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"Charming" CHARMIE GASTON

Attractive Charmie Gaston Begins New Job With Burlington Coat Factory

By Jalyse Strong Post Staff Writer

Attractive Charmie Gaston is this week's beauty. A native of Mt. Holly, NC, she's 20-years-old and has recently begun a new job with Burlington Coat Factory Warehouse Store.

But there's a lot more to Charmie than meets the eye. She's also married, the mother of two small children, with aspirations of becoming a beautician.

After getting more settled into her position at the store, Charmie plans to go to cosmetology school to re-educate herself in the craft of hair-styling, which she enjoyed studying in high school. Though she's not presently in school, Charmie does practice the art of hairdressing by perming and styling her friends' and relatives' hair.

"I've always enjoyed fixing hair," she relates. And as soon as the time is right, assures Charmie, "I'm going to get my license."

Yet right now, Charmie has her hands full with her two children, LaKeitha, three, and LaQuae, 15 months. The two tykes keep her quite busy and though Charmie notes that they are "pretty sweet and well-mannered" children. "Sometimes," says the young mother, "I have to try to keep from pulling my hair out."

Married for two years to Keith, Charmie says she also spends a lot of time taking care of her marriage. "It can be a struggle," she confesses and from experience she believes, idealistically, people should be older before they get hitched. "You have to give up a lot," Charmie notes. The

foundation of a happy marriage should be equality, says this young lady. "Things should be 50-50," explains Charmie. "Not just for self."

For relaxation, the busy wife and mother says she likes to unwind by going out to clubs once in a while. The area club she enjoys most is Mr. Pee's on Freedom Dr. "It's very nice," describes Charmie.

A gifted singer, Charmie also likes belting out a few songs. She won first place in a high school talent show for singing. She prefers soul music and especially the songstress Whitney Houston, who's soprano voice, Charmie claims, is similar to her own.

Charmie is one of a family of four girls. Her sisters Cassandra, Alesia and Shawn and herself are all pretty close in age. What was it like growing up in a house of four females? "Locks on the closets," laughs Charmie. "Everyone could wear the same things. It was a hassle," she adds. However, Charmie says, "Now, we get along a lot better since we're spread out. You know how women are," she

smiles.

The other woman in Charmie's childhood household was Shirley Mack, her mother and the person she most admires. "She raised four children: kept a roof over our heads and saw us all through school. My youngest sister, who's still in high school, will be going to college. I admire my mother a lot for what's she was able to do for us," affirms Charmie.

She, of course, wants to do the same and more for her own children. Charmie says her future will, for the most part, be devoted to the raising of her daughter and son. "Leading them in the right direction and providing educational opportunities for them," she elaborates. For herself, ten years from now she projects, "I'll be settled and successful, owning a beauty salon."

For a person who says about herself, "I like things to go my way," Charmie will likely try extremely hard to reach her goals. "But I do bend," she adds, and it's assured that she'll even manage to work around any unforeseen snags.

Gantt Reelected

Roussio Provides Election's Biggest Surprise

By Audrey C. Lodato Post Staff Writer

While it came as no great surprise that incumbent Mayor Harvey Gantt handily won re-election on Tuesday, the election was not without some unexpected results.

District 3 City Council member, Ron Leeper, who had no opposition, expressed that opinion when he stated, "I'd be surprised if anyone was not surprised at Roussio's lead. I thought he and Stenhouse might be a toss-up for fourth place."

Instead, jeweler Al Roussio was the top vote-getter, with 33,740 votes, over 2,000 more than his next closest opponent, Richard Vinroot. Roussio's total was 15 percent of the vote in a field of eight candidates. The next three highest each had approximately 14 percent of the total votes cast for at-large City Council seats.

With two at-large seats going to Democrats (Roussio, C. Patterson) and two to Republicans (incumbents Vinroot and Trosch); and with the only contested district seat (District



Harvey Gantt ... Wins easily

4) going to Democrat Roy Matthews, City Council will once again have a Democratic majority.

How significant is that? According to Ron Leeper, not very.

"I don't see it substantially altering the direction the Council is going," he remarked. "I think it's healthy to have partisan elections,



Al Roussio ... At-Large winner

but after the election, not many local issues are determined by party."

He added, however, that "some of the people elected will be beneficial to the Democratic mayor."

Charlie Dannelly, incumbent from District 2, agreed with Leeper's estimation of the relative importance of political party at the City Council level.



Ron Leeper ... District 3 incumbent

"From the party standpoint," he began, "it makes a difference. But from the service-to-the-city standpoint, it doesn't make a difference."

"Newly elected Council members are going to be as well-informed and eager to serve the citizenry as those already on Council."

"The citizens elected responsible people," he added.

Majeed Gives Update On "Business Incubator"

By Audrey C. Lodato Post Staff Writer

Several weeks ago the Post reported on efforts by the West Trade-Beatties Ford Area Merchants Association to spur economic development on the westside. Cited among the association's projects was a "business incubator" which would provide space and support services for small businesses just getting started. Here is an update on that proposed project.

At the next meeting of the association on November 25, Chilton Rodgers, assistant director of the North Carolina Development Authority (NCDA), will brief members and elected officials on the intricacies of an incubator.

According to Nasif Majeed, president of the association, a business incubator is seen as a mechanism to increase employment opportunities in an area, as well as to increase the tax base.

It enhances the viability of new and starting businesses through the provision of support services that might be economically unfeasible for new businesses to acquire, such as computer access, a business library, marketing services, possibly discounted accounting services, other business expertise, and even copy machines.

The incubator would have an executive director and secretarial personnel. The center would also actually lease space to start-up



Nasif Majeed ... WTBFA president

companies at a greatly reduced rate.

"We're looking for industrial type businesses, light assembly or light manufacturing, because, generally speaking, these have the potential for employing more people," Majeed noted. "However, we will also be able to assist retail businesses."

He adds that the association will have to develop statistical data in the Beatties Ford area. The proposal to the NCDA is to be submitted by December 30 in anticipation of fiscal year 1986.

Majeed explains that the Authority puts up \$200,000, which is matched by private or public

sources. "We'll have a series of fund raisers," he remarks.

"It would be a golden opportunity for the county and the city to join in this investment," he says. "We're taking the position of solving problems, which is a breath of fresh air for our total community."

Majeed does not anticipate any problems with the city or the county. "Their initial response has been positive," he says, "but we have to go into more detail with them."

"There are no negative aspects in an investment like this," he adds.

Majeed believes that a project such as the business incubator "facilitates communities believing in the positive powers within themselves."

It is not known yet precisely where the incubator facility might be located, if funding is approved. And it would not be the first such project in the state. The Smoky Mountain Development Corporation has three centers in the works, with one scheduled to open this fall.

The West Trade-Beatties Ford Area Merchants Association is also working with Johnson C. Smith on Project Catalyst, a development project near the university, says Majeed.

The merchants association currently has about 50 members. It has grown rapidly since its inception a few months ago. Majeed estimates there are about 150 merchants in the West Trade-Beatties Ford Road-area

Where Will Bob Walton Go From Here ?

By Audrey C. Lodato Post Staff Writer

County Commissioner Rev. Bob Walton recently announced his decision to remain in the Democratic Party, ending months of speculation over whether or not the four-term Commissioner would switch political affiliation.

Walton's decision was based on his conclusion that, "I would be truer to myself and to those who have given me support in my several campaigns by remaining in the Democratic Party... I did not want to give any credence whatsoever to those who would say that I had 'sold out' and more importantly, I did not want to destroy, in any way, my credibility and integrity."

With the party question settled, the next question becomes, where will Bob Walton go from here?

"I have three options," he re-

marked in a recent interview.

Those options are to run again for the County Commission in 1986, to possibly run for the state legislature, or to take a sabbatical.

"My wife often tells me to run for the county line or to run for cover," he laughed. "It's a very time-consuming endeavor to hold public office." His daughter Karen's first word, he noted ruefully, was "meeting."

With the elections now over, Walton expects to come to a decision on his future course after further discussions with close friends and political advisors.

If he decides to run for a fifth term on the commission, he'll need to choose whether to go for one of three at-large seats or to run from his district. Until now, the commission did not have district representation.

If he decides to run for a seat on

the state legislature, his preference is the Senate. "I wouldn't rule out the House, but the Senate is a smaller body," he commented. "I think I would be more effective working in a smaller body." Those presently holding the seats for which he would consider running are Senator Mel Watt and Representative Jim Richardson, neither of whom Walton would look forward to challenging.

And then there are others who have suggested Walton seek other offices. "Some have said I ought to consider running for statewide office, maybe lieutenant governor," he related.

One thing he has learned in his years in politics: "Don't rule anything out; you never say never."

He continued, "All of us in public office think about where you want to be five or six years from now. One day I wouldn't mind being mayor of this city, or a member of Congress. Certainly, Jesse Jackson has inspired all of us."

Whatever he does, Walton said he's sure of the support of his family and his church, St. Paul's. "My family would support me," he reported, "even though it takes away a lot of time from the family. They believe in my giving time for public service."

So does the congregation he has pastored for 13 years. The church, he explained, sees his political role as "an extension of our ministry. It's one thing to talk about feeding the hungry and other problems facing society. As a commissioner, I'm able to actually do something, to vote for programs that help."

Among the examples he cited are the hot lunch program for senior citizens, a library and other services in the western half of the county, and the assumption of emergency services by the county, a move which he initiated.

Walton was also the commissioner who recommended to the board that the question of four year terms for commissioners be put on the ballot. He advocated doubling the term of office for two major reasons. One is that campaigning takes

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TURTLE-TALK



Hitting the bull's eye is seldom accomplished by shooting the bull.