



French brings her game to America

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Iraqi man shares story with students

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Race relations is topic of local conference

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THE CHRONICLE

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THANKFUL TO GIVE

Church gives out 500 Thanksgiving baskets

BY T. KEVIN WALKER
THE CHRONICLE

Despite the chill in the air, Saturday provided glorious fall weather.

The sun was luminous, casting a spotlight on every shade of red, brown and orange atop every tree. The sky looked blue enough to swim in.

For the hundreds who came to Mt. Olive Baptist Church, the weather was just one of the many blessings the day provided. The church continued its Thanksgiving basket giveaway, an annual tradition begun about 15 years ago. Church members spent several hours giving away 500 turkeys and bags of holiday fixings to a thankful crowd of people — some who waited in line for hours.

The church made it worth the wait. The choir performed rousing, hand-clapping numbers, hot-dogs and chips were served, Dr. Charles Gray, the church's pastor, provided words of faith, and there were even a few drawings for cash prizes.

The annual Thanksgiving giveaway is a heartwarming experience for Gray and his flock. Over the years, the event has grown by leaps and bounds. There was a time when the church handed out just a couple hundred turkeys. Through the grace of God and the commitment of his congregation, Gray says the church has been able to help more and more people who come from all across the city.

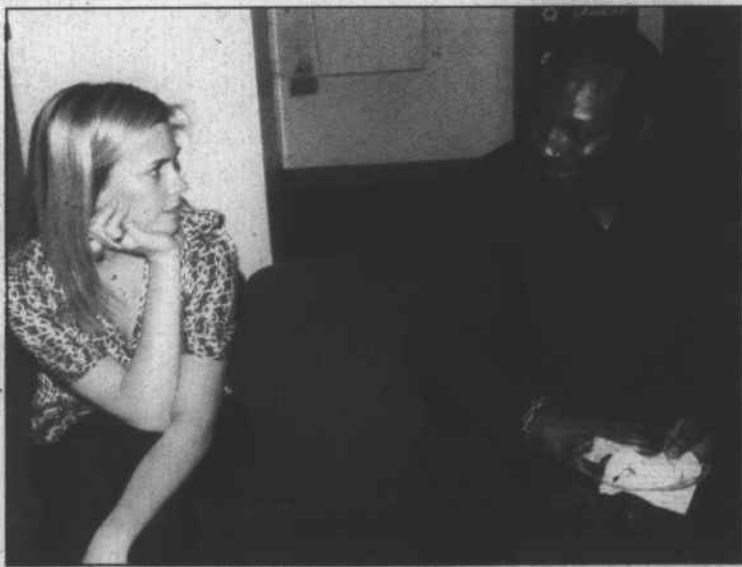
"The more you give, the more you receive," he said.

The church, indeed, has been blessed. Two years ago, members celebrated the grand opening of a fellowship hall adjacent to the sanctuary, and last year city officials renamed Belevs Street — where the church sits — in honor of Gray.

See Turkeys on A12

Photo by Todd Luck

Dowd Keith, a Wake Forest University student who organized last week's forum, chats with Darryl Hunt, whose story of false imprisonment has captured the attention of many.



Justice is topic of Wake forum

BY TODD LUCK
THE CHRONICLE

A Nov. 15 forum at Wake Forest University put a spotlight on the existence of the death penalty in an imperfect justice system.

Among the panelists was Darryl Hunt, who was exonerated of murder charges after spending 18 years in prison. Since being released three years ago, he founded the Darryl Hunt Project for Freedom and Justice, which works to help



Cannino

others who may have been wrongfully convicted.

Hunt said innocent people can be wrongly convicted no matter who they are or the color of their skin. Hunt said he came very close to getting the death penalty in his own trial before the jury settled on life in prison.

"Nobody here is above what happened to me," said Hunt.

The panel also included Jennifer Cannino, the chair of the Darryl Hunt Project for

Freedom and Justice.

Cannino talked about her own experience with wrongful conviction. In 1984 she was raped at knife point. She identified her rapist as Ronald Cotton, who was convicted of the crime. Years after Cotton's conviction, DNA testing proved that he was innocent of the crime.

Cotton was released after 11 years in prison and cleared of all charges. Cannino said she didn't know what to do with the guilt she had about it. For a while friends convinced Cannino that she did not owe Cotton an apology. They would tell her Cotton,

See Forum on A11

Mt. Olive member Terrin Tucker places turkeys in bags.



Kinard: Sit-ins TV news catalyst

Veteran newsman says Civil Rights provided big, exciting stories

BY TODD LUCK
THE CHRONICLE

At a Greensboro College lecture last Thursday retired local news-caster Lee Kinard recounted what it was like to cover the



Kinard

1960 Woolworth sit-ins and how the Civil Rights Movement changed television, and society, forever.

He began by recounting what it was like growing up in a segregated South. His grandfather employed several black workers. He has fond childhood memories of his friendship with one of those workers and trips to Concord, N.C.'s poor Shankletown, where the blacks lived.

As a child he didn't fully comprehend the implications of segregation, but it became all too clear as an adult. He described the absolute separation between white and black that was so extensive that even broadcasters didn't cross the divide. He said white broadcasters didn't report on things involving black people. Not even football scores at black colleges were reported, he recalled.

"It was too distinctly separate societies," said Kinard.

When he first got into television in the 1950s at WFMY 2, there was very little news on the air. Television was still relatively new. The equipment was limited and people took turns doing weather, news, and other on-air jobs. There was an uncertainty about how much interest there was for news on television, he said.

Then it happened. On Feb. 1, 1960 four N.C. A&T students sat at a whites-only lunch counter at Woolworth's and refused to leave after being denied service.

Kinard remembered the shock of everyone at the station. He said personally he was afraid that there would be an uprising, a civil war. Instead what happened was a mostly peacefully series of protests that gave the TV station what it had been waiting for — a big story.

"When the civil rights struggle started and people went in the streets, local TV was born, we had a story to cover. Finally, we had a story. Finally, there was something there," he said.

Kinard said news became more important after that. It got its own department and better equipment.

"February 1st, as far as I'm concerned, marks the beginning of local TV being as we

COMMUNITY SERVANTS



Photo by Felicia McMillan

Cheryl Harry, a well-known community volunteer, gets cozy with Andrew Rodgers, head of Riverrun International Film Festival. The two were among several people who took home awards Saturday for their contributions to the community during the Urban League's Bridging the Community Awards ceremony. To read more about the event, see Page B12.



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