Mildred Johnson Speaks

Last Sunday we who attended the AME Zion Church 33rd anniversary of the Troubadours who presented to Rev. A.C. Bell, founder of the Troubadours when he was pastor of AME Zion Church and to Mrs. Eleanor Jackson, for her dedication of being with the group all of the years it has been founded. Some may not know of the great work Marvin has done in the past. We who were closely associated with him during his ministry here has done in the past. We who have been founded. Some may not know of the great work Marvin has done in the past. We who were closely associated with him during his ministry here and as a student at Colgate Rochester Divinity School, Mr. Chandler served as Associate Director of Geneesee Ecumenical Ministries and Co-ordinator of Black Church Ministries, was producer-announcer of a local radio show on WBBF, and a pianist-director of the Troubadours. The Chandler family currently resides in Richmond, California, where he is Executive Director of the Howard Thurman Foundation, lecturer, and community relations specialist.

Rochester should be truly proud that the first black woman chaplain of the United States Air Force, Capt. Juanita Elizabeth Carroll, daughter of Dr. Juanita Pitts, returned home Sunday to preach at their home church the Memorial AME Zion Church of which the Rev. A.N. Gibson is pastor at the morning service. Capt. Carroll delivered a stirring sermon. She will be returning to Florida this week to resume her duties of chaplain in Florida. We congratulate this fine young lady on her accomplishments and wish for her many more years of success and happiness.

We wish to congratulate the mother of Capt. Carroll for celebrating her retirement in the field of medicine from the state of New York. Dr. Pitts worked most of the twenty years at the Rochester State Hospital. A few years ago she transferred to Sonya State Hospital. She was presented a plaque at the AME Zion Church last Sunday. May she and her lovely family enjoy her many retirement years ahead.

I am always asking people to send me news for my column, the other day one of my friends, Mrs. Adelaide Williams of Adams Street came by the office to tell me of the sad news of her great nephew of Columbia, MD. A brilliant youth who had a great future ahead of him, died at his grandmother's in his sleep. Here is what a writer in Columbia, MD, said of him:

On a Colombian dying young by Carolyn Kolleman

I've always questioned A.E. Houseman's poem "To an Athlete Dying Young": I've always wondered whether it was better to die in glory than live a less glorious life, as Houseman said: "Now you will not swell the rout! Of lads that were their honors out!... Runners whom renown outran! And the name died before the man."

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I've struggled with those thoughts for so long and now I know the answer.

The news came early this morning; Roger Parrish, 18, had died in his grandparents' home in New York. He had just finished the race. He had just won the regalia at the American College Crew championships. Brown University was victorious and Roger's boat placed in the winner's circle.

Roger had everything in the world to look forward to. He was the golden boy, the Columbia dream. With a black father and a white mother, he encompassed the best of both races. He was bright, had a 4.0 at the Lake, graduated first in his class, sharing the honor with my son, Mark.

Roger was scholar-athlete in Howard County last year; he was tall, good-looking, intelligent, active and a good kid. My memories of Roger go back many years when Mark and Roger first became friends. He was another son in the family; whenever we went on trips, Roger came and vice-versa. I can remember him first learning to ski, his first date, the prom, the parties, the joy he brought to all of us.

We even visited colleges together; Roger, always certain that he would go to Brown where his father had studied. Mark, on the other hand, was more uncertain, but like Roger, his friend, chose Brown over other Ivy League schools. I drove them to the train station and the plane, and right at this moment, as I write these sad words on his death, his stuff is sitting in the basement waiting to be taken to his Columbia home.

I loved Roger and I'll miss him so much. So will his friends—Scott, VII, Sean, Mark, John and the rest of the guys who were "his gang." There will be no more trips to Vermont or North Carolina or Ocean City; no need to carry home his things in the big black truck. A light has gone out in this town.

So, A.E. Housman, I think you're wrong. Even in the most glorious moment of Roger's life, there's no excuse for dying. He should have lived to an old age where he could have looked back at Brown's victory last weekend. He deserves better.

Sunday June 19th at the Afro-American Club the courts of Rochester and Monroe County and the citizens of the community held a roast at the Afro-American Club on Hudson Ave. In honor of "Rocky" Steve Simmons, who has been ill in the St. Mary's Hospital, he was honored by many prominent citizens of the community. Judge Carolyn Branch was one of the judges who attended and spoke on the wonderful work Rocky has done over the years in sports with our youth. We hope Rocky hurries and gets well, so that he can again get on that baseball field with many of his children and play as never before.

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