

A 'Saving Grace' At Experiment In Self-Reliance

By Glendolyn J. Pope
Special to the *Phoenix*

Around 8 a.m. every Monday through Friday, an energetic Queen Wright arrives at the "Experiment in Self-Reliance (ESR)" to begin her daily work schedule. She is oftentimes the last resort for clients who come to her in need of help with housing, electric bills, or some other crisis that disrupts their daily lives. Queen is more than glad to help those who are able to show need, and she is able to give sound advice or referrals to others.

Queen has been hardily and energetically working at ESR for almost 25 years. She came to ESR shortly after the founder, Mrs. Louise Wilson, started the agency to help residents throughout Forsyth County become or maintain self-sufficiency. Queen has been doing her work with grace and enthusiasm ever since. "I'm always glad to help someone," she says, "God put us on earth to be of service to others; that's why I enjoy what I do." Because of her commitment to help others and because she is the last resort for many people, she can be referred to as a "Saving Grace at ESR."

Queen can be heard telling clients,



Queen Wright

"Now, you have a good day, Love," or "You take care, Love," or even, "Let me know how things turn out." These are not the words one would expect to hear spoken to a person that is hardly known - especially when that person may be homeless, on welfare, just out of prison, or just plain down and out. Christian music is always playing quietly in the background of her office because Queen feels that this helps to soothe and cheer up clients who may be feeling down.

Queen has been an active member of her church, the Ambassador for Christ, for the last 11 years. It is probably very hard for those who

are not born-again Christians to understand how she could love her clients before meeting them. "I love all my clients simply because they are human beings, and we are all children of God. Helping clients gives me a high, and I try to put love in the work that I do. Otherwise, I'd get tired, feel burned out, and not want to do my work," she explains.

Some days are hectic - with many clients waiting for help. On those days, Queen, without being asked, goes the extra mile. Many times she works through her lunch hour

because she doesn't like to have clients wait around in the lobby for long periods of time. Pamela Thombs, Director of the Problem Center at ESR, says that Queen Wright is definitely an asset to ESR.

Queen, the mother of two daughters and a son, who is a junior at NCCU in Durham, says that her job helps to keep her son in college. When not at ESR, Queen spends her time busy with church work or at home with Cornelius Wright, her husband of more than 25 years.

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