

OP/ED

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37
Years
of
Community Journalism

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Submitted Photo
AC Stone stands behind Mark Raymond Smith (second from right) in this photo taken in the 1990s with R&B group Intro.



Remembering AC Stone

Camille Roddy
Guest Columnist

After church service this past Sunday, my pastor asked, "When was the last time you witnessed to someone about your faith?"

The question was part of a conversation about changes within our denomination, but it resonated with me as I read through the countless testimonies and condolences that were posted on Facebook and 97.1 WQMG Web site after the passing of Alvin "AC Stone" Stowe.

His loyal listeners are familiar with the baritone voice that got them ready for Sunday worship and the workday and will always remember his signature sign-off: "A Cee Ya!"

I inherited a friendship with Alvin after becoming engaged to his radio partner and ace buddy, Mark Raymond Smith. Both cut their teeth and honed their skills at 980 WAAA. WQMG's stature today is due in part to the foundation and friendship forged at WAAA between Mark and Alvin with the support of station owner Mütter Evans. The music gurus bounced programming and production ideas off one another over the years, sealing a bond of mutual admiration and respect and intuitively learning how R&B and gospel resonated with their urban audiences.

Music, no matter the type, can lift a bad mood, express emotions when words don't come easily, relieve stress, soothe anger and make one

succumb to temptations he or she might not otherwise entertain. A party just isn't a party without music, and OK, who among us has not blasted the volume when a song on the radio made us bounce in the car seat? I know I've been in a local grocery store and heard cashiers and customers singing along to songs being played on 97.1. And, of course, Sunday worship service just isn't right if the music coming from the choir stand isn't on and popping.

I think it is no small coincidence that these two friends — one born Christmas Day and the other on Valentine's Day (two holidays we associate with love) — shared a deep passion and devotion to a medium that ministers to our souls.

I got the chance to spend time with Alvin and share how his love and devotion to his faith had influenced Mark to renew his own relationship with God. This occurred shortly before Alvin's passing. Mark had taken note of how Alvin carried himself, always weathering life's ups and downs with his strong faith, and wanted to have the same inner peace he saw in his friend.

In answering the question posed by my pastor, I have to think of Alvin. He not only talked about his faith, but showed it in how he conducted himself, even on his job. Two sentences from the letter on WQMG's Web site said it best.

"He didn't push it in anyone's face, but AC's religious convictions were a very important element and strong guiding force in his life," the statement reads. "He came from a family of preachers and regularly sought opportunities to present his testimony, always doing so in the most appropriate, even unobtrusive ways."

Knowing how Mark had suffered with problems related to diabetes, Alvin began getting his own weight under control through healthier eating and exercise. The last time I talked to AC was the day before he began treatments for Leukemia and what was to be a month long hospital stay. He was in good spirits, upbeat and positive and very clear about his desire to use his voice through the medium he loved to help raise awareness about health and wellness issues in the black community. What he didn't realize was he had spent a lifetime doing this already.

The Latin word for health is *salus* — which is where we get the word *salvation*. From the testimonies on 97.1's Facebook page and web site, to conversations taking place among listeners and friends throughout the Triad, it is clear you could see the fruits of Alvin's spirit: his patience in helping interns learn the craft he enjoyed; the joy in his voice when on the air and at events; and love for his job, his co-workers, family and his listening audience.

If we are to have life more abundant, then our health, our wellness and our salvation should be to personally experience and see hope, joy and love. AC influenced everyone he encountered, both on and off the air, with these qualities. His legacy isn't just that he was a great on-air personality, and he was, but that he witnessed his faith to us all. We tuned in, became loyal fans and listeners because we saw in AC, Matthew 7:24 (NIV) — "Therefore everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock."

Camille Roddy is a resident of Winston-Salem.

Area gets new Salvation Army leaders

SPECIAL TO THE CHRONICLE

The Salvation Army Southern Territory and Divisional Headquarters has appointed Majors James and Lois Allison to lead the Winston-Salem Area Command.

The Allisons come to Winston-Salem from the Washington, D.C. area, where they served as General Secretary and Secretary of Women's Ministries respectively, for The Salvation Army's National Capital and Virginia Division for the past six years.

This is not the first time the Allisons have served the Winston-Salem community. The couple were Corps Officers in Winston-Salem in 1978, shortly after their commissioning as Salvation Army officers. After serving in various communities as Corps Officers, Majors Allison were appointed in 1990 to Divisional Headquarters staff and have served in the Florida; Alabama, Louisiana and Mississippi; North and South Carolina; and National Capital and Virginia Divisions.

Major James Allison was born in Gaffney, S.C. Shortly after graduating from high school, he entered The Salvation Army's College for Officers Training in Atlanta. While attending the college he met his wife, Lois, and they were commissioned as Salvation Army officers.

Major Lois Allison was born in Moundsville, West Virginia. She came to The Salvation Army when her family's house caught on fire and they lost everything. By nightfall, they had clothes, food and shelter from The Salvation Army.

"We are excited to be back in Winston-Salem and look forward to being a part of this very caring community," said Major James Allison.

The Allisons will oversee the operations of the Winston-Salem Area Command, which includes Forsyth, Davie, Stokes and Yadkin Counties. The Winston-Salem Area Command offers many programs including the only emergency shelter for homeless families and single women in Forsyth County, two Boys and Girls Clubs, three corps community centers and a family thrift store.

The Salvation Army's Washington Park Corps community center is also getting new leaders. Lieutenants Jonathan and Dawn Whitaker will be the new Corps Officers and pastors at the center, which is located at 1411 South Broad Street. They will work under the direction of Majors Allison.

The Salvation Army Winston-Salem Area Command's previous officers, Majors Kent and Melody Davis, have been appointed to oversee The Salvation Army's work in Greenville, S.C.



Submitted Photo
James and Lois Allison

Hunts

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was just unbelievable," said Robin Hunt, a UNC alumna. "I was just very very excited about that opportunity."

The evening was truly unforgettable, the Hunts say, especially the time they spent with the Obamas.

"They were so down to earth and warm," said Robin. "When we walked in, we didn't even shake hands — we hugged."

Elvita Hunt, a retired Winston-Salem State University employee and the first lady of New Birth Worship Center in East Bend, said coming face-to-face with the president, whom she supports strongly, was a dream come true for her.

"I thought I was going to Glory ahead of time because of the respect that I do have for him," she declared. "This was just an unexpected happy thing."

The Hunts chatted with the Obamas about Robin's work in the healthcare field and her socially-conscious jewelry line, Hadley Moore. Elvita Hunt said she told the president how proud she is of his accomplishments.

"I told him that on my family calendar I placed on there on the day he went into office, 'This is the day our forefathers' prayers were answered,'" related the grandmother of five. "That's what I said to him, the first thing when I met him."

Robin was also pleased by how "genuine" the Obamas are.

"It was absolutely amazing to actually be there to meet them in person, but also to be received so warmly as well," remarked the 31 year-old. "...None of it is a show, as far as their affection towards each other and their desire to make an impact."

The Hunts and the Obamas took a photo with Parker and Wintour to preserve the moment for posterity.

Exercise

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done at different time points in life, and the risk of developing breast cancer.

The study included 1,504 women with breast cancer (233 noninvasive and 1,271 invasive) and 1,555 women without breast cancer who were 20 to 98 years old and were part of the Long Island Breast Cancer Study Project, an investigation of possible environmental causes of breast cancer.

Women who exercised either during their reproductive or postmenopausal years had a reduced risk of developing breast cancer. Women who exercised 10 to 19 hours per week experienced the greatest benefit with an approximate 30 percent reduced risk. Risk reductions were observed at all levels of intensity, and exercise seemed to reduce the risk of hormone receptor positive breast cancers, the most commonly diagnosed tumor type among American women.

"The observation of a reduced risk of breast cancer

and across the country, so I think people were very proud."

She added that the experience has made her and even bigger President Obama supporter than before. She said she is going to do all she can to help make his 2012 bid a success.

"It has reenergized me to not only support the president, but also to think of different ways that I can help educate people about the issues," she said. "I definitely feel like it's my responsibility to make it extend beyond one night and contribute something to make a bigger impact."

For more information about the Obama campaign or how to get involved, visit www.barackobama.com. Find Hadley Moore products at www.hadleymoore.com.



Photo by Layla Farmer
City native Elvita Hunt holds an official photo from her memorable trip to NYC.

Pass the Voter Empowerment Act

Marc Morial
Guest Columnist

Thanks to rising citizen outrage and efforts like the National Urban League's "Occupy the Vote" campaign, the voter suppression movement is facing mounting resistance. As we reported several weeks ago, voter suppression laws in Florida designed to purge voter rolls and make it more difficult to register voters have now been challenged by the Justice Department. There is also a new bill in the U.S. House of Representatives that takes direct aim at some of the most egregious voter suppression tactics being employed or considered in dozens of states throughout the nation.

These tactics include elimination of Election Day and same-day registration, reductions in early voting periods and absentee voting opportunities, and new restrictions on voter registration drives. These measures could prevent millions of eligible voters from exercising their constitutional right to vote and they disproportionately affect our service members, people with disabili-

ties, minorities, young people, seniors and low income Americans.

As we approach the 2012 presidential election, we should be encouraging more, not less, voting by the American people. In the 2008 presidential election, about 3 million Americans were turned away from the polls due to voter registration problems. And an estimated 51 million Americans eligible to vote are not registered. Still, there are those who are determined to keep even more people from voting. This is a travesty; it's un-American and it dishonors the sacrifice of generations of voting rights foot soldiers who fought and died to guarantee every citizen the right to vote.

Sponsored by Representatives John Lewis (Ga.), John Conyers (Mich.), Steny Hoyer (Md.), James Clyburn (S.C.), and Robert Brady (Penn.), the Voter Empowerment Act (H.R. 5799), would fight back by ensuring equal access to the ballot box, protecting the integrity of voting systems and mandating accountability for fair elections. Among its provisions, the bill calls for things like modernizing the voter registration system by allowing for things like online registration, requiring universities that receive federal funds to encour-

age students to register and setting standards for operating voting machines.

The Voter Empowerment Act is the most serious attempt to date by Congress to protect voters from the recent onslaught of restrictive voting measures that make it harder for millions of eligible voters to register or vote. In describing the bill in a recent op-ed in the Hill newspaper, Congressmen Conyers and Brady write, "The bill declares that a voter shall not be denied the right to vote unless the challenge is corroborated by independent evidence, and it also prohibits persons other than election officials from challenging a voter's eligibility based on voter caging and other questionable challenges."

John Lewis, a veteran of the Civil Rights Movement who was beaten during the 1965 "Bloody Sunday" voting rights march in Selma, Ala., added, "The ability to vote should be easy, accessible and simple ... We should be moving toward a more inclusive democracy, not one that locks people out."

We agree. Occupy the Vote. Pass the Voter Empowerment Act now.

Marc H. Morial, former mayor of New Orleans, is president and CEO of the National Urban League.

Hampton

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Officer III. He was also the program manager for Information Security at Ft. Monroe, retiring after 18 years. These days, Scott spends his time in the garden, in his wood shop and being an advocate for proton therapy.

"I tell as many people I can about this treatment because proton therapy gave me a new lease on life," said Scott, who celebrated his 33rd wedding anniversary just days after completing his treatment.

HUPTI also treats brain, pediatric, breast, lung, head and neck, GI and other cancers in

four treatment rooms.

"This is an exciting time for us, as we are commissioning the fifth room which, should be ready by late summer," said Cynthia Keppel, HUPTI's scientific and technical director.

HUPTI's staff has over 100 years of combined clinical proton therapy experience. Despite the economy, the \$225 million project was brought to fruition. President William R. Harvey has deemed HU's efforts as easing human misery and saving lives.



Keppel