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Serving the Triad

Priceless

Judge Roland Hayes: History Worth Repeating

by Samantha Muhammad



"He hath showed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?" Holy Bible, Micah 6:8

In 1984 Judge Roland Hayes was the "new kid on the block." He had been practicing law since the '70s and was recommended by the governor of the state to assume the seat of judge in the 21st Judicial District. It was an honor and also a challenge. Public opinion of lawyers and the courts was on the decline. He believed in the

oath that he had taken. He was going to make a difference.

That was then. Judge Hayes, now the senior judge in District Court, was recently appointed at the Chief District Court Judge in Forsyth County and has made a difference. He is one among seven judges in District Court and the only African-American. His new position will primarily add more administrative duties, but he'll tell you, he's still up for the challenge.

"In 1984 they created an additional judge and I was appointed by Gov. Jim Hunt to serve in that seat. I was the first black to ever become a district court judge," he said. "We needed the perspective I had to offer," said Judge Hayes, whose responsibilities include supervising 16 magistrates, scheduling assignments and tracking of cases.

"I've had opportunities to go to Superior to Court (federal) but I didn't want that. I wanted to be here. This is where we are. I need to be where the people go to court. This is where I am needed most," said the Winston-Salem native.

Judge Hayes calls himself a "retread" in regards to his schooling. He graduated college in 1952 with a degree in education and later decided to go back to school for law. He attended and graduated N.C. Central University in Durham, earning his law degree in 1971. "I realized that in order to compete, I had to do more than an

undergraduate degree and law was something I had an interest in."

On any given day the courts are filled with mostly Blacks and Hispanics. "I can't tell you why. I can't tell you why more blacks are arrested or why more blacks are charged. I can only do what I was put here to do and that is serve justly," said Judge Hayes, 67.

"Race should not be an issue. But if that be the fact, I have a duty to uphold the law and a duty to have some compassion," he said. "The judge has a very important impact on the case. And a judge can not assume a person is guilty just because he has been charged."

Other shocking court statistics is that more people are getting divorced than married, he added.

His 14 years on the bench has opened his eyes to some horrifying stories. He still can't believe some of the crimes people commit against each other, especially crimes committed by children.

Judge Hayes says he tries not to become callous to the cases and real-life situations that he is exposed to. As a member of Cleveland Christian Church, he stays very active in church affairs. His faith in God and his commitment to do the best job that he can has kept him grounded. "But for Grace, there go I," he said.

"I try not to forget that people are human. I am serious about upholding my oath to be fair and just," said Judge Hayes. With all of the power his position holds, he is still very thankful to be a servant of the people.

Judge Hayes said when he's not in the courtroom, he's spending time keeping abreast of new laws passed by the legislature. He attends seminars and workshops to enhance his understanding of new statutes and the changing times, he said, showing off the five thick books of laws passed from the last session.

"This is a noble profession that is there to help people, not just in defense in criminal cases but also to help people secure rights in a civil case," he said, recalling the sad stories where he has seen people who have been tricked into giving away their property or possessions.

His next feat will be a Nov. 3, 1998, election. This will be the first time his seat has been challenged. He'll face off with a Republican at the polls and is asking everyone to come out that day and vote for him. "I'm looking forward to the race. I see this as another challenge."

"I am serving this community well. And I just pray and encourage everyone to vote," he said. If Judge Hayes wins the election, it will be the last term he will be able to serve. The law requires judges to retire at 72 years old.

DUDLEY GIVES THUMBS UP FOR NEW BASEBALL TEAM

by U.C. Moore

When word got out that Major League Baseball was expected to add two more teams, people in the Triad went to work, including Mrs. Eunice Dudley, of Dudley Products, Inc.

Dudley was appointed to serve on the Forsyth/Guilford Metropolitan Baseball Park Authority, a team formed at the request of the two counties' commissioners and its citizens. The group will look into the prospects of bringing the next Major League Baseball expansion team to the Piedmont Triad.

May 5 will be the determining factor, when citizens go to the polls to say "yea" or "nay" to the idea.

According to a study, the Triad is the geographic center of North Carolina with the major markets of Charlotte, Raleigh and Roanoke, Va., within 100 miles of potential stadium sites. Transportation serving the Triad allows for easy access from almost 6,500,000 people in the combined market.

North Carolina is also the 7th largest television market in the U.S. and one of the largest states currently without a Major League Baseball team. With no major league baseball team between Baltimore and Atlanta, North Carolina is well-positioned to offer strong market support for the Southeast.

As an appointed member of the commission, Dudley said her job is just to do the "leg-work" for the commissioners so they will be able to make a better decision. But as a private citizen and a business owner herself, Dudley said she is very happy at the prospects of having a team in her hometown.

"Both Raleigh and Charlotte have received national attention for the teams they have. The exposure would be great for business owners as well as for the economy," she said.



Dudley believes a baseball park would also give the respective cities a little push on expanding traffic patterns and roads.

Although citizens are inquiring about increased taxes, as well as retailers, they need not be worried for long. "Hotels, restaurants, retailers, everyone will increase their customer base, just by the traffic coming in and out of our area," she said. "Companies will begin to look at moving their businesses to our area and this will mean more jobs and higher paying jobs."

Another big plus, she said, is that the concession stands will be manned by non-profit organizations, who will receive a percentage of sales. "That is one of the best things I like about the base-

ball park," Dudley added. "There are so many good reasons why we should back this idea. It will solidify the area and beautify it as well."

Cities with professional sports teams offer a camaraderie with its citizens. "There will be a buzz in the Piedmont once the team comes here. There will be ongoing excitement. All positive changes that will all trickle down."

Dudley believes that the ball players as well will serve as role models for children and students in the area.

"The ball players will of course be involved in community service projects. They will be able to be mentors to the younger people, give lectures and even set up scholarships for school. This will be a win-win situation for everyone," she said.

If the vote goes through, the stadium would have to be built on the Forsyth/Guilford county line.

The league will be awarding the teams by the end of 1999. According to the North Carolina Baseball Committee, 31,250 fans will attend each of the 81 home games and fill the stadium to at least 75 percent capacity. The average ticket price will be \$15 and each attendant is expected to spend approximately \$10 at the concession stands.

The study also shows that during the 2000 season, an estimated 800 new on-site jobs will be created by the operations of a team in the Triad region. The five-year total economic impact on the Triad region economy is expected to be \$774 million. Approximately 300 acres will be needed to build a Major League Ball Park.

The next commission meeting will be held Tuesday, Feb. 24, at 5 p.m. at the Winston-Salem Chamber of Commerce for those interested in attending.

Welcome Fans!