

ROCKYMOUNT NEWS and VIEWS

By J. B. HARRIS
Dial 2-1913

WHY IS MY TOWN STAGNANT?

ROCKY MOUNT — I am sure that many progressive-minded individuals have asked themselves and others: "Why does our town remain static, inactive or dormant while many other communities are steadily forging ahead in the battle for complete first-class citizenship?"

Please apply the question to your community and see if you can find a satisfactory answer. One that will help you improve things — then pass it on to this column so we can tell someone else. Currently, I feel that my town needs it worst than any other in this state.

We shall ever remember how Durham publisher Louis Austin vigorously reprimanded Rocky Mount some 25 years ago in his famous "What's Wrong with Rocky Mount" editorial. We don't have the answer yet.

Discussing the situation last week with a rather conservative Baptist deacon who is in his early fifties, he said: "The trouble is we don't have leadership; no one whom the people will trust — have confidence in — and follow." I asked if he did not think that "followership" was also necessary and some of those who had attempted to lead had been snubbed or ignored because of their being without the favor of the elite society or considered too radical? He stuck to his opinion of lack of leadership. However, he conceded that weak ministerial leaders were principally responsible for the dearth of civic, political and general community growth here.

After leaving this man I thought of how the Rev. W. C. Somerville, when he pastored the deacon's church more than a score of years ago, organized a Civic Forum and had the town on the road to progress in a forthright manner when he left to take up his present duties with Lott Carey Foreign Missions. Gradually the Forum lost sight of its original ideals and the program grew up in weeds until now, when William T. Grimes, current president, is trying to get it back on the road to serving the total community.

I thought of how we once had an NAACP in 1945 and 1946; and how some of us have given service for 18 years with the local unit and now we cannot get a forum together (the said deacon, either) to hold a meeting or elect officers.

I thought of how Charlie Jones and I had begged the high and mighty to join in effecting a program of community leadership and civic-mindedness to get people to register and vote. I thought of how the Rev. K. P. Battle had

twice run for alderman to get the town conscious of its potential political possibilities in a ward which could have for the time elected a race alderman. He was snubbed.

Also how Alex H. Bryant, a former teacher, had run for alderman from his ward twice without getting any support from colored people to go along with the votes of broad-minded whites who supported him as many did Battle and later, Charlie Jones, when he ran.

The so-called colored leaders said Battle and Jones were not equipped to cope with the weighty matters of civic administration, notwithstanding the fact that there were (and have been since) white members with even less literary preparation; and Bryant, a J. C. Smith U. graduate, was rebuffed because of some personal dislikes.

I thought of how one local organization has reportedly taken over the program for this year without any visible sign of activity all the while, when candidates are filing for office.

I also thought of how it was proposed in a men's religious group meeting to get the noted Rev. Martin L. King, Jr., to come here and give us a pep talk and the chairman objected on the grounds that to do so "might stir up race feeling."

SIXTY YEARS OF SUBMISSION
After leaving the deacon, I asked J. W. Parker, Sr., 80-year-old native former businessman, who knows about all there is worth knowing about the history of the city, to answer the question of why we remain staid.

Mr. Parker stroked his heavy coat of gray beard and proceeded to tell how he recalled, as a youth, the first election in which Negroes took any outstanding part before disenfranchisement took place. He recounted the incidents of the year about the turn of the century when Negro Republican Congressman George White was in power and Lee Pearson, one of those colored grandmasters to serve this town, was a political leader, who, he said, failed the attempt of the Democrats to commit a fraud in the handling of election ballots.

As a young man, Parker recalls that a small riot broke out during which one prominent white man was killed and a colored man seriously wounded while Negroes were being driven away from the voting place by bands of armed whites and the ballot boxes destroyed. This Parker said, broke up all mass participation in politics on the part of local Negroes. This person, reportedly left town at that time in the interest of his personal safety. Many oldtimers will tell you of how, when Negroes had the Courthouse in Tarboro for a political rally, the enraged whites marched on the Courthouse and ran the Negroes out at gunpoint. A white newsman, Red Buck Bryant of near Charlotte has written many times of witnessing that scene.

When you consider all these depressing events in the lives of the Negroes of the area just 60 years ago, maybe you can understand why they won't rally to the cause of suffrage, equality, political action and the right to be on the various governing boards of the community.

They have not forgotten how their fathers told them of how Negroes ran across that conical hat election night when the whites allegedly took the election by force and stand up and be counted in this fight for freedom, regardless of how little or much education, nor how big a car or home they have. And they are unwilling to support the few who try to stand for them. What is the answer to our great dilemma? We need your help!

PATRONIZE OUR ADVERTISERS

Rocky Mount Club News

ROCKY MOUNT — The Jolly House Club of Rocky Mount gives an annual formal party each year. This year it was given at the home of Mrs. Idella Bellamy, 1012 West Thomas Street.

The club has been in progress for about 28 years. The officers are president, Mrs. Idella Bellamy; vice-president, Mrs. Sallie Smith; recording secretary, Mrs. Lucy Gray; financial secretary, Mrs. Mary E. Bullock and treasurer, Mrs. Harrison Terry.

The acting hostesses were the members as follows: Mrs. Maggie Bines, Mrs. Mary L. Gay, Mrs. Idella Bellamy, Mrs. Sallie Smith, Mrs. Harriett Terry, Mrs. L. Battle, Mrs. Mable Battle, Mrs. Geneva Lewis, Mrs. William A. Merritt, Mrs. Minnie Allen, Mrs. Georgia Sumner, Mrs. T. Joyner, Mrs. Lizzie Coddell and Mrs. Lucy Gray.

The guests played games and were presented prizes. First prize, Mrs. Harrison Terry; second, Miss Victoria E. Hopkins; third prize, Mrs. Lillian Ivey; fourth, Mrs. Lillian Ivey; fifth, Mrs. Allen Thomas and sixth, Mrs. M. J. King.

The menu consisted of ham, turkey, string beans, cranberry sauce, fruit salad, rolls, hot rolls, coffee and individual chest pies for dessert.

Music was rendered by Mrs. Mary C. McIntyre throughout the evening.

The guests were as follows: Mr. and Mrs. James A. Savage, Mrs. Lucy Fernald, Mrs. Pauline Harrison, Mrs. Victoria E. Hopkins, Mr. and Mrs. Harry Gray, Jr., Mr. and Mrs. Frank Sumner, Jr., Miss Mary McIntyre, Mr. and Mrs. Jerry Hedgepeth, Mr. and Mrs. George Daniels, Mr. and Mrs. Lewis Daney, Mr. and Mrs. James Davis, Mrs. Fannie B. Byers, Mrs. P. V. Patterson, Mr. and Mrs. Henry W. Brown, Mrs. Lillian Ivey, Mrs. Alder Thomas, Mrs. Macy J. Corbett, Mrs. Ethel Hunter, Mr. R. C. Gray, Mrs. R. B. Byrd, Mrs. Mildred E. King, Mr. Harrison Terry and Mr. Thomas Joyner.

The affair was very nice.

MRS. C. P. JOHNSON
Funeral services for Mrs. C. P. Johnson were held Sunday afternoon at St. Matthew's C. M. E. Church at 2 p. m. with the Rev. M. D. Clark officiating.

Mrs. Johnson, a resident of 929 Windley St., died Tuesday morning in Greensboro, N. C. She was a native of Richland, Ga., and had lived in High Point for the past 10 years.

Surviving relatives are Mrs. Minnie Moreland of Brooklyn, N. Y. Three grandsons, Johnny Johnson of High Point, Jesse Johnson of Cincinnati, Ohio, and William Johnson of Columbus, Ohio.

Following the funeral services burial followed in Greenhill Cemetery. Hairliff Funeral home was in charge of the services.

Happy Birthday to Brenda Marks - March 14th, Little Joyce McCloud - March 10th, Mrs. Bettye Brown - March 14th, Little Terry Sue Williams - March 18th.

Many wishes for a speedy recovery go to Mr. Lester Strong - High Point Hospital, Mrs. Octavia Leake - 1015 E. Washington St., Mrs. Cleola Leonard - Brooks St., Mrs. Doshia Carter - Leonard St., Mrs. Eula C. Lenoir - Harrison St. and Mrs. Gertrude Stanton - Leonard St.

Hopping About TARHEELIA

By Jay Bee Aytch

ROCKY MT. GETS MAILMAN
ROCKY MOUNT — At long last, this city, with a race population of 12,000 out of the 25,000 total, has gotten what is hoped will be a permanent colored mailman, Maxwell Page, an ex-service man, has been serving several weeks as Special Delivery and general Utility Man, which occasionally sees him walking a route, according to information gained from an interview with Postmaster H. C. Roundtree last week, who added that Page's work "is highly satisfactory."

Previously, another veteran — a "one-foot man" — had held the job for awhile. It had been several years, the postmaster said, since a colored man had served in other than a custodial capacity except at Christmas time during recent years when a couple of teachers have carried the holiday rush deliveries.

THREE POSTMASTERS
In reply to a query by this reporter, Mr. Roundtree reminded that many people did not know that Rocky Mount had had three colored postmasters during its early history.

These men and their tenure of office as postmaster were as follows: Weeks S. Armstrong served from April 18, 1859 to April 11, 1860; Lee Peason, April 11, 1860 to June 18, 1863; and Israel Hargett, July 27, 1867 to February 15, 1869.

During mid-January Dr. Joseph W. Parker, Jr., the city's youngest race medic, was appointed to the city school board to become the 1st member of his race to so serve. Dr. L. P. Armstrong has served on the local housing authority for several years, and a full-time nurse has served for more than 25 years. Mrs. D. O. Sellers is now retired; while Mrs. Allen Winderly occupies the position now.

However, the city has not seen fit to increase the percentage of colored police officers which has remained static at two for nearly ten years while the force is being increased numerically. Three race women have been added as school patrolwomen during the time. The local police department has not seen fit to promote either colored officer thus far. Many years ago colored electionists did all the city's line work, but not so today. Only a few laborers are used to wait on the white linemen. Colored men do the manual labor jobs in the street department and also in garbage disposal. Once the two genders were operated by colored, but not anymore.

OMEGA WINNER
The Omega Talent Hunt winner for the year was Miss Essie Jean Robinson, an 18-year-old Booker Washington High senior who hopes to attend Shaw University. She is the daughter of Mrs. Ester Robinson, 307 Goldleaf St.

We were glad to see Mrs. Candace Brown Burnett of 501 Centennia St., Greenville, N. C. while in the Pitt County tobacco city last week. We just learned that the Tarboro girl was married December 31 to Baker J. Burnett of Oak City.

The new Mrs. Burnett is teaching in the elementary department of the C. M. Epnes School in Greenville. She is a PATECO grad.

ELKS OFFER \$1000
Across the street from Mrs. Burnett, we talked with Mrs. Leroy Barnes, wife of IBPO ELKS of World leader of the same name. Barnes was recently made Brigadier General of the southern division of the Antlered Guard Dept. of Elkom.

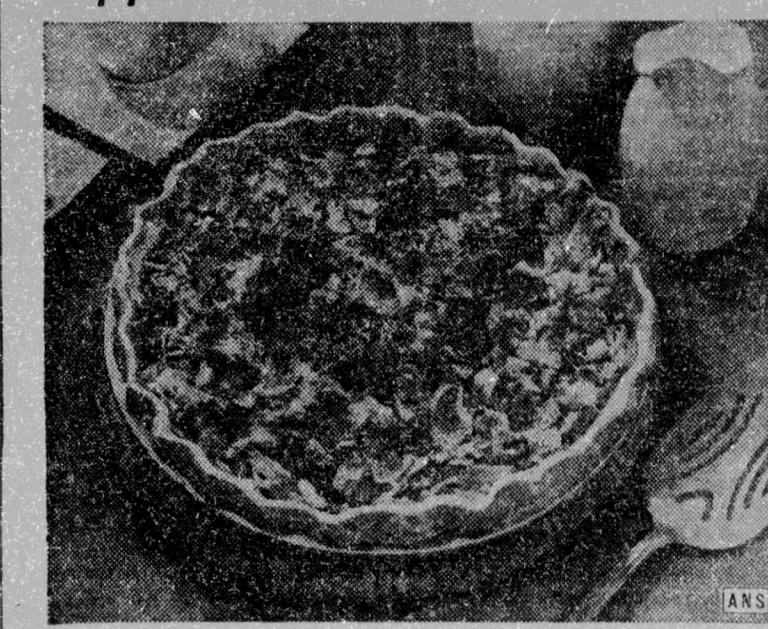
Prof. W. H. Davenport promised to try to have a winning contestant in the Elks Oratorical Contest from Epnes High School district contest to be held early in April at a city and school yet to be selected. Jack Peason of Progressive Elks, Seaboard and L. E. Bowen of Calumet Elks, Scotland Neck, are promising stiff competition for all.

ALSO IN GREENVILLE, 18-year-old Miss Georgeline Jackson, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. George O. West Moore Street, is looking forward with youthful eagerness to participation in the debutante affair of 24 girls to be presented by a local club soon. Miss Jackson is also expected to be in a later presentation at Elizabeth City. Mama Jackson says Georgeline can easily type 45 words per minute and hopes to enter J. C. Smith University in September. My! What a start these kids get so young! They ought to win.

We found Millard F. Bell Cadillaging around town with his white "trippers" generally find it possible to visit almost every country, from Sweden to Greece or beyond, if only for a weekend.

ROCKY MOUNT

Apple Pie With French Accent



"THE APPLE GROWS SO BRIGHT AND HIGH, and ends its days in apple pie"—but in this instance, the pie is interestingly French accented.

Lighter than the traditional two-crust pie, this new version is made with a crisp topping of Kellogg's Sugar Frosted Flakes that go from package to pie with no additional sweetening needed. Just crush the flakes slightly, sprinkle them over the sugar and spiced apples and bake, keeping covered for the first 30 minutes. If you serve the pie warm, add ice cream for an extra delectable touch.

FRENCH APPLE PIE
5 cups thinly sliced apples
1 9-inch unbaked pie shell
3/4 cup sugar
1 teaspoon cinnamon

2 tablespoons butter or margarine
4 cups Kellogg's Sugar Frosted Flakes

Arrange apples in pie shell. Combine sugar and cinnamon and sprinkle over apples. Dot with butter. Crush Sugar Frosted Flakes slightly; sprinkle over pie. Cover. Bake in hot oven (425° F.) about 30 minutes. Uncover; lower heat to moderate (375° F.) and bake about 20 minutes longer. Yield: 1 9-inch pie.

Bishop Grad Is A "First" In Denver

MARHALL, TEX. — (ANP) — A Bishop alumnus, who now lives in Denver appears to be making a career of scoring "firsts." The Rev. M. C. Williams, who went to Denver six years ago from an Omaha Neb., pastorate, has done it again.

This time, the sincere, hard-working minister became the first Negro to serve as chaplain in Colorado's legislature. Mr. Williams assumed that post at the beginning of Colorado's 11st general assembly this year.

In 1956, North Carolina growers produced about 70,000 pounds of aromatic tobacco.

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IT'S SPRING IN GERMANY TOO—And a young soldier's fancy turns to city (Wurzberg) sight-seeing from a rural vantage point. During a normal duty tour in Europe, soldiers who are born "trippers" generally find it possible to visit almost every country, from Sweden to Greece or beyond, if only for a weekend.