

NORTHSIDE NEWS

Honoring Ms. Euzelle Smith : Centenarian

Happy 100th Birthday to Ms. Euzelle Smith! Mother, educator, mentor, woman of faith, community icon-- Ms. Euzelle is all these and much more. And on July 3, she was celebrated in true Northside style, surrounded by family and friends at the home her husband, R.D., built for her more than seventy years ago. Trained as an educator at Hampton Institute, she was fiercely committed to making sure all the children of Northside received the best education possible. Together, the Smiths served as mentors to neighborhood kids, reminding them of their potential and encouraging them to persevere despite the obstacles facing black students in Chapel Hill. After the Chapel Hill schools were desegregated in 1967, Ms. Euzelle continued to work as a teacher and school counselor at Culbreth Middle School. Congratulations and may God continue to bless you always, Ms. Euzelle!

Celebrating Life, Family-Style

The following ethnopoetic transcription, a poem based on a 2012 oral history interview with Ms. Euzelle and her husband, Mr. R.D. Smith, was composed by Jackson Center Summer Fellow Wyatt Woodson.

Home

So where do you all usually do holidays
Like Christmas or Thanksgiving?

It's here
Most of the time
They say "we want to come here,"
But occasionally we'll go to one of their homes.
But it's not unusual to have about twenty people here.

Children
Grandchildren
Children and their spouses
Ten grandchildren
Two great-grandchildren

It can be quite a crowd.
And it's more than about twenty Family members.
But then sometimes they bring somebody with them.
One of the grandsons will say:
they wanted to bring a friend,
And then the word gets around
and the house is full of them.

And everybody—
I mean, all the girls and all.—
They'd chip in and don't leave anything for us to do.
That's the only way we would let them come. [laughs]
Its so funny that they do all this now.
When they were growing up
We did it all.

-Ms. Euzelle Smith

Words from a Daughter: Pamela Smith Edwards

You know when you live a hundred years you live to see a lot of things. She lived through World War 2, the Voting Rights Act, the end of segregation, the election of Chapel Hill's first black mayor, the first black President, and she saw a school named after her.

The only argument [Ms Euzelle and Mr RD] ever had: he wanted a Buick, she wanted a house. And this is the house that love built.



Remembering "Mama Kat"

On June 21, 2019 at Hamlet Chapel in Pittsboro, the Northside community celebrated the life of one of its beloved members. Mama Kat, as she was known affectionately by all, lived life to the fullest and was a woman of great faith and joy who warmly embraced everyone she met with a smile. Devoted to service to her community, her church, and the children she worked with for thirty years in the Chapel Hill schools, she was a woman of great love. Until shortly before her passing, Mama Kat continued to volunteer as a Community Mentor, telling stories about growing up in Chapel Hill to young people, and at the Heavenly Groceries food ministry at St. Joseph CME church. It is impossible to summarize Mama Kat's life in a few words. If you have something you'd like to share, contact us (www.jackson-center.info), and we'll post your memories on our website blog.

Hudson Vaughan, Executive Director of the Jackson Center, was asked by Mama Kat's family to talk about her life at her homegoing service at Hamlet Chapel on June 26. Here are some selections from the remarks he made that day:

I've been blessed to know Mama Kat for the last ten years, mostly in relation to her stalwart presence at Heavenly Groceries week in and week out. Her presence and warmth stays with you. Mama Kat said the most beautiful – and thorough prayers. I'll never forget when she would get going you would hear this great mix of a chorus of Amens and whispers of "how much longer is she going to go?" Even when she said she had begun forgetting things, especially people's names, somehow she would remember them when she prayed – all of them! She said the blessing every day at Heavenly Groceries – and everybody loved those prayers and joked with her about those long prayers too. The last few years, she has said the special blessing for the Jackson Center's holiday party. And recently, she said the most beautiful blessing for our soon to be son. I will miss her prayers.

While Mama Kat never seemed to stop joking, she was serious when it came to caring. Mama Kat knew



how to love. From what I've heard and experienced, her whole life was about caring. Caring for her mother when her dad passed away. Caring for her siblings when their parents passed. Caring for her family when their house burned down. Caring for her son Odell for many years. Caring for the many people who came through Heavenly Groceries not just to get food but to receive the humanity that Mama Kat passed on with her smile, her jokes, her warmth. The world will miss the gravity- and levity - of her care. She is an example for us all.

Thank you, Mama Kat, for touching all of us here and for demonstrating courage, faith, and laughter that we all so desperately need in the days to come. Glory be to God. Amen.

"Her smile and her laughter had been earned in struggle. Her joy flowed from a profound strength that she carried with her over the many decades she gave us on this earth and which will remain an example for those of us lucky enough to have known her."
-Aleck Stevens

Living Fully

This ethnopoetic transcription by staff member Andrea Wuerth is based on a 2018 Jackson Center oral history interview with Mama Kat.

A Good Life

I went through a lot,
but it was a good life
because I've always been happy,
and I've never been a person to walk around
saying a word about things;
I don't know why, but I don't.
Just like I said:
even when I lost my house,
it wasn't a thing that drove me crazy.
My sister used to worry about me
more than I worried about myself!
My mama used to tell me I was just like my daddy—
He was just happy-go-lucky.
And I think that's the way I've always been,
not letting things get me down.
I've been to the point where I didn't have a nickel,
but it didn't bother me.

-Katherine Council, 2017

We're all about change at the Jackson Center

The Marian Cheek Jackson Center is celebrating its 10th anniversary! In the last ten years, we have grown from a motley crew of volunteers inspired to do justice by Northside history to a fully realized non-profit organization with 6 full- and part-time staff and a host of in-



terns, fellows, and service partners-- inspired to do justice by Northside history. It's time for a little more change. By the time you read this, I will have stepped down as Executive Director to make room for a full-time on-site leader. Ms. Yvonne will have risen up to become our Director (Diva) of Operations and Hudson will have begun a year as both a new parent and Interim ED of the Center. Soon we'll have a new Director of Organizing and Advocacy on board. She or he will take the lead on the Northside Neighborhood initiatives to balance the housing market and to retain our historic neighbors. The rest of the amazing MCJC staff—George, Andrea, Brentton, Kathy—will still be here, ready and willing as usual. Please come by to cheer all on!

I'll be releasing the reins but returning to building the Center's Oral History Trust and securing the many accounts of courage, struggle, ingenuity, care, faith, and collective power that have led us for the past 10 years and will remain our beacon for many more to come. It has been the privilege of a lifetime to work with you to honor such an extraordinary community and to see the truly magnificent growth that comes with community leadership on all things, great and small. I hope that I will be able to continue to do some justice by you in the stories I will continue to tell, the lessons I will pass on, the enormous love and laughter I will share. Thank you for your generosity and patience. My soul is so much bigger.

--Della Pollock

In Memoriam

Ms. Velma Perry, a lifelong advocate for the Northside community, passed away on Sunday, July 6, at the age of 98. She lived in the Northside home built by her grandfather for her entire life. Ms. Velma was known by many neighbors as "The Mayor of Lindsay Street" for her eloquent voice, her knowledge of local history, and her fearless, tireless commitment to justice. Her beautiful voice and spirit will be very much missed. A full feature of her life and work will be featured in next month's Northside News.

"Whenever an elder dies, a library burns down."

-Amadou Hampâté Bâ

Ask Keith

Ms. Keith and the Jackson Center want to continue to congratulate all of our graduates of 2019. We still need information on many of you who graduated. We need pictures or names to include in our newsletter. Graduation and honoring those who put in all the hard work is very important to us. Please help us celebrate these deserving graduates by sending us information or pictures. Starting with the August issue of the Northside News we will include some of the information we receive. Please send to the Jackson Center (contact@jacksoncenter.info) or bring by our office located at 512 W. Rosemary St. Continue to have a happy and safe summer.

Congratulations to Maya Sharpe who graduated from Carrboro Elementary Pre-K. Parents, Tiffani Watson and David Sharpe, Jr.



"In times of crisis, the wise build bridges while the foolish build barriers" -T'Challa

August Birthdays

8/1	Jason James
8/2	Sheila Alston
8/5	Kathy Atwater, Steven Pendergraft
8/8	Kathy Wilson
8/11	Seth Murray
8/13	Doris Wilson
8/18	Shannon Dwyer
8/19	Jesse Chavis
8/22	Tiffany Watson
8/28	Sherdena Weaver, Rosalyn Alston
8/29	Keith Edwards

Need help maintaining your property?

Keeping Your House A Home (KYHAH) is a free workshop for neighbors to inform you of resources that are available to help you stay in your home through home repair, property tax support, and financial counseling.

Free legal services are also available to neighbors for estate planning documents (full wills, will amendments, power of attorney, living trusts) in one to two sessions.

The workshops happen on the last Tuesday of the month from 2:00 pm- 4:00 pm. Contact Kathy Atwater, Community Advocacy Specialist, at 919-960-1670 to schedule an appointment for the KYHAH workshop and the free legal will service.

Mama Kat's Pound Cake

In a 2011 interview, Mama Kat revealed how she made her famous pound cake.

Ok. I'll let you know what you need...

Three cups of flour

Three cups of sugar

Two sticks of butter

One half cup of shortening

One cup of milk

One tablespoon of the vanilla flavoring

And ... one teaspoon of lemon flavor.

I forgot to say my eggs...

And, a teaspoon of baking powder.

Do you need to know how to make it?

Ok, you cream the butter and shortening together.

Add the sugar slowly.

A small amount at a time.

And... I left the eggs off,

so we do need five eggs.

And after you beat the sugar and butter real well, add the eggs one at a time.

Make sure they're beat real well

before you add another one.

After you beat all five eggs,

you do the flour and the milk.

You begin with milk and then flour

and end with milk.

Turn your mixer down slow

when you're mixing after the flour

so that it won't dry out.

Then you're ready to put it in a

greased and floured pound cake pan.

And put it in...put the oven on 325.

for one hour and thirty minutes,

and it should be done.

But you can do the testing with a toothpick.

I know it from memory,

'Cause I bake it all the time.



The Porch Revival Tour is a series of resident-hosted celebrations that will take place on a porch, lawn, and/or favorite outdoor area. Come create and develop meaningful connections in our transformative community.

SIGN UP TO HOST!

WHEN? One Friday a month

HOW? Email kaylah@jacksoncenter.info or call the Jackson Center at (919) 960-1670 for more information.

Have family photos and documents in a box somewhere?

Let us help you save them with them!

The Memory Keepers Project is an effort to save all kinds of materials (birth and marriage certificates, photos, school and church records, letters, news clippings) and the stories you tell about them in a digital "shoebox" so that they can be shared with family and Northside neighbors now and for generations to come.

Let us know when you'd like to bring your materials to the Jackson Center—where we'll scan your materials and record your recollections of them. (We can also help you haul).

All items will be immediately returned to you.



For more information call (919) 960-1670 ask for **Saradine, Wyatt, or Kathryn**