

'Magician' proves physics is fun

By LEIGH PRESSLEY
Staff Writer

In B.T. Linder's office a picture of Albert Einstein hangs on the wall. Not a picture of Harry Houdini. But when the 40-year-old "Mr. Wizard" isn't working as manager of teaching labs at the University's physics department, the magician in him comes out.

Linder creatively demonstrates principles of science — such as his showing the difference between force and pressure by pushing a knitting needle through a balloon. He travels to various Triangle schools to perform his physics show.

"I try to present the gee-whiz-bang part of science instead of teaching the actual physics," Linder said. "When I give shows to the children, they may become more interested in physics in the future."

Linder became interested in physics at an early age because of a show similar to his. Even though he did not pursue science until later in life, "The show pointed out that physics is fun and interesting — it's not dry and mundane," he said.

A mental block against physics is one of the hardest problems to overcome today, Linder said. While many older people have already developed an apprehension of the difficulty of the subject, younger students have a better attitude toward learning, he said.

"The younger the student is, the more open the mind is," he said. "I have shown these shows to adults, and they are taken back, but grammar school students are more adept to following my meaning."

Like many UNC students, Linder had a hard time determining what he wanted to do in life. He worked in construction, built culverts and bridges, owned a paint and body shop, and developed computer programs.

"I like being the boss and having a captive audience," Linder said. So he decided to return to school. He obtained an undergraduate degree at Augusta College and received his master's degree from the University of South Carolina in Columbia.

In his physics shows, Linder says a few words about how the demonstration is done. The reaction is usually very positive, he said. "I like to shake them up with interest," he said. "I want them to go home and tell Mom and Dad about things they see every day, just the real world."

Some of the demonstrations include lying on a bed of nails to demonstrate the difference between force and pressure, showing inertia by snatching a cookie pan out from under eggs without breaking the eggs, and throwing a Nerf football with a buzzer implanted inside to demonstrate the Doppler effect.

Linder said he hoped these shows would also tell children more about world issues concerning science. "The public may one day have to make a decision about nuclear reactors," he said. "If they know the difference between fission and fusion, they can make a more intelligent, informed decision."

At UNC Linder writes lab manuals, designs and arranges class demonstrations, and maintains the



UNC News Bureau photo

B.T. Linder performs a miracle of physics for a young audience

teaching equipment for the physics department.

But when Linder leaves Einstein in his office and becomes a magician

at a school, his main goal is to entertain and to spark interest in physics. "Once the concepts are down, the students may remember one day."

BCC, church honor black female priest

By JENNIFER WING
Staff Writer

The Black Cultural Center and the Chapel of the Cross church held a birthday celebration in tribute to Pauli Murray, the first black woman to be officially ordained an Episcopal priest in the United States.

Murray's achievements were recognized during the tribute at the Chapel of the Cross Sunday with memorial speeches and readings from her books and poems and later through testimonies from her friends.

Murray grew up in Durham and attended Hunter College in New York. She applied to UNC's graduate school to study sociology but was denied the opportunity to attend because "members of your race are not admitted to the University."

However, Murray tried again to attend UNC, this time at the law school, but was refused admission for the same reason. Murray did not want to give up the chance to attend graduate school, so she attended Howard University and won a fellowship to Harvard University. But she was denied admission to Harvard because she was a woman.

Murray graduated from the University of California School of Law and later earned a doctorate in juridical science at Yale.

She worked for the civil rights movement, wrote poetry and even argued a case before the Supreme

Court. UNC offered Murray an honorary degree in an attempt to repay her for the injustices she suffered at the hands of the University, but she turned it down because of volatile political activities going on at the time.

Murray was perceived as a person who told the truth about racial situations, said Lee Kessler, a teacher at Guy B. Phillips Junior High School, who kept a close correspondence with Murray during her lifetime. She was a person of dedication who worked for causes unselfishly, Kessler said.

Floyd McKissick, president of the N.C. Center for the Study of Black History at N.C. Central University, said that as a lawyer, Murray was a staunch advocate of civil rights and was constantly asking what we could do about race relations.

"She represented the best in all of us," he said. "We can't just claim her and call her black; we can't just claim her and call her white."

Murray was also praised for contributions to the church, although she became a priest when she was 67 years old. "Pauli had an infinite faith in God," Kessler said. "She had such a fierce joy about her."

Also remembered was Mary Ruffin Smith, a wealthy white woman who took care of Murray's grandmother as a child and recognized the Murrys as real people with rights.

Talented Loreleis shine in stylish, fun performance

You've seen it on posters, fliers and advertisements. But just what is this "la" business anyway? Luscious amazons, Lucifer's angels or lazy agriculturalists? No... it's just la as in "la la la" and other nifty little ditties for the Loreleis, who gave their fall concert on campus Friday.

If you've never seen the Loreleis, then you really don't know what you've missed. The Loreleis have something that all singing groups probably should have, but few do — they've got style. There's a fine line between being personable and being obnoxious; fortunately, the Loreleis come across as just plain fun.

Starting their first set off with the Bangles' version of Simon and Garfunkel's classic, "Hazy Shade of Winter," the Loreleis demonstrated

Julie Olson Concert

their versatility as an a cappella singing group: Their repertoire runs the gamut from classic rock to the classical.

Didn't think that an all-female ensemble could pull off the Who's "I Can't Explain" or the Beatles' early "Chains"? Or how about the Catholic spoof "Vatican Rag"? Perhaps the most spectacular song of the evening was their version of "Hallelujah" from Handel's Messiah. With the arrangement's complex harmonics and rhythm, the Loreleis showed they aren't just fun but also extremely

talented singers.

But then they're more than just a singing group; the whole aspect of performance is incorporated, visual as well as aural. Introducing each song with a skit or an explanation — sometimes personal, sometimes humorous — the Loreleis bridged the gap between performer and audience and seemed more like a bunch of friends goofing around. Especially when the girls serenaded an innocent but slightly embarrassed young man, whom they lured from the audience to the stage with Bobby McFerrin's recent hit "Be Happy." Then the Loreleis really began to charm the audience.

That isn't meant to imply that the Loreleis aren't a serious singing group; they have obviously put a great deal of work and training into their performance, but that is precisely why they seemed so smooth. Of course there's only so much that an a cappella group can accomplish, and the Loreleis aren't perfect.

Their version of Elvis Costello's "Almost Blue," for example, left a little to be desired. Costello's version is probably one of the saddest songs ever made, but background singing spoiled the effect of the original. And there were one or two others, perhaps new and not quite ironed out, that sounded just a little on the flat side. But you can't help liking a group that can perform Handel and then turn around, and in complete earnestness, sing Oscar Mayer's Weiner song.

And the group did something very different at this performance: The Loreleis showed their true colors. I mean literally — they actually wore



DTH/David Surowiecki

The Loreleis sing a cappella tunes to a packed crowd in Gerrard Hall Friday night

brightly colored clothes during their first set. Tradition won out as they returned for the second set attired in

the accustomed black. But whatever color clothes they wore, the enthusiastic response and the eventual

standing ovation they received were well-deserved. The Loreleis quite simply put on a great show.

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