



The Columns Staff

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The Columns thanks Katherine Grimes
and Wayde Vickrey.

The Editor Expounds

Recently, many Louisburg College students were annoyed because they thought they weren't going to be invited to attend the opening of the new auditorium.

After discussions by the administration, the SGA, and other members of the student body about invitation procedure, students were invited and I am pleased to report that over one hundred and fifty attended.

I would like to personally express my appreciation to Dr. Norris, his staff, and all others who gave their time and support in this situation. I thoroughly enjoyed the

reception and performance by the North Carolina Symphony.

However, I would like to express my views on the availability of the auditorium to the students and the public. There is currently an art exhibit on display in the auditorium by Professor Will Hinton. This display was open one night and was not able to be seen by many people including one of *The Columns* reporters who needed to see it in order to successfully complete her article.

I would like to suggest that a way be found so that these exhibits can be seen and appreciated by everyone. The auditorium would be put to much better use that way.

Letters to The Columns

To the editor:

Steve Pendergrass's death brought much grief to Louisburg College. Those of us who knew him felt his absence in our classes or wherever we went that he should have been.

But to many, Steve was also an inspiration, not because of his death or how he was killed, but because of something we learned after his death: Steve was an organ donor.

I don't know what it's like to need a heart or a kidney or a cornea, but I do know what it means to be saved by someone's unselfishness. When I was almost killed in a car accident a few years ago, people who gave blood helped to save my life.

Steve Pendergrass was something of a hero; we all can be. I've signed a donor card, and I give blood. If a coward like me can do it, you can, too.

Organ donor cards are available in the Student Affairs Office. If you want to be a donor, sign the card, carry it with you, and tell your next of kin. And on March 30, the Christian Life Council is sponsoring a bloodmobile.

I hope you never need blood or an organ transplant; I hope no one you care about does. But if you do, I hope someone cared enough to make that donation.

You have time *now*; don't wait until it's too late. Several people are glad Steve Pendergrass didn't.

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College, Community Observe King's Birthday

By William Byrd Wilkins

Special to *The Columns*

Sunday, January 15, was a night of reflection, a night when a few people gathered in Benson Chapel on Louisburg College's campus to honor the memory of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. After the opening selection, Genard Batts gave the welcome and the purpose for the celebration. As I listened, I wondered what purpose most had for coming. How many of them really came to honor a great man? How many came because of their eagerness to open their mind and learn about the social injustice in this country and a man who gave his life to change things? How many came for humanities credit?

As I listened to the Louisburg High School Choir, I sang along quietly with them "I've been 'buked and I've been scorned, I've been talked about shore's you born." Vivid images came to me: images of people being persecuted while struggling to be free.

After the choir, Jessica Harris gave Dr. King's biography, an amazing story in itself. She spoke of his upbringing, his education, and his interest in the teaching of Ghandi. I listened intently, preparing myself to do one of King's speeches, a speech that I had little time to prepare. I'd heard it on an album that day and decided to use it because it expressed exactly what I felt about the racial climate then and now. It was entitled "THE AMERICAN DREAM." I was moved by the words and images King used to show how the American dream had been scarred by a history of slavery and segregation in a country founded on the principles that "all men are created equal." Though I could never match King's oratorical skills, my sincerity and commitment to enlightening the masses was just as great.

I finished and joined an ensemble to sing another selection. For some reason the song we sang ("Believe") had never sounded better. The scripture was then read and a prayer given by Rev. Larry Edwards, Pastor of St. Paul's Presbyterian Church. The speaker, Dr. Prince E. Graves, was introduced by Charles Johnson after The Louisburg High School Choir gave another selection.

Dr. Graves is Pastor of St. James Baptist Church in Greensboro. He has served on

the City Council and has done numerous projects, ranging from housing to youth projects. His message on Dr. King compared the life of the late civil rights leader to that of Joseph in Genesis, chapter 37 of the Bible. He spoke of how both men had the courage to tell people of their dreams, knowing they would be persecuted for it. He also spoke of those who plotted against the dreamer, those who were afraid and threatened by the fulfillment of the dreams.

"And when they saw him afar off, they said to one another, behold, this dreamer cometh. Come, therefore, and let us slay him and cast him into some pit, and we shall see what will become of his dreams." (Genesis 37: 18-20)

The comparison revealed to me how both Joseph and Dr. King were persecuted for their dreams — Joseph's brothers working to destroy him because they felt threatened by his dreams; King, whose image was being destroyed by rumors being spread about his life. His enemies tried to discredit him by calling him a communist — all because both men dared to dream.

Dr. Graves concluded his message by inspiring the listeners with events from his own life, reflecting on the time when he carried food home from garbage cans and dreamed of one day building houses for people. "Our mother just washed them and cooked them and even had the audacity to pray over them. What I didn't know, was that God was removing all the

poison from them, so that I could have the strength to go on and fulfill my dreams."

His message made me analyze myself and what I had or hadn't done to fulfill my dreams. I was thinking this when I heard Dr. Graves recite the lines from my favorite poem by Langston Hughes:

What happens to a dream deferred?

Does it dry up
Like a raisin in the sun?
Or fester like a sore—
And then run?

Does it stink like rotten meat?
Or crust and sugar over—
Like a syrupy sweet?

Maybe it just sags
Like a heavy load.
Or does it explode?

Commentary

As the celebration came to an end, the words to "We Shall Overcome" brought both nostalgia and new images of overcoming obstacles in pursuit of a dream.

After the ceremony was over, I talked with some of the people leaving. Some were just as moved as I had been. Others wondered why there was such poor attendance from faculty and students. Some were disappointed in the school's being open on King's birthday when other schools all over the nation were closed. I also heard some looking for the sign up sheet for humanities credit. For whatever reason they came I think everyone was touched by the inspirational magic of Dr. King.

