



**Deltas Donate To UNCF**

St. Augustine's College official Purdie Anders accepts \$100 donation to the United Negro College Fund on Friday, October 30, presented by Ms. Andia Moore and Ms. Laurie Thompson on behalf of Kappa Omicron Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc., at UNC-Chapel Hill. The money was raised in a recent one-day solicitation held at the Chapel Hill campus. Ms. Sheila Whitehead, first vice president, coordinated the campaign.

## JONESTOWN A MYSTERY STILL UNSOLVED

The unbelievable horror has faded with time — Jonestown is no longer a front page story. Since it occurred around this time of year (November 18, 1978), more than likely, it will appear as a news update. But for most Americans, it is now one of those tragic, crazy incidents that once dominated the news, but is now a bad memory that is best forgotten.

I can't really explain why, but the Jonestown tragedy that eventually took the lives of over 900 Americans in a bizarre setting in the jungles of Guyana, South America, still fascinates me — even after three years. For sure, before November 18, 1978, I have never heard of Jonestown, the Peoples' Temple cult, or its leader, the Rev. Jim Jones.

At the time that Jonestown burst upon the world headlines, I was a sports reporter for the campus newspaper at Fresno State (Calif.). Even though Fresno is less than 200 miles from San Francisco, the home base of the doomed cult, and I had lived in Fresno for the better part of three years, I had never heard of any of the shenanigans that would soon shock most Americans over the Thanksgiving holiday season.

Saturday, November 18, 1978 had dawned cloudy and cold in Fresno and, like the weather, my spirits were drab. The one bright spot that I looked forward to that weekend was that in a few hours, I would go over to some friends' apartment and we would watch some collegiate football games and discuss Thanksgiving plans.

Later that afternoon, I decided to return to my apartment for an afternoon nap. Just before I dozed off, I heard over the bedside radio that California Congressman Leo Ryan had been fatally ambushed on a remote airstrip in Guyana, South America.

When I awoke later that night, I expected the news to be filled with the ambush (probably by some anti-American fanatics, I thought) and it was, but I was shocked to hear sketchy reports that Ryan had been killed by members of a fanatical American cult that had set up a colony in the backwoods of Guyana.

Before I could make heads or tails of the already bizarre story over the next 24 hours, an even larger tragedy began to come across the news wires and over television.

By Monday, November 20, it was known that the people that had killed Ryan and several others at the airstrip were members of the "Peoples' Temple", a religious cult that had

built quite a following in San Francisco and other California locations since arriving there from the Midwest in the late 1960's.

I then learned that group's leader was a Rev. Jim Jones, a fanatical Indiana-born religious fire breather who had built up a following in San Francisco's black neighborhoods and that many of his followers were either very young or very old persons who really believed that the Rev. Jones was offering them a better life. (Jones' followers also included a number of young white activists).

By Tuesday, November 21, the incredible story took an

even darker turn. Guyanese troops who had reached Jonestown reported finding scores of dead people. First reports said that it appeared that most died from a suicide ritual. By Wednesday, the mass suicide had a body count of 400 and a few survivors said that most had voluntarily — at the urging of Jones — drunk a cyanide-laced brew of flavored ade from a large tin tub and waited to die.

At this time, I had had enough of that death story. Four hundred people committing suicide just blew my mind and I didn't want to hear any more.

Like most Americans, I wanted to turn my attention to Thanksgiving

which meant good food, football, and time off from school. Oddly enough, I spent that holiday in the South Bay, only fifty miles south of San Francisco, where the news from Jonestown dominated all the media.

While watching football scores, the final magnitude of the tragedy was revealed through a news report that the body count was now over 900 and it appeared that most of the jungle colony had died in the mass murder-suicide which included the leader, Jim Jones. Then came the magazine and television pictures of the jungle horror. It was as if a bad fictional story had come true. It was revealed that Jones had

## Ask The Lawyer Day Set For Nov. 18

People who are in need of legal information will have an opportunity to talk directly

connections in high places, politicians ran for cover, the city of San Francisco was in shock, and a nation sought answers for the event.

In time, other news replaced the Jonestown tragedy and books and movies have depicted the event. But for this reporter, along with many Americans, the true story of what caused over 900 people to die in a remote country still has more questions than answers. Tragically, we will probably never learn the truth concerning a mad prophet and his doomed ban of followers.

with attorneys when the Durham and Raleigh Call For Action Offices and the North Carolina Bar Association join

over thirty other Call For Action cities across the country in sponsoring the fifth annual "Ask the Lawyer Day." Durham and Raleigh Call For Action phone lines will be turned over to volunteer lawyers from the Young Lawyers Association and the North Central Legal Assistance Program. They will man the phones from 3 to 7 p.m. on Wednesday, November 18.

These volunteer attorneys will provide information on how to choose a lawyer, what costs are to be expected, what a person's rights

are in areas such as landlord/tenant relations, consumer affairs, child custody, wills and insurance.

All calls will be free and will be taken off the air in confidence. Neither the callers nor the lawyers will be identified. The program is designed to provide a service to those people who hesitate to consult a lawyer because of the cost. "Our program allows callers free personal legal advice for the

price of a phone call," says Mrs. Mary Livas Smith, director of the Durham Call For Action Office.

Call For Action is a national telephone information, referral and action service staffed by 2,000 volunteers in over thirty cities. It is affiliated with radio and TV broadcasters and serves of 250,000 people yearly.

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