

Va. man waits for the chance to clear his name after 27 years

PAROLE FROM B1

exonerations of five other wrongly convicted men, then-Virginia Gov. Mark R. Warner (D) ordered a sweeping review of thousands of criminal cases from 1973 through 1988. Haynesworth's was among them.

Using technology that was not available in the 1980s, authorities tested the DNA collected from a January 1984 rape for which Haynesworth was convicted. The results cleared him and implicated a convicted rapist named Leon Davis.

The Mid-Atlantic Innocence Project took on Haynesworth's case. DNA testing exonerated Haynesworth in a second rape in which he had been a suspect. Again, Davis was implicated.

Davis lived in the same neighborhood as Haynesworth. They resembled each other and have the same blood type. Davis has declined to be interviewed.

In light of the DNA evidence, prosecutors agreed to re-examine the cases in which there is no genetic evidence to test. They pored over the case files, and Haynesworth passed two polygraph examinations.

The Virginia Court of Appeals has scheduled a March 30 hearing to consider Haynesworth's innocence claim. But McDonnell said that "in light of the unique circumstances" of the case, he asked the parole board to review it.

McDonnell also said in a statement that he will consider a petition for pardon.

"We're ecstatic," said Shawn Armbrust, Haynesworth's attorney and director of the Mid-Atlantic Innocence Project. "It doesn't fully correct his conviction, but it gets Thomas out. It shows a real

"It shows a real commitment on behalf of the governor and everyone in Virginia to righting these wrongs once they are found out."

— Shawn Armbrust, Haynesworth's attorney

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Haynesworth said that, over the years, his friends in prison told him that he'd have a better

shot of being granted parole if he admitted guilt, but he has refused. The parole board most recently turned him down this past summer.

"An inmate I knew, he said you have to go in and say you did it even though you didn't do it," Haynesworth recalled. "I said I'm not going to say something I didn't do."

Haynesworth said one of the first things he would do on the outside is visit the grave of his brother, who died while Haynesworth was behind bars. He said he

hopes to get a job as a mechanic. He's planning to move in with his mother.

"I'll just be at home waiting for him to walk through the door," Dolores Haynesworth said.

glodm@washpost.com

Pr. George's investing in job growth

DEVELOPMENT FROM B1

determine rates and terms.

Baker initially implied that he would tap into the entire \$50 million this year. But the county budget director, Tom Himler, said Baker will ask the County Council to establish the fund and then draw down \$7 million from it this year.

Additional funds could be made available with legislative approval during the fiscal year, but the investment is expected to be rolled out over several years, Himler said.

"It's unheard of that a county commits \$50 million into a [economic development] fund," he said. "The intent is to say we are serious about economic development."

By setting aside \$7 million, Prince George's would outshine neighboring jurisdictions. Montgomery County has less than \$1 million dedicated to its economic development fund in its budget.

The Office of Management and Budget would assess applications before passing them on to an independent panel made up of five to seven financial experts selected by the county's chief administrative officer, who would examine the company's financial history.

The business would have to provide an estimate of how many jobs it would create and the county's Office of Finance would ensure that the company is audited, examining financial and performance reviews after receiving funds.

M.H. Jim Estepp, president of the Greater Prince George's County Business Roundtable, said small businesses, which have been frustrated by the county's lack of interest in boosting economic development, are pleased that Baker has made economic development a focus.

Prince George's school board member Donna Hathaway Beck said she thinks the fund is a good strategy and hopes it will eventually lead to more revenue to pay for essential services, including schools.

She said she wonders, however, how "you lure businesses into a school system where you have a school with a librarian who is only in on Mondays. That seems like a disconnect."

Brad Seamon, who was Baker's campaign treasurer and worked to design the fund, said the county plans to use the money to leverage additional funds from the Maryland Department of Economic Development.

"There are instances where we

may put in \$500,000 and get \$5 million from the state," said Seamon, who is likely to become Baker's chief administrative officer.

The plan has received high marks from bond rating firms on Wall Street. Council members also seem to generally approve of the proposal.

"We haven't done enough in the past to grow our economic tax base," said council member Mel Franklin (D-Upper Marlboro). "We're so over-reliant on our residential tax base."

According to county officials, about 30 percent of the county's tax base comes from commercial taxes and more than 60 percent of the county's workforce commutes to jobs outside the county.

Franklin said he wants local residents to benefit from jobs that are created.

Council member Obie Patterson (D-Fort Washington) said he likes the concept, but he wants to make sure there are checks and balances in place.

"We just want to make sure we are not just giving blank checks," he said. "I know we're not going to see returns in 2012 or 2013. We have to look long range, and I think it will work to benefit the county."

wigginsovetta@washpost.com

Police say gang staged string of crimes

ROBBERIES FROM B1

gar Geovani Perez-Suniga. Their immigration statuses were not immediately clear.

The indictment deals with an alleged plot to rob a Wachovia bank branch in Horsham, Pa., north of Philadelphia. It alleges that the suspect asked the undercover officers for "eight vehicles, multiple firearms and a female driver" for the job.

Sources said the undercover officers joined the suspects in casing the bank. The indictment says this occurred March 5. The officers went inside the bank, then returned to the car to discuss the building's layout and security.

During the conversation, one source said, members of the crew discussed taking hostages in the bank if they were trapped by police and said they had to be prepared to shoot the captives one by one if necessary.

After the trip to Pennsylvania, sources said, the robbery crew went off to case another bank without the undercover officers.

On March 9, the indictment alleges, the six suspects met with the undercover officers and "inspected multiple firearms and a sample of the bullet-proof vests

that they believed the officers would provide to them" for the planned Wachovia robbery.

Based on chilling talk about possibly shooting a guard, sources said, police decided it was time to arrest the six suspects.

And they had to act fast, sources said, because there were hints the crew had another job lined up for that week — at a Pennsylvania bank or a check-cashing business in Baltimore. So the undercover

"There's a coldness about them."

— Investigator, referring to six men held after undercover officers allegedly infiltrated their gang and discussed a bank robbery.

officers told the suspects about a drug dealer who was ripe for a robbery, sources said, and the men allegedly took the bait.

According to the sources, the men said they needed two cars and seven fresh guns. The undercover officers agreed to oblige and arranged to meet the suspects on the night of March 10 at the office building. Sources declined to dis-

close the building's location.

They said three undercover officers met the six men inside. The two cars, courtesy of police, were parked in front, and the undercover officers, good to their word, handed over six pistols and a semi-automatic rifle, neglecting to mention that none of the weapons had a firing pin, sources said. They said the suspects also were armed with three handguns of their own.

They went over the robbery plan, then walked outside, headed to the cars.

Boom! Boom! Boom!
Three of the six men threw away their weapons and tried to flee, but officers had cordoned off the block, and there were police dogs and an armored vehicle on the scene, sources said.

The explosive takedown lasted about two minutes.

Assistant Chief Peter Newsham said the arrest operation — run by the ERT, the Narcotics and Special Investigation Division and the FBI — was "extremely risky for our folks." He praised the officers involved for arresting six men, three armed, with no injury to anyone.

williams@washpost.com

Staff writer Del Quentin Wilber contributed to this report.

OBITUARIES

SAM CHWAT, 57

Master of voice taught actors how to lose or gain an accent

BY ELAINE WOO

Sam Chwat was a master of accents who taught Robert De Niro to talk like an Appalachian ex-convict, Olympia Dukakis to talk like a Holocaust survivor and Peter Boyle to talk like a bigot from the Deep South. A modern-day Henry Higgins, he also trained some actors to lose accents, helping Julia Roberts drop her native Georgia drawl and Tony Danza his distinctive Brooklynese.

Mr. Chwat even turned his training on himself, muting his own "Noo Yawk" accent to prevent clients from miming the wrong cues.

Mr. Chwat, 57, who died March 3 of non-Hodgkin's lymphoma on Long Island, N.Y., ran the Sam Chwat Speech Center in New York City, which has helped thousands of people with speech challenges. His clients included corporate executives trying to eliminate distracting accents and politicians seeking to switch more nimbly between the voice they use in the halls of power and the one they use courting voters at home.

In the highly specialized world of Hollywood dialect coaches, Mr. Chwat's background made him unique.

He was a licensed speech pathologist who used the knowledge he gained working with stroke victims, stutterers and people with developmental disabilities to help actors fit their roles.

"He was very highly regarded," said Robert Easton, the dean of Hollywood dialect coaches, and "went across the board" in the range of accents he taught.

Born in New York City on March 29, 1953, Mr. Chwat was a 1974 graduate of Sarah Lawrence



COURTESY SAM CHWAT SPEECH CENTER

Speech therapist Sam Chwat was a dialect coach for such stars as Robert De Niro, Julia Roberts and Olympia Dukakis.

College in Bronxville, N.Y., and received a master's degree in speech pathology from Columbia University in 1977.

He started his professional life as a speech therapist working with hospital patients. He pronounced his last name without the "t" so it sounded like "schwa," the linguistic term for a short, neutral vowel sound.

About 1980, Mr. Chwat received a phone call from a super-market chain about an employee whose advancement opportunities were hindered by a thick Puerto Rican accent. His success with that client — who subsequently won a promotion — led Mr. Chwat to start a private practice.

His first Hollywood client was Andie MacDowell. She sought his help to avoid a repeat of her experience in the 1984 movie "Greystoke," in which producers hired Glenn Close to dub over her

lines because her South Carolina accent was deemed too intrusive.

Soon, an unknown Roberts showed up in Mr. Chwat's office. "Her manager said she would be eligible for a wider variety of roles if she lost her Southern accent," Mr. Chwat told the Atlanta Journal-Constitution in 2002.

After working with Mr. Chwat several times a week for months, Roberts landed her breakthrough role in 1998 with "Mystic Pizza." He was so effective in eliminating traces of Roberts's linguistic roots that she needed to be coached in a Southern accent for "Steel Magnolias," the 1989 movie set in small-town Louisiana.

Mr. Chwat's most grueling assignment might have been coaching De Niro for the 1991 film "Cape Fear." To prepare for his role as a convicted Appalachian rapist, De Niro had a researcher tape conversations with violent felons in Appalachian prisons.

Mr. Chwat reviewed each tape with De Niro until they settled on one voice that would serve as the actor's model. De Niro was nominated for a best actor Oscar for his work.

Over the years, Mr. Chwat was criticized for helping immigrants who wanted to sound more mainstream. Those critics accused him of contributing to cultural homogenization, but he saw his services as an aid to assimilation for those who desired it.

His work took him all over the globe, said his wife, Susan Lazarus Chwat, who survives him, along with three daughters and a sister.

"He spent a month in Pakistan right before 9/11 working with call centers there," she said. "They didn't want people who called to know where they were. He helped them sound more American."

— Los Angeles Times

BRIAN LANKER, 63

Photographer was Pulitzer winner

Brian Lanker, who won the Pulitzer Prize for feature photography in 1973, died Sunday at his home in Eugene, Ore., 10 days after being diagnosed with pancreatic cancer, the Eugene Register-Guard reported. He was 63.

Mr. Lanker won the Pulitzer for a black-and-white photo essay on childbirth, exemplified by his photograph "Moment of Life," which featured his future wife, Lynda. He was working for Kansas's Topeka Capital-Journal at the time.

During the 1970s, he was twice named Newspaper Photographer of the Year by National Press Photographers Association and the University of Missouri School of Journalism.

Mr. Lanker became a nationally known photojournalist whose work appeared in Life, Sports Illustrated and National Geographic magazines. A project he began for National Geographic about dance in America was published in 2008 as a book, "Shall We Dance?"

Other books of his photography include "I Dream a World: Portraits of Black Women Who Changed America" (1989) and



PAUL CARTER/ASSOCIATED PRESS

Brian Lanker poses in 1989 with his portrait of civil rights activist Rosa Parks. He won a Pulitzer Prize for a photo essay on childbirth.

"Track Town, USA" (2010).

"Brian was a master craftsman who didn't need words to communicate," said Tony Baker, editor and publisher of the Register-Guard, where Mr. Lanker worked as director of graphics from 1974 to 1982.

"His camera work alone made for extraordinary storytelling. ... He was a big personality with

a big-picture view of life and of his craft."

In 2000, Mr. Lanker directed a PBS documentary, "They Drew Fire," about the combat artists of World War II.

Survivors include his wife and three children.

— From news services and staff reports

CORRECTION

The March 13 obituary of songwriter Hugh Martin incorrectly reported that "The Boys From Syracuse" by Richard Rodgers and Lorenz Hart premiered on Broadway in 1942. It premiered in 1938.

the Korean War.

Earlier in his career, he was the Arizona state director for what is now known as the National Beer Wholesalers Association. He also edited the Arizona Cattle Growers' Association's magazine and ran his family's ranch near Flagstaff, Ariz.

He moved to the Washington area in 1964.

He was a member of St. John's Episcopal Church in Washington, the National Press Club and the St. David's Society, a Welsh heritage organization.

He had no immediate survivors.

— Lauren Wiseman

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