

Business Briefs

BUSINESS PROFILE

Couple builds on ministry

By YVETTE N. FREEMAN
Chronicle Staff Writer

A local minister and his wife hope to spread God's word through another avenue besides that of the church services. Lenton and Pamela Rhodes opened up their own business — Reynolda Christian Supplies, Inc., just over a year ago in the Reynolda Commons Shopping Center.

The store carries a number of religious items, including books, bibles, choir robes, office and church supplies — basically anything related to the church. It also has a weekly bulletin service for

area churches, copying and printing service.

"We had always thought about starting a business, but we didn't know what," said Pamela Hauser Rhodes. "And the vision was actually given to my husband. It was a vision from the Lord to open up a Christian supplies. Since we were in the ministry already, this would be an extension or another part or another phase of the ministry."

The Rhodes' initially started the business themselves, but have since brought in other family members, who are now their business partners. They include Syteria Puryear, Mrs. Rhodes' sister

and her husband William; another sister, Forrest Bonaparte and her husband Emanuel; and a third sister, Dianne Hardin. Mrs. Rhodes says that each comes in and works at the store on a rotation basis during the week, and currently they, along with the Rhodes' are the only employees. But Mr. Rhodes said that sometime in the near future, they would like to hire more employees.

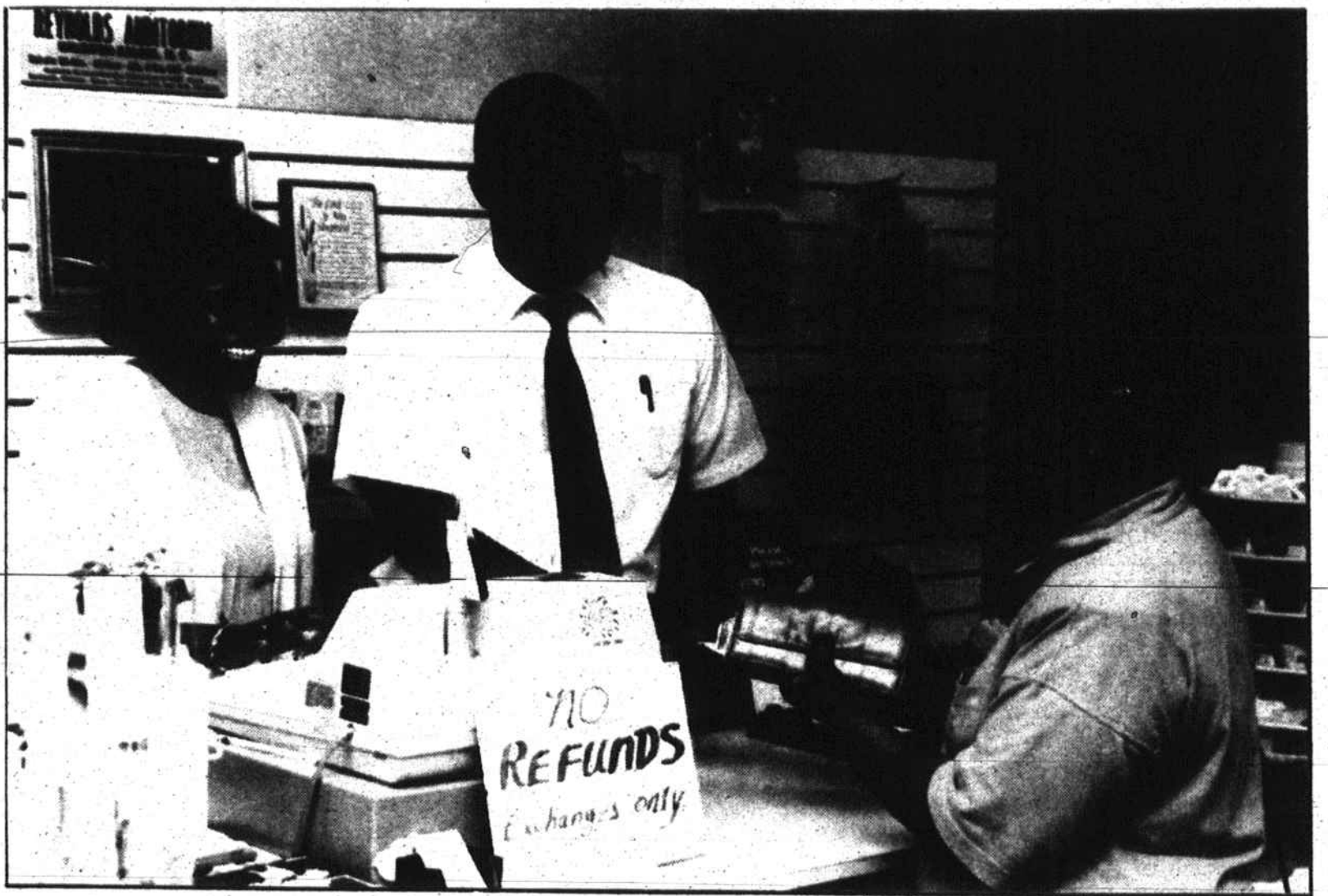
In the year since opening, both the Rhodes say that business has been doing well, although there have been some ups and downs.

Mr. Rhodes said "I think the hardest part is learning the trade; just learning about the business that you're in. Because for some for reason or another, people don't tell you anything. They're very secretive. And everything that we had to learn, we had to learn on our own."

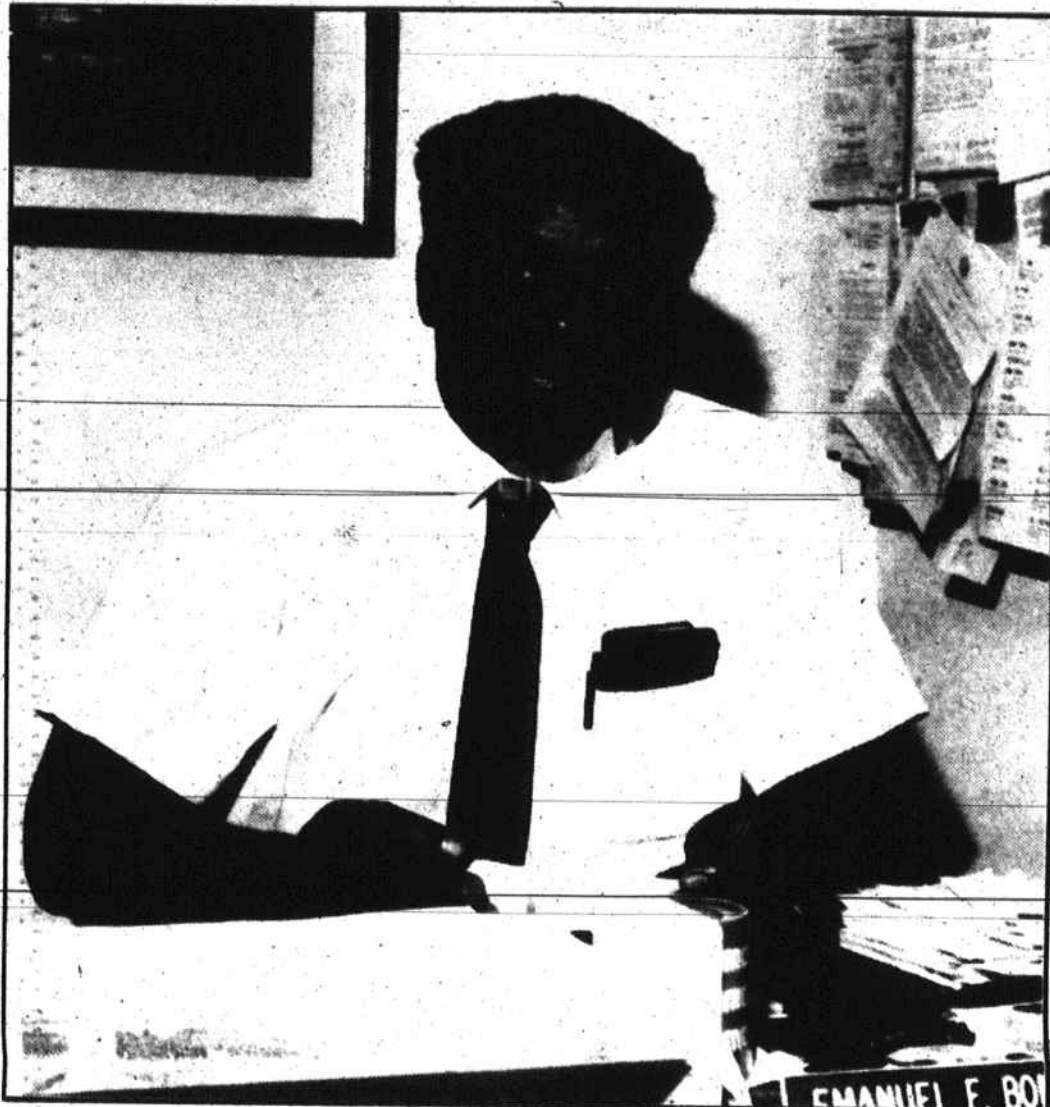
Mr. Rhodes, who is also the pastor at Piney Grove A.M.E. Zion Church in Harmony, N.C., also said that he expected to have much more flexibility in his time. But as it turns out, he said it is a challenge trying to balance the business, the home (the Rhodes have two children), and his church duties. However, Mrs. Rhodes says they are able to do it all. "Strength comes from above," she said.

Mrs. Rhodes, who is a native of Tobacoville, also stated that it is that strength which enables her to continue working as a technical illustrator with AT&T. Mr. Rhodes, who is a native of Comfort, N.C., formerly worked for USAir in sales reservations for 11 years. He is also a former associate minister of Center Grove A.M.E. Zion Church in Tobacoville.

Although they say they don't want to get too far ahead of them-



Pamela and Lenton Rhodes opened Reynolda Christian Supplies, Inc. in August of 1990 in the Reynolda Commons Shopping Center.



Emanuel Bonaparte, Mrs. Rhodes' brother-in-law, is also a partner in the business.

selfs, the Rhodes say that once business gets much more stable, they would like to franchise out, by opening in perhaps two other locations, possibly Greensboro, Charlotte or some other city, with the help of their children. Right now their two children, Teri, 12 and Teagan, 11, are not old enough to help run the business, but Mrs. Rhodes says that she would like to continue a family tradition of leaving something behind for them.

Reynolda Christian Supplies, Inc. is located in the Reynolda Commons Shopping Center, 3524 Yadkinville Road.

The hours are 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Monday-Thursday, 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. Fridays, and 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Saturdays. The store is closed on Sundays.

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Reinvestments in the Community

RJR funds special school programs

Three special public school programs around North Carolina are being implemented this year with funding from R.J. Reynolds Tobacco Company.

The programs help open a library to the community during the summer, support reading improvement by first-graders and offer affordable teacher training to qualified persons in rural areas.

The first is a summer program in progress at Cameron Elementary School in Moore County. Since mid-June, the media center at Cameron has been open every weekday morning and several nights each week to enable students and their parents to check out books, read magazines, or attend special events.

"The program is a milestone for our community," said Cameron principal Wiley Barrett. "Over time, the students' participation in a program like this one could begin to make a difference in their performance during the school year and on standardized tests as they advance to higher grades."

The second program will begin in the Winston-Salem/Forsyth County Schools this fall. It is called Reading Recovery and is an innovative approach for helping first grade children become independent readers early in their school years. Most programs targeting students who are "at risk" of failure in reading do not begin until a student is reading several years below grade level.

This program has been in operation in Ohio, and, to date, research shows that children who place academically in the lowest 20% of their first grade class can become competent readers after 12-15 weeks in Reading Recovery.

Reading Recovery provides procedures for working with children, a teacher in-service program, and a plan for continuous monitoring and support. Students enrolled in the program have daily one-on-one lessons in reading and writing to complement their regular instructional program. The Reading Recovery program will be implemented in all Forsyth County elementary schools beginning this school year.

The third program to receive funding is the North Carolina Model Teacher Education Consortium.

The purpose of this program is to offer a creative, accessible and affordable teacher education program for qualified persons in rural areas in northeastern North Carolina.

It has been in operation since 1988 when the North Carolina State Department of Public Instruction joined with seven public school systems, two community colleges, and four colleges and universities to address an urgent need for qualified teachers in remote areas of the state.

The consortium offers teacher education programs to individuals in the following three groups: 1) persons who have two years of college and need upper-level education courses to qualify for a degree; 2) lateral entry teachers who lack the education courses needed for teacher certification; and 3) teachers seeking a master's degree.

Prior to this year, the consortium has been funded by the State Department of Public Instruction, the General Assembly, various educational organizations, and private foundations. The grant from Reynolds is the first corporate funding received for the program.

Reynolds Tobacco focuses its corporate contributions and volunteer activities on two of North Carolina's most important needs — education and economic development. It supports a number of programs in K-12 public schools throughout the state.

"The program is a milestone for our community."

— Cameron principal Wiley Barrett

"Reinvestments in the Community" is a weekly column appearing in API publications throughout the USA.