

FOCUS ON WAKE FOREST

BY ELIZABETH ARCHER

MY FRIEND IS DEAD

There is a charm, a certain something in the atmosphere, that all men feel, and no man can describe.

—Longfellow

A sort of youngish, boy-man whistled, and sang at his work of mowing grass. He worked right across from the home of my friend. As he paused to yell out, "Hey, girl! What's your name?" and in another breath, said, "Can I talk to you a minute?" As I came nearer to the steps of my friend's home, and he, standing in his opened door, laughed at my approach, he said comfortingly to me, "You don't have to worry. I'm sure that he [the boy-man] is harmless. He doesn't know that he is outclassed."

I laughed, too, because I had seen this man at other sites around Wake Forest, and he had made similar "passes." At other times I had told him that I had no time for conversation. On this occasion, I felt sure that the hard-working man had not even realized that I was even the same person.

My friend was the protective sort. In the terrible heat of summer, he'd say, "I'm glad to have you bring me the paper, but I hate to see you out in this scorching weather."

Is it wrong to call a person a friend whose first name you don't even know? I do it because he was one of the first persons to make me feel more than welcome in unfamiliar territory.

"Will you be delivering the paper every week?" he asked. Told yes, he said, "I am so glad, because I love The CAROLINIAN, and I've had to go to Raleigh to get it, except the other week, I was in Franklinton at Jones' Barbershop. I saw it there and bought one."

I did not see my friend often, there was no need, for he was at that time the sole person who paid me well in advance to deliver his paper. Once when he gave me \$4, he said, "Just continue to bring it until this runs out, and I'll give you some more."

That action reminded me of how the Good Samaritan in the Bible had compassion on the man who fell among robbers, and was stripped and beaten by them and had been left on the roadside, half dead. And he (the Samaritan) had bound up his wounds, set him on his own beast

and took him to an inn, and took care of him. And the next day he gave money to the innkeeper, saying, "Take care of him and whatever more you spend, I will repay you when I come back" (Luke 10:33). My friend was just like that.

I asked him at that time, "Why don't you subscribe to the paper? Then you can receive both copies, both Tuesday and Thursday," but he told me, "No, I do not care to do that, because then you will stop coming to bring it and I'll be sorry not to see you."

I did not see my friend often, or I might not have had to rely on seeing his death notice to learn his first name. "I wish that you could get out of Wake Forest before dark," he told me the last time I saw him alive. "When I was in Raleigh last Saturday, to visit my friend, Ms. Jeffreys, just down the street from her home, a one-legged man got killed, and I am really concerned about you being out here because people are not like they used to be in Wake Forest."

The CAROLINIAN carried the story in the Dec. 12, 1991 paper, which read "Attempted Food Stamp Swap Kills." My friend had told me that Ms. Reville Jeffreys, longtime organist for Rush Metropolitan AME Church, was his "dearest friend."

When he learned that she is a near relative to my in-laws, my friend said, "Well, I knew there was something special about you."

Neither he nor I had known about the surprise party given to her in November by her out-of-state in-laws. It had been held on her mid-90-something birthday, that all of my in-laws attended.

I am glad that I have a date when it was that I last saw my friend. I was delivering the paper for Thursday, Dec. 5, 1991, when he told me of the Raleigh murder. He had given me enough money to last through the entire month of December, prior to that last conversation.

Upon seeing the wreath upon the door of my friend's home as I delivered the paper late on Monday, after a very rainy weekend, I rang the doorbell that one time to allow my friend to tell me who it was that had died. Instead, the door was answered by another gentleman, who politely asked me in. I asked if Mr. Mangum was in, and I do believe that he answered "yes." Having never before gone inside of the home, I knew that my friend lived there with his mother.

I felt badly that I was coming to the home with the paper in the face of a death, that I felt was the mother of that home. I asked the stranger if the mother had died. "No," I was told, "my brother did." I asked, "Did your brother live here?" and was told that "Yes, he had for the past 20 years at least." Feeling sure that my friend had an invalid brother whom I had not met, for never having gone inside, that very question was put to his aunt two doors away, as I entered her home. I was told by her that, "No, he had not even been ill. I'm surprised that you have not ever met him."

It had not for an instant dawned on my foggy brain that they could have been talking about "my friend," the man whose name I did not know completely, who I only called Mr. Mangum whenever we saw each other.

As I finished the route, I asked one person, could they have been talking about the man who worked for Wake Forest Middle School, and who had told me once he was a military retiree? Could they possibly be talking about him, and not another brother whom I had not met?

I was told, yes, it was he, and I was very, very sad and sorry that I had never really learned his name, only enjoyed his smile and light conversation in praise of another, his friend, Ms. Jeffreys of Raleigh.

I know the name of his uncle, next door, and his aunt, the third door away, and now, after reading the account of his death in the Franklin Times on Wednesday, late afternoon, too late for his funeral on that day, I know the name of his mother, Delores Mangum, of the home, and his brother, William H. Mangum of Raleigh. Nothing else, but that is enough. True friendship isn't built on knowing names only, it is a product of the heart.

By not seeing his lifeless remains, as they lay in state directly across the street from his home at Feggins and Feggins Funeral Home, I will always remember his joy of living, and think of the name Lenwood Mangum, Jr., 61, of Wake Forest, my friend.

To his mother and brother, your pain is mine. I'm sorry I hadn't known to offer you my condolences.

Emancipation Day Program Held For Dunn

An Emancipation Day program and dinner were held at the Dunn Chapel Freewill Baptist Church fellowship hall Jan. 1. The theme of the observance was "New Ways for New Days."

The group sang "What a Fellowship, with Ms. Valencia Crossland at the piano.

Prayer was offered by Elder Halford McNeill, director of the Love and Help Association of Dunn. Greetings and introductions were made by Ms. Eva M. Minter, narrator.

Chris Ray read a paper on the institution of slavery which triggered the Civil War.

Ms. Geraldine Cameron read "Creation" by James Weldon Johnson.

Ms. Dorothy Smith read Martin Luther King's famous "I Have a Dream" speech.

Ms. Betty Lou McKoy read the Emancipation Proclamation which was signed by President Abraham Lincoln Jan. 1, 1863, setting free millions of black people in slavery. The group then sang a black spiritual, "Free At Last." Remarks were made by Elder Halford McNeill, Deacon Nazo Ray, Ms. Gerthie McAllister, Ms. Mary Elliott, Ms. Alma Cousar and a guest, Ms. Williams of the Oak Grove AME Zion Church near Erwin.

In addition to the food, the group enjoyed old-fashioned singing.

The hosts for the affair were Bishop and Mrs. Louise McLean, pastor and first lady of Dunn Chapel.

Deacon Curtis C. Ray asked that those attending reach out and help someone each day and pronounced the benediction.

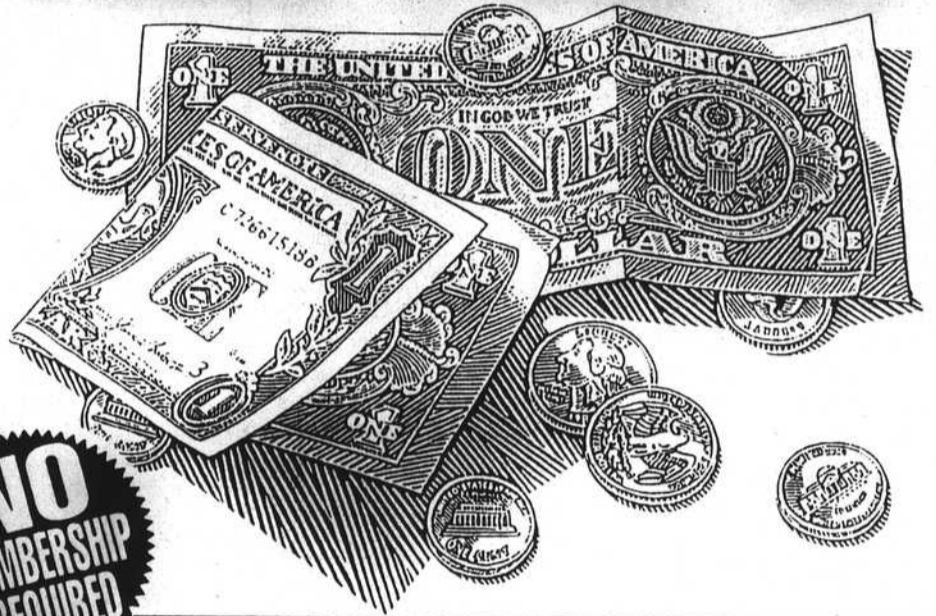
The dietician, Ms. Mary Grady, Ms. Brazzie Ray and Ms. Martha Fordham assisted in the serving.

Ms. Betty McKoy thanked the hosts for the experience and bade them a happy and prosperous New Year.

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Bishop Transfer Backed By More Than Members

NASHVILLE, Tenn.—The United Methodist Church has a provision it never has used for assigning bishops in the United States across geographically determined jurisdictional lines; now 34 of the 50 active U.S. bishops have signed statements supporting such transfers.

Of active U.S. bishops, 11 have said they meet the constitutional requirements for such transfers and are willing to serve "wherever assigned." Another 23 active bishops and 19 retired bishops signed the appeal in support of their colleges. Two of the 11 who meet the requirements said they would not want to move until 1996 because of only four years in current posts.

Bishops in the church are elected for life and must retire sometime between the ages of 66 and 70. At least 16 bishops will be elected in five jurisdictional conferences in mid-July of this year. Bishop William B. Lewis, Fargo, N.d., who announced the support for inter-jurisdictional episcopal assignments, said that without such a practice "we are jurisdictional, not general, superintendents of the church."

Black Males Suspended More Than Whites

PITTSBURGH (AP)—Black students at public middle and high schools in the city were suspended nearly twice as often in the 1990-91 school year as white male students, according to a report.

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The report showed that about 46 percent of all black male students in those schools were suspended last year, a rate nearly double that for white male students.

The report was greeted by chargin by school board members and Superintendent Richard C. Wallace.



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TIMES OF TROUBLE CAN BRING OUT THE BEST IN ALL OF US

We have just completed a year that those of us who survived it will not soon forget. In addition to the man-made calamities of war and economic recession, we saw an incredible parade of natural disasters throughout the world. There were floods, along with tornadoes and other killer storms; as well as earthquakes and volcanic eruptions. For the answers to why these things happen, go to your House of Worship. There you will learn that misfortune can bring out the best in us, causing us to forget our own problems and pursuits while we help our neighbors in trouble. This is true of nations as well as individuals. God has been reminding us of the power of His universe, and helping man to develop an unselfish capacity for dealing with it.

He who helps in the saving of others saves himself as well.
—Hartmann Von Aue

They helped every one his neighbour; and every one said to his brother, Be of good courage.
—Isaiah 41:6



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