

Holocaust

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when they were just college students in 1940 for transporting children on their bicycles to homes where they could be hidden from the Nazis. A woman turned them in to authorities after she pretended to want to help them hide Jewish children. Once imprisoned, Voute recalled, she and her friend would sing songs to keep their spirits up and occupy their days.

"It seemed like you had more life in you, more good spirit," Voute's voice said on the tape about their singing in the camps. "It was like hell. It was really unbelievable when you came in."

Voute's family volunteered to take in children from Austria and Germany after the war. She explains to Klempner on the tape that "those girls became our friends....We were seven, so it was very easy that there came some more. It made no difference."

After helping prisoners in a cell above them escape, Voute and Sohlein were deported to concentration camps. Both women insist it was their friendship that got them through their difficult

times. Voute explains how "fantastic" it was to then be in the company of women from so many nationalities. Voute now can speak five languages.

"One quality I saw in Hetty as well as many of the rescuers was a propensity to question and, if need be, defy authority," Klempner said about Voute, whom he considers to be a daredevil.

Klempner told a story about Voute, who was forced by the Germans to work in a factory to manufacture gas masks. She dug her nails into the nose clips so that when the masks came out of the oven, no one was able to breathe while wearing one.

On one audio interview, Klempner speaks with Pite Meerburg, who even today is still not satisfied with the hundreds of children he helped to save. The number of children who needed help was so large compared with the number he actually assisted. Meerburg considers his efforts to be "peanuts - it's not enough. That's one of the things which I regret very much now today."

More than 17,000 rescuers from around the world have been honored for their efforts. Many of those still living are flown to Israel to participate

in a special ceremony where they receive medals and are given the chance to plant trees in their names along the Avenue of the Righteous, and are then recognized as being "righteous."

"Those who tried to help Jews in the Netherlands put themselves in a very high risk situation with a most uncertain outcome. Yet they went ahead and did it," Klempner said.

All of the rescuers quickly won Klempner's affection, not simply because of their heroism but because of their good, innate human nature. According to Klempner, the rescuers continue to do good and help others in small and large ways.

"This is the rescuers: able to face the worst about the world while laboring to repair it," Klempner said.

Klempner, an oral historian and folklorist, is the son of a Holocaust survivor and spent the early part of his career in the music industry. A graduate of Cornell University, Klempner also received a master's degree from UNC. Klempner recently completed a book titled "Just the Human Thing to Do" on the Holocaust rescuers. It has not yet been published.

Zetas promote finer womanhood at event

SPECIAL TO THE CHRONICLE

The sisters of Beta Nu Zeta in Greensboro, of Theta Eta Zeta in Thomasville, and of Rho Zeta in Winston-Salem met with hostess chapter Nu Tau Zeta in observance of finer womanhood. About 125 women met on March 16 in the main dining room of the Anderson Center on the campus of Winston-Salem State University, where they enjoyed a delicious meal followed by the entertainment of Lorenzo "Logic" Meachum, who captivated his audience for about 45 minutes with song and poetry.

Beta Nu Zeta recognized its members who had served Zeta for 40 years or more. Rho Zeta recognized and presented plaques to its president, Pollye Bailey; its vice president, Danetta Fitts; and longtime servant Vivienne Conley.

Sorors Addie Jabbar and Alberta Mickens won top honors in Nu Tau Zeta Chapter. Jabbar was chosen Zeta of the Year for her all-round participation while Mickens worked



Mickens



Jabbar

behind the scenes to get a lot accomplished, thus being presented with the Quiet Storm Award.

This chapter also paid special recognition to Hold Out the Life Line Ministry at Today's Woman and Minister Arlean Crump for excellent and outstanding community service.

Special guests included Nu Tau Zeta Wanyibu Queen Christina Reid and her mother,

Valorie Coplin, and first runner-up Evyann Durham and her mother, Evelyn Durham.

Chapters throughout Zeta-dom celebrate finer womanhood each year during the period of the last week in February through the full month of March.

The Finer Womanhood Committee consisted of sorors Jabbar, chairman; Juanita B. Penn, co-chairman; Alberta Mickens and Blondell Penn.

Watt

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military, which is where we are headed now," he said.

Watt would like the conversation to shift to issues that he says are equally as pressing, issues such as the economy, Social Security and even universal health care. He says if Democrats were in the driver's seat in the House, such issues would be swept from under the rug.

When Watt first went to Washington, he arrived at a House that was controlled by Democrats, but voters quickly shifted that control to Republicans by the time Watt won his first bid for re-election. While Watt will be working hard to keep his own seat, he said he also will do all he can to help other Democrats. He believes this year the Democrats can regain control of the House, which he says will result in tangi-

ble benefits for his constituents if Democrats can pump life into the sagging economy.

Watt said voters with good memories will remember that Democrats, led by then-President Clinton, led the nation out of the economic downfall experienced after two consecutive Republican administrations. He says the election of President Bush has put that nation in an economic hole again.

"(The Democrats) got the country out out of the economic ditch, then we get punished for it by getting a Republican administration that gets us back in an economic ditch," he said.

Watt said that he is baffled about how a projected budget surplus of more than \$3 trillion has vanished into thin air since Bush took office. Many say the surplus' demise is due the devastation of Sept. 11. Watt disagrees.

"If you look at the figures, you see that that is untrue," he said.

He says the economy was taking a nose dive before the attacks.

While Watt is often outspoken on many issues, he says that he is remaining neutral on one prominent topic of discussion - which Democrat should get the chance to fight for the seat of outgoing Sen. Jesse Helms.

The three main candidates - Elaine Marshall, Dan Blue and Erskine Bowles - have been running hard and picking up endorsements from key individuals and groups along the way. But none of them should wait for Watt to throw his support their way.

"All three of them are my friends, and I am supporting my friends," he said.

Watt is more opinionated on the topic of Elizabeth Dole, the likely Republican nominee for the seat.

"I think she is vulnerable - first of all, because she is really not a North Carolinian and has not been one in 40 years," Watt said.

Colleges

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African-American life and culture.

The audio recordings are part of the university's Southern Historical and Folklife Collections. The Southern Folklife Collection has 82,000 sound recordings and is one of the nation's foremost archival resources for the study of American folk music and popular culture.

The University of North

Carolina at Greensboro won \$60,000 to study antebellum petitions sent to Southern state legislatures and county courts. The petitions provide insights into slavery and race relations in the period after the American Revolution and before the Civil War. The petitions offer unique revelations into the manumission (freeing) of slaves and the challenges faced by free women of color.

The N.C. Museum of History in Raleigh will use \$39,561 to develop an exhibi-

tion about the Civil Rights Movement in North Carolina. The exhibit, scheduled to open in 2004, will focus on the social and political changes initiated by African Americans and American Indians in North Carolina between 1945 and 1975.

The National Endowment for the Humanities is an independent grant-making agency of the U.S. government dedicated to supporting research, education, preservation, and public programs in the humanities.

The Chronicle's new e-mail address for news items is news@wschronicle.com



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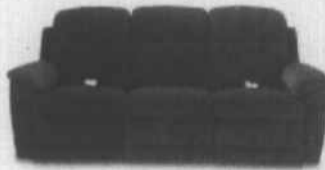
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