

Eastern Echoes



By Gail Roberson

The Glass Beads

Now and then, for old times' sake, I go rambling through my jewelry. What better place to reflect a while on life's bittersweet memories.

There's a brass button from the uniform of a friend killed in Vietnam, my class ring, a pin my great aunt once wore, a bracelet from a boyfriend, a locket from another. They're all bits and pieces of my life, tucked away in a velvet box.

But, the most precious piece of jewelry I own, the one thing no amount of insurance could cover, no diamond could outshine, no gold replace... is the cheapest jewel I own. Monetarily, that is. Just glass beads strung on yellowing tobacco twine, always too short to fit around my neck, not even a clasp to fasten them with... but they tell the story of the purest love a woman ever knows. The love of a little brother.

It was my sixteenth birthday. My driver's license was freshly tucked away in my purse, a special dress chosen for that night's date, and a small family celebration, complete with cake and ice cream, underway.

For the rest of my life I will always remember two things about that day. First, the song that played on the radio as I drove away from the license office... *She's Got A Ticket To Ride*, and second, the special gift of love from a shy, eight-year-old, red-haired, freckled-face little brother.

He'd been my responsibility more than the rest because he was the youngest and I was the oldest. The other three were big enough to look after themselves. My mama always said to me, "Look after your brother. You know you can't take your eyes off him for a minute."

And I did. I busted a boy's nose on the school bus for picking on him, cracked on bone in a big bully's hand who had knocked his booksack off the seat, pulled sandspurs from his feet, picked seeds from his watermelon and just generally made certain he got grown all in one piece.

Today he's nearly 30. He has to bend his head when he enters my back door. His shoulders are broad enough to conveniently carry a 100-pound bag of fertilizer, yet his hands gentle enough to dress his own small son. But, he will always be my "little" brother.

He disappeared that morning of my birthday and had me in a terrible state for over two hours. I finally spotted him emerging from the woods. He limped from the loss of a boot in the swamp, and his skin was scratched and bleeding from contact with briars. All I could see were two huge, shy brown eyes and a messy batch of red hair. Everything else was covered in mud. His hands were balled in fists, hanging loose at his side. When he refused to show me what he had, I smacked him across the bottom. He shoved his fists in his pockets, depositing his "find," and then obediently stood beneath the water hose while I scrubbed him with the vigor of a mother cat washing her kitten.

But later, he disappeared again. This time I found him coming from the packhouse. I was afraid he'd been messing with the notebooks stashed in my makeshift studio, but he shook his head. I stomped and fussed, but again he refused to show me what he was clutching behind his back. And then, I smacked him a hard one on his behind again for going off and not telling me, and scaring me half to death once more.

When the party was over, I went to my room to redress. There on the bed was a ragged, cloth marble bag tied up with string. Inside, I found a messy signature that read "From David," and the beautiful old pink and black glass beads strung on tobacco twine.

I then realized he had gone off to the swamp in search of the old beads my aunts used to "pitch" there from my grandma's front porch. He had gone out there among the mud and the briars to retrieve those beads for me, out of love. I had punished him, out of love. And I cried when I saw them... out of love. Just like I'm doing right now, 22 years later, still out of love, as the beautiful old glass beads lay nestled in my palm.

Obituaries

Hezekiah K. Hargett

COVE CITY — The Rev. Hezekiah K. Hargett died on Friday, Sept. 18, at Craven County Hospital in New Bern. Funeral was held at 3 p.m. on Wednesday, Sept. 23, at Bryant Chapel A.M.E. Zion Church with the Rev. J.C. Franks officiating. Burial was in the White Cemetery.

Surviving are his wife, Estella M. Hargett; three daughters, Leethel H. Cameron and Rebecca Hargett, both of Brooklyn, N.Y., and Dr. Stella Hargett of Crockersville, Md.; five sons, Daniel Hargett, Hezekiah Hargett Jr., and Carl Hargett, all of Cove City, Coston Hargett of Brooklyn, N.Y., and Chief Master Sgt. Alton R. Hargett of the U.S. Air Force, Alaska; four sisters, Marie Williams and Bernice Carroll, both of Brooklyn, N.Y., Ina Green of the Bronx, N.Y., and Nina Brown of Cove City; three brothers, Willie B. Hargett of Washington, D.C., and Coley Hargett and Nathan Hargett, both of Cove City; 21 grandchildren and four great-grandchildren.

Arrangements were by Lane's Funeral Home.

Queenie Laughinghouse

Mrs. Queenie E. Laughinghouse, 81, died Sept. 25 at her home on Rt. 3, Vanceboro.

The funeral service was conducted at 2:30 p.m. Sunday in the Wilkerson Funeral Chapel in Vanceboro by Rev. McDonald Bennett and Rev. John Grimsley. Burial was in Celestial Memorial Gardens.

She is survived by three sons, Richard E. Laughinghouse, Raymond A. Laughinghouse and Donald G. Laughinghouse, all of Vanceboro; one sister, Mrs. Lillie Dunn of Vanceboro; six grandchildren; 10 great-grandchildren.

She was a member of Reunion Chapel Free Will Baptist Church.

William C. Morris

William Craig Morris, 42, died Sept. 25 in Pitt County Memorial Hospital.

A graveside service was conducted at 11 a.m. Wednesday in the National Cemetery in New Bern by the Rev. Kenneth Townsend.

He is survived by his wife, Candice V. Morris of Minnesota; two daughters, Sharon Morris and Deborah Morris, both of Carolina Beach; a son, Jason Craig Morris of Minnesota; a brother, Richard Morris of Greenville.

He was a native of Washington, D.C. and spent much of his life in Vanceboro. He was an Army veteran, having served in Vietnam.

Arrangements were by Wilkerson Funeral Home in Greenville.

Rev. Richard J. Sasser

MOUNT OLIVE — The Rev. Richard Joseph Sasser, 87, retired Pentecostal Holiness minister, died Sept. 24 at his home.

He was a former pastor of the Vanceboro, Wallace, Moore's Chapel, Bizzell's Grove and Holy Hill Pentecostal Holiness churches.

Our Opinion

Fourth And Long

The NFL players out on strike should be penalized. And we are not talking the 15-yard variety. Why people who make more money than most Americans will make in at least five years say they want what all Americans have (more money) is beyond us.

We really cannot blame anyone for trying to earn as much as they can. That is the American way. But to hear the NFL players tell it, they must be living in poverty. Maybe the price of drugs is going sky-high and they more money to keep up. Cheap shot? Well, maybe not as cheap a shot as some of the actions of some football players.

We realize most football players are decent, hard-working people who probably refrain from using drugs and getting in other assorted trouble. They want to provide for the families. They want a secure future. They want the American Dream to come true for them.

Few of us understand the other issues the NFL players want addressed at the bargaining table. But we would hope they think we have enough sense to see past the salary question. It is hard to agree that a man making over \$100,000 a year needs more money to help support himself or a family. Hundreds of thousands of families make do with far less than \$100,000 in five years, much less one year.

Football players want a guaranteed job. We all want job security, but how many of us have iron-clad agreements for continued employment. As someone said recently, even the president of the United States does not have a guaranteed job. And remember he makes about \$200,000 a year.

Lawrence Taylor may play great defense for the New York Giants, but is he worth more than the president?

The NFL players say they have the right to strike. What we want to know is do not the so-called replacement players have the right to work? Are the NFL players saying these replacements do not have the right to work but claiming the right to not work for themselves? Sounds like illegal procedure to us.

The NFL players appear to want things their way, but refuse

to allow others to practice their freedoms and rights. Come on, guys, have you taken one too many shots in the head? If you do not want to work, let someone who wants to work report for duty.

We cannot forget the owners, nor their millions in profits. We will not even address the issue of higher NFL salaries. Owners are in the football business for various reasons, but they all want to make money. No problem with them doing just that. They need to realize that maybe it's time to help improve things and not just by throwing money around.

For six months both sides have little to do in the off season. Can anyone tell us why serious negotiations did not occur during this time? Six months is a long time to spend on solving problems. One is bound to make some progress with that much time to spend working on solutions.

Where does that leave us, the poor fans? It leaves us without football on the pro level. The fans are the real losers in this strike. Other than maybe threatening to stop going to games and buying products advertised during games (see how little power we have), there is not much we can do.

We could demand a percentage of the profits from the owners and a percentage of each player's salary. After all we do pay to keep the NFL in operation. It is our money that allows the players and owners to enjoy their lifestyles. We could say they are putting something back into the game.

We could go on strike ourselves. Since we pay the bills, we would probably get plenty of action at the negotiating table. We could make demands on both the players and owners. Since we control the purse strings so to speak, we could force the owners to pay us to come to the games.

And some teams would have to pay dearly to get many fans to come watch them play.

Let us get on with football. Everyone back to their positions. It is time for the fans to call a delay of game on the players and owners. It's fourth down and long and time for the fans to start kicking.

Eagles Get Offense Clicking With Win Over West Carteret

By JIM GREEN
Sports Writer

West Craven may have finally found an offense.

West Craven coach Clay Jordan said he was pleased following the Eagles' 45-0 romp over West Carteret in a Coastal Conference football game Friday night.

"For about the last six quarters, our offense has performed really well," Jordan said. "Our offense was pretty balanced, which is what we need right now."

West Craven had four backs gain at least 70 yards, and the Eagles rolled up 473 yards in total offense in the victory.

In other games involving Coastal teams Friday, Havelock remained undefeated by beating D.H. Conley 20-6, North Lenoir lost to White Oak 29-6, and East Carteret held off Washington 16-7.

In Havelock, Ledel George scored three touchdowns as the Rams won their league opener and stayed unbeaten at 5-0.

George had two scoring runs of three yards each and a third one a one-yard run. Conley's only points were set up by a fumble recovery at the Havelock 25, and Anthony Perry ran 2 yards for the Vikings' lone touchdown. Conley also had a 97-yard fumble return for a touchdown nullified by a penalty in the second quarter.

Daryl Jackson led Conley with 97 rushing yards on 18 carries. In Jacksonville, James Nelson threw a 99-yard scoring pass to

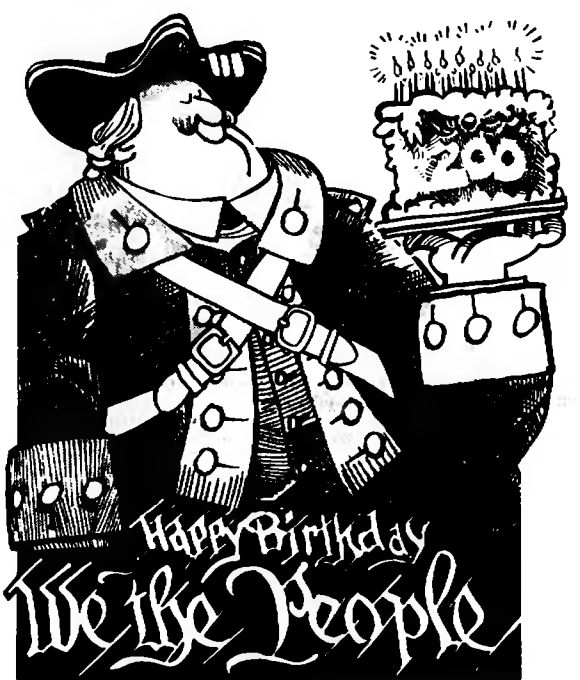
Jamal Jones off a fake punt in the second quarter, leading White Oak past the Hawks.

North Lenoir's only touchdown came in the second quarter on a 2-yard run by Andre Perry. Ron Dingle had a 3-yard scoring run, James Howard threw a 13-yard touchdown to Quinton Rosendary, and Howard added a one-yard run for White Oak.

Teams	WCr	WCo
First Downs	18	7
Rushes-Yards	41-398	31-48
Passing-Yards	83	11-41
Pass-Comp-Int	8-5-0	11-4-2
Punts-Average	2-48	0-28
Fumbles-Lost	3-1	4-3
Penalties-Yards	4-40	3-30
West Craven	177	147-43
West Carteret	00	00-0
West Craven — Derek Booker 14 run (Raymond Williams kick)		
West Craven — Booker 8 run (Williams kick)		
West Craven — Williams 32 field goal		
West Craven — Lamont Harris 41 pass from Adrian Cameron (Williams kick)		
West Craven — Dillion Harris 11 run (kick failed)		
West Craven — Anthony Section 5 run (Chris Williams run)		
West Craven — Section 5 run (Williams kick)		

Teams	DHC	Hvbk
First Downs	9	11
Rushes-Yards	16-112	49-246
Passing-Yards	48	6
Return-Yards	43	13
Pass-Comp-Int	14-4-0	1-4-0
Punts-Average	4-41	1-43
Fumbles-Lost	1-1	2-2
Penalties-Yards	5-50	3-45
D.H. Conley	4-0-0-0	6
Havelock	7-0-7-20	20
Havelock — Ledel George 3 run (Stephen Craig kick)		
D.H. Conley — Anthony Perry 2 run (run failed)		
Havelock — George 1 run (Craig kick)		
Havelock — George 3 run (kick failed)		

North Lenoir	White Oak
0 40-0-6	0 16-67-29
White Oak — Ron Dingle 3 run (run good)	
White Oak — Jamal Jones 99 pass from James Nelson (run good)	
North Lenoir — Andre Perry 2 run (run failed)	
White Oak — Quinton Rosendary 13 pass from James Howard (pass failed)	
White Oak — Howard 1 run (kick good)	



Eagle From Page 1

rolled on to score 45 in the game. Shouldering most of the offensive performance was two-time Flying Eagle winner Derek Booker. But Becton shined on defense and added to his luster by his offensive efforts.

Congratulations to Anthony Becton for winning the Flying Eagle Award and to the entire Eagle team for its outstanding performance against the Patriots of West Carteret.

Jobless From Page 1

had the lowest rates during July, with Currituck's rate at 1.8 percent and Dare's rate at 1.3 percent.

The August figures show the state's labor force at 3,351,300 with 3,211,400 employed and 139,900 without jobs.

Poverty From Page 1

ported the International Health Board, which also was funded by the Rockefeller Foundation. The third of the South's "lazy" diseases, pellagra, was the most stubborn in resisting medical science.

Nicholas Lemann, author of "Origins of the Underclass," traces all aspects of today's ghetto culture to the starvation diet of Southern sharecroppers a generation ago. If the sharecropper now has all but disappeared, along with the riverbank mill hand and his working household, he had been replaced in the economy by the seasonal laborer, the unskilled drifter, the bottom-wages employee, the unemployed and the uninspired and the hopeless.

Want, in any event, continues. It is undeniable. Yet, it is denied; indeed, as the poor are constant, so is a reluctance among the affluent, the complacent and the uncaring to admit that poverty and hunger abound. When the Public Health Service in 1921, drawing on medical knowledge six years old, accurately warned that the boll weevil and a collapsing cotton market would spawn an epidemic of pellagra, it was badgered into inactivity. Senator Harris of Georgia denied knowledge of a single case of hunger in his state. Representative Byrnes of South Carolina protested that Southerners "were not seeking charity." President Roosevelt's label of the South, a dozen years later, as the nation's Economic Problem No. 1 outraged Southern boosters and politicians, with Senator Bailey of North Carolina, chairman of the Commerce Committee, leading the howl. Much more recently, Senator Hollings of South Carolina, reversing political form with disclosures of "hidden hunger" among his constituents, was accused of defaulting on his raising.

Hunger, then, is a social and political no-no. Even its victims, loyal to the poor-but-proud principle of the joke and the tragedy, too often make a secret of their bare cupboards. That makes hunger all the more the moral issue that William Friday, former president of the University of North Carolina, declared it to be in reporting last year for a committee investigating hunger in North Carolina. Above all, hunger is a challenge to social justice.

Justice entails the use of authority to uphold what is right as well as what is written into the law. Charities and volunteerism are welcome auxiliaries to, but unreliable substitutes for, systematic assistance to the needy. One need not be cynical to suggest that compassion in parishes and neighborhoods may be fickle and transient, and at best is limited; and that, if conditions were otherwise, government would exploit them. Surely no man should have to depend on the state or another man's grace, for his health, nor should his dignity be an even swap for his dinner. Public programs are essential to the protection of some of us against calamity and defeat as they are to the protection of all of us against crime and fire. Support for that truth is as worthy as support for community service.

Robert Mason of Southern Pines is the author of *One of the Neighbor's Children*, published this past spring by Algonquin books. A native of North Carolina who grew up in Mebane and graduated from UNC-Chapel Hill with a journalism degree, Mason is the retired editor of the *Virginian-Pilot* in Norfolk, Va. He also is a former editor of the *Sandford Herald* and worked on newspapers in Raleigh and Durham.

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