

Joe Tschamler employee of the year, advises retirees to make right choices

Joe Tschamler, a 25-year employee in the Personnel Department, was nominated from four departments of city government and chosen as Employee of the Year. In his job as benefit's coordinator, he has assisted nearly every retiring city employee to make the right choices for their future.

Since joining the city in 1972, Joe has spent most of his career with the Personnel Department. He is known for his caring and compassionate personality. Throughout his long tenure, he has always been an advocate for employees.

In October 1993, Joe was awarded the "I Got Caught" award and has been nominated again for that award. This award is given to employees who get caught giving outstanding customer service. Once, he was visiting a retiree who was unable to come into the office. When he arrived at her home, she had locked herself out. Joe managed to open a side window and crawl in to open a door. Many city retirees depend upon him for more than making sure their retirement benefits are intact. He has been known to complete tax forms and offer advice on everything from investing for retirement to gardening.

"With Joe, it is very hard to narrow your comments to a short statement, said recent retiree

Aleene Carter. She goes on to say, "I know he means a lot to me. I trust and value his opinion as well as most employees within city gov-



Joe Tschamler

ernment." Another retiree, S. Douglas Carroll, said, "When I was involved in processing my disability retirement, I was amazed with the substantial work that Joe did on my behalf to facilitate the glitches which arose ... At one time, I counted 37 tension points in the total process, and because of Joe's professionalism and knowledge, I had no surprises waiting

for me." Tschamler interacts with employees of every city department, including public safety. Lieutenant Mike Culler of the Winston-Salem Police said, "Joe consistently demonstrates his dedication to each and every one of us as he gives advice and assistance when one of us calls on him ... Joe is always friendly and courteous, even when questions are not easy, or the answers are not welcome information."

Linda Fisher, a payroll assistant in the Sanitation Division, points out that when she doesn't know answers to employee questions, she calls on Tschamler for help. "Although I know he has a heavy workload, he is unfailingly courteous and friendly. He does not pass the buck, and when he says he will handle something, I can consider it done."

Throughout the year, Tschamler conducts informative retirement seminars. During these meetings, he provides follow-up assistance to the participants, demonstrating his interest in long-term benefit to employees.

City personnel director Bill Hill says "Joe is the Wise Sage! He is 'Mr. Dependable', a team player, a hard worker, a teacher ... my right hand and my left; he is a friend to all, never meets a stranger and a joy to know."



Friends from various cities joined the fun: (left to right) Tim Murchison and Owen Murchison, of Southern Pines; Greensboro City Councilman Yvonne J. Johnson; Robert Scott and Francene Scott, of Chicago; Judge Patrice Hinnant; and Walter Davenport.

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current system is organized by judicial district; however, the legislature is currently examining whether the circuit system could feasibly take its place.

Under the judicial district, a county would have its own district court judges, magistrates, and district attorneys. However, under the circuit system, several counties could be grouped together, and only one circuit court judge, one circuit attorney, and one magistrate would serve a group of counties. "Professional groups have the responsibility to make this information public. We are not waiting for the legislature to take a position," Johnson said. Members of the organization are discussing their views on the two alternatives so they can educate the public.

"This issue is quite debatable and controversial, because it would reconfigure the judicial district," she said. In the report there are many suggested benefits of the change; however, Hinnant says,

"We want to think that it's justice, but politics are involved as well." At this point the proposal is only in its beginning stages, but the group plans to follow up as changes develop.

Another goal of the organization is to promote economic development in East Greensboro. When the bond issue was successful last year, money became available to develop the East Market Street Corridor and create businesses where the black business district once was. The South East Greensboro Development (SEEDS) seeks to revitalize this area, and many of the members of the Guilford County Association of Black Lawyers have joined hands with SEEDS to help make critical decisions about the development.

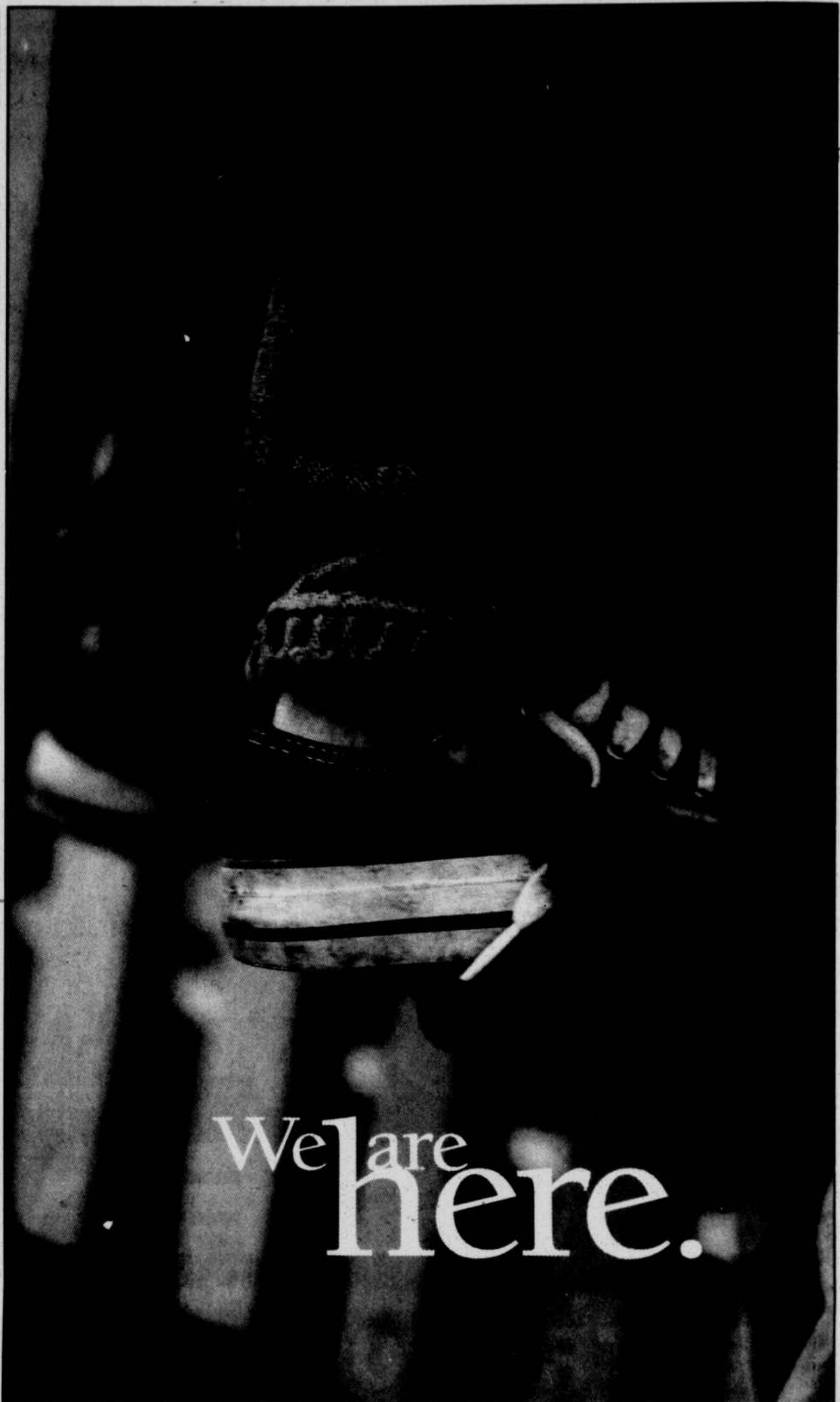
In addition, the association participates in Project Homestead, which will provide affordable housing and commercial development in East Greensboro. "If we can all work together, we can do some meaningful things in East Greensboro," Johnson said.

Johnson, a solo practitioner of civil and criminal litigation, has also taught law at North Carolina Central University, and Duke University. He strongly encourages the members of the organization to serve as educators for the public, to make them aware of their rights.

Camille Payton, secretary, works with Gray, Newell and Johnson, L.L.P., and she considers the Association of Black Lawyers to be a "fine organization that caters to the character and professionalism of lawyers in Guilford County." She enjoys some of the service projects, such as donating toys and food to the needy, especially during the holiday season.

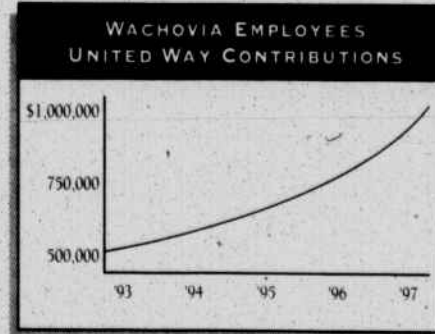
Other officers of the association include Charles Backmon, vice president, and Steve Allen, treasurer. Johnson said he plans to keep his eye on the purpose throughout his term.

"We have a responsibility as older professionals to lend a hand to younger people who are trying to find their way. People helped us," he said.



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there is more to be done. That to really change lives in our community, we must all work together year after year. And that way, we can really make a difference in this place we call home.

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Rosa Johnson, junior, majoring in arts management and sociology.

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