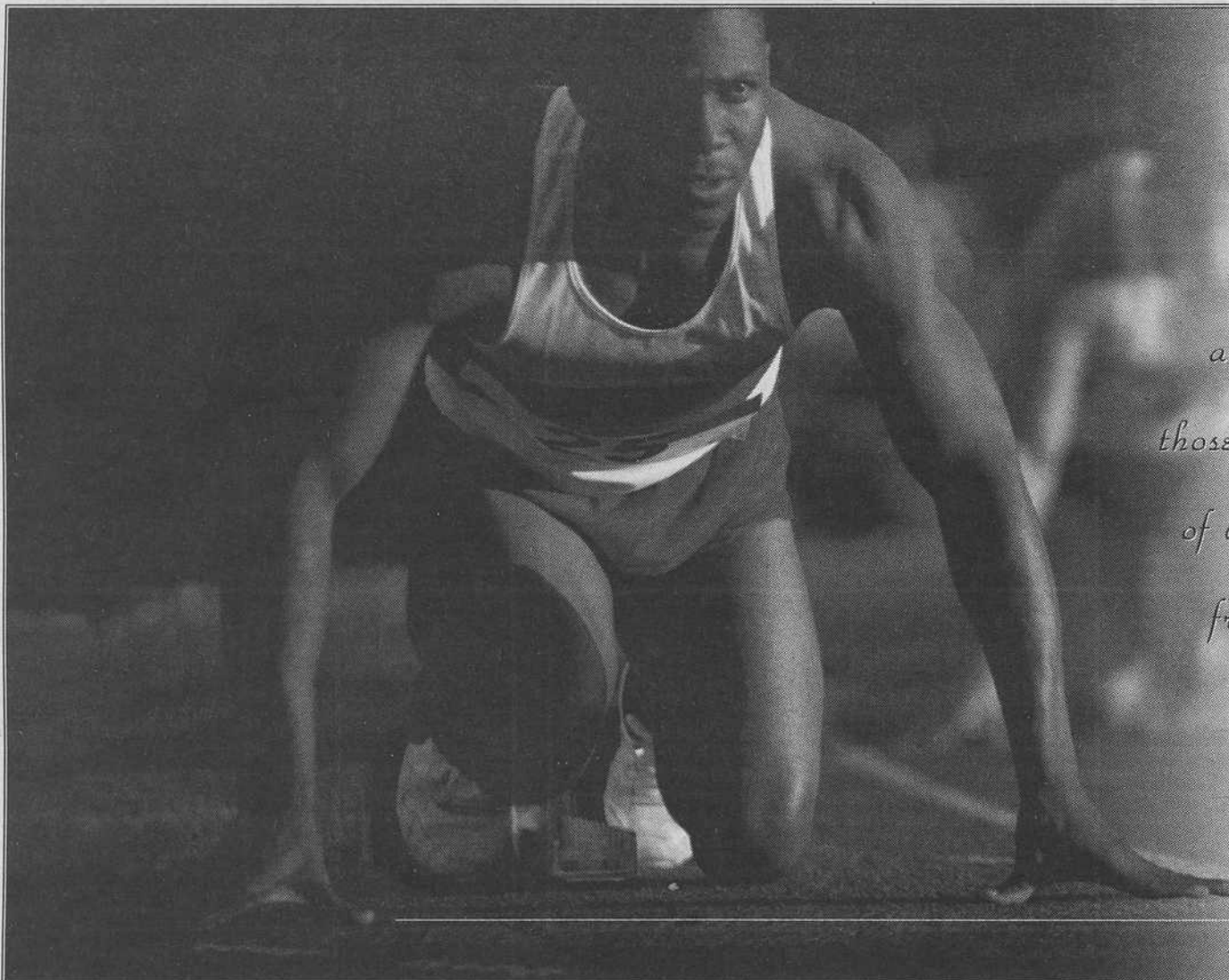
Both men are being held in jail without bond.

Cressell and Ceparano are accused of robbing Garnett P. Johnson at the end of an all-night drinking party in Ceparano's trailer.

Girlfriends of Cressell and Ceparano who were attending the party told investigators that both men carried Johnson outside.

But neither woman said they saw the 40-year-old handyman being doused with fuel and set afire.

The Justice Department is investigating the slaying to determine if it was a racially motivated hate crime.



*Look into the mirror and  
celebrate the image of your  
ancestors. You are one with  
those who spoke with the fullness  
of words when seeking freedom  
from the injustices of slavery  
and rejoiced with screams  
of, "Freedom!"*

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

