



Winter graduation held for Granville County Public Schools

Fifteen high school seniors graduated from Granville County Public Schools in the district's very first Winter Graduation Ceremony. The inaugural event was held at the Granville County Expo and Convention Center, with a diploma being awarded by Dr. Michael Myrick, Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction and respective high school principals. District Superintendent Dr. Alisa McLean presided over the 'turning of the tassels' at the end of the ceremony.

Graduates included Ayanna D'Asia Bullock, Larry David Ganzzemiller, Zachary Tyler Edwards, Matthew Henry Gilson and Raul Guillermo Quezada Ramos of Granville Central High School; Jonathan Dykel Jones, Darius Saadi Royster and Noah Joel Upchurch of J.F. Webb High School; Sarah Grace Parham of J.F. Webb High School of Health and Life Sciences; and Nicholas Rommell Blacknall, Tariq West Harris; Christopher Dylan May; Caleb George McConnell; Clayton Walker Shaw and James Wyatt Womack of South Granville High School.

Serving as marshals for the ceremony were Delaney Faith Edwards and Jacob Ewing of Granville Early College High School, Haley Franklin, Tony Lehman and Emily Wright of South Granville High School; Taylor McMannen of J.F. Webb High School and Miranda Grace Nelson of J.F. Webb High School of Health and Life Sciences.

Dr. Stan Winborne, Executive Director of Operations, Human Resources, Communications and Safety gave the welcome while Dr. Tom Houlihan, Chairman of the Granville County Board of Education, provided remarks on behalf of the Board.

Brian Holtshouser, Band Director of J.F. Webb High School, per-

formed the National Anthem while members of the J.F. Webb ROTC presented the Posting and Retiring of the Colors for the occasion.

"It was standing room only at this event," Dr. Alisa McLean remarked at Monday night's Board of Education meeting.

All graduates, no matter if they completed their senior year in the winter or in the spring, have traditionally participated in the spring graduation ceremonies sched-

uled for their respective schools. This is the first year that a Winter Graduation ceremony has been held, according to school officials.

On behalf of the Board of Education, Dr. Houlihan thanked Superintendent McLean for bringing this idea to Granville County. "This is the first time we have had such an event," Houlihan remarked, "and it is just one of many changes to come for our school district."

Historic Preservation Commission elects new officers

The Oxford Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) met on Jan. 25, and per its Charter, elected its Officers for the year. Tony Armento will continue as the HPC Chair and Marc Brooks will become the Vice-Chair. Lisa Schons will serve as Secretary and Gary Weaver will be the Treasurer. Other members of the HPC include Rick Thomas, Kelly Collins-Schram and Derreck Brown, who was appointed as the HPC Webmaster.

The Oxford HPC is an extension of the City of Oxford's government. Its purposes are to protect the integrity of the Oxford Historic Districts by review Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) applications, and to encourage the enjoyment of the Historic Districts. Historic preservation advocacy initiatives are also fundamental to the HPC's responsibilities.

A recent accomplishment of the HPC was the award of a \$10,800 grant from the national Historic Preservation Fund, to update the survey of properties eligible to be included in the National Register of Historic Places. The project is currently underway. The HPC has also recently updated the eligibility criteria for its annual Stewardship Award, to include activities not requiring a COA in the consideration of the Award.

Goals for the coming year set at meeting include hosting a region-wide public education session, creation of an inventory of Oxford Historic District properties online on the HPC website, re-starting the guided walking tour events, expansion of the annual HPC Photo Contest, and presentation of the seventh annual HPC Stewardship Award, among other planned activities.

CRIME from page 1

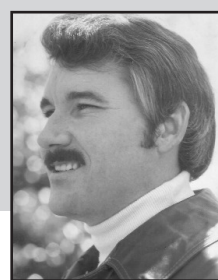
On Jan. 26, a breaking/entering/larceny/property damage was reported at a residence located on Hester Road in Stem. A witness reported seeing a black Honda (possibly a Civic with a rear spoiler) occupied by a female (white/Hispanic) parked on the shoulder of

the road near the residence and a Hispanic male was also seen walking down the road in the vicinity of the residence.

Upon arriving home, the homeowner also saw the female sitting on the shoulder of the road near the residence and stated that she was talking on the telephone and had the emergency flashers activated on the vehicle, as if

Life as I Choose to Forget It

(A continuing chapter story by Bill Massey)



CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED FOUR:

Our Tuesday afternoon flight from Denver to San Francisco goes without a hitch. We even have separate room reservations when we arrive for check-in at the Fairmont Hotel.

And no one calls Constance "Ma'am." After checking in and freshening up, Constance and I have dinner at 'Alioto's Seafood Restaurant' on Fisherman's Wharf. Constance wanted to go to 'The Crab Hut,' but I discouraged it.

"I don't like having to beat my food with a hammer before I can eat it," I had explained, prompting her to roll her eyes.

Our Wednesday morning San Francisco presentation goes well, as does our Thursday afternoon meeting in Houston. It isn't until our Friday morning session in Dallas that we encounter another Attila-like sales rep. This time it is Reggie. He has the same concern as Lorilee had, back in Denver, and the same combative demeanor.

"Reggie, I have stated the company's position on this issue and explained the rationale behind it. That position isn't going to change. But, if you find it unacceptable to you, that's a discussion you need to have with Jon. He's your manager, not me," I say, after a too long back-and-forth verbal exchange with Reggie about not getting paid at the time an order is taken.

I pause, looking directly at Reggie for a long moment, waiting for him to react. He doesn't.

"Well, so much for 'proper protocol...' and maintaining your cool... and using restraint... when speaking to another manager's employees," Constance says to me, as we wait at the gate to board our Friday mid-afternoon flight back to Philly.

"I decided that, while Reggie is Jon's employee, that was *my* meeting he was trying to hijack."

"Would you mind not using that word - 'hijack' - while we're in an airport?" Constance whispers.

"You know, with a name like 'Reginald,' he might consider drawing less attention to himself," Constance says, right after the gate agent announces 'a short delay' before we can board our flight.

"You like 'Constance' better than 'Reginald'?" I ask.

"I hate the name 'Constance.' That's why I insist upon being called 'Constance.' If I don't embrace it, I'll cry about it. In fact, I *did* cry about it... a lot... in junior high."

I start thumbing through my newly purchased *People* magazine without responding to Constance's convoluted name-calling rationale.

"Were you making fun of my name a few minutes ago, when you compared the likeability of 'Constance' to that of 'Reginald'?" Constance asks, just as I am about to read about Miss USA - Amanda Jones.

"Are you kidding? No way. With a name like mine, I'm not making fun of anybody's name," I reply.

"What? You don't like 'William'?"

"I'm ambivalent about 'William.' I don't like, nor dislike it. But I despise my middle name."

Constance waits. I say nothing more.

"WELL?" she finally says, impatiently.

I still say nothing.

She rolls her eyes. Again.

About five minutes later, Constance excuses herself to go to the restroom. Ten minutes after that, she returns and plops down in the seat beside me with a cat-that-ate-the-canary look on her face.

"Are you going to tell me your middle name... or not?" she immediately asks.

I continue reading about Miss Jones - also known as Miss Illinois - ignoring Constance's question.

"Okay then, how about I try to guess. Hmm. Let's see... could it be... Carroll... C-A-R-R-O-L-L?" she smirks.

I look over at her, feeling like I just became the canary.

"How... the hell... do you know that?"

Constance picks up the front-page section of her newspaper, turns to page two, dramatically flaps the paper to smooth the crumpled pages, folds it in half and smugly starts reading, without saying a word.

With the time differential, Constance and I are back in the office in Lionville about an hour before quitting time. I go straight to my office and check voicemail messages. There are a couple of follow-up questions from a couple of the managers in the offices Constance and I just visited; questions raised by sales reps after we presented and left.

There is also a brief message from Ricci, recorded this morning:

"Please call me if you get back before I leave for the day."

I dial her extension but get no answer. I look at my watch - 4:45 p.m.

As I am unpacking and repacking my briefcase, in preparation for my trips with Kim to Atlanta and Chicago next Monday, T.J. appears in my office doorway.

"Why is Constance calling me from a payphone in an airport, asking me what your full name is? Did you hit your head and forget your own name?"

She shakes her head and walks away.

I return a couple of the manager's phone

calls - Jon in San Francisco and Frank in Dallas.

When I hang up from my call to Frank, I check my watch again: 5:20 p.m. Thinking Ricci's probably gone home by now, I decide to stop by her office on my way out and leave her a note.

"Oh. Good. You're still here," I say to Ricci as I walk into her office to drop off my note.

"Yep. Midnight oil," she says, looking up from her task, then looking at her watch. "Okay, so it's more like twilight oil, but hey..." she jokes.

"I got your message and called, but you didn't answer... as you obviously know."

"At the copier, probably."

"Your eye is looking a lot less like you've gone three rounds with George Foreman. Things okay at home? Rodney being civil?"

"Things are much better. Rod and I have been getting along pretty well. We're still not best buds, but we're not mortal enemies, either. So, thank you again."

"Good. I'm glad."

"Speaking of enemies, Rod warned me about you," Ricci says, smiling. "He said, 'Mom, that guy - that's what he calls you, that guy - that guy said he makes a really bad enemy, so if you date him - and you break up - he might become your enemy.'"

"At least he was paying attention," I say.

"Oh... yeah. You can believe that."

First thing Monday morning, Kim and I strike out for Atlanta while Constance and Ruby head over to New York City. Ruby has been referring to this excursion as our "Peach Tree to Big Apple Tour."

At 5 p.m. Tuesday afternoon, as pre-arranged, Kim and I place a conference call from the Palmer House Hotel, where we are staying in Chicago, to Constance and Ruby at Hank's Uptown Manhattan office, the purpose of which is a short debriefing session on these last five meetings. Turns out that in none of those meetings did we encounter any Lorilee- or Reginald-type disruptors.

"Ruby, I'll see you in the Philly office tomorrow afternoon at 1 o'clock. And Constance, Kim will meet you in the D.C. office tomorrow, at the same time. Then, I'll see you all back in Lionville Thursday."

"How'd it go in D.C.?" I ask Constance, late Thursday morning, when she comes into my office and drops into a chair. She looks exhausted.

"It went well. Ed said to tell you 'Hello,' Gloria and Azita both said they were disappointed you weren't at the meeting, and Christa said to tell you she's sorry you're not going to be their manager. Seems your popularity knows no bounds," Constance jokes.

"It's a curse, disguised as a blessing," I reply. Her expression tells me she can't quite tell if I'm being serious, or facetious.

"So, what's next?" she asks.

"Will you please round up Ruby and Kim, and the three of you meet me in the conference room in... let's say... in 30 minutes?"

When I get to the conference room, Constance and Kim are already there. Ruby is five minutes late.

"Sorry," she says, as she slides into a chair. She knows I do not abide tardiness.

"Between now and next Monday, I would like the three of you to get together and divide the eleven district offices into three regions, and then assign yourselves to one of those regions. You can do that to suit yourselves, with two restrictions: One, I want the regions to be geographic, so as to facilitate future travel, and two, Ruby, I don't want you assigned to New York. You need exposure to other districts," I explain.

"You got it," Constance says.

Ruby and Kim nod.

Constance, by mid-day next Monday, I'd like you to provide me with a list of the three regions, noting which of you is assigned to which region. From that point on, any info to be conveyed to the field will be conveyed to the offices in your region by *you*. And all questions received from the offices in your region will be responded to by *you*. Relationships are everything," I say.

A few minutes after I return to my office from our meeting, Ricci walks in.

"Back from the Crusades, I see. Victorious, I hope," she says.

"We took no prisoners."

Ricci takes a seat and looks at me, pensively.

"Something wrong? You seem nervous," I say.

"No... nothing's wrong. Yes... I'm nervous."

"About?"

"About inviting you over to my house for a 'thank you dinner'... this Saturday night... if you are agreeable, and available," Ricci says.

She waits a moment, fidgeting with her fingers, before asking, "so... are you? Agreeable? And available?"

(to be continued)

(You can reach Bill Massey by email at williamassey68@yahoo.com)

Community Snapshot



In appreciation of Smart Start...

Omotolokun Omokunde (left), local pastor and chairman of the Granville County United Way and Dawn Marie Omokunde, (right), chair of the Franklin-Granville-Vance Smart Start Board of Directors, were recently able to personally thank former Governor Jim Hunt (center) for his role in the establishment of Smart Start, a statewide initiative that ensures children are prepared to enter school healthy and ready to succeed. (Contributed photo)

'Good things' are happening all over our community. If you have photos of events or activities to share, please send to oplynnallred@earthlink.net.