

Willies Find Solution To Age-Old Complaint

By Rachel Swann
Post Staff Writer
In 1978 Earl and Margaret Willie retired from work but definitely not from life.

In fact, the Kannapolis couple seem to have found a solution to the age-old complaint that there are just not enough hours in the day. Both of them cram every possible kind of activity—church, civic, political, professional, social and even recreational—into each day.

The den in their Center-view home tells the story of their busy lives better than any testimony. The walls are lined with plaques, awards and certificates for numerous accomplishments and contributions. Shelves and cases are choked with the hand-made products of their multitude of hobbies. Scrapbook after scrapbook chronicles each one of their many vacation trips.

But if you asked the Willies if they do too much, they respond almost in unison, "Oh, no, we're doing the things we like to do."

That's why, they say, they decided to retire from teaching. Mrs. Willie worked as a reading teacher in almost every school in Kannapolis before turning in her primer. She won't reveal how many years she worked. "That's not important, is it," she joked.

Mr. Willie doesn't mind saying, and proudly, he put in 38 years with the Concord City Schools as an industrial arts teacher.

But they decided together, as they do most things, to retire while they felt they were still able to do all the things they liked and wanted.

Luckily for all the organizations in which they were members that didn't mean retiring from them, too. On the contrary, it meant having more time to devote to the causes to which they were most committed. Four years after their retirement, that list of organizations is still long and growing.

For Mrs. Willie the list includes several church-affiliated programs. Both the Willies are members of Marable Memorial AME Zion Church and she is currently a candidate for chairman of the Life Members Council of the Woman's Home and Overseas Missionary Society.

In addition, she's on the board of directors of the Kannapolis-Landis-Concord (Kan-La-Con) Community Concert Association and the Piedmont Residential Center for Mentally Retarded Children. She also serves on the executive board of the interdenominational Christian Women's Club, as secretary of the Senior Citizens Advisory Council, and is a member of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, the League of Women Voters and the Retired Teachers Association.

Also at the top of Mr. Willie's list are his church



EARL AND MARGARET WILLIE
...38 years together

affiliations. He is chairman of the boards of trustees and finance for his church as well as president of the Lay Council of Salisbury District for the AME Zion Church. Civic-wise, he is on the board of directors of the Cabarrus Arts Council and the Cabarrus County American Cancer Society, president of Concord-Cabarrus Retired School Personnel, past vice-president of the Cabarrus County Board of Health, past president of Kan-La-Con Community Concert Association and a life member of Omega Psi Phi Fraternity.

For his community involvement, Mr. Willie won the 1982 Senior Citizens volunteer award for Cabarrus County.

Worked into their days along with the mandatory round of meetings, are the Willies' two other "loves," traveling and hobbies.

They spent "almost all of October," Mr. Willie estimates, in Hawaii, one of their favorite places to vacation, and earlier in the year they visited Southeast Asia. They've also found time to travel through Europe, the Caribbean—another favorite for them—and Africa, perhaps their most memorable trip.

"We always liked to travel," Mr. Willie said, "but when we worked we always had to do it during the Christmas holidays. There are lots of things happening around the world at other times, though. Now we can go see and do them."

The Willies say they'll definitely make time to go back to Africa. "I loved Africa and its people," Mrs. Willie reminisced, "All of the people looked like they belonged to me, like they were kin, and they were all so gracious and kind."

Although he enjoys having the time to travel now, Mr. Willie is clear about his favorite place. "There's no place like home," he beamed.

That's probably because the Willies have so many hobbies there.

The results of all their interests are displayed everywhere in their home. There's Mr. Willie's wood-working. He's made all kinds of furniture for their home, not to mention having built the house, too. And Mrs. Willie's needle-art. She's adept at forms ranging from the unusual, tapestry-like Swedish weaving to the more commonly-recognized needle-point and crochet.

There's also Mr. Willie's fishing. Blankets from the last overnight trip lay in the kitchen waiting to be put back in service. And Mrs. Willie's baskets. She picked up weaving them in a half-day class. And his photography. And her sculptured dolls, beaded flowers and folk art painting.

Most importantly, there are the times they now have to share together. After 41 years of marriage, Mrs. Willie said easily, "We don't do much that's not together. He's my husband, but he's my friend and we have a real good time together."

Mr. Willie agrees that may be the secret to finding those additional hours in the day. Doing things you like and maintaining a daily schedule, he added, also makes the difference.

"I believe you ought to wear out and not rust out," he smiled. "I know I have

something I want to do every morning when I get up. You won't last long if you don't keep going."

Staying busy has a hidden advantage, he revealed. "It keeps your mind off your aches and pains." He glanced at Mrs. Willie and added mischievously and lovingly, "My wife thinks she doesn't have any aches or pains, but that's because she's so busy, she doesn't think about them."

Red Cross Home Nursing Course Planned

The Greater Carolinas Chapter of the American Red Cross will offer a course entitled, "Home Nursing," January 10, 12, 17, 19, 24, and 26 from 9 a.m. to noon.

Home Nursing is designed to help people learn how to promote and maintain good health, prevent illness, and perform simple nursing skills in the home.



During the Christmas holidays, Grier Heights Lodge No. 752, Prince Hall Affiliated, Free and Accepted Masons, made efforts to spread the Christmas spirit and love. The Lodge, under the

leadership of Worshipful Master Eugene Barringer, distributed food baskets to needy families in the Charlotte community.

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