



Veronica Rousseau (center) with Marvin Hughes and his family, wife, Frances, and daughters Brenda Hughes and Vicky Bunn.

**Rousseau**  
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heart surgery. "Sometimes I have to sit down and give them a little encouragement, and this is where my purpose comes in. I give them a confident word from God and the song of their choice."

Rousseau, who was selected for the monthly honor from a pool of nearly 8,000 employees at N.C. Baptist, says she literally found her voice last year, when she transferred to the mobility unit after working for nearly two decades as a CNA elsewhere in the hospital.

While walking with a patient one day, Rousseau says she "ran out of conversation," so she began to sing. "The other patients heard me singing and therefore, I had to sing to them," she related. "...I feel the singing helps because it relaxes them. It makes them feel like, 'There's a tomorrow, and if I work hard enough, I can do it.'"

Rousseau now sings to all her patients - an average of 16 - while they are walking, two times a day. And she's never lost her voice. "You wouldn't believe

the patients that have cried (when I sang). I've cried with them, and it just gets to be all right," she declared. "It's amazing. It's got to be my calling because it goes so well."

Not all patients have been in the mood for a song. Rousseau can recall only two who have requested that she not sing.

"Then I hum, and we both end up laughing about it," Rousseau says.

In her prior position at the hospital, she had sung to patients, but was told she was "too loud." But in the Mobility Unit, her voice is a welcome sound. She even gets requests to sing to patients outside the unit.

"My unit manager, when she gave me this position, she said, 'Make it your own, and that's just what I do,' she related. "...When I get here, all of me comes out. By the time I get home, I'm real tired, but I love it."

Rousseau's sunny disposition has also won her many friends in the unit.

"Other than my singing, they say it's my personality (that distinguishes me)," she commented. "I don't meet strangers, and most of the time, I'm joyful."

Patient Marvin Hughes says Rousseau's melodious brand of TLC has been a blessing to him.

"It's great. It helps. It keeps you motivated, anyway. It makes you go," commented Hughes, 67. "It's really rough having surgery like this, and it takes your mind off it."

Hughes' wife of 49 years, Frances, and two daughters, Vicky Bunn and Brenda Hughes will readily attest to Rousseau's effectiveness. Hugs and kisses for Rousseau from the grateful family followed Hughes' walk Tuesday afternoon.

"It's the most I've seen him smile all week," Bunn remarked. "I think it helps him, him talking with her and her singing to him."

Frances works as a private-duty CNA in Patrick County, Va., where the couple resides. With more than 42 years in the medical field under her belt, Mrs. Hughes says she is well aware of what a gem Rousseau is.

"She's just precious," she declared. "I listen to her every time she goes up and down the hall (with a patient). She's a wonderful lady."

**Pregnancy**  
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during pregnancy is safe for you and your baby. The baby is protected by the amniotic fluid in the womb, your abdomen, and the mucus plug that seals your cervix and helps guard against infections.

You and your doctor should talk about when to do ultrasounds, a safe type of x-ray to view the baby. Many women have an ultrasound in the first trimester, which helps with planning a due date; most women also have an ultrasound at 18-20 weeks, though it can be done at any point as needed.

The Institute of Medicine recently released new weight gain guidelines for pregnant women: underweight women (BMI <18.5) should gain 28 to 40 lbs, healthy, normal-weight women (BMI 18.5-24.9) should gain 25 to 35 lbs during pregnancy; and overweight women (BMI 25-29.9) should gain 15 to 25 lbs.

**What's happening with the baby?**

The National Institute of Child Health and Human Development notes that, during the second trimester, your baby will develop ovaries (girl) or a prostate gland (boy), and skin will begin to form. Bones will also start to develop early in this trimester, and, by the middle of the trimester, baby will be able to make facial expressions. Baby also

begins to hear, usually around week 18, and baby may begin to pick up your voice tone. As nerves and neurons that control movement in the brain develop, you may begin to feel your baby move around week 19 or 20. As the second trimester progresses, baby develops the sense of touch and balance, and baby's lungs begin preparing to breathe outside the womb. All baby's organs also continue to develop and grow. By the end of the second trimester, baby weighs between 1.5 and 2 pounds and has fully formed arms, legs, hands, and feet. Eyebrows and eyelashes also form, and more hair appears on baby's head.

As you enter the third trimester, baby begins to move more forcefully and frequently; sometimes this movement can leave you short of breath. Baby will begin gaining a half pound a week until about week 37, and he/she grows from about 15 inches to (on average) 17-19 inches long by birth. Baby's lungs, skin and eyes, along with all other organs, continue to develop and prepare for life outside the womb. By week 37, your baby is considered full term, and baby's sucking muscles (for breastfeeding) are fully formed.

**What symptoms might I notice?**

Common pregnancy symptoms during the 2nd and 3rd trimesters include:  
Larger breasts

- Increasing belly size
- Skin changes - healthy glow or dark pigmentation in areas
- Nose or gum problems
- Dizziness
- Leg cramps
- Heartburn, constipation or hemorrhoids
- Shortness of breath
- Vaginal discharge and/or bladder/kidney infections
- Mood swings
- Frequent urination
- Backaches

**Braxton Hicks contractions** - You may feel these in your abdomen and groin as your uterus may start contracting to build strength for labor. Contact your health care provider if the contractions become painful or regular as this may be a sign of preterm labor.

Stay tuned for next week, when we will talk about labor, delivery and postpartum (after birth) expectations and concerns.

- Contribution By: Maya Angelou Center for Health Equity

Do you need further information or have questions or comments about this article? Please call toll-free 1-877-530-1824. Or, for more information about the Maya Angelou Center for Health Equity, please visit our website: <http://www.wfubmc.edu/minorityhealth>.

**Marriage**  
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their lives. Marriage and cohabitation present even bigger changes than single people face. Maybe the cause of weight gain is not just age, but the pressure of shifting behaviors that result in weight gain."

According to Gordon-Larsen, when people are living together - married or not - they tend to share behaviors and activity patterns. They may choose to eat meals together, possibly cooking bigger meals or eating out more often than they did when they were single, and may watch TV together instead of going to the gym or



Gordon-Larsen

playing a sport. Gordon-Larsen said that in subsequent interviews with both romantic partners, they found that couples who lived together for more than two years (especially those who were married) were most likely to display similar weight/obesity patterns and physical activity behaviors.

So what's the solution? "If this is a time of shifting behaviors, and of influencing each other, then maybe it's a good time to intervene with these young couples and get them to have a more positive effect on each other," Gordon-Larsen said. "Maybe they can exercise together or cook

healthy meals together. "People who are married or who are living together tend to share behaviors. Couples can use that phenomenon to their advantage if they're aware of what's going on."

Other weight loss studies have shown that the best way to help one person lose weight is to change behavior in the whole household, she said. If one person is at risk for obesity, then others are likely to be at risk or to become at risk.

"When people are married, or living together, they can offer each other social support for healthy behaviors and a healthy environment," Gordon-Larsen said. "They can be good influences on each other. That may be how they can avoid the extra pounds now associated with marriage."

**Pastors**  
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role in their prosecution to have a court review the matter. If the court found race was a factor, defendants would be given life in prison without the possibility of parole in lieu of the death penalty.

"We have known for half a century that the death penalty is all about race and poverty, and yet, our legislators over the decades have never offered a solution, until now," commented Stephen Dear, executive director of the Carrboro-based People of Faith Against the Death Penalty, referring to a 1962 News & Observer article that found, "execution victims (were) usually poor, Negroes."

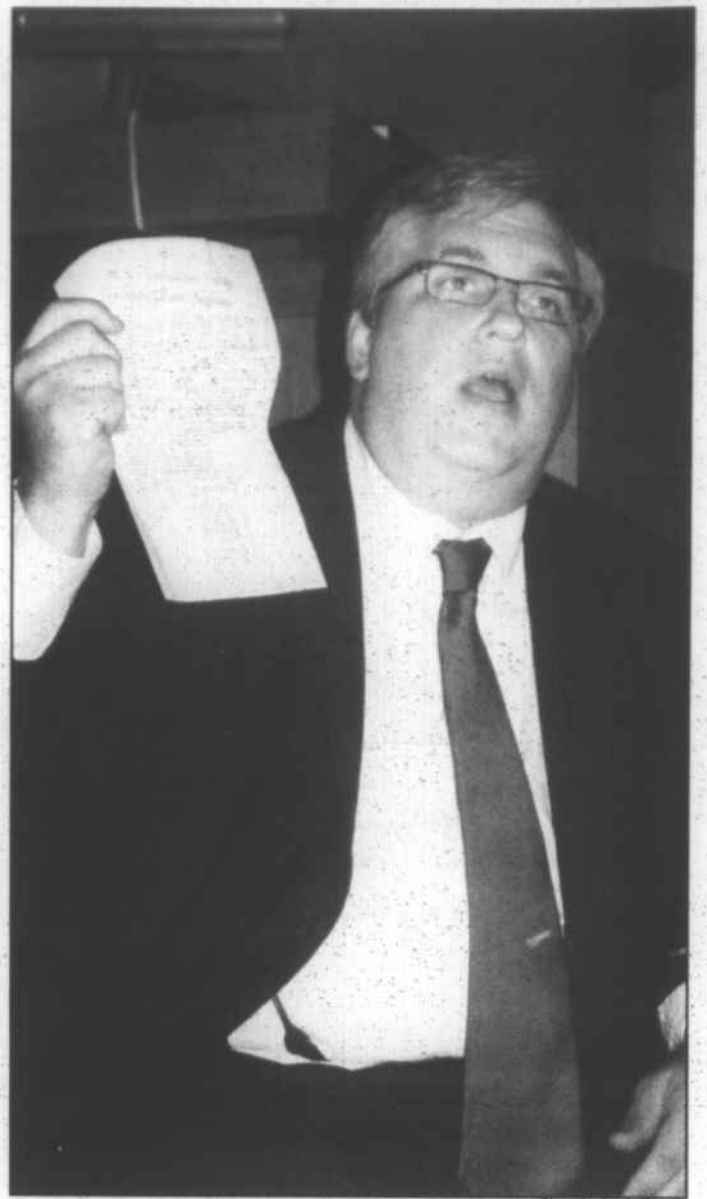
"The difference between 2009 and 1962 is that all over North Carolina pastors are speaking out." The N.C. Senate has already passed the bill, with what Dear calls "some very harsh and unwanted amendments," but State Reps. Larry Womble and Earline Parmon, who sponsored the bill, have restored it to its original form. It must now be passed by the House, and again by the Senate in its current state, to become law.

According to a letter written in support of the Racial Justice Act and signed by more than 80 clergy members in the Triad area, 61 percent of all North Carolina death row inmates are minorities.

The now infamous case of Darryl Hunt, a local African American man who was wrongfully convicted of raping and killing Debra Sykes, a white woman, has made the statistics real for many in Winston-Salem, Eversley said.

Hunt, who was freed in 2003 after nearly 20 years in prison, was one vote away from receiving the death penalty, and Dear says his was not an isolated case.

"In addition to Darryl



Stephen Dear holds up a photocopy of a 1960s News & Observer article on the death penalty.

Hunt ... three other innocent men were sentenced to death and were recently exonerated," Dear reported. "All were African Americans."

The Racial Justice Act is far from perfect, supporters say.

"The burden of proof remains on the defendant," Parrish, the pastor of Peace Haven Baptist Church, pointed out. "The accused has to put his or her resources, in effect, against the state's. That's a fairly high threshold in a system in which there are documented cases (of such discrimination)."

While the bill won't sin-

gle-handedly level the playing field in the criminal justice system, it is a step in the right direction, the panelists believe.

"I don't think this bill goes far enough," remarked Carpenter, the pastor of Green Street Church, "but what it does do is recognize the racial disparity that's been there far too long ... it allows the naming of that racial factor, and I think that's important."

For more information about the Racial Justice Act, visit [www.ncmoratorium.org](http://www.ncmoratorium.org).

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