

# The Progress

Published Monthly

Morrisville, NC

December 1, 1997

## Cromwell optimistic health will hold through term

By Mary Beth Phillips

Morrisville's new mayor was looking for a challenge when he decided to run for office, to get his mind off the bone marrow cancer that he had recently been diagnosed with.

The challenge may have been more than he bargained for, but that's another story.

Gordon Cromwell has just finished a round of chemotherapy and is likely to be undertaking a stem cell transplant in the near future which will potentially hospitalize him for a few weeks and certainly weaken him for a month or so.

But although he acknowledges his condition is serious, he said he expects to complete his term with only a short time away from his duties.

"The Lord led him into this," said his wife, Joyce, "and we feel confident that he will see his four-year term through—easily."

In a stem cell transplant, the existing bone marrow is destroyed and replaced with healthy bone marrow.

"They've done a lot of it over the past few years, and shown some fairly good results," Cromwell said of the transplantation procedure.

Dr. Alan Kriz, a hematologist/oncologist at Rex Hospital, who is handling Cromwell's treatment, said he is completing tests to determine whether the stem cell transplant is the best option.

The treatment involves transplanting his own stem cells (part of the marrow), which have been extracted and frozen, back into his body after he receives a high dose of chemotherapy which wipes out his existing bone marrow.

"There is a period of 10 or 12 days where he is not producing his own blood cells, and will be susceptible to infection (because of the

lack of white cells) or bleeding (because of the lack of platelets which help with clotting). This is a tough period of time," Kriz said. "The bone marrow organ, which produces the blood cells, is completely dysfunctional."

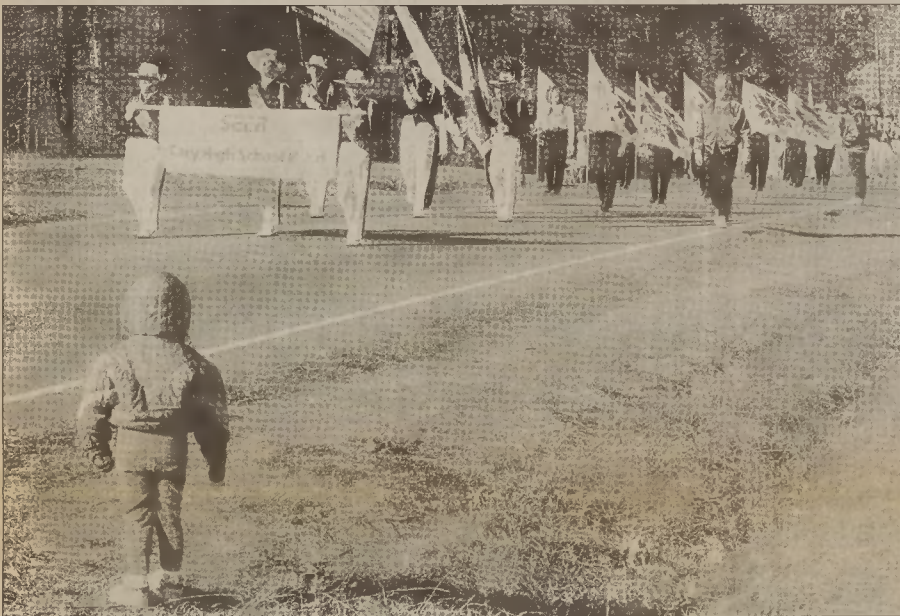
"We will have to give him transfusions, and probably antibiotics to support him through that," Kriz said. "Most patients tend to be hospitalized for a period of time. Some can go through whole transplant without being hospitalized."

It takes about two days for the chemicals to wash out of his blood

See CROMWELL, page 2



AT HOME—Gordan Cromwell likes working with wood in the shed behind his home. He recently made a weathervane for his wife.



AN UNCLUTTERED VIEW—Sarah Young of Carpenter couldn't resist the sounds of the Cary High Band as it played during Morrisville's Christmas parade Dec. 6. There were more than 25 entries along the route including the Garner and Apex High School bands.

## Musically inclined

Preston soprano's voice taking him places as Canterbury Singer

By Mary Beth Phillips

Colin Geisenhoffer can sing some high notes.

The former second soprano says it's kind of hard to go that high sometimes, since Tom Sibley, director of the Raleigh Boychoir, moved him to first soprano this year.

"Once I get warmed up, I can do it," said the sixth grader, who lives in Preston and attends West Lake Middle School.

The worst part about changing

from second soprano to first was relearning all the notes, he added.

Despite his talent and his time commitment to the Boychoir, Colin says he likes to play soccer about as much as he likes to sing. He received even more encouragement to pursue the singing when he found out that his soccer coach sang in an a capella choir.

Being a member of the Canterbury Singers, the most prestigious ensemble in the Raleigh Boychoir, takes away from his soccer time,

especially this time of year.

"I had a performance and three (choir) practices last week, and one performance and practice were on the same day," he said last week.

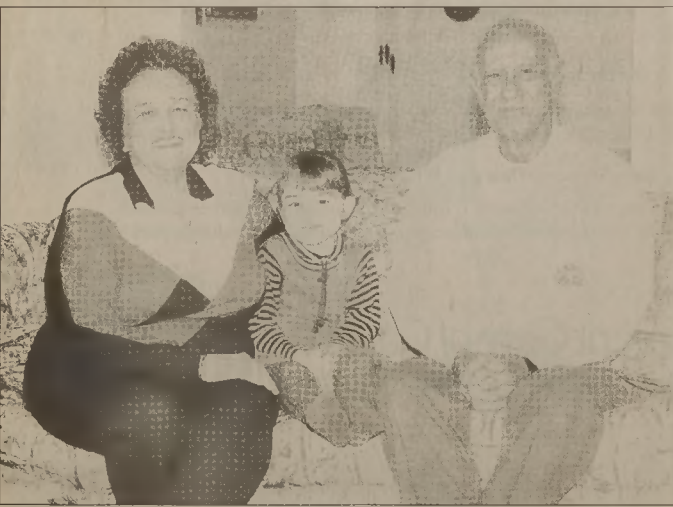
On Wednesday of last week, he flew to the White House to sing for a party there, and perhaps to see the President or the First Lady.

This week, he will be singing for the matinees at the Nutcracker Suite at Memorial Auditorium in Raleigh, and at 8 p.m. on Dec. 20

See PRESTON, page 3



COLIN GEISENHOFFER



CLOSEKNIT TRIO—Michael and Carmen Casas of Preston enjoy keeping their grand daughter Mary Carmen, a preschooler, while her parents work.

## Board rethinks sewer line halt, reverses vote

Shiloh project, grant will resume

By Mary Beth Phillips

The Morrisville Board of Commissioners in a special called session on Dec. 14, voted unanimously to resume work on the Shiloh Sewer Project, undoing action by the two new board members and Mark Silver-Smith, who had voted to halt work at the regular meeting Dec. 10.

Commissioners Jan Faulkner and Bill Case had voted along with Silver-Smith to halt the project, after Silver-Smith accused Commissioner Leavy Barbee of initiating the project for his own personal gain.

After voting to resume the project on Sunday, Silver-Smith said, "Obviously, after the report came back from Wilkerson (the construction firm) and we found out of course that the contract was so far gone, it wouldn't pay to stop it. Of course, the right thing to do at this point is to finish the project so at least some benefit will come to the area."

"That is a project that should have been stopped a long time ago," he said. "I've always voted against the project. I would have tried stopping it earlier, but I knew that I was only one vote on the board. Doing it that night, of course I appreciated commissioners Faulkner and Case, who understood the issue, going along with me."

Contractor J.T. Wilkerson and Consulting Engineer Bass, Nixon & Kennedy presented cost figures to the board that showed the town would lose money by halting the project.

According to the accounting by the contractor, the original contract amount was \$621,691; work in the

amount of \$422,531 has been billed for, and \$199,160 has not been billed.

However, the amount of work and stored materials not yet billed is \$66,957, and the contractor would seek \$28,000 to secure the project at its present status (\$2,800 per day times 10 days) and \$24,465 in lost overhead and profit. So the cash outlay required by the town to terminate the project would be \$119,422. That leaves \$79,738 remaining from the original \$199,160 not yet billed.

By terminating the project, the town would lose a \$100,000 Community Development Block Grant that had targeted the area of Shiloh in question. So the town would actually have to pay \$20,262 more if the contract were terminated than if the contract were to proceed.

At the special called meeting, which lasted less than five minutes, the motion to resume the project was made by Commissioner C.T. Moore and seconded by Commissioner Leavy Barbee. It was then approved unanimously with no discussion.

At the regular meeting of Dec. 10, Silver-Smith had said, during the time for other business on the agenda, he never favored the current configuration of the sewer line and a more detailed plan should be made to serve the entire community. Silver-Smith claimed at the time that stopping the sewer line project before it went under the railroad tracks would save the town about \$100,000, but Town Attorney Frank Gray cautioned that there could be claims from the contractor

See BOARD, page 2

## Preston retiree recounts struggle in Cuba

By Mary Beth Phillips

"In this country, if you want something and you work for it, you will get it," said Michael Casas of Bolstone Court in Preston.

He should know. He came to America from Cuba in 1960 with \$5 in his pocket and a few clothes in a suitcase. The only English he knew was from a high school course.

The communist regime forced his family, which owned a factory that manufactured metal buckets and trash cans, out of business.

"They took everything. First they took houses for the poor. Then they said the factories should belong to the people," Casas said. "I realized it was impossible to live in a system where there was no freedom."

He had some confrontations with communist officials, and got word that they were planning to come arrest him, so he left the day before.

His wife, Carmen, and three daughters, who were then 6, 5, and 1, followed about two months later. The Casases spent most of their

lives in the Fort Lauderdale and West Palm Beach areas of Florida, but when their daughter, a mechanical engineer with IBM, and son-in-law, also with IBM, both got transferred here from Boca Raton two years ago, they followed.

"Our kids come first," Casas explained. "The family is the base of

everything, for the nation, for relations with other people."

Soon after moving to Florida, the Casases had moved both sets of parents in with them. Carmen worked full time as a Spanish teacher, and also taught adult Spanish classes in the evenings, so

See PRESTON, page 2

Bulk Rate  
Postage Paid  
Morrisville, N.C.  
Permit #23

Delivered expressly to the residents of Morrisville and Preston