

WSSU radio announcer finds new life, new love after life-threatening illness

SPECIAL TO THE CHRONICLE

On September 4, 1999, Bill Franklin, renowned radio personality and longtime voice of Winston-Salem State University sports on WSNC, suffered a heart attack while on the air during a football game with Catawba College.

Five days after his heart surgery, one of the first faces he saw, as she stood at the foot of his hospital bed, was that of a woman he only vaguely remembered. Therein lies the beginning of a love story.

As Franklin tells it, he and Juanita Lucille Lewis had met briefly in a Washington, D.C., suburb. Franklin was shopping in a store where she worked. She had given him her phone num-

ber, but Franklin never called. In the 26 years that would pass since their chance meeting, Juanita married and raised two sons. Franklin also married, raised three daughters and is raising a 12-year-old son. Both marriages ended in divorce.

Juanita later moved to Winston-Salem. She had heard Bill Franklin on the radio but did not know it was the Bill Franklin she had met more than two decades ago. She just happened to be looking at a television news report about Franklin's heart attack and saw his face. She wasn't sure but she thought the man she saw in the report was the same man she had met so long ago.

Franklin picks the story up from here. "I found out she had

gone to the wrong hospital initially," said Franklin. "But she kept searching until she found where I was." Franklin later learned that she had prayed for his recovery with members of his family four nights straight. "When I woke up, her face was one of the first I saw," he remembers.

Franklin said his realization about who Juanita was came to him during a conversation the two had about bygone days. Franklin said he began to talk about his younger days in the Washington, D.C., area and the places he frequented. He mentioned a store where he used to shop. "Then she said 'I worked there.' Then I started talking about an incident that took place at the store one day when I

was there shopping. She said, 'I remember that day.'"

Franklin said she described to him what he wore that day, the car he was driving and the fact that he had a little girl with him. She also reminded him that she had given him her phone number and that he never called. "It all came back in that instant as though it happened yesterday," Franklin said.

After spending more quality time with each other, Franklin recalled, "We went back to the sidewalk where we first met 26 years ago, hugged and kissed and this time we got it right." Bill and Juanita were married the Saturday after Thanksgiving, thankful they had found each other again after all those years.



Bill and Juanita Franklin

Lawmakers return under threat of suit

BY DICK PETTYS
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

ATLANTA — Georgia lawmakers convened a new session Monday under threat of a federal lawsuit over the state flag and its Confederate symbol, touchstone of a new generation of civil protests across the South.

The Senate Republican leader said the suit, threatened over the weekend, sounded suspiciously like a ploy by Democrats to move the fight from the Statehouse to the courthouse and thereby dodge a divisive and politically costly vote on the question.

"Everything that I see and hear is that the Democratic Party in the Legislature is avoiding dealing with the flag," said Sen. Eric Johnson of Savannah. "They want to put it on the ballot, they want it to be decided by the courts — anything but accepting the responsibility of doing their legislative duty."

Rep. Calvin Smyre, D-Columbus, chairman of the House Rules Committee and highest ranking black member of the House, insisted there is no relationship between the lawsuit and the legislation to remove the Confederate fighting banner to the state flag.

"It's another avenue of trying to achieve the same goal and to get the same results, but there is no direct correlation," said Smyre.

He said there "may be some discussion" among legislators about waiting for the court suit before dealing with the flag but he added, "I would think that it's going to be very difficult to abdicate our responsibilities because of the lawsuit."

Senate Majority Leader Charles Walker, highest ranking black in that chamber, said the lawsuit is "an added incentive" for lawmakers to act. "I believe this matter should be resolved this year. Any compromise we

reach must be done with honor and finality this year, this session — lawsuit or no lawsuit."

The sponsor of the bill to change the flag, Rep. Tyrone Brooks, D-Atlanta, said he was disappointed to hear a suit discussed and added, "There will be no litigation, I pray, until the legislative session is over. There should be no discussion of litigation."

Brooks said he doubts a lawsuit would be successful because judges have held in the past that flags are a state matter. Further, Brooks said, talk of a lawsuit could give lawmakers cover to avoid discussing the issue.

The Confederate symbol was added to the flag in 1956 during unrest among white Southerners over school desegregation. Former Gov. Zell Miller tried but failed to remove the symbol in 1993.

Atlanta attorney Emmett Bondurant announced last week he will challenge the symbol in a federal court suit, using U.S. Rep. John Lewis, a veteran civil rights figure, as a plaintiff.

As in South Carolina last year and in Georgia eight years ago, changing the flag remains a bitter, polarizing issue. Flag defenders call it a symbol of Southern valor. Opponents call it a reminder of racial hatred.

Polls show significant continued opposition to changing the flag and legislative Democrats fear a vote to remove the rebel symbol could cost rural whites their legislative seats and turn majority control of the Legislature to Republicans in the elections of 2002.

Gov. Roy Barnes, at the midpoint of his term and facing reelection in two years, has kept his distance from the question, saying legislators have asked him to butt out while they discuss it privately.

Rep. Tyrone Brooks, D-Atlanta, a veteran civil rights activist and sponsor of the bill

to change the flag, said he is "cautiously optimistic."

But House Speaker Tom Murphy, D-Bremen, said the new effort is as doomed as Miller's 1993 attempt. "Near as I can tell, I do not believe the votes are there," he said.

While the flag stood to dominate the agenda, returning lawmakers also faced a new round of education reform and a series of proposals to restrict teen driving, spawned by a rash of deaths in the metro area.

After hard-fought elections in November and with both parties looking ahead to the summer's redistricting session to redraw legislative and congressional seats, no one seemed to know just what to expect from the 40-day lawmaking period that, with breaks and recesses, will stretch through mid-March.

"Predicting the General Assembly is like predicting the weather," Barnes said. "It's not

an exact science."

Barnes will offer part two of the education initiatives that he began last year, although it is less far-reaching and less likely to incite the kind of partisan fighting he encountered in passing the initial legislation.

This year's effort is expected to focus on ways to attract and keep good teachers, with perhaps some lengthening of the middle school day.

Last year's bill amounted to a wholesale change for school systems throughout Georgia, including steps to reward schools for posting good student scores and to punish them for performing poorly.

Among the proposals advanced for teen drivers is one the governor is mulling to bar teens from driving in metro counties unless they are 17 or accompanied by an adult. The driving age outside the region would remain 16.

Alston

from page A7

missed, there was a collective - ahhh!

I forgot what was going on around me as I watched them have such a good time. Three boys and a basketball now had expanded to four, soon to be six.

And then another boy (white), apparently traveling with family and friends to support the visiting team (Ferris State), losing this night, jumped

in. Although he was a long way from home, in a strange gym with his team losing, he too would be running up and down the court. Here they were, black and white, short and not so tall, friends and strangers having a good time.

I am glad I didn't leave the stands during half time. Watching those boys have fun was worth the price of admission and a reminder that the dream of Martin Luther King, Jr. is still worth making a reality.

HAWS

from page A1

ensure that residents would not go cold, Bill Andrews said. Andrews singled out a public housing high-rise in High Point where residents had to be moved to other units because of heating problems.

"We have never had such things in Winston-Salem," Andrews said. "There are some in our community that would like to make this a political or other issue."

In other HAWS news, Wayman

Williams, project manager for HOPE VI, announced that about 13 contractors are being considered for the remaining phases of the HOPE VI redevelopment project. HAWS fired the last contractor after lines of communications between the company and the agency went dead. Williams said a contractor should be chosen by early March. He also said the first phase of HOPE VI, a seniors facility, was about a month behind schedule because of recent bad weather.

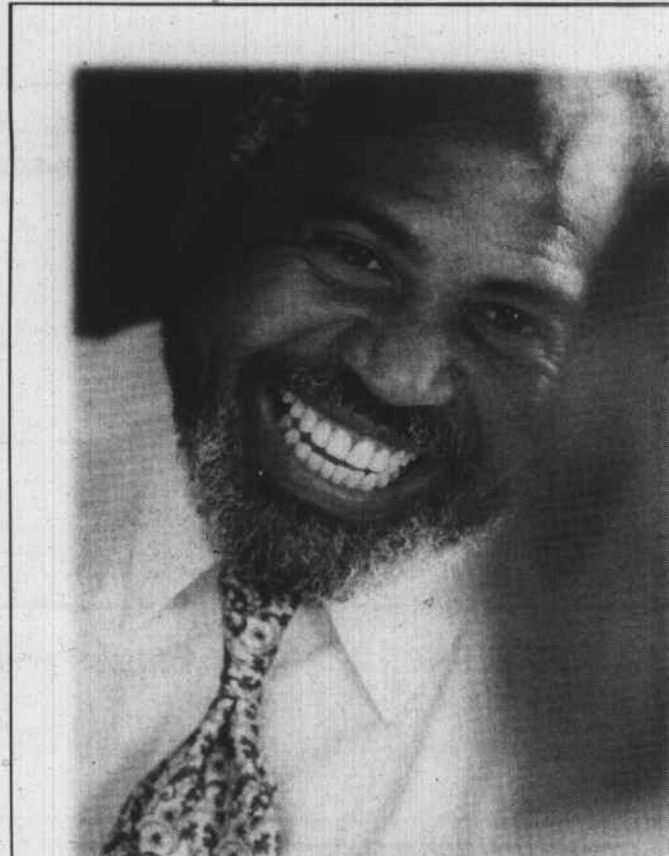
three hours on Monday, Wednesday and Fridays is tiring and sometimes fun. I thank my family for supporting me through these years."

Salem Gymnastics is the 2000 Level Four state champion, and Maya Horton's score certainly contributed to the team's vault score.

er of the 5th District Senior Democrats. During his second term in the Legislature, Hauser served as treasurer of the N.C. Legislative Black Caucus.

Since Hauser's retirement in 1977, he has earned more than 15 Million Dollar Club Medals from the NAACP for urging citizens to take memberships in the NAACP. A person must get others to buy memberships worth \$1,000 or more to become a Million Dollar Club member. In addition to the above, he has served as the administrator of the estate of three families, and has power of attorney and the handling of the affairs of two individuals who spent more than 11 years in nursing homes.

Hauser has not been sanctioned or removed from holding any of the above offices for the mishandling of the finances of any of the above organizations.



We'll waive the monthly service charge for 6 statement cycles* when you sign up for Business Quest Checking.

Business Quest provides premium banking services and the flat monthly service charge saves you money too.

Call or come by your nearest First Citizens branch. Then count the ways Business Quest can improve your bottom line.

Working for your business every day.

Business Quest Checking

- Up to 500 items included in monthly service charge
- Avoid monthly service charge with \$10,000 average checking balance or \$20,000 combined balances in checking and savings
- Earn overnight interest with a sweep account**
- Preferred rates on loans and CDs

FIRST CITIZENS BANK

firstcitizens.com
1-888-FC DIRECT
(1-888-323-4732)

* 6 statement cycles (approximately 6 months).
** Sweep accounts are not bank deposits and are not insured by the FDIC.
Offer good through 2/28/2001. Normal credit approval applies.
Member FDIC. Equal Housing Lender.