



Black and white photography does not do justice to the pink and fuchsia. Marie does arrangements in all styles, shapes, and sizes.

Marie Stowe Makes Others Happy Through Her Floral Arrangements

By Audrey C. Lodato
Post Staff Writer

As a gentle soul who loves to make people happy, Marie Stowe has found her niche in arranging flowers.

"Most people are affected by flowers," she notes. "They can be so down, but if they see flowers, there's a smile on their face." Borrowing the words to a song, she adds, "They light up your life."

Always a lover of flowers herself, Marie did not realize she had the talent to do arrangements until about a year ago when a friend asked her to arrange the flowers for the renewing of her wedding vows. Marie took on the challenge and was pleasantly surprised when "they turned out so pretty."

Since then, there's been no stopping her.

Without any formal training, she has been able to fashion floral creations to bring a smile to anyone's face. In the process, she says, her "inner self" is being expressed and that "feels good."

Marie starts with an idea of how she wants an arrangement to look, and just works with it until it does. Most arrangements she can do in an hour or two.

The transformation from a collection of beautiful individual flowers to a unified work of art with a shape and a loveliness of its own is a thrill to this blooming artist. "It's a beauty what you can do with a few flowers and a bowl," she laughs.

A lock-box clerk for Wachovia by

day, Marie turns into a creator of floral beauty by night. Family members, husband Lee and 10-year-old son Gerrard, are understanding. "I cook ahead and freeze so when I have arranging to do, it's easy to prepare meals," she says.

When Marie does wedding arrangements, Lee helps his wife set up the flowers at the church. Gerrard supports his mom with comments like, "You do such beautiful work!"

She has thought about renting a booth or table at fairs and craft shows, but to date her efforts have gone into gifts for family and friends and arrangements that have been ordered. Friends and acquaintances have been her primary source of customers, "but word is starting to get out," states Marie. "I'd like it to open up like a daisy."

Daisies are a special flower to this energetic lady. In fact, if she were a flower, she'd be a daisy. Why? "They come in so many colors and sizes," she explains. "They're so pretty and they live so long!"

Other favorite flowers are roses and carnations. "I love roses, but you can pay \$5 for a rose and in two days it's gone," she laments. "Carnations are beautiful to work with. Their shapes blend so well."

Marie recently did the arrangements for a rainbow wedding using carnations, which can be tinted to any color. The bridesmaids' flowers matched each of their gowns, and the bride's bouquet included each of the bridesmaids' colors. "It was so pretty," she recalls.

Talking with Marie is almost like talking with flowers. That may sound strange, but this woman seems to radiate whatever it is about flowers that make people feel good.

And she's the kind of person who loves to put a smile on someone's face, "with flowers or without."

If you'd like to talk to Marie about floral arrangements, you can usually reach her at 598-7433 after 4 p.m. She lives at 3345 Autumn Ridge Drive.

UNCF Chairpersons Selected

Charles L. Farrar, manager in the long range planning department for Southern Bell Telecommunications, Inc., and Henry H. Doss, senior vice president of Phoenix Communications, have been selected as general chairpersons for the 1985 Johnson C. Smith-United Negro College Fund campaign.

Farrar received his B.S. degree in business administration from Virginia State University. He joined Southern Bell in 1972. Farrar and his wife, Shirley, have two children.

Doss received his B.A. degree in English from UNCC. Prior to forming Phoenix Communications, he was director of corporate and foundation relations at Davidson Col-

lege.

According to Getchel Caldwell, assistant vice president for development and JCSU-UNCF campaign coordinator, "We are delighted to have both Charles and Henry chairing our campaign this year. Both persons bring to the campaign expertise in the area of volunteer management and charity fund raising."

As in the past, JCSU has the responsibility for all solicitation efforts in both Gaston and Mecklenburg Counties. The 1985 goal is \$100,000 and the major solicitation period is July through December, 1985.

Agencies To Address Literacy

Ralph P. Davidson, Chairman of the Board of Time Inc., will be the featured speaker at a kickoff luncheon to announce "Time to Read," a pilot literacy project exploring the use of volunteers and magazines to teach reading improvement. The luncheon will be held at the Marriott City Center at noon on October 11.

Mr. Davidson will speak to leaders of the educational and business community urging joint efforts from the private and public sector in addressing the need for basic reading improvement. "Virtually all businesses today are adversely affected by the large numbers in their work force with weak or non-existent basic skills," said Davidson. "Business must give an even higher priority to this problem among their many pressing corporate social responsibilities. There is a vital interdependency between business and the community; neither can prosper without the other."

The year-long program was designed by Time Inc. to improve adult reading abilities. The "Time to Read" program uses Time publications such as Time magazine, People, and Sports Illustrated, as well as cable television, to encourage reading improvement for adults. A group of 50 city employees from the sanitation and road maintenance departments will improve their reading skills as part of this effort sponsored locally by Cablevision of Charlotte, Central Piedmont Community College and the City of Charlotte.

Those who sign up for "Time to Read" receive free subscriptions to Time magazine and one other Time publication. The publications are used as reading material for the lessons. Cablevision employees have been trained as volunteer tutors by

Time Inc. staff, and a weekly reading program will be broadcast by Cablevision and cablecast directly into the home over cable channel 3. To ensure that the program is available to everyone, each student will receive free basic cable service for the duration of the program. Additionally, reading excerpts from Time magazine will be broadcast over CPCC's radio reading service.

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