

ALLEN'S CHRONICLE

Allen Chapel AME Church

Spring Volume

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Special points of interest:

- *District Conference
Allen Chapel & COR
Sept. 22-23*
- *Sunday School Conven-
tion: Mount Zion
AMEC, Roanoke,
June 23-24*
- *Youth Congress,
Hampton, July 18-19*

THE WATKINS MEMORIAL TROPHY

The Franklin D. Watkins Memorial Trophy Award was initiated in 1992 to promote academic excellence among young African American males. Talented athletes explain what the newly formed generations of African American males will value or get out of this experience. The award is for recognizing exceptionally gifted African American male athletes who by their example help to promote high academic standards and a commitment to community service.

The reason for focusing on African American males comes from research that says: African American females are making gains in education, whereas African American males in the 18-26 age bracket are far more likely to be involved at

some level in the criminal justice system rather than pursuing their education. The Watkins Award takes them farther away from that.

By the time a high school senior is a finalist for the Franklin D. Watkins Memorial Trophy Award he will have received many other awards. A finalist will have appeared regularly in the media and dominated the attention of high school recruiting magazines.

The Watkins Award can be summed up in one word—

EXPECTATION.

The finalists are expected to be leaders in efforts to empower (grant authority) and improve disadvantaged communities. This is important because through sports they have an opportunity



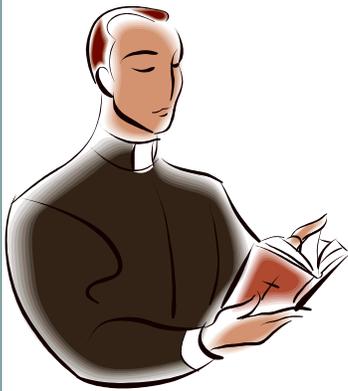
and an obligation to do more for their communities.

All the things listed above about a finalist's expectations describe a young man by the name of Myron Rolle. Myron is a African American Student Athlete of The Hun School of Princeton, New Jersey.

What Myron says and what Myron does will have a major effect on what will happen next.

By: Cierra Bundy

Annual Conference Lifts the Spirit by Preaching



The 140th Session of the historic Virginia Annual Conference opened the first week of May in Portsmouth, Virginia. Those in attendance remarked that the spirit was more palpably evident this year than in any year they could recall.

The preaching was outstanding beginning with Rev Daryl Kearney who preached for the opening service culminating in a rousing in-

vocation of the fever that communion with the Holy Spirit can impart.

The following day Rev. Oretha Cross likened the miracle of the reinvigoration of the dry bones of Ezekiel to the enlivening of the churches of the conference from Winchester to Red Bluff and from Roanoke to Chesapeake.

Rev. Gilbert Harper of Mount Zion AMEC

in Roanoke preached to the youth and the adults of the importance of bringing friends and foes, kith and kin to Jesus.

Bishop T. Larry Kirkland preached for ordination and Bishop Richardson closed the conference with a word that encourage the preachers and congregations to trust the sovereignty of God in all things.



“When the appointment was read on the last day of conference gleeful applause ensued.”

ADKINS RECEIVES NOD FOR ELDER

Rev. Paul Clifford Adkins, formerly pastor of Beulah AME Church in Farmville, was reappointed as Presiding Elder after an eight year interregnum. Upon Elder Sidney Williams retirement at the site of the 140th Virginia Annual Conference considerable speculation continued to simmer among preachers and lay alike about Bishop Richardson's appointment to this critical conference post.

Though his appointment had not been previously announced it was not surprising nor lamented. Indeed, when the appointment was read on the last day of Conference gleeful applause ensued.

Rev Adkins is universally respected and well beloved in the district. He is gifted in eliciting concord out of the dissonance of our discord. In his first meeting with pastors at Be-

thel Third Street in Richmond he outlined his plan for the most significant events of the district this year.

It was agreed that the District Conference would be scheduled for September 22 and 23. Allen Chapel and Christ Our Redeemer in Staunton are co-hosts.

The Sunday School Convention will be hosted by Mt. Zion, Roanoke, June 23–24.



STATE OF THE COUNTRY REPORT, 2006

Our nation, born from the experiment of democratic rule, can only look back in wonder to see the road it has now traveled from promise and hope to nihilism and despair. If this tone strikes a harsher chord than wished we can but look at the present circumstances to be mindful that our lot is grim. This year's State of the Country report recalls those of bygone conferences. The prosecution of our imperial misadventures overseas, the skittish economic prospects both foreign and domestic, the insensitivity of government bureaucracy to hurricane and flood victims, the growing industry of penal mis-care, the escalating sense of siege in our public schools, the pervasive and enervating effects of drugs and exotic narcotics, the ever widening gap between the wealthy affluent and the desperately poor and the distressing glorification of license and lawlessness in popular

culture does our country no honor. To those who would counsel us to underscore good news we say a physician is not sent for the well but the sick. Of the aforementioned matters that continue to afflict the nation our committee this year would hope to emphasize most particularly the culture of death that has and is overwhelming our nation's children.

Recent events scream that our collective resolve is too weak to deal properly with the complex array of drug related evils. Indeed, latest studies reveal that the growing addiction of our children to narcotics can be traced to the active participation of their very own parents who are snorting, shooting and swallowing these poisons as a form of family recreation. The introduction of children to drugs by one or both parents is the leading reason for early addiction. The second is parental indifference. In

too many instances parents simply abdicate their own responsibility for the proper instruction and correction of their children. Though many of us believe peer pressure to be the most common reason for children becoming addicted to drugs it is, nonetheless, a distant fourth according to the same figures.

In a report of this size and scope it is unreasonable to expect that it might prove exhaustive on the subject. Howbeit, we offer the following specifics in the hope of stinging national conscience to a quickening of its commitment to this battle. Our children are all too vulnerable in the surrender of their persons when they have consumed a cocktail of speed and Viagra. The effect is a heightened state of wakefulness and enflamed libido. Under these conditions the unscrupulous mark them for sexual exploitation and abuse. A young prepubescent girl



Children are the fruit of our love, to be nurtured and harvested for the glory of God.



“The introduction of children to drugs by one or both parents is the leading reason for early addiction. The second is parental indifference.”



Let us be as a tree planted by the water that shall not be moved.

STATE OF THE COUNTRY



Let us abide in the vine that is Christ Jesus.



“Under such conditions the unborn are doomed in the womb and generations are swept away by the prick of a needle.”



Our duty is to bear that fruit which is proper to Christ: to love as he did love.

can be made to walk the streets in an unholy prostitution that robs her of the promise of her life. The end of the tale is too often one of homeless children living in the squalor of our abandoned inner cities turning tricks for a fix. If the language is ugly, more ugly still is our disinterest when we see markedly more children addicted to methamphetamines, the effects of which destroy the internal organs and hasten mortality within a mere two years.

The many billions of dollars in profit that flow to the drug cartels insure that the trade will continue unabated for many years unless we do something to stop it. Indeed, we have more assurance of drugs in plentiful supply than we do oil to drive our vehicles and to heat our homes. If the supply is steady the demand is insistent cutting across every division of class, race, gender and age. And where the ease of acquisition is notable

the fatalities are remarkable. Whole families are lost when mothers are “turning on” daughters and fathers are “turning on sons.” Drug use of the kind already mentioned has damaging consequences for our posterity because it fosters sexual promiscuity, which in turn breeds unwanted and unmerited pregnancy. Under such conditions the unborn are doomed in the womb and generations are swept away with the prick of a needle.

Of all crimes for which we incarcerate our citizens none are more numerous than those associated with drug trafficking, drug possession and drug use (80%). Of those reasons for which a child is most likely to be expelled from school, though some may equal it for severity, none are more serious than drug dealing or drug possession. Of those factors contributing to the dissolution of marriages and the disintegration of families none are

more insidious than drugs. And of those conditions external to our own bodies that augur the sure deterioration of psychic and physical well being none are more unrelentingly vitiating than the abuse of drugs.

Hand in hand with this fatal apocalypse are the ever burgeoning commercialization of youth culture and the commodification of sex and violence. Children are prematurely awakened to the mysteries and wonders of human sexuality by salacious music videos without receiving the nurturing care that produces self respect and a deep spiritual awareness of the dignity of others. Music, otherwise indispensable to the affirmation and inspiration of human imagination, is too often used to misshape and misdirect the soul when it celebrates gun play and the fascination with death.

Ought we to pursue capitalism's dream of

STATE OF THE COUNTRY

ever widening profits even at the expense of our youngest and our brightest? Or, ought we rather to subject contemporary arguments for war in Iraq to the critique that identifies the enemy from within? Deeper still is the irony that discloses an American economy increasingly dependent upon foreign labor, investment and usury. While our children, in a drug induced fog, lag farther and farther behind their foreign counterparts in academic performance their country addicts itself to greater and greater levels of foreign debt, principally to China. Our situation is more than critical. It is critically urgent.

The present moment yearns for the raising of a prophetic voice to decry the nation's lack of nerve for an honest and determined confrontation with the demonic power of drug addiction in its unholy alliance of domestic and international avarice. Moreover, a concerted

church effort to address the problem is derailed too often by internecine conflict, interdenominational envy, the vanity of evangelical triumphalism, and the contagion of the naked fear of the disciples on Good Friday.

This committee recommends a movement in that faith by which we may be warmed and encouraged, that faith which is "the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen" (Hebrews 11:1). We urge the support of agencies equipped to provide parenting classes for all families, in crisis and out of crisis. We implore all institutions political, social and ecclesiastical to provide incentives for a well educated citizenry. We admonish the modification of curricula that restores the thoughtful examination and adoption of the virtues by which any self government is assured to be courageous, moderate, just and wise. We call for the proper study

of psychic health whereby character may be shaped for the general good and not private gain. We trumpet the call to bold and sustained church involvement in the lives of the dispossessed, the lost, and the sacrilegious.

We ignore the need of the present age in its downward spiraling fall at the peril of the nation and at the risk of irrelevance for the church as the conscience of the nation. The call of the sacred unto righteousness and justice is uncommon and certain over the din of riotous living. So, we deplore the empty worship which amuses with glad songs and entertains with the spectacle of histrionic but unsound preaching lest we pique the ire of Amos' God.

I hate, I despise your religious feasts; I cannot stand your assemblies.

Even though you bring me burnt offerings and grain offerings, I will not accept them.

Though you bring choice fellowship offerings, I will have no regard for them.

Away with the noise of your songs! I will not listen to the music of your harps.

But let justice roll on like a river, righteousness like a never-failing stream!

(Amos 5:21 - 24)

Let the church renew the mandate to seek the lost, to restore the penitent, to feed the



"The call of the sacred unto righteousness and justice is uncommon and certain over the din of riotous living."

hungry and clothe the naked, to lift the fallen, to visit the sick, to set the captive free, and comfort the dying. Then she might serve both God and country well because her cross she did bear with brave undaunted obedience

Continued on last page

YOUR GIFT

By: *Cierra Cheyenne Bundy*



Tracey, Danella, Ryan and Alex were hanging out at their favorite beach in Oakland, California. The sun was hot and the water was cooler than ever. Tracey could feel the water splashing on her feet, soaking her new capris.

Danella looked out at the crisp cold water. "It's a nice day today. Too bad Cameron couldn't be here. But she should be here tomorrow, at least that is what her mom said," explained Danella . . . thinking about her best friend.

The four friends went into the water for a swim. When Alex swam towards the deep end she noticed a brown box with a golden handle and lock on it that was partly buried in the sand. She dove down into the water and swam towards it.

Alex grabbed for the box and tried pulling it out of the sand. After failing to lift the box

Alex decided to come up for air. Ryan saw Alex far out in the ocean and swam out to get her. His feet were hitting the water so fast and so hard it was as though weights were banging on them! Grabbing her arm he pulled her all the way back to shore. After drying off and catching her breath, Alex told her friends of what she saw. They all agreed to return the next day to find out what was in the box.

"It was almost like a treasure chest, and it was heavy! But there wasn't any writing on it," Alex explained to her friends the next day. Tracey, Danella, Cameron and Michael and John were all sitting around listening to Alex describe the box from the day before.

"Cool, let's go get it!" Cameron said excitedly. "Did it look old? Do you know if it was like thrown overboard or if it was lost?"

"Cameron! Calm

down. She has to figure out if she remembers where it is," Danella explained.

Alex looked around at her friends. John was looking as though he were tired but excited. Michael and Tracey were kind of just sitting around thinking. Cameron, of course, was giving Alex an impatient look. Danella was observing everyone the same as Alex. "Well, I do remember, but maybe we should wait until tomorrow and check." Alex looked out into the ocean. "I don't think it would be a good idea to rush back out there."

"Well it doesn't seem fair to us. I mean you saw it, so it doesn't surprise you, but we want to see it ourselves," protested Danella.

"I suppose you'll have to find it yourselves. I won't go back out until tomorrow," Alex refused stubbornly.

"When Alex swam towards the deep end she noticed a brown box with a golden handle and lock on it that was partly buried in the sand."



YOUR GIFT

“Do you have a reason?” Cameron asked angrily.

“I don’t want to get it. It’s not safe!” Alex exclaimed. Tracey stood up. “She is right. That’s the deep end. We could get hurt.”

“Ryan saved her yesterday and she promised to help us find it today.” Danella folded her arms and turned to Alex waiting for an answer.

Trying to break the tension between the friends John suggested, “Let’s go get some smoothies.” He pointed to the beach owner opening up the snack shop. The kids walked to the other side of the beach and found a table under a bright yellow umbrella. All the friends tried to forget about the treasure chest that Alex had mentioned. Michael continued to glance at Alex every few moments to see her reaction to her own thoughts.

Alex wasn’t really

paying attention to the conversation her friends were carrying on with James, the man who owned the beach. Michael nudged Alex with his elbow and pointed to the sign James had just set up on the counter.

SOLD CLOSING NEXT MONTH

Jumping out of her chair, Alex ran over to the counter. “What! You sold the beach? Are you crazy?”

“Well, I don’t have enough money to carry on long and no one really comes anymore. So, I figured I’d sell the place.” James shook his head sadly.

Michael ran up behind Alex. “Come on man, you can’t sell the beach!”

James shrugged his shoulders, “Business is business and there’s nowhere else for money to put in it, so, I had to do what I had to do.”

Danella thought and then gathered her

friends and told them her plan. “Okay, Alex, I know how you feel about going back out there, but do you want James to close down?” Danella asked rhetorically.

“Of course not! I have so much fun here. “When my little sister gets a little older I want her to have memories here too!” Alex looked back at James helping a customer.

Then Cameron caught on to the plan and realized what Danella was trying to do and joined in. “Well don’t you understand what James means when he says his money is tied up right now?” Cameron gave Danella a quick wink!

“Well, you know we have plenty of ideas to help but what do you think we should do?” Danella moved close to the water.

“We could go and find the treasure box and see what we can find, but that’s what



“Jumping out of her chair, Alex ran over to the counter. ‘What! You sold the beach? Are you crazy.’”



YOUR GIFT

you want me to say.”
Alex folded her arms.

“Yeah, but we need it . . . Please, just help us,” begged Cameron.

“I don’t want to but we have to. Now I have a plan. Okay . . . John, go get some info about the guy he sold it to,” Alex ordered.

“We should do some searching. I mean, for the box, right?” Tracey asked.

“Umm . . . Yeah, let’s go!” Alex kicked off her flip flops and threw off her over shirt, then dove into the water.

“Really?” Tracey exclaimed. The girls jumped in the water and pushed their way to the bottom. Alex came right to the box and came up to show the other girls and catch her breath.

Cameron looked down and saw the treasure chest. She pushed to the bottom and pulled at the chest. It didn’t budge. Tracey tried lifting the chest many different times.

The girls took a break and swam around a little. “I’m tired of this. It’s not worth it,” Tracey whined.

“Sure it is. Just try harder. We Can’t do it without you,” Alex encouraged.

The girls all pushed and pulled . . . and pushed and pulled. It popped up! When they dragged it to shore they were sore and out of breath. That’s when they noticed they were short one girl! “You guys, where is Tracey?” Danella asked worriedly.

“No wonder the chest seemed to get heavier about half way there,” Cameron gasped. “Oh no! When we were coming up she grabbed my leg. She must have fell or was being pulled.”

Alex sat the chest down and stood to look out across the water and madly whispered, “what happened?”

“I kicked her off. She tightened her grip

and scratched me,” Cameron explained. “I thought she was a crab or something.” Cameron showed the girls the marks Tracey made on her leg.

“Something had to have pulled her if she made these kinds of marks.” Danella inspected Cameron’s ankle. “What are we going to do?”

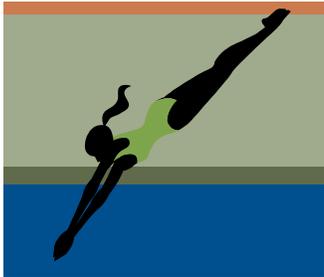
John noticed the girls looking worried and he also saw that they managed to get the box. “Hey, let’s open the box!” John suggested running over.

Alex turned to the box. “It’s locked,” pointing to the big lock on the box.

John tugged at the chain, twisted the chain and finally it popped open.

“Cool, how did you do that?” Cameron asked opening the lid. There was a note inside that read,

**NOTE OF THE
LAND OWNER**



“Alex kicked off her flip flops and threw off her over shirt, then dove into the water.”



YOUR GIFT

**YOU HAVE EARNED
MONIES ENOUGH TO
BECOME A TRUE
STAR: \$416,000,016.00**

**TO THE CURRENT
LAND OWNER ON
BROOKES PARADISE
BEACH**

**FROM THE OLD
ISLANDER BOAT**

"Where's Michael, John?" Danella asked. "They couldn't have lost two people."

"He went to the mall to send some people over here." John looked at the girls' worried faces. "Where is Tracey?" When no one answered John ran into the water and looked back and forth. He took a deep breath and swam out. Hearing water splashing, he turned only to realize it was just a fish.

Back at shore, Michael arrived with about 50 people. Then behind them they heard John come out of the water. "I can't find her. She has to be out there somewhere." John sighed and tried to change the subject for

the moment. "James said if Michael can keep people coming, he is going to need some new workers."

"Cool! I need a job anyways," replied Cameron. "I'll work for him. It would be fun to work at my favorite place."

"I guess I'll take the job too, but I thought we had to be 16 years old?" Alex asked.

"Well we can work something out, especially since we found this treasure chest." John turned as he heard splashing in the water. He pointed to the hands that were getting closer.

"Who is that?" Danella asked.

"Well I am not too sure but I think it's Tracey!" Alex shouted, jumping up and down. Just then Tracey came out of the water with the key.

"Hey you guys, I found the key!"

Alex did not think they would need it until

she saw a tiny box sitting on top of the coins scattered at the bottom. Tracey handed her the key and they opened the box. Everyone looked inside and found a solid gold chain necklace.

"What should we do with it?" Cameron asked.

At that point Alex gave it to Tracey and stated, "You deserve it." Everyone agreed . . . that is everyone except Tracey.

"Thanks but if you would have . . .," Tracey started.

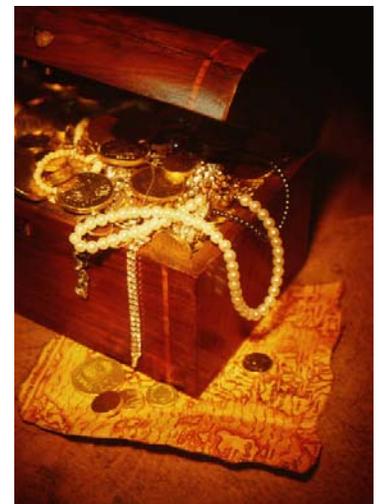
"Then give it to James. He'll have it for the work," Alex sighed. By that time Michael was back and Ryan had arrived. The friends turned in the money **and** the necklace and signed up for jobs.

After sorting everything out, Alex and her friends went for a swim together . . . **but not their last on the beach!**

Moral: Think it over. You have to share your treasure in order to receive your inheritance.



"Just then Tracey came out of the water with the key. 'Hey you guys, I found the key!'"



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AND I WILL SHOW YOU
A STILL MORE
EXCELLENT WAY

STATE OF THE COUNTRY

to the charge of the Christ who saves.

Though the diagnosis is bleak, the prognosis is ever good because we are convinced that the God who promised fruitfulness in the midst of Sarah's barrenness, the God who saved Israel from bondage, the God who ordered the way of David and raised the hopes of Job, the God who would not forsake a world consumed by sin and the pathology of power, the God who sent his only begotten son to die that all might

live and live more abundantly, the God who snatched love from death and resurrected the living savior from the grave, that God is in the venture with us to strengthen us in our weakness and to sustain us in our woe.

We have but to call upon him for his grace that we might do what we can, however small, however seemingly inconsequential to turn the tide of drug induced despair, to subvert the dominion of willful ignorance and to overcome the spirit of



the artist by John Sartain, 1841

R Allen

*Rev. Rev. Richard Allen,
1st Bishop of the African M.E. Church*

fear that our little is not enough. The psalmist is still right that,

the earth is the Lord's and the fulness thereof, the world, and they that dwell therein. For he hath founded it upon the seas, and established it upon the floods. (Psalm 24:1 - 2)

With him we sing,

Lift up your heads, O ye gates; even lift them up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of glory shall come in. (Psalm 24:9)

Literary Report, May 2006, The Virginia Annual Conference

