

Celebrating *Women's History Month*: trailblazers and history makers.

# Paulette Moore celebrates 25 years at The Chronicle

BY JUDIE HOLCOMB-PACK  
THE CHRONICLE



Paulette Moore has been the welcoming face of the Chronicle for over 25 years.

Photo by Judie Holcomb-Pack

The newspaper industry has seen dramatic changes over the past 25 years and Paulette Moore, a long-time Chronicle employee, has first-hand experience in how it has changed. But one thing that hasn't changed – how she greets everyone who walks in the front door with a warm smile and friendly “hello.” And like the television show, “Cheers,” where “everybody knows your name,” once Mrs. Moore meets you, she treats you like family. Few people walk in the door that she doesn't greet by name, often with a hug. She is kidded that she knows everyone in town.

Mrs. Moore started her career with the Chronicle in 1993 when the office was located on Liberty Street. At that time it had a pressroom in the basement where the paper was printed each week. She worked Wednesday nights inserting preprints into the paper and putting mailing labels on the paper to get it ready to go to the post office. In today's automated industry, it is hard to imagine that this was once done manually, one paper at a time.

“Then,” she relates, “Mr. Pitt (Ernie Pitt, the Chronicle's founder and first publisher) found out that I could type.” He offered her a position helping in the newsroom, typing up press releases and community news that was handwritten and delivered to the front desk. Again, imagine a time before computers and email! She became Mr. Pitt's secretary, assisting the newsroom and the front office staff. During those years, a large

staff was needed – reporters, editors, circulation manager and paperboys, advertising sales people, graphic designers, pressmen – all working to put out the weekly paper.

Over 25 years later, Mrs. Moore has become the face of The Chronicle. As administrative assistant, she greets visitors, answers the phone, manages subscriptions, and many other duties in the front office. She has been with the paper the longest of any employee. She laughed as she remembered how she had to “pound the keys on the manual typewriter” before electric typewriters came into being. Now she uses a computer, email and the Internet in her job.

Mrs. Moore is often asked if she did radio or TV or if her speaking voice was an answering machine. Those questions speak to how her friendly and professional demeanor comes across to those on the other

end of the phone.

After the death of her first husband, Mrs. Moore married Reggie Moore, who worked in the pressroom for the Winston-Salem Journal and is now retired. She related that they went from elementary school to high school together, but it was when his older brother stopped by the Chronicle one day and she asked how Reggie was doing that they reconnected. They have been happily married since 2007. Mrs. Moore has two daughters and is a proud grandmother to a grandson and granddaughter. She attends Mt. Olive Baptist Church where her grandmother was a member. She sings in the Mass, Gospel and Young Adult choirs, is a greeter (of course!), is in the Senior Dance Ministry, and a pastor's aide. In her spare time, she likes to cook, take walks and enjoy music.

Mrs. Moore recently

reminded about past times at The Chronicle, how large a staff it used to have, and how technology has changed the way the newspaper is now produced. She remembers the events the Chronicle hosted, such as Family Day at Rupert Bell Park, where everyone enjoyed the food and music and just being together as one big neighborhood family.

When she thinks about the future of The Chronicle, she said she hopes it will continue to grow, both in size and in subscriptions. She would like to see more young people read the paper. She is glad to have the opportunity to do work that she loves with people she enjoys working with, but she added, “It's time for the

younger ones to lead the way.”

“Mrs. Paulette continues to honorably serve our community through her work at the Chronicle,” said James Taylor, publisher of The Chronicle. “She is certainly a living legend that has made a positive impact on the lives of many. I count it a privilege to be able to glean from her wisdom of the industry and her knowledge of our culture.”

Mrs. Moore has learned and grown over her 25 years at The Chronicle. But what she does best is what she has always done: make every person, whether staff or visitor, feel important. Her friendly spirit, bright smile and positive attitude set the mood at The Chronicle every day.

# Donna Montgomery: Defying the odds and making history

BY TEVIN STINSON  
THE CHRONICLE

In celebration of Women's History Month, throughout the month of March The Chronicle will be highlighting women in our community who are blazing trails and making history every day. This week we highlight promoter and event planner Donna Montgomery.

Since the late 90s, Montgomery has been known for booking some of the best artists and performers right here in the Triad. After a few years under her belt as a promoter here in the Triad area, in 2003 Montgomery was faced with her biggest challenge yet, booking Tyler Perry at the Lawrence Joel Veteran's Memorial Coliseum. Montgomery said when she first started planning the event, she had a lot of people tell her that it couldn't be done.

At the time Perry's stage play, “Madea's Class Reunion,” was very popular across the country. The production made stops in a lot of big name cities including Atlanta, Charlotte and several others in the south. Because the play was so popular, Montgomery said naysayers who doubted her said she would never even be able to contact Perry.

And the doubts from skeptics didn't stop there. When she reached out to the Lawrence Joel Veterans Memorial Coliseum, she was told she wouldn't be able to meet the \$5,000 deposit,



Submitted photo

## Donna Montgomery

meet the requirements for the advertising campaign, or fill the venue, which holds about 5,000.

“The people in place started asking questions like, who is Tyler Perry? Then they said I would be doing good if I sell 1,000 tickets and they asked me if I realized that they never had an African-American show to sell that many tickets,” said Montgomery. “History has shown that African-American shows typically do better in Greensboro; they did not expect for it to sell in Winston-Salem at all.

“I'm the type of person that believes you can't tell me what I can and cannot do.”

On the day of the

event, Montgomery proved the naysayers wrong when she became the first African-American woman promoter to book and sell out the LJVM Coliseum two consecutive nights. Montgomery said people traveled from across the state and from South Carolina to see the on-stage production.

In 2004 Montgomery and her team started the North Carolina Battle of the Bands. Montgomery said the idea came after she talked to a parent who said their child was interested in joining the band, but couldn't afford to buy the instrument.

“Any time a child is expressing that they want

See History on A4

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