

Chronicle Profile

Queen: 'God Has Really Smiled On Me'

By AUDREY L. WILLIAMS
Staff Writer

A lot of people have told Paula Mickens she resembles singer Natalie Cole.

She takes the compliment as an honor. However, she says being crowned Miss Winston-Salem State University tonight will be one of her greatest honors yet. "God has really smiled on me, being that I'm Miss WSSU," she says. "That's the real honor."

A native of Garner and a senior computer science major, with a minor in mathematics, Mickens has all the "right stuff" for the makings of a queen. She's warm, charming, personable and a master conversationalist.

Her corner desk in the student government office in Memorial Student Union is scattered with paraphernalia about life and God. Throughout the interview, her phone never stops ringing. Eager to please all who call her, she always answers, "I'm still smiling and how are you?"

Despite the demands of a college queen before her coronation, Mickens seems only a little edgy.

"I didn't run for this title for the sake of beauty," she says. "A lot of people knew me and respected me for what I was before this."

"I wanted to get closer to the students, and I felt that I could be a link to the them and help bring more unity to the campus," she says.

Mickens says many of her friends were worried that she might suffer a personality change once she became Miss WSSU.

"This title didn't make me," she says. "I make the title. If a person centers his life on a title, then when it's over, he's nobody."

Mickens says she had her doubts about "Everybody tells me I'm the perfect queen. It's not every day you walk out of your dorm and people say, 'Hey, that's Miss WSSU.' It feels great."

— Paula Mickens

campaigning for Miss WSSU at first, but when her friends began rallying for her, she says she had to go through with it.

"It all started when I was Miss Interdenominational Youth for Christ," she says. "Since I was the last queen to come out (during last year's coronation), I came down those steps with all I had and it was like, 'Wow, is that Paula?'"

After the impression she made at the coronation, Mickens says a couple of her friends urged her to campaign for Miss

WSSU.

"Everybody tells me I'm the perfect queen," she says with a smile. "It's not every day that you walk out of your dorm and people say, 'Hey, that's Miss WSSU.' It feels great."

A born-again Christian since her freshman year, Mickens says she's satisfied with her new life.

"I love my new life in Christ," she says. "God is the key in my life."

"Before I took this office, I prayed about it because I didn't want to take it just for myself," she says. "One of the reasons I wanted it was to let the people know the glory God has given me and to let them know that not all Christians are dull."

In her campaign, Mickens says she went directly to the students and asked them what qualities they were looking for in a queen.

"I got all kinds of answers," she says, "but most of all they said they wanted a queen who wouldn't change after she was elected. I haven't changed at all. I'm still Paula Mickens."

Mickens' resemblance to Natalie Cole is overwhelming, and the 22-year-old "B" student says her father was often told he looked a lot like the late Nat King Cole, Natalie Cole's father.

"I was in New York once and this man



Paula Mickens, Miss WSSU, is not letting her title change her — instead, she's "making" the title, she says. (photo by James Parker).

started following me. I didn't know what to think," says Mickens. "Finally, he looked at me and said, 'You look like her (Natalie Cole).'"

"The majority of the places I've been people have either just stared at me or said I look like Natalie Cole. It really started when I was about 12."

Mickens has set her goals high, and she says that owning her own business is one of them.

"I want to become a computer programmer," she says. "But my greatest

ambition is to own my own business in computers. I would also like to be involved in international relations."

In her hometown of Garner, Mickens says family and friends are very proud of her.

"When I went to church at home, my pastor came up to me and bowed," she says, laughing. "My whole family is excited."

Tonight, Paula Mickens will still be the last queen to make her entrance. But this time, she will be the queen everyone came to see.

Alta Vista Garden Club Meets

The Alta Vista Garden Club met recently at the home of Mrs. Louise King of 2921 Reynolds Park Road, with Mrs. Juanita Penn as co-hostess.

The meeting was opened with a reading by Mrs. Mae Field. The theme song and scripture reading was done by Mrs. Alberta Singleton. Mrs. Kenneth R.

Williams, president of the 4th District Garden Council, visited the club and gave remarks.

Other members present were Mrs. Janie Thomas, president; Mrs. Eva Harris, recording secretary; Mrs. Estelle Cropps, assistant secretary; Mrs. Alberta Singleton, treasurer; Mrs. Elizabeth Ceaser, Mrs.

Beatrice Feemster, assistant financial secretary; Mrs. Beulah Hickerson, Mrs. Louise King, Mrs. Tereatha Miller, Mrs. Maggie Rucker, Mrs. Ora Rutlane, Mrs. Willa Truesdale, Mrs. Cordelia Turner, Mrs. Hattie Vaughn and Mrs. Marion Wallace.

Dinner followed at K&W Restaurant.



Andre Baity Phillips

Winston-Salem Native Moves To Saudi Arabia

Andre Baity Phillips of Dallas, Texas, and originally from Winston-Salem, is transferring with the Babcock and Wilcox Company's internal division to Saudi Arabia. Babcock and Wilcox is an Ohio-based firm which manufactures and erects utility and industrial boilers.

A field service engineer, Phillips will participate in a desalinization project for Saudi Arabia. The project will be complete in one year. Phillips is a 1975 graduate of East Forsyth Senior High School and is a 1980 graduate of Tennessee State University. He earned a bachelor's of science degree in civil engineering.

While at Tennessee State, Phillips worked as a field inspector on the Blue Ridge Parkway for the Federal Highway Administration and as an environmental engineer intern for the sanitary district of Chicago.

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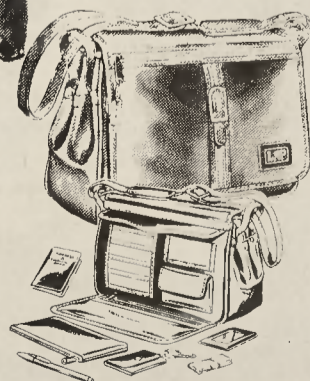
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