

The Bennett Banner

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BENNETT COLLEGE, GREENSBORO, N. C.

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"I am Somebody"

Jesse enlightens

by Carla Bannister

At 8:45 a.m. the dorm director announced loudly over the intercom, "The chapel service will be delayed until 10 a.m. because Rev. Jackson's plane was delayed." The sighs of an anxious, excited ladies were heard loudly down the halls.

Later at 10 in the full, buzzing chapel, excited people talked animatedly about the Rev. Jesse Jackson. He had not appeared yet. At 10:15 the music started. The atmosphere was filled with Belles that were beaming with a certain awareness of black pride. There was a feeling of togetherness as Bennett sisters exchanged smiles and hellos. The song "That's What He'll Do For You" brought even more self-esteem. This closeness spread quickly as the audience stood to give Rev. Jackson a warm, hearty ovation.

Rev. Jackson began the speech with a bit of Bennett history. He talked about the sit-in at Woolworth's downtown restaurant at which the A&T students made history. Jackson said that it was the women of Bennett who urged and encouraged that event.

Jackson said, "The fire in the woman of Bennett would not go out. It was the Belles that kept sitting in and marching while others would stop."

Jackson admired the strength and maturity of the Bennett Belle. "Bennett was a prominent place in unlocking the change," said Jackson. Jackson added, "Dr. Willa Player (former Bennett president) wanted degrees with dignity." This statement

brought loud claps from the audience. Jackson identified with the crowd as he compared Bennett of today with the Bennett of 25 years ago.

Jackson went on to compare South Africa in the present with the American South 25 years ago. He said, "What does it matter to have a Ph.D. if you don't have mobility like the wings of a bird" and "Everyone needs freedom to move, to develop and grow," unlike the sisters and brothers of South Africa and unlike the blacks who lived in the South of America 25 years ago.

Jackson's speech touched on the plight of farmers. He said, "Choose farms over arms." He said farms were needed to feed the hungry in America and South Africa.

Jackson also urged the audience to choose black schools over jails. He commented that the government was spending more on the jails than on the schools that are rapidly closing. Jackson believes that black colleges can give important opportunities for blacks to learn and exercise leadership skills. These leadership skills can help give self-esteem to blacks and enable them to be proud to say loudly, "I am an Afro-American."

At the conclusion of his speech, he had everyone standing while they repeated his trademark statement, "I am somebody."

Jackson then urged non-registered voters to register. Jackson said, "You must vote where you live. You live in Greensboro. You get your mail here and you eat here so register and vote here."



The E. Gwynn Dancers will appear on campus tonight Sept. 26 at 7:30 p.m. in the Goode Gym. (photo by Sallie A. Hayes.)

Dance troupe's performance involves total theater

The Lyceum Cultural Series begins tonight with a performance demonstration by the E. Gwynn Dancers of North Carolina A&T State University.

The 7:30 presentation in Goode Gymnasium will feature the 12-member company's total theater concept, including dance, poetry and slides to enhance the historical significance of period pieces.

All dances are original and they are based on authentic material related to West African, Haitian and Afro-American culture and music. Following the performance, a reception will be held in the second floor lounge of the gym.

According to Dr. Ruth Lucier, series chairperson, "The program is continuing evidence of our commitment to bringing the best in dance to this college. We are anticipating an exciting evening and an enthusiastic response from the audience."

The choreographer and founder of the group is Dr. Eleanor W. Gwynn, a certified teacher of the Katherine Dunham technique. Gwynn is an associate professor of physical education with a specialization in dance at A&T.

The performance is free and open to the public. Ms. Cathy Griffin is program coordinator.

On Oct. 29-31, the Lyceum series is sponsoring a lecture and exhibition by visual artist Otto Neals, who will speak Oct. 29 in the science assembly and show his work at the "Z" Gallery, 107 S. Dudley.

On Nov. 11, Dr. David Pinnix, the college organist, will give a piano concert in Annie Merner Pfeiffer Chapel at 8:15 p.m.

A Fashion Show and Costume Ball, sponsored by the home economics department, will occur Nov. 14, featuring costumes through the years.

The Lyceum's final event of the semester will be the ever-popular Evening of Public Speaking, sponsored by the communications department.

Miss Bennett has exceptional talent

by Carla Bannister

She's so classy that she wore pearls with her bathing suit while on duty as a lifeguard. She's so disciplined that she made the National Dean's List and Who's Who in American Colleges and Universities. She has also served as president of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority Inc. and as vice-president of the junior class.

Now Alicia Carol McCollum, a 21-year-old biology major from Burlington, can add the title of Miss Bennett to her achievements. McCollum, who feels she has matured at Bennett, remembers her freshman year as a time of unstinting devotion to duty.

"I was very conservative," she says. "I lived like a hermit, always in my room studying. I had one hour a week to talk to my boyfriend and only one day to spend with him on the weekends, and that was the extent of my social life. I was on a very strict and rigid schedule."

Since then, McCollum has grown more outgoing. She describes herself as "very talkative." She loves to be positive. Her favorite motto is: "In God all things are possible. The road is long; there are mountains in our way, but

we climb a step every day. Never give up."

During her reign as Miss Bennett, McCollum would like to see an improvement in the security staff, the installation of fire extinguishers in all of the dorms and higher morale among students.

A Bennett Scholar and a member of two honor societies, she wants to represent the college "in a serious academic way." "I believe that there is not enough stress on the black woman's education," she says. "I think that the women here should be represented as smart and successful."

McCollum has a deep love for the campus, which she considers superior in atmosphere to the mood at A&T.

"There's a friendliness at Bennett. People always speak to you whereas at A&T the people are cold and unfriendly, and if you speak to the students, some of them look at you like you're crazy," she explains.

McCollum plans to become an obstetric gynecologist.

She attributes her hard work habits to her mother, Mrs. Calva McCollum, who is her inspiration.

She hopes to pass on her drive and determination to all her Bennett sisters.

President Miller resigns

by Sallie A. Hayes

Robert S. Chiles Sr., chairman of the Board of Trustees, has announced the retirement of Dr. Isaac H. Miller Jr. as the school's president, to become effective June 30, 1987.

The announcement was made during a special call session of the board which also committed to the establishment of a science chair in Miller's honor.

Miller, a biochemist, has served as president of the college for more than 20 years.

"He (Dr. Miller) has been responsible for the growth and development of our total

academic environment which includes faculty, curriculum, students and facilities. . . Under his leadership, the Bennett College alumnae were organized and strengthened to represent one of the finest support groups that an institution could desire," Chiles stated.

In honor of Miller's service to the college, the board also announced the development of a permanent endowed chair for the science division with a minimum commitment of \$1 million.

"This distinguished chair will be named for Isaac H. Miller Jr., a distinguished scholar in his own right, for

he is held in very high esteem among his peers in his beloved profession of biochemistry, and as a writer and research analyst," said Chiles.

The board also announced a gift of \$22,000 to refurbish the former home of one-time president, the late Dr. David D. Jones. The home has been designated by the Board as the Alumnae House, and the gift of renovation comes from alumna Mrs. Nancy Young Lee, a Greensboro native and former public school teacher. Mrs. Lee and her husband, Attorney J. Kenneth Lee, were on hand to acknowledge the generous gift to the school's Alumnae program.

Valuing yourself emphasized at Opening Convocation

by Evelyn Sims

President Isaac H. Miller Jr. stressed the importance of self-worth during the Sept. 11 Opening Convocation, which also included the Ceremony of Matriculation.

Dressed in white, 182 freshmen and new students as well as 13 Belles who entered college last semester saw their names listed in the registrar's book.

"You are indeed persons of value, and this signing-in ceremony symbolizes that for

you," said Miller, who encouraged the audience to greet one another with the slogan, "You are a person of value and I love you."

The president warned the assembly about the social ills that blight the present and darken the future.

"We had better get about the business of living in the 21st century," he urged, a task complicated by the specters of nuclear holocaust and pollution and "the corrosive effects of dependence on

drugs and alcohol (that) threaten to destroy our civilization."

Miller affirmed the significance of the church in higher education and the importance of fulfilling the destiny of helping fulfill the destiny of blacks.

"This college is the instrumentality of the dreams of slaves . . . of people who came to this country stacked like cordwood in the bowels of slave ships. This is an important institution to the history of the Negro race," he said.