

**Chronicle Profile**

# Philson is a hard-working soldier in a different kind of army

By ALBERT NICKERSON  
Chronicle Staff Writer

Mrs. M.S. Philson is a dedicated soldier -- not a military soldier, but a soldier in a volunteer army which spreads service and love to others.

Mrs. Philson belongs to the Retired Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) sponsored by the Volunteer Action Center, a division of United Way. The program provides interested groups with the names of senior citizens who want to do volunteer work.

"I love to give a helping hand," said Mrs. Philson, a senior citizen volunteer for the Red Cross. "There's always plenty to do."

Mrs. Philson, who retired from R.J. Reynolds in 1976, has remained active by donating her time to RSVP and through church activities.

She devotes about 40 hours each month to volunteer work. At the Baptist Hospital, she assists doctors and nurses by doing errands, like taking paperwork to the labs.

She also helps patients with small chores. She feeds them, combs their hair and helps them with other minor responsibilities.

"I love volunteer work because I like giving service to people," Mrs. Philson said. "I'm concerned about people. They have tried to pay me for transportation but I will not take money. I can't say I'm giving service if I get paid. I do it because I love people."

Susan Parks, director of the RSVP, said Mrs. Philson gives about 30 to 40 hours each month to her volunteer service, well above the average of 12 hours each month.

About two days each week are allocated to volunteer work, Mrs. Philson said, and the remainder is left for church activities.

She is a lifelong member of Mt. Zion Baptist Church. Tuesday nights are set aside to work with the church-sponsored Girl Scout Troop No. 410, a troop she's helped for 42 years. She also has worked with the church-sponsored Boy Scout Troop No. 869.

She attends choir rehearsal on Wednesday, and Thursday nights are for prayer meetings.

Saturday night is her night for relaxation. Normally, she either reads or listens to the radio. And Sunday, of course, is for regular church services.

In the next two months, Mrs. Philson will give additional time to the Christmas Cheer Toy Shop, a United Way program. Churches,

*"If I only go downtown, I want to always do something. You have to get out an exercise to keep your mind clear. There is always something to be done."*

-- Mrs. Mary Philson

merchants, community groups, and individuals donate clothings, toys, and other items to the shop for distribution to needy families.

Volunteers workers like Mrs. Philson work about eight hours each day to repair and fix up the toys for the families. The shop gets a list of poor families from community, civic and church groups.

A needy family receives a card, half of which is returned to the shop. At Christmas, the family brings their half of the card to pick up gifts such as bicycles, dolls, clothes and other items.

Parks said Mrs. Philson provided 270 hours of volunteer work last Christmas, well above the average number of hours per volunteer.

"It is a very rewarding experience to work at



Mary Philson: I love to give a helping hand. There's always plenty to do (photo by James Parker).

the shop," she said. "Sometime, however, it can make you sad. A lot of children wouldn't get anything if it wasn't for the shop."

Mrs. Philson said she never meant to be inactive after she retired. "If I only go downtown, I want to always do something. You have to get out and exercise to keep your mind clear. There is always something to be done," she said.

A native of the city, Mrs. Philson declined to give her age, saying "I'm over 65." A widow, she lives with her sister, Rozena C. Smith.

She hopes to continue her volunteer work until she is over 75. At that time, she plans to read magazines and newspapers for leisure.

"The only time you'll be able to catch me at home is when I'm over 75," she said.

Until then, Mrs. Philson will be giving a helping hand wherever she is needed.

"Life is beautiful, but you have to work at it," she said. "If you don't put anything in it, you will not get anything out of it. Your fellow man needs you."

## Michael C. Strange selected Carver High's Band Student of the Month

Michael C. Strange, a 10th-grade percussion player at Carver High School, was named Band Student of the Month for September. Strange is the son of Mr. and Mrs. Calvin Strange of 3819 Sawyer St.

Mike's ambition is to become a professional drummer. His former music teachers include Russell French and Chris Reid. His previous honors have been in athletics, where he participated in the relay team and the physical fitness contest. Last year, he was in the top 10 band students for several months. This year, Michael is a section leader and a quartermaster in the band.

R.V. Boone Sr., band director at Carver, recognizes Mike's extra efforts to excel in music and helping his section and the rest of the band in a variety of ways.

"Mike usually stays after everyone else has left to see that all the chores are taken care of in proper fashion," Boone said. "He does a lot of repair work for the drum section. He assists members of the Band Booster

Club in doing various projects. In addition to being a good worker, Mike is a good student, very cooperative, dependable, loyal, obedient and in general, serves as a good model band student."

Melanie T. Agnew, an 11th-



Michael Strange

grade clarinet/bell player, won runner-up honors. She is president of the band for the 1984-85 school year. Last year, she received a number of honors in band, including Band Student of the Month, All-American Band and being an honor student.

The other top 10 students were Kelia Gray, Bryan Wall, Lisa

Pegram, Judy Roberts, Freda Henry, Pete Birkner, Jemmisse Bowen and Agress Hymes.

Honorable mentions were given to Armarie Cowan, teddy Davis, Geoff Fulton, Stefan Moore and Rhonda Peoples.

The Carver High School Marching Band has performed at all school football games this year. It also participated in the Ronald McDonald's Parade recently and at the Dixie Classic Fair for the benefit of the band's uUniform drive.

Plans are being made to purchase band uniforms for all eight city-county high schools in 1985. The school system has budgeted \$60,000 to be matched by private contributions. Persons interested in making contributions may contact any band director or Mrs. Ginger Amos, chairman of the uniform fund drive.

The Carver band's next performance will be tonight at 7 o'clock at North Forsyth Stadium.

The Carver band's service is in great demand. The Band Boosters Club has done much to support the group, since organizing in August. The club recently purchased white gloves for the band. Members of the group have prepared and served


refreshments to the band students prior to leaving for performances. The band will participate in the Winston-Salem State University Homecoming parade on Saturday. It will also perform at the school's first PTA meeting on Oct. 22.


The Carver Majorettes, Letter Girls, Flag and Banner Girls recently made their 1984 debut when Carver played the Reynolds High School Jayvee football team. The "Sweet Stingers" continue to be a feature during all band football shows.

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