

# Community

## Senior Citizens Showcase Talent at Rupert Bell Recreation Center

By MARK R. MOSS  
Chronicle Staff Writer

The talent show didn't feature young people dancing and spouting rap. There were no musicians showcasing their talents. Nor was there a prop-filled stage. In fact, there was no stage.

Nonetheless, a talent show went on — senior citizen style.

About 50 of the city's elderly gathered at Rupert Bell Recreation Center last Friday to see about a half dozen of their peers sing and read poetry. One woman showed off the Army helmet and gear her father wore during World War I.

Dorothy Gibson, whose father was one of a platoon of African-American soldiers who were sent to fight overseas, wore the helmet while reading information she had gleaned from a textbook on the black soldiers who fought in that

war.

The material she recited focused on the hardships a soldier encountered in the midst of battle. To the delight of the audience, Gibson, still wearing the helmet, donned her father's gas mask and posed for a photographer.

Mary Britt, the center's supervisor, explained that the pageant show was one of five annual events held annually and sponsored by District 5 of the North Carolina Association of Senior Citizens. District 5 is comprised of senior citizens groups throughout the county.

Among the most creative of the poetry readings was Deloise Joyner's "The Meanest Mother in the World," a tribute to her mother and a sarcastic slap at the leniency today's parents show their children.

"I had the meanest mother in the world!"

While other kids ate candy for

breakfast,

I had to have cereal, eggs, grits, sausage, bacon and biscuits ...

I am really shame to admit it, but she actually whipped me;

Not once, but each time we did 'as we pleased ..."

Joyner went on to talk about having to be in bed by 9 p.m. and the cold reception young men received from her mother when they came courting.

"And who do I have to blame for the way I turned out?"

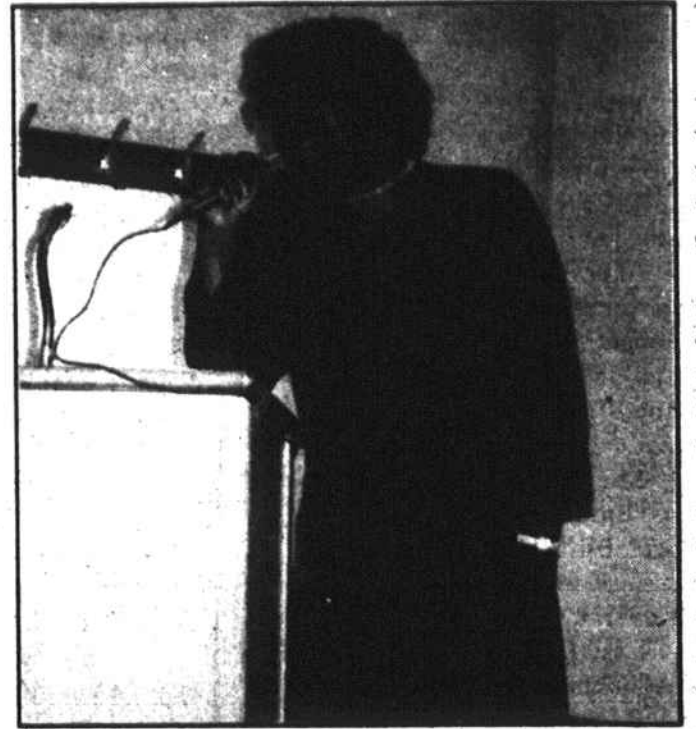
My mean old mother ..."

Geneva Britt read two poems, one humorously critical of the modern woman and her relations with men and another that took a comical but critical look at men.

Frances Griffin, who represented a senior citizens club in Skyland Park, sang, a cappella, an original rendition of "Amazing Grace."



Dorothy Gibson shows off her father's Army gear.



Frances Griffin sings a solo.

## Through Drug Treatment Program, An Ex-Offender Gets a Fresh Start

By DAVID L. DILLARD  
Chronicle Staff Writer

One day last year, Cathy Caesar and several friends were driving to another friend's house for a get-together. She never knew, she said, that cocaine was stashed under the hood. But minutes later she would be charged with possessing and trafficking cocaine after police found the drugs.

Caesar, a former user of the drug, was angry at first but later became more content after being allowed a chance to clean her system and her criminal record. At her lawyer's advice, she entered the DONT (Drug Offenders Need Treatment) program last December to avoid a felony drug charge.

"I went (to the program) to get myself back to where I wanted to be, get my self-esteem back," said Caesar, who now is a volunteer for the program.

Because of the benevolence of an anonymous donor, DONT will be able to help others like Caesar.

The Winston-Salem Foundation announced last week two challenge grants of \$20,000 each to DONT and ARCA (Addiction Recovery Care Association). Henry M. Carter Jr., the foundation's executive director, also said the foundation has met one of the challenges by approving a grant of \$40,000 to DONT from Crosby Tournament funds.

DONT has been operated for the last two years by the Winston-



Cathy Caesar, right, chats with DONT program director Anita Evans.

Salem Police Department. Police Chief George Sweat said the program will help prevent prison overcrowding and gives offenders a new start in life.

"This program will forever change the outlook of the criminal justice system," Sweat said. "Treatment is the answer to the drug problem, not a jail cell."

Anita Evans, DONT program director, said participants must have a possession charge with no other drug charge, must complete 50 hours of community service and must pay a \$240 waivable fee.

Sweat said the program, which has 33 successful graduates, is try-

ing to expand and allow more people to attend. Sweat said those who complete the program are not prosecuted and have the felony charge removed from their record. Those who do not complete the program will be prosecuted, he said.

Caesar, who is upgrading her office and clerical skills, feels her being arrested was a blessing in disguise, because it allowed her a chance to get a new start in life.

"Had I not been a user, I would not have been with them. Everything happened for a reason," she said. "I'm stronger now than I've ever been. I know where I want to go."

## Biblical Scholar to Speak at Church

Emmanuel Baptist Church will observe its annual Christian Education Convention this weekend with celebrated scholar and author Cain Hope Felder as guest lecturer.

Felder is professor of New Testament Language and Literature and editor of "The Journal of Religious Thought" at Howard University Divinity School.

After eight years of research, his book *Troubling Biblical Waters: Race, Class and Family*, was pub-

lished in 1989 and immediately gained recognition as a groundbreaking study that is revolutionizing biblical studies.

Recently, he served as general editor of *The Original African Heritage Study Bible*, which deals with

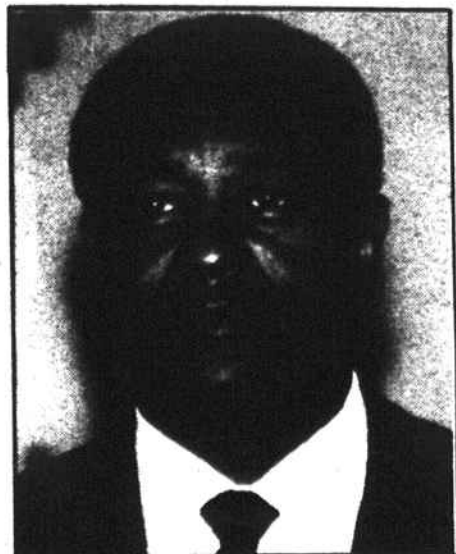
the bible from an African perspective.

Felder's research has served as a catalyst for renewed interest in biblical interpretation in many universities and churches throughout the world.

### Did you live in this city before 1950?

If so, I need your help. There is an ongoing effort to restore the original St. Philip's Church, located in Old Salem. If anyone has recollections pertaining to this Moravian church before it was moved from Old Salem (March 16, 1952), I would like to talk with you. I would also like to talk with people who lived in Happy Hill Gardens before 1952.

If you have any information, please contact me, Tanya Thacker, at 721-7300 from 8:30a.m. - 4:30 p.m. Monday - Friday. Thank you!



Cain Hope Felder

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