

Charlottean Jerry Springs Relates African Experience

By James Cuthbertson
Post Staff Writer

It has been almost a year now since Jerry Springs has been back from the continent of Africa and a lot of things have happened to him since last summer when he returned.

Marriage and a job with the Union County Department of Social Services have come his way in that short span.

Last weekend, Springs sat in the quiet of his Countryside Drive Apartment with his wife Brenda; surrounded by original African statues, kitchen utensils, hatchets, raffia wall mats, clothes baskets, and other artifacts; and reflected

upon his year in Africa, ending the conversation on that topic with a smile, indicating that he would like to return to Africa soon.

"This time I would like to go to Ghana for a while and study history," reflected the 25-year-old graduate of the University of North Carolina at Charlotte.

The last time the place was Zaire and Jerry was a teacher. During his year-long stay he shed many stereotypes. "I know now," he said, "that all Africans are not bushmen, all do not live in small villages, and that most seem to have a great love for their black American brother because they know we are linked together

historically.

Springs and his wife made many friends during their stay in the Kasai Occidental province capital of Kananga, and almost every day an aergamme arrives telling the Springs about what has happened since their departure.

The son of Mr. and Mrs. Zachariah Springs of 2819 Capital Dr. served as a teacher at a missionary school sponsored by the Zairian Church of Christ and the U.S. Presbyterian Church General Executive Board.

He is presently working on his masters degree in administration at the University of North Carolina at Charlotte.

Springs has gained the 26 pounds that he lost during his stay in hot humid Zaire. He is now back to a stocky 180.

Why did he go to Africa? "I went to Africa because I wanted to offer assistance to the people and to see the homeland of my ancestry," he said.

When he speaks of his stay, he smiles, explaining that "Friendship came very easily for me in Zaire. I met and enjoyed a lot of people. In fact, in some aspects I didn't want to leave."

Before he left the states he underwent a six-week training program at Montreat-Anderson College to prepare him for

certain expectations of the country of Zaire.

I remember it now, he reminisced. "These included a course in basic French and history and geography lessons of the country."

In the city of Kinshasa Kananga, a westernized city full of skyscrapers and about two million people, Springs taught math, health, physical education and science to four classes daily.

When he wasn't teaching or resting in his two and a half room apartment, he was busy exploring. Did he enjoy exploring? Springs flashed a big wide grin and said "four-jours" which is French for

"always"

His eyes gleamed with excitement as he remembered the diamond mines at Mbuji Mayi and the fact that he couldn't keep a sample to bestow upon his wife in their December 29 ceremony in Laurinburg, N. C.

Everything did not come up roses, however. "I did have some frustrations," he said. "Most of the young children (ages 10 to 15) 90 percent of the women and most of the older men and middle-aged men spoke Tshiluba the mother language of the area and one which Springs struggled with until his departure. During his trip home, he

made stops in Lagos, Nigeria; Accra, Ghana; The Ivory Coast and Paris, France. But it is Ghana which captured his heart.

"One of the highlights of my trip was touring the old fort and castles along the beautiful white beaches of Ghana," Springs said.

"We saw a tremendous amount of heritage including dungeons where slaves were held before shipment to America," he said.

And to authenticate and discover this heritage is why Springs' hand still reaches across the wide and his heart still reaches across the wide blue waters of the Atlantic



Jerry Springs
World traveler
Ocean to clutch the motherland of Africa, his motherland of Africa

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Black Unemployment Rate Hits Record High 14.2 Percent

Food Stamp Allotments To Change

Washington, -- The U. S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) announced today that food stamp allotments and maximum income eligibility standards will be increased on July 1 by approximately five percent. For example, the allotment for a four-person household will be increased from \$154 to \$162 a month, and the maximum income eligibility level from \$513 to \$540 per month.

The Food Stamp Act, as amended by the Agriculture and Consumer Protection Act of 1973 (Public Law 93-86), directs that coupon allotments be adjusted semi-annually to reflect changes in food prices as published by the Bureau of Labor Statistics Maximum income eligibility standards are based on allotments and are therefore adjusted at the same time.

Allotment adjustments are based on the cost of USDA's Economy Food Plan as it is computed from Bureau of Labor Statistics food prices. Adjustments are made each July based on the cost of the Economy Food Plan in the preceding February, and in January based on the cost of that plan in the preceding August.

The cost of the Economy Food Plan for Feb. 1975 was \$162 for a family of four with school children. Accordingly, USDA will raise the value of the coupon allotment for a four-person household from \$154 to \$162 and make appropriate Food Stamp on page 4



CHARLOTTE DISTRICT PARTICIPANTS in the 41st observance of National Insurance Week. Photo by Peeler.

N. C. Mutual Kicks-Off Insurance Week Celebration

The Charlotte District Office of N. C. Mutual Life Insurance Company, 103 Beatties Ford Road was the setting last week for The Charlotte District's kick off meeting celebrating the 41st National Insurance Week May 12-17.

For 41 consecutive years, beginning May 24, 1935, the National Insurance Association has conducted National Insurance Week a full pledge effort to educate the public to the benefits, uses and value of

life insurance as a means of achieving economic security.

L. B. Frasier Vice President Agency Director of N. C. Mutual Life Insurance Company and Chairman of National Insurance Week was the Charlotte District guest speaker. In Mr. Frasier's forceful message he encouraged all employees of N. C. Mutual to decide early in life their individual goals, work hard to achieve them and enjoy life in the process.

Mr. Frasier has been with N. C. Mutual for 42 years and will retire next February. The meeting was closed with a lunch at Royal Villa Motel on I-85.

Although the 41st National Insurance Week is set for May 12-17, The Charlotte District and N. C. Mutual Life Insurance Company have pledged to double their efforts as they strive to help the public achieve economic security through life insurance.

April Report Lists 8.2

Million Jobless Blacks

The unemployment rate for blacks rose to 14.6 percent in April, the U. S. Labor Department's Bureau of Labor Statistics has reported. The unemployment rate for blacks was 14.2 percent in March.

The unemployment rate for whites in April was reported at 8.1 percent.

National unemployment continued to increase in April, but total employment rose

slightly. The unemployment rate moved up to 8.9 percent from 8.7 percent in March. This was the highest rate since 1941 and nearly double the rate of October 1973, the prerecession low.

Total employment (as measured by the monthly survey of households) rose by 240,000 in April to 84.1 million. This represented the first employment gain in 7 months; between last September and March, employment had receded by 2.6 million. With employment and unemployment both rising, the labor force posted a strong advance for the second month in a row, and the rate of labor force participation actually exceeded the year-earlier figure.

Total nonagricultural payroll employment (as measured by the monthly survey of establishments) held steady in April at 76.3 million, as a continued drop in manufacturing jobs was countered by small gains in the services sector. Since last October's peak level, payroll jobs have diminished by 2.6 million, with all but 200,000 of the reduction occurring in the goods-producing industries.

Unemployment rose by 200,000 in April to 8.2 million, seasonally adjusted, following an increase of 500,000 in the previous month. Since August 1974, when the extraordinarily large increases in unemployment began, the jobless count has risen by 3.3 million persons. As has been the case throughout this recession, the April increase in unemployment stemmed primarily from job loss. Since August, the number of job losers has risen by 2.7 million, accounting for more than four-fifths of the total increase. Job loss now accounts for 57 percent of total joblessness, compared with only 41 percent last August.

Most of the April increase in unemployment occurred among adult men. Their jobless rate was 7.0 percent, up from 6.8 percent in March and at its highest level since July 1958. This rise was also reflected in unemployment rate increases for married men and household heads to 5.6 percent and 6.0 percent, respectively. Both the level and rate of unemployment for each of these three worker groups have doubled over the past year.

The unemployment rate for adult women (8.5 percent) and teenagers (20.4 percent) were about unchanged in April, but remained at or near record high levels.

Afro Cultural

Group Announces

New Project

The Charlotte-Afro American Cultural and Service Center, the group who brought the successful Afro-American Cultural Festival to the Queen City last summer has announced a new project at a meeting held Tuesday night downtown at the Public Library.

Mombasa, Kenya, a city in East Africa has been named as a new sister city for Charlotte. The hands across the water concept however is not new. Charlotte has been engaged in exchanges with Arequipa, Peru our South American sister city for years.

However, it was the belief said officials of the ACSC that it was time for the black community of the city to come forth and make some exchanges with an African "sister city."

A sizeable crowd consisting of regular members of the ACSC and the general public were on hand to be introduced and become acquainted with the overall purpose of the ACSC.

Who are J. F. Williams, Marie G. Davis, and Eugene Potts? These names and others of historical significance were discussed at the meeting of the ACSC whose function is to increase black awareness and talents to the Charlotte community.

"There's a great deal of Black History about Charlotte stored away in attics and trunks-history that belongs to blacks and that we need to be aware of," said Bertha Maxwell a member of the group organized by Mrs. Maxwell and Mrs. Mary Harper as an extension of the Black Studies Program at the University of North Carolina at Charlotte designed to help the Charlotte community and to transcend the gap between theory and practice.



BEVERLY PARKER
...North Mecklenburg senior

Beverly Parker Is Our Beauty

"After graduating I plan to attend Clark College in Atlanta. Please don't ask why I chose Clark it's just a school I want to go to," stated our beauty for this week, Miss Beverly Parker.

"I have chosen the field of Business Education. I don't have any special reasoning for considering this field. I feel that it is open, which leaves a good opportunity for me. I would like to teach or become an executive secretary."

When Beverly speaks of graduation she has reference to her upcoming high school graduation from North Mecklenburg. As Beverly puts it "I can't wait until June."

At North our beauty is a member of the Spanish Club, Junior Achievement Club,

NAACP Vice-President and a member of the Annual Staff.

She was recently presented in the "Miss Debutante Pageant." The affair was sponsored by the graduate chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority. Beverly was sponsored by Mrs. Dorothy Bradley.

As her hobbies Miss Parker enjoys sewing, drawing, and singing. She sings regularly in the Cannon's Temple Church of God Choir. Her favorite singer is the group "Tavares". Her favorite subjects to draw are animals.

Beverly is the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Bennie Parker. They live at 1808 Griers Grove Road. The Parker family retains their membership at St. Judes Holiness Church in Wilson, N. C. "Although we haven't moved our membership, we still attend various churches in the Charlotte area," smiled Beverly.

Beverly was recently a contestant for the "Miss YPHA" contest. She came in fifth place. The event was sponsored by the holiness churches in the area. Rev. M. R. Roundtree is the pastor of St. Judes Holiness Church.

Miss Parker is 5 feet 3 inches tall and weighs 120 pounds. Her favorite actor is Clifford Davis. "I think he's cute and also a very good actor," Beverly stated, somewhat shyly.

She is born under the sign of Gemini and describes them as being sometimes very moody, having a split personality.

County Commissioners Invite Public To Attend May 19 Meeting

The Mecklenburg Board of County Commissioners will hold a public hearing at 10 A.M. Monday, May 19, for discussion of the County's tentative budget for 1975-76. The public is invited to attend the hearing and to speak on concerns and requests that are related to the budget.

County Manager Glenn C. Blaisdell presented a tentative budget of \$112,143,945 to the Commissioners May 5. He said this budget would require a County tax rate of 79c provided reductions in local funds of \$1,539,347 could be made. Blaisdell said \$3,250,000 had already been cut from County

departmental requests. Commissioners will spend the next several weeks studying the tentative budget, line by line, to determine where the additional reductions can be made.

Blaisdell said that no new programs (except \$300,000 for emergency medical services), no new facilities, no purchase of open land, and no across-the-board increases for County employees are recommended in the tentative budget.

Improvements or betterments in the County's portion of the budget, with minor exception, are for Federal and

State programs over which the County has no control or for programs which were started in 1974-75 and are just now becoming operational. The County's entire allocation of Federal Revenue Sharing in the amount of \$2,443,000 has been budgeted for operations.

The Charlotte-Mecklenburg School Board is requesting a \$2,960,601 increase in local funds for operations. The Social Services Department is requesting a \$1,999,431 increase in local funds to cover the rising costs of Aid to Families with Dependent Children, Medicaid, Food Stamps and the Medically Indigent.



Rowe "Jack" Motley
County Commissioner

TURTLE-TALK



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