

Concerned Citizens of Tillery



25th Anniversary

Tillery Community Center, Tillery North Carolina

Saturday, November 1, 2003



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"WE MAKE THE DIFFERENCE"

**CELEBRATING 25 YEARS OF
POSITIVE SOCIAL CHANGE
1978-2003**

**Published by the
Concerned Citizens of Tillery
October 2003
Tillery, North Carolina**

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**with
Invaluable Expertise and Dedication of our Researcher & Graphic Artist**

**Tom Buller, PhD Candidate
University of Minnesota
Department of Geography**

And with

Much Time Donated by the CCT Staff and Volunteers

**Gary R. Grant, Executive Director
Doris Taylor Davis, President
Barbara Reynolds Demery, Office Manager
Naeema Muhammad, Community Organizer
Sita Dollie Redding, Special Projects Coordinator
Dorothy White Cannon, Ambassador of Human Resources**

And the

Wonderful Language and Skilled Wordsmithing of

**Evangeline Grant Redding Briley, Author/writer
Tillery, NC**

With Invaluable Foundation Support from



Greensboro, North Carolina

And with

Some Financial Support from Friends and Businesses of CCT

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DO WE HAVE YOUR PERMISSION TO BEGIN?

There is an old African Proverb that the Concerned Citizens of Tillery continues to use to teach respect, admiration, reverence and love of the elders in our lives. The tradition requires permission from the elders to begin any community event or activity.

Today, we salute 103-year-old Susie “Ma Sue” Weathersbee and request permission to begin our celebration.



OMS member Hazel Hendricks and former Halifax County Health Director Merle Greene look on as Susie “Ma Sue” Weathersbee gives permission to begin a program at the Tillery Community Center.

Dedicated
to
Gary R. Grant
for his untiring dedication and effort
towards achieving positive social change and
justice
for all people.

Gary with Eddie Cates,
who ran one of the Summer Youth Empowerment Camps.



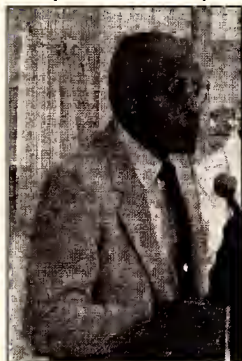
In his world of PROTEST,
NO HOG WASTE IN TILLERY!



Showing off the "Leadership
Award" from NC Legislative Black
Caucus to his Aunt Gertha.

In Honor of the SEVEN FOUNDING MEMBERS

*William W. Taylor,
1st President
(1912-1994)*



*Matthew Grant,
1st Vice President
(1918-2001)*



*Ruth Johnson,
1st Secretary*



*Booker T. Marrow
1st Treasurer
(1918 – 2000)*



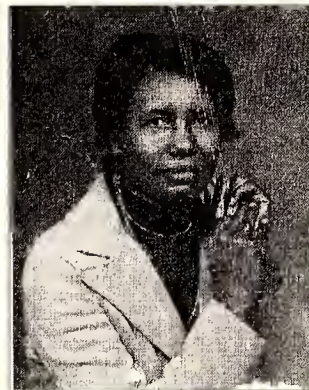
*Rolelia H. Herritage,
1st Membership Committee
Chair*



*Annie Mae Foreman,
1st Hospitality Committee
Chair*



*Laura Foreman,
1st Building
Custodian*



In Remembrance Of Lola Mae Whitaker Williams

December 4, 1939 ♀ September 30, 2003

Neighbor, Friend, Community Organizer,
CCT Board Member, Women's Rights Activist



IN TRIBUTE TO CCT's "90s" and CENTURIAN CLUBS

There are several members of the Concerned Citizens of Tillery who have made it into the elite "90s" Club, and they have come to CCT to share their wisdom and the wealth of their experiences. The members of the 90's Club are Lillie Fenner (95), Charlotte Branch (94) and the late Linwood Branch (91 – April 13, 2000), the only man to have made it into the 90s Club thus far.

Three members of CCT have made it over the Century mark, living more than 100 years. Hattie Johnson White (deceased – June 1993) at 104, Annie Johnson at 101, July 2003; and Susie "Ma Sue" Weathersbee turned 103 on September 29, 2003, and continues to be alert, and participates in activities of the Open Minded Seniors. "Ma Sue" celebrated this wonderful day with OMS on Tuesday, September 30.

The 90s Club



Charlotte Branch
94



Lillie Fenner
95



Linwood Branch
91 (deceased)

The CENTURIAN Club



Annie Johnson
101



Hattie "Mrs. Hat" White
104 (deceased)



Susie "Ma Sue" Weathersbee
103
in her regal African dress.

THE MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR GARY R. GRANT

Wow! Twenty-five years! I can hardly believe it!



As a general rule, Black community workers allay all personal dreams and ambitions and simply *commit*.

The 4 Concerned Citizens of Tillery (CCT) was first organized in March 1978, by seven bold and inspired members of the Tillery community who gathered around a roaring hot pot belly wood stove in the Tillery Community Center. We had no defined scholarly impulses, there was no radical political agenda, and we had no fancy cultural or ideological philosophy. But we were thinkers and movers. In our traditional language and with a noble view of ourselves, we exercised a fighting spirit that refused to be destroyed or impeded by the daily problems and terrorism of discrimination and indignation that we struggled with at all levels of our human endeavor.

Our children were symbolic of the dreams and possibilities of us as a people. We had the backbone of a history of relevant but bygone organizations. We shared the fixed purpose of doing whatever possible to save our community school and our historic “Town Hall,” better known at that time as the “Community Sto’.”

CCT’s presence in the community has sometimes been misunderstood, threatening, and contemptible. *The Willie Lynch Syndrome* has been hard at work during our 25 year existence. But we have stayed the course and been true to ourselves and to our mission.

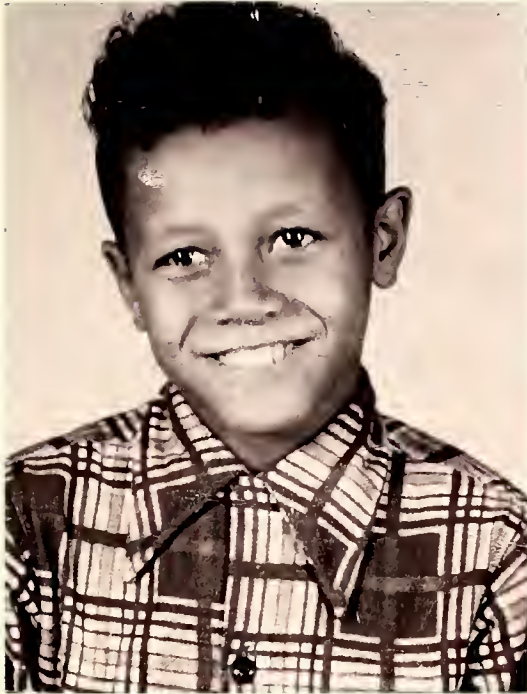
In the beginning, we literally organized on nickels and dimes and worked like a little energizer bunny machine, marching in great numbers with hand made picket signs, that has mushroomed into a highly developed organization that provides marginal and caring citizens with opportunities for political and social solidarity, leadership training, emotional expression, travel and critical thinking, while opening up a wider system of collective meaning and social programs.



Part of “Mr. Grant’s” 1975 8th Grade Classes from the former Tillery Chapel Elementary School on a field trip to Washington, DC. (Back Row) Gwendolyn Walden, Teresa Turnage, Janet Pittman, Veronica Hill; (Front Row) Gloria J. Knight, Janet Hendricks, Debbie Reynolds, Rose Ausby, Mr. Grant, Niketta Tillery, Denise Boone and Carol Cheek.

Some of you have watched me grow up and were familiar with the moral fiber and hard work and leadership of my parents, the late Matthew and Florenza Moore

Grant. During my twelve years of teaching your children and grandchildren at the Tillery Chapel Elementary School, some of you experienced my unwelcomed firmness, passion for excellence and reciprocity of duty inherited from my former teachers, the late Mrs. C.C. Lassiter, and Mrs. R. H. Herritage, also a founding member of CCT, and from so many ancestral teachers whose names and contributions are lost to posterity. It has been your pats on the back and nods of approval, timely suggestions and occasional criticism that have kept me strong, steady, and on course. There are those who would say that the only humility I suffer is obedience to the elders.



Gary R. Grant – age 9 Taken at the Rosenwald Tillery Chapel Elementary School.



Gary R. Grant - 1961
Brawley High School Graduate



Gary with Ma Sue during one of her 2002 visits to the Open Minded Seniors (OMS) meeting.

All of us have been overwhelmed by the relationships with partners and academic interns we have established throughout the country, who have supported us both financially and morally. At times, when we were at our lowest in funding, there would show up in the mail an unsolicited financial gift from some special supporters.



James Benson receives plaque of appreciation for his work on the Curin' House – October 1993



Gary R. Grant with Governor Ben Nelson of the Nebraska Groundwater Guardian Meeting, 1994.



Congresswoman Maxine Waters (D-CA), Gary, and Congresswoman Eva Clayton (D-NC) 2000 Campaign.



Former Intern Ira Dworkin meets Gary & CCT members for "We The People Award" in NY – 1995.

To those brave warriors who wish to start a grass roots organization, I join with many other community partners in saying you must be willing to *commit* all that you are and care about. Believe in yourself and your dream. Prepare to live a life of poverty with no insurance benefits. Strive for intellectual earnestness and honesty and have always as your impetus *the saving of our children*. Make reading and studying a daily habit. Stay on top of world issues and the economy. Be thorough in your bookkeeping, and record every day of your history as it happens. Photograph and video everything.

Incorporate an astute Board of Directors that is supportive and not timid in the mission. Hire yourself a great office manager like Barbara Reynolds Demery (a former student), and program staffers like Doris Taylor Davis (daughter of the late William Taylor, one of the seven founders) and Naeema Muhammad; and acquire a host of wonderful volunteers of the quality and dedication of Dorothy White Cannon, and Gladys Walden.

We feel good and proud, and energized for the next twenty-five!

What did you just say Barbara?



Gary takes the helm of the Pontoon Boat as Raymond Vincent looks on. The OMS were on there 2003 annual outing to the Vincent Family Retreat at Lake Gaston.

THE MESSAGE FROM THE FIRST WOMAN PRESIDENT OF CCT

The past twenty-five years holds within it a rich history with many memories for me as one of the notable presidents of The Concerned Citizens of Tillery.

Under the leadership of past presidents, William W. Taylor and Matthew Grant, my holding the office of president has been a learning experience from those two role models and pillars of the community. To be the president of an organization that is nationally known is gratifying, rewarding and challenging.

The office of president of a social change non-profit organization does not just mean sitting behind a desk and pushing a pencil. It means leadership, accountability and responsibility. The position is not to be taken lightly when so many issues have to be addressed that affect peoples' lives daily.

I was given the opportunity to be the president of CCT when I did not realize how much my own life was impacted by local, state and national political decisions (i.e. the lack of a living wage). I was

given the opportunity to learn leadership and technical skills that led to my becoming aware of what was needed then and in the future to help me make a better living for myself and for my family.

Skills, such as becoming computer literate, letter writing, public speaking skills, sending faxes, and copying, etc. in small rural crossroads communities like Tillery, NC, were very rare when I first became president.

The most rewarding opportunity I have had is to work along side our Executive Director, Gary R. Grant. Under his leadership, I have grown mentally and socially. His vision of what a social change organization can do to help people has certainly changed me as well as countless others.



Sarah Clark from Roanoke Electric Coop's Care Trust presents check to Doris – 2002.



Doris protesting at one of the Black farmers rallies in Washington, DC

Though at times the challenge of president vs. executive director is heavy, I pull through and work goes on as usual.

As the parent organization to seven member groups and several projects, things can become stressful at times, but with so many great volunteers, an excellent staff and positive outlooks, stress is overcome quickly.

The Concerned Citizens of Tillery (CCT) survives because of the concerns that people have for people; the love that people have for each other; the trust that is built

for one another; empowerment of all generations; working collaboratively on projects while seeking to overcome classism and all other “isms”; growth that has occurred within our community; and the creative energy that makes difficult situations work, like being employed by the organization for which I am president.

It is truly gratifying to know that the quality of life for people has been improved because of CCT through its work of educating, bringing about awareness, and nurturing.

The rewards are the **renewed spirits** of the Open Minded Seniors, the **testimony of patients** whose lives have been saved by the Tillery Peoples Health Clinic, and seeing **Nubian Youth** grow up to become productive adults that give back to their community.



Doris & Barbara with the Sistah's United for Breast Cancer Awareness Project at Becker Village Mall, Roanoke Rapids – 2002.

I say we will continue to fight for justice, keep the faith and work for a just health care system and peace for all.



Our Children! Our Future!

As Margaret Mead said, “Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful committed people can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has.”

Doris T. Davis
President

Introduction

"If we have no sense of community, the American dream will continue to wither." President Bill Clinton

History is "that which someone thought important enough to write down," Reverend James M. Johnson, then President of the Halifax County Black Caucus, told the Open Minded Seniors in 1990. By writing some of the history of the Concerned Citizens of Tillery, this book is a lasting tribute to the importance of the Concerned Citizens of Tillery, an organization which has long been a beacon to local, national and international groups looking for ways to organize around issues of social justice for those whom most of the rest of society attempts to marginalize.



1982- Protesting the Tillery Chapel School Closing (Patricia Goddard, Linda McGee, Cheryl Tillery, and twins , Gary R. and Haile B. Redding in carriage).

The Concerned Citizens of Tillery (CCT) developed in the spring of 1978 to fight against a variety of changes in the Tillery community, primarily the actions of the Halifax County Board of Education to close the Tillery Chapel Elementary School.

The school was to close due to dwindling enrollment because of the out migration of young adults from the Tillery community.

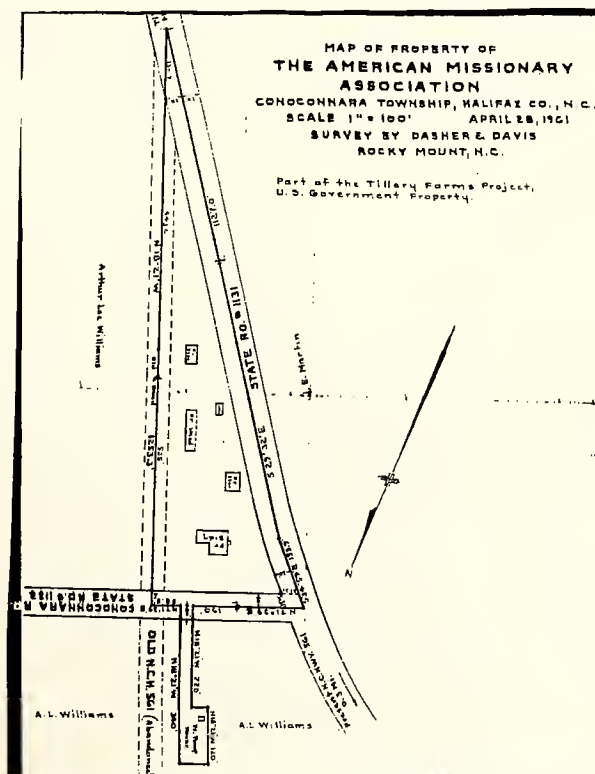


The Tillery Community Center prior to renovation in 1983.

The Tillery Chapel Elementary School building would later become a sewing factory to "create economic development." Gary R. Grant said that, "If you really want to kill off a community, what you do is close the school."

The school closing was attacked with a variety of methods, with Lola William, Bessie Solomon and Elizabeth Davis leading the call. First, concerned parents and community members met with the superintendent. This did not lead to any significant change, so the community began a petition to keep the school open. The organizing effort culminated in 1979 with a mass march 10 miles from the Tillery Chapel Elementary School, to the county school board office in Halifax, NC. About 150 people turned out for this event and it was the crowning achievement of this particular struggle. The fight initially succeeded in keeping the school open until 1981. When the school was closed, the community petitioned to take control of the building, but it was sold to open a sewing factory.

A second challenge that developed in Tillery was the United Church of Christ's decision to sell the Tillery Community Center. CCT began to organize to purchase the property. The Community Center was purchased by the Concerned Citizens of Tillery, using money that was gathered within the community. A variety of events such as bake sales, gospel singing programs, and the organizing of the Road Captains to secure memberships for CCT were held to raise money to purchase the Community Center.



Map of the Tillery
Community Center Property



1983- (Top) CCT receives its first grant to renovate the Community Center. (Bottom) At left Tonja Williams cleans windows. At right, Doris Davis and Sita Redding and others assist.



1984- The Tillery Community Center during the First Citizens Recognition Ceremony in October- after the renovation.

These two initial struggles demonstrated the community's ability to face adversity. Thus, the Concerned Citizens of Tillery began to address other issues that challenged the community. The Concerned Citizens of Tillery was incorporated February 4, 1983 by

Matthew Grant, William Taylor, and Haywood Harrell; with the help of Sister Iva Gregory and Sister Maureen Fenlon of the Adrian Dominican Sisters, Adrian, Michigan, who were in the area establishing a house for battered women. On June 14, 1984, CCT received its 501 (c)(3) status from the Internal Revenue Service, making it a tax-exempt organization. Thus, The Concerned Citizens of Tillery became the first community based, tax-exempt non-profit organization incorporated by the citizens of Tillery. In 1983, CCT also received its first grant from the Z. Smith Reynolds Foundation for \$15,000.



FAMILY DAYS



(Top) 1983 Family Day- CCT's General Director Gary R. Grant with Tanisha Boone, 2nd runner up for Little Ms. CCT, Tasha Dickens, Little Ms. CCT 1983, Natasha Kittrell, 1st Runner Up for Little Ms. CCT, and Delma Davis, the first Ms. Black Earth.



1985 Contestants for Little Mr. and Ms. Tillery (left to right)- FRONT- Donald Ray Hendricks, Adrian T. Shearin, Lateshia Johnson, Cedric T. Pittman, Tanika Davis; back, Jeffrey Solomon, Ebony Moore, Florissa Hale, Nicole James, Tamekia Goddard.



1988 Gary Grant (left) with unknown Little Mr. CCT (2nd from left), who will pass the crown to Gary R. Redding (2nd from right), also pictured: First Runner Up- Second Runner Up- Tanika Davis (third from left), and Fourth Runner Up- Monee Peebles (right).



1990- Little Mr. CCT 1989 Gary Redding (center) presents the Little Miss and Little Mr. CCT awards to Deneen Reynolds (l) and Stephon James (r).



1990- Little Miss CCT Deneen Reynolds and Little Mr. CCT Stephon James with their mothers, Evelyn Hendricks Reynolds and Tina Thigpen James.

In 1980, CCT began holding Family Day celebrations, usually held each August, to bring the community together. This tradition has since passed on,

but there were a number of family days held throughout the years. The Family Day was a big celebration that brought members of the Tillery Community together to fellowship. Family was the occasion for numerous activities including the Little Mr. or Little Ms. Tillery. Also, there were many Recognition Dinners which started in 1984. These dinners celebrated the efforts and achievements of CCT and its members. The longest standing tradition is that of the Holiday Fellowship hour, which provides people a chance for fellowship around the end of the year, to celebrate Kwanzaa and Christmas, together and to look forward to the coming year.



CAMP CONTRIBUTION — Mrs. Adell Davis, President of the Tillery Home Extension Club, presents a check to Gary Grant, General Director of Concerned Citizens of Tillery for recreational equipment and craft supplies for the Summer Day Camp being held at the Tillery Community Center. Other members of the Home Extension Club are (left to right): Mrs. Sally Lyons, Mrs. Beatrice Turnage, Mrs. Adell Davis, Mrs. R. H. Herritage, Mrs. Ruth Johnson, Mrs. Beulah Johnson.

The Concerned Citizens of Tillery has grown over the years, and as new hardships confronted the community of Tillery, CCT created new member organizations to tackle these challenges. First, in 1983 the Committee to Save Black Owned Land was formed, which later became the Land Loss Fund. Other organizations - the Area Wide Health Committee, the Open Minded Seniors, the Nubian Youth, the Grown Folk Group, HELP, the Economic

Development Committee, and the History Project have all developed to work on various issues confronting the Tillery Community. The individual histories and accomplishments of these organizations are detailed in Part III of this book entitled, "The Organizations of CCT."

To achieve the many great things that the Concerned Citizens of Tillery are known for has required the dedication of many people. Indeed, the strong leaders and active members of the Concerned Citizens of Tillery are what have made this organization great. Some of those who stand out are recognized in Part IV, which is entitled "The People of CCT."

CCT has long been a leader across the state, and indeed, the Concerned Citizens of Tillery is nationally and internationally recognized for its history of improving the lives of citizens in Tillery, throughout North Carolina and across the nation as its long record of awards and achievements attests to. In this 25th year of CCT's existence, there is no better time to reflect upon the past than now.



The Tillery Community Center in 2003.

CONCERNED CITIZENS OF TILLERY 25 YEARS OF ACHIEVEMENT

1978- March- The Concerned Citizens of Tillery was formed! With seven founding members.

150 people marched 12 miles from the Tillery Chapel Elementary School to the Halifax County School Administrative Office to protest the closing of the Tillery Chapel School.

August- CCT holds first Family Day Celebration.

1981- CCT reclaimed the Tillery Community Center property for the Community.

CCT is incorporated as a non-profit organization in the state of North Carolina.

CCT receives first grant for \$15,000 from the Z. Smith Reynolds Foundation to renovate the Tillery Community Center.

CCT helps to establish the *People's Voice Newspaper*.

1982- CCT led the Tillery Community to elect the community's first representative to the Halifax County School Board, Gary R. Grant.

1983- April- CCT organizes The Committee to Save Black Owned Land, which established the Land Loss Fund to protect local Black farmers and landowners.

March 7- CCT becomes the first 501(c) 3 community-based organization in the town of Tillery.

June- CCT's Land Loss Fund hosts the First Miss Black Earth Pageant. A total of four pageants were held to raise funds to support area Black farmers. Delma Davis was crowned Miss Black Earth 1983 for raising over \$1200 to support the local Black farmers through the Land Loss Fund, and approximately \$5000 was raised by the first pageant participants.

1984- CCT organizes the First Tillery Community Health Fair with the North Carolina Student Rural Health Coalition.

CCT institutes the first internship program for young college students.

The Second Miss Black Earth Pageant is held. Cynthia Pitchford is the winner.

1985- CCT brought in Heifer Project International to help diversify Black farmer's incomes and established the Farmers United for Survival.

1986- First Summer Youth Empowerment Camp was held at the Tillery Community Center.

The 3rd Miss Black Earth Pageant is held. Paulette Johnson is the winner.

July- The Open Minded Seniors was organized and has been providing weekly meetings and activities for seniors in the Tillery area ever since.

1987- Established the Area Wide Health Committee to make health care accessible to the Community.

The 4th Miss Black Earth Pageant is held. Deborah Solomon is the winner.

1991- CCT receives First Halifax County Health Department's Rippling Effect Award.

Grown Folk Group was established.

1992- Halifax Environmental Loss Protection (HELP) was organized and warded off large corporate hog factories from invading Halifax County.

CCT led the struggle with HELP in Halifax County and helped to write the FIRST INTENSIVE LIVESTOCK ORDINANCE for any county in North Carolina.

CCT established the NC Hog Roundtable bringing over 40 grassroots community groups and traditional environmental groups together, a first in North Carolina.

The North Carolina Food Bank Awards
stock to CCT- one of 7 awards out of 110 agencies.



April- CCT wins the Halifax County NAACP Image Award.

CCT is one of the founding members of the North Carolina Center for Nonprofits.

1993- CCT won the First INTERNATIONAL HEALTHIER COMMUNITIES AWARD presented by the Healthcare Forum in San Francisco, CA.



Economic Development Committee Established.

CCT's HELP group organizes HOGTOBER FEST II to protest the local invasion of corporate hog factories.

1994- CCT becomes one of eight pilot Groundwater Guardian Programs in the United States and Canada.



CCT helps to establish the EPA REGION IV African American Environmental Justice Action Network.

The Nubian Youth receives Youth of the Year award from Spiritual Connections Community Network.

1995- September- CCT was selected as one of 50 communities from around the world by the Friends of the United Nations as being exemplary of the mission of the United Nations for Self-development of people.



Aug 30- CCT opens the "Remembering Tillery... A New Deal Resettlement" photo exhibit in the Taylor family home (William and Madeline Smith Taylor).

CCT won the NC State Historic Halifax Resolves Award for its Photo Exhibit of "Remembering Tillery.... A New Deal Resettlement." We were the first African American group or individual to receive the award.

CCT reclaimed the Johnson Café property for the Community, now the Resettlement Café.

CCT in conjunction with East Carolina University wins a Learn and Serve America grant.

CCT calls for the first meeting to organize and establish the Tillery Volunteer Fire Department and district.



1996- CCT's Executive Director, Gary R. Grant won the Trail Blazer award for extraordinary action in building the environmental justice movement, from the EPA REGION IV African American Environmental Justice Action Network.

March- CCT helps to put together the March In March. Over 600 people showed up and marched several miles through Roanoke Rapids.

July- CCT, in conjunction with the NC Hog Roundtable, successfully gets a Moratorium on expansion and new hog factories in the state of North Carolina. This moratorium has been continued by the NC Legislature every two years and will currently expire in 2007.

CCT helps to organize the HIV/AIDS Awareness March in Halifax County.

September- CCT successfully worked with the Halifax County Health Department and the School of Public Health at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill in securing a grant from the National Institute of Environmental and Health Sciences Environmental Justice Division. The grant was for 4 years and allowed CCT to continue organizing around the issue of Environmental Racism.

December- CCT was featured on CBS' 60 Minutes. CCT was part of a segment entitled "Pork Power" which was hosted by Morley Safer.

1997- Renew America Certificate of Achievement is awarded to CCT.

CCT's Executive Director, Gary R. Grant wins the Halifax County NAACP's First ever Humanitarian Award.

CCT was featured on NC NOW, a weekly NC PBS TV program. Our segment dealt with Economic Development in NC.

March 20-22 - CCT's Land Loss Fund hosted "And then there was none..." the first national Black Land Loss Summit in the New Deal Resettlement Community of Tillery, NC and at the Historic Franklinton Center at Bricks.

July- CCT's Executive Director, Gary R. Grant was featured on C-SPAN while testifying before the Congressional Black Caucus.

July- CCT was featured on a re-airing of CBS' 60 Minutes. CCT was part of a segment entitled "Pork Power" which was hosted by Morley Safer.

August - CCT, through its Land Loss Fund, is lead organizer for the new national Black Farmers & Agriculturalists Association (BFAA). BFAA members went on to file the now historic *Pigford vs. Glickman* Class Action Law Suit on behalf of Black farmers resulting in a \$2.4 billion settlement.

October- CCT's executive director, Gary R. Grant was featured C-SPAN while testifying before the House Agricultural Committee.

October- CCT organized and hosted the First North Carolina Statewide, Community-Based Environmental Justice Summit at Franklinton Center in Bricks, NC.

December - CCT's executive director, Gary R. Grant, was one of 10 African American farmers from around the country to be selected to take the Black farmers issue to the White House and meet with President Bill Clinton.

1998- February- CCT's Land Loss Fund hosted the second national Black Land Loss Summit at the Historic Franklinton Center at Bricks.

February- CCT's HELP project wins Renew America's 1998 Environmental Success Index Award.

CCT organized the North Carolina Environmental Justice Network (NCEJN) and has worked with the Network to host annual community driven NCEJ Summits.

CCT's executive director, Gary R. Grant was elected the first president of the national Black Farmers & Agriculturalists Association.

October- Governor Hunt declares Environmental Justice Awareness Week during the 2nd Annual North Carolina Environmental Justice Summit.

1999- February- CCT organized, with the Black Farmers & Agriculturalist Association (BFAA), The Third National Black Land Loss Summit held in Durham, NC.

October- The Tillery Resettlement is named an Official Project of “Save America’s Treasures,” sponsored by the Trust for Historic Preservation. This is the only community to achieve this notoriety.

CCT’s Land Loss Fund and BFAA organize farmers and supporters to hold 3 demonstrations in Washington D.C. to protest the unjust resolution of the *Pigford v. Glickman* lawsuit.

CCT wins a Trailblazer Award for extraordinary action in building the environmental justice movement, from the EPA REGION IV African American Environmental Justice Action Network.

December- CCT and its Learn and Serve Project with East Carolina University are named one of the “Points of Light” by the Points of Light Foundation, founded by former president George H. W. Bush.

2000- March- CCT’s executive director, Gary R. Grant, representing the Land Loss Fund and BFAA meets with President George W. Bush on behalf Black farmers.

CCT’s Land Loss Fund organizes, in conjunction with the Black Farmers & Agriculturalists Association (BFAA) 6 demonstrations in Washington, DC to protest the unjust settlement of *Pigford v. Glickman*.

October- CCT receives the U.S. Forest Service Rural Community National Outreach Award for “Spirit, Hard Work and Commitment to the Future.”



CCT works to organize Citizens against Rural Dumping (CARD) to combat a proposal by the Halifax County Commissioners to site a regional landfill in a poor, predominantly Black community, within 1 mile of two schools, in Halifax County.

2001- CCT wins Outstanding Non-Profit Support Award from the North Carolina Council for Women.

CCT wins a second grant from the National Institute for Environmental Health Sciences.

2002- February- CCT's Land Loss Fund and the Black Farmers & Agriculturalist Association (BFAA) organized the Fourth National Black Land Loss Summit held in Atlanta, GA.

CCT completes its commitment to 8 years participation in the Groundwater Guardian Program.

July- Members of Land Loss Fund and BFAA meet with Secretary of Agriculture Anne Veneman.

Aug 30-Sept 1, During Labor Day Weekend - CCT hosted the First Tillery-Wide Community Reunion and launched the Tillery Reunion Committee.

2003- January CCT hosted the 4th Halifax County Martin Luther King, Jr. Day, in conjunction with Hollister REACH, the Halifax County Human Relations Commission, the Scotland Neck Coordinating Committee, the Halifax County NAACP and the Halifax County Black Caucus.

February- CCT's Land Loss Fund organized the 5th National Land Loss Summit held in Kernersville, North Carolina.

Spring- CCT is Central Story in *East Magazine*, Spring 2003 issue.

May- CCT's OMS holds "A Senior Umoja Extravaganza: The Real Senior Prom."

June- CCT was featured on the re-airing of CBS' 60 Minutes. CCT was part of a segment entitled "Pork Power" which was hosted by Morley Safer. This was the 3rd airing of the segment

June- CCT's executive director, Gary R. Grant testifies at the Progressive Congressional Caucus, Washington, DC briefing on the impact of Free Trade Agreements.

June - July -CCT holds the 14th Camp in June-July of 2003.

September- CCT executive director Gary R. Grant is recognized by Johns Hopkins University's Center for A Livable Future with the Individual Award for Leadership in Environmental Stewardship.

October 21, CCT Receives the Natural Community Champion Award from The Conservation Fund.



Gary R. Grant, Doris T. Davis and Umphrey Tillery accept the KEEP IT NATURAL CAROLINAS Award from Mikki Sager. 37 OMS members traveled to Windsor, NC for the ceremony.

CCT's Executive Director, Gary R. Grant receives the Torchbearer Award for Excellence in Organizing for Democracy, from DEMOCRACY NC.

November- Doris Taylor Davis, CCT President, recognized by the Halifax County Commissioners for service to the county Human Relations Council.

**CCT CELEBRATES Its Silver Anniversary!
25 YEARS of Positive Social Change!!!!**

FOREWORD

The celebration of 25 years of positive social change by the Concerned Citizens of Tillery culminates on November 1st 2003, but the entire year of 2003 has been dedicated to remembering and celebrating the great achievements of CCT. This year has brought a number of special events, times to learn, times to remember and times to dance. These celebrations not only reminded us of the past, they also give us a chance to look forward, and to experience the ongoing power and joy that the Concerned Citizens of Tillery bring to northeastern North Carolina and the rest of the world.

Planning for this year of celebration started back in December 2002. Some of the events that have occurred over this past year include: a special Black History Month teach-in led by Dr. Marcus Tillery, NC A&T State University, in February; In April CCT hosted the Family Talent and Fashion Show. This was a huge gala event, hosted by Dorothy White Cannon and featured the Whole Village Drum and Dance Ensemble from Warrenton, NC, and The Fay Wooten Full Figure Models, Philidelphia, PA. The models were Faye Wooten, Cary White, Jr., Theresa Harvey, Shaneese James and Shanell James.



Front row – Little Ellington Blalock, 4 Members of the Praise Dancers of Scotland Neck.
Second row – Gary R. Redding, Marie Gray; Ebony Moore, Theresa Harvey, a Member of the Praise Dancers, Tanika Davis and Erma Battle Williams.

On May 24 the Open Minded Seniors hosted the real Seniors' Senior Prom- a **"SENIOR UMOJA EXTRAVAGANZA."** This event brought out more than 200 people of all ages to the Weldon Elementary School for dinner followed by an evening of dancing. Six women from OMS vied for the title of Queen of the Prom and 3 men vied to become King of the Prom. In the end, Clementine Fenner Sledge was crowned Queen, closely followed by Elnora Arrington Johnson; and James Harris was crowned King, and the first runner up was Claude Ford.



The Royal Court for the Senior Umoja Extravaganza. (Seated Left-Right) Claude Ford, King of the Prom James Harris, Queen of the Prom Clementine Sledge, Elnora Johnson; (standing l-r) Martha Lawrence, Hazel Hendricks, Umphrey Tillery, Lula Sledge, and Elvenia Russell.

In June, CCT continued the celebration with a Teach-in on the History of the Resettlement Communities, instructed by Dr. Robert Zabawa, Tuskegee, AL. This teach-in brought the community new information about the history of the resettlement and the New Deal. In addition to Dr. Zabawa's presentation "A Year Round Kwanzaa" was celebrated and there was a performance of the reading play "Predny and Yestidy," written by Evangeline Grant Redding Briley. Also in June,

Susie Weathersbee, returned to the Open Minded Seniors at the tender young age of 102 after major surgery. She told the group "I am not sick, I just can't walk."

In August, another Teach-in was held titled "Farming While Black: The Tillery Connection". This time the presenter was Tom Buller, Ph.D.

Candidate at the University of Minnesota. He discussed the history of the Tillery Resettlement and the decline of Black farming in Halifax County and across the country.

Finally, in Septemeber CCT made preparations for the big celebration on November 1, by holding a meeting to discuss the progress of this history book.



Gary Redding serenades Lola Williams at the Family Talent and Fashion Show in April 2003.

Tom Buller presented a tentative draft of the book to members of the CCT History Committee, who then discussed the layout of the book, and reminisced over many of the memories brought up by the preliminary draft of the history book.



The First meeting of the 25th Anniversary Planning Committee. Pictured (Row 1) Bernice Foster, Gary R. Grant, Tanika Davis, Cary White, Jr.; (Row 2) Naeema Muhammad, Sita Dollie Redding, Dorothy White Cannon, Evangeline Grant Briley, Morrisa Demery, Bruce K. Grant, Doris Taylor Davis; (Row 3) Steve Wing, Shanae Couch, Cary M. Grant, Jr. Barbara Demery, Claude Ford, and Clarence Fenner.

Susie "Ma Sue"
Weathersbee attending a
meeting of the Open
Minded Seniors in June
2003, at age 102. Also
pictured (left-right) Cary
White Jr, Emma Dancy
and Gary R. Grant.



Robert Zabawa with
New Deal Resettlers
Charlotte Branch, and
Lois Barkley



CONCERNED CITIZENS OF TILLERY
25TH ANNIVERSARY ACTIVITIES
Celebrating 25 Years of Positive Social Change: Predny and Yestidy
(1978 – 2003)

4th Halifax County Martin Luther King, Jr. Celebration

January 20, 2003

Dr. Marcus Tillery, Keynote Speaker, NC A&T State University
Halifax County Agricultural Center Auditorium
Halifax, NC

The School of Allied Health Sciences - East Carolina University
Black History Month Celebration

THE TILLERY EXPERIENCE

February 10, 2003

Mary Susan Templeton, Dr. Teresa Conner-Kerr, Dr. Peggy Wittman – ECU Faculty
Gary R. Grant & Doris Taylor Davis – CCT
Bridget Katana & Other Current Students – ECU
Greenville, NC

5th National Black Land Loss Summit

February 7 – 9, 2003

Dudley Inn & Conference Center
Kernersville, NC

Black History Workshop

Teach-In: The War in Iraq, Homeland Security and Civil Liberties

Dr. Marcus Tillery
NC A&T State University
February 22, 2003
Tillery Community Center
Tillery, NC

Voices Reaching Visions

(A Sequel to Community Voices)

Dr. Shirley Callaway, Keynote Speaker, NC A&T State University
April 8, 2003
Tillery Community Center
Tillery, NC

A Salute to the
Concerned Citizen of Tillery's 25th Anniversary
ECU OT Tillery Alumni Reunion

April 12, 2003
Tillery Community Center
Tillery, NC

Family Talent & Fashion Show

Featuring
The Whole Village Drum & Dance Ensemble
&
Faye Wooten Full Figured Models, Philadelphia, PA
April 19, 2003
Tillery Community Center
Tillery, NC

A Senior *Umoja* Extravaganza

(The Real Senior Prom)
May 24, 2003
Weldon, Elementary School
Weldon, NC

New Deal Teach-In

Robert Zabawa, PhD - Tuskegee University
June 21, 2003
Tillery Community Center
Tillery, NC

Teach-In

Farming While Black: The Tillery Connection

Tom Buller, PhD Candidate, University of Minnesota
August 16, 2003
Tillery Community Center
Tillery, NC

A Preview of

CCT's 25th Anniversary Souvenir Book

Tom Buller, PhD Candidate, University of Minnesota
September 27, 2003
Tillery Community Center
Tillery, NC

CCT's 25th Anniversary Celebration

Marla Frederick, PhD - Harvard University
Tom Buller, PhD Candidate - University of Minnesota
NC State Representative John D. Hall (7th District)
Congressman Frank W. Balance, Jr (1st District)
November 1, 2003
Tillery Community Center
Tillery, NC

Holiday Fellowship Hour

December 28, 2003
Tillery Community Center
Tillery, NC



Marcus Tillery, PhD
Martin Luther King, Jr. Day, Keynoter
&
Black History Teach In:
The War In Iraq: Homeland Security



Emory Campbell
Keynote Speaker
5th Black Land Loss Summit



Dr. Shirley Callaway
Voices Reaching Visions
Keynote Speaker



Talent & Fashion Show Models
Teresa Harvey, Faye Wooten,
Shaneese James, Shanell James,
Cary White, Jr.



King & Queen of the Prom
James Harris &
Clementine Sledge



Dr. Robert Zabawa
Tech-In: New Deal Communities
With Resettlers
Charlotte Branch & Lois Barkley



Tom Buller, PhD Candidate
Teach-In: Farming While Black: The Tillery Connection
&
25th Anniversary Book Preview

CONCERNED CITIZENS OF TILLERY
25TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION
25 Years of Positive Social Change: "Predny and Yestidy"
NOVEMBER 1, 2003

Celebrating 25 Years (1978 – 2003) of Positive Social Change

9am - Workshop – How your Land\$ Can Make You \$\$\$ Without Ha\$\$le

Gerry Cohn – American Farmland Trust, Pittsboro, NC

Mikki Sager – The Conservation Fund, Chapel Hill, NC

Kelly Mance – NC State University, Raleigh, NC

Mike Hester – Orange County Small Farmer

Land Loss Prevention Project – Durham, NC

11am - Re-Opening - Tillery Historic Photo Exhibit

The Welcome

Marla Frederick, PhD – Harvard University

1:30pm - Dinner – Food for Meat and Veggie Lovers

2pm - 25TH ANNIVERSARY PROGRAM

The Welcomes

Presentation on the Souvenir Book – Tom Buller, PhD Candidate – University of MN

Representative John Hall (NC House of Representative – 7th District)

Keynote Speaker – Congressman Frank W. Ballance, JR. (NC 1st Congressional District)

Entertainment

Connie Harvey, International Gospel Singer

Other Gospel Singers

Steve Wing, Jazz Keyboard

Youth Activities

Anniversary Souvenir Book Available

AND MUCH MUCH MORE!!!

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 2, 2003

WORSHIP AT THE CHURCH OF YOUR CHOICE

Galilee Baptist – 11am

Tillery Chapel Baptist – 11am

Crowells Baptist – 8am

Mary's Chapel Baptist – 11am

A YEAR ROUND KWANZAA

Kwanzaa is a holiday, founded in 1966 by Dr. Maulana “Ron” Karenga as a unique African American Celebration for seven days with seven principles to learn. The word *Kwanzaa* is derived from a Kiswahili phrase, *matunda ya kwanza*, which means “first fruits.” The second “a” is added to the word *kwanzaa* to represent African American. A



Year Round *Kwanzaa* means to celebrate *Kwanzaa* year round by keeping the seven principals daily.

The celebration of *Kwanzaa* is a means for African Americans to reaffirm their commitment to themselves, their families, their community, and the Black struggle for equality and justice. *Kwanzaa* provides African Americans with spiritual renewal and sustenance, as well as an opportunity to connect with their rich cultural heritage.

Today many of us no longer participate in the

harvest as we once did. However, we do have our minds and therefore can plant the seeds of UNITY in our heads and hearts so the seeds will grow, and we will be cultivated to our culture and educated to our history, struggle and future.

NGUZO SABA means the seven **PRINCIPLES** and each one is on a mission for a righteous cause:

UMOJA – Unity (United as clenched tight fist)

KUJICHAGULIA – Self-Determination (turn your tear into a spear)

UJIMA – Responsibility (look out for one another)

UJAMAA – Cooperative Economics (put our money together)

NIA – Purpose (we must have a purpose as a people)

KUUMBA – Creativity (our artistic heritage)

IMANI – Faith (believe in our Creator, race, parents, teachers, and leaders)

Part One:
The Roots of CCT

TILLERY ORGANIZATIONS BEFORE CCT

Twenty-five years ago, Concerned Citizens of Tillery (CCT) came into existence, but prior to the flourishing of CCT, there were organizations of great importance in the Tillery Community that sustained the social, political and economic life of citizens in the area.

WE SALUTE THESE ORGANIZATIONS WITH GREAT PRIDE AND HOMAGE AND THE LEADERSHIP STRATEGIES THAT KEPT THEM OPERATING FOR SO MANY YEARS. If anyone has additional names and histories of Tillery organizations, please feel free to contact our office.

(listed alphabetically)

CONNOCANARA BURIAL SOCIETY

CITIZENS ACTION GROUP, INC (CAG)

HOME DEMONSTRATION CLUB

N A A C P, Lower Halifax County Branch
(the First Branch in the region)

TILLERY EXCHANGE ASSOCIATION

TILLERY FARMERS CO-OP

TILLERY IMPROVEMENT ASSOCIATION

TILLERY TEENAGE CLUB

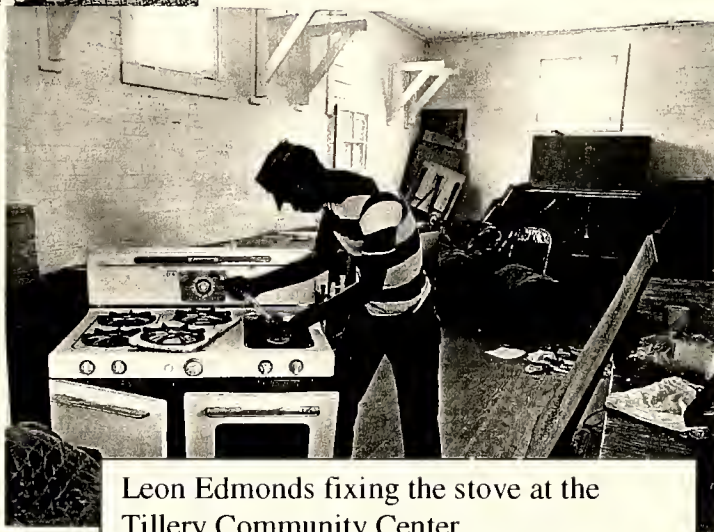
Citizens Action Group, Jr.

(CAG, JR.)

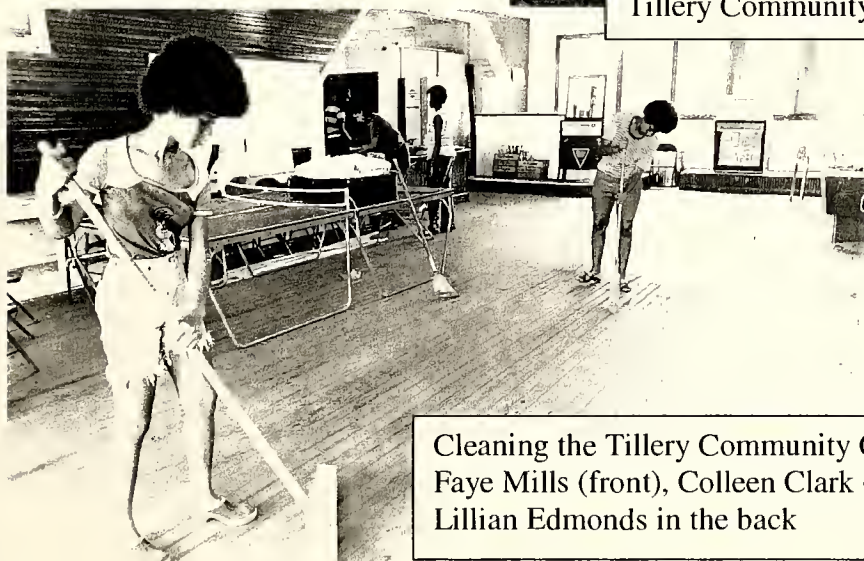
Family Day 1972



Adell Edmonds Davis (l), Rosa Edmond Walden, and Ruth Johnson prepare food!



Leon Edmonds fixing the stove at the Tillery Community Center



Cleaning the Tillery Community Center: Linda Faye Mills (front), Colleen Clark (center) and Lillian Edmonds in the back

Linda Faye Mills Jones (left)
Ms. Tillery and Ms. Voter
Registration (1972) with
Congressional Candidate
Howard Mills, Ms. Hollister,
and Sam Taylor, President of
CAG, Jr.



Adell Edmonds Davis (l), Gary R. Grant
(center) and Rosa Walden prepare food for
Family Day.



Sandy Walden trimming bushes
around the Community Center.



Part Two:
The Work of CCT

CCT: THE CATALYST THAT MAKES THE DIFFERENCE

CCT has been a catalyst for positive social change not only in the Tillery Community and Halifax County, but across the state, nation and the world. While the issues that CCT addresses start with what is confronting the Tillery community, the struggles do not stop at the community boundaries of Tillery. In fact CCT members pursue justice and help others across the nation and world. This has made CCT a national and international leader in a variety of areas, from justice for Black farmers, to health care, to environmental justice. In all of these fields, CCT has served as a catalyst, leading others to achieve great milestones.



Congratulations

Delores H. Amason (right), a Business Education instructor at Halifax Community College,

congratulates her mother, Mrs. Cossie L. Harvey of Tillery, upon passing the test for the High School Equivalency Exam recently.

1987- Cossie L. Harvey, 1st president of the Open Minded Seniors, and CCT Board member, Delores H. Amason.

CCT has always been centrally focused on improving the lives of Tillery residents, through many ways. CCT offered Adult Basic Education classes, and many students of these classes went on to get their high school equivalency diploma, and as one student, Ann Couch said, "When I entered the class here at the Center I found support that I never had before." She went on to graduate from Halifax County Community college with a B average!

Besides helping its members get an education, CCT has been an ardent advocate for quality education in Halifax County. In 1986, a great struggle between the community members

and the Halifax County Board of Education occurred. In order to prevent the Board from terminating the contract of the first female and the only Black woman superintendent, ever, of the Halifax County School System, 5 members of the Halifax County Black Caucus, including CCT's Executive Director Gary

R. Grant were arrested. At the next Board Meeting, one lone individual also was arrested for closing down the meeting, CCT's Evangeline Grant Redding Briley. This group became known as the Halifax County 5 + 1.



The Halifax County 5 (l-r) Willie Lowe, Jr., Rev. James Johnson, Rev. C.E. McCollum, Gary R. Grant, Rev. Jeremiah Webb at their trial in Halifax County Superior Court.- Hey where is the + 1 (Evangeline Grant Briley)?????

In areas other than education, CCT has always been a leader in Halifax County and North Carolina. In 1995, CCT began discussions that eventually led to the establishment of the Tillery Volunteer Fire Department and District. With leadership from the late Leanders "Lee" Amason and Kenneth Thompson, CCT led the push to organize this Department.

A recent activity of CCT has been the establishment of the Political Awareness Council which works to raise awareness of political issues throughout Halifax County.

CCT has also participated actively with the Halifax County Black Caucus to organize large events such as the March in March, held March 23, 1996, marching from the Halifax Community College to First Baptist Church in Roanoke Rapids, 2.6 miles with more than 600 people marching for justice; the Stop the Violence March on June 21, 1996, Scotland Neck, NC with more than 200 people marching; and the campaign and the March for HIV/AIDS Awareness in conjunction with HIV/AIDS activists and the Halifax County Health Department.



1994- Stop the Violence Rally in Scotland Neck. On the right is Lala Russell, Chairperson of the AWHC and on the left is Nubian Youth Titania Themes.

The scope of influence of CCT has never been limited to the Tillery area. CCT has also long been active in organizing communities around North Carolina. For example, in May of 1992, CCT took part in organizing the Justice for Hamlet Rally, to remember the

workers who died in the chicken factory in Hamlet, NC. CCT has sent people to participate in the Million Man March (1996), and the Million Family March (2000) in Washington DC, as well as the Million Woman March (1997) in Philadelphia, PA. CCT has led the way in organizing communities across eastern North Carolina and throughout the South, helping them to stand up against the oppression brought against them by local power structures and corporate business interests. For example, CCT worked with the Southside Concerned Citizens (SCC), of Halifax, Virginia to help that group organize to oppose corporate hog farms from entering the area.

In the area of environmental justice, CCT's Halifax Environmental Loss Prevention (HELP) has been central to organizing Environmental Justice and corporate hog farming activists across the state. HELP called the first meeting of the North Carolina Hog Roundtable in April 1992. The Hog Roundtable is a coalition of grassroots and traditional environmental groups that work together to oppose large corporate hog production in North Carolina. With the concerted effort of community groups and traditional environmental organizations, and a number of trips to meetings and demonstrations in Raleigh, the Hog Roundtable succeeded in getting the North Carolina State Legislature to pass a moratorium prohibiting the further expansion of existing intensive hog operations or opening new large-scale confined animal feeding operations in the state of North Carolina, in 1996. Through the continuing efforts of the Hog Roundtable, and its member organizations, the Moratorium

has been extended every two years, and is currently set to expire in 2005.

On January 2001, the Hog Roundtable, in conjunction with the National WaterKeepers Alliance, organized a large “Summit for Sustainable Hog Farming” in New Bern North Carolina, that brought together activists from across the country to discuss the problems of industrial hog production. To emphasize that this summit was about fighting corporate hog production and not about hurting family farms, lunch was served complete with pork, grown on a sustainable family farm.

CCT also worked to host and organize the first North Carolina Statewide, Community-Based Environmental Justice Summit at Franklinton Center in Bricks, NC, in 1997 in partnership with the NC Clean Water Fund and the Land Loss Prevention Project (LLPP). The following year there was a second Environmental Justice Summit, and Governor James B. Hunt declared the Environmental Justice Awareness Week during October 11-16, 1998. Since 1997, there have been annual summits to discuss environmental justice issues across North Carolina. Another key event that transpired from the first summit was that it brought together various concerned groups and individuals who have since formed the North Carolina Environmental Justice Network (NCEJN). The NCEJN formed in 1998 and has hosted the subsequent environmental justice summits, which works to further the struggle for environmental justice statewide. CCT also helped to establish the Region IV African American Environmental Justice Network (AAEJN) in 1994, based in Atlanta, GA.



State of North Carolina



JAMES B. HUNT JR.
GOVERNOR

ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE AWARENESS WEEK

1998

BY THE GOVERNOR OF THE STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA

A PROCLAMATION

WHEREAS, the term Environmental Justice has been defined as the equitable distribution of environmental impacts and equal protection under all environmental statutes and regulations without discrimination based upon race, ethnicity, and/or socioeconomic status; and

WHEREAS, Environmental Justice can only be achieved through the concerted efforts of all levels of government - local, state and federal - as well as, private industry; and

WHEREAS, grassroots and community groups along with environmental organizations across the State are sponsoring the first-ever Grassroots Environmental Justice Summit, to be held in Edgecombe County, October 9-11, 1998; and

WHEREAS, this summit will bring people together in a positive forum to work toward a better future; and

WHEREAS, the North Carolina Environmental Justice Planning Committee encourages the State to support environmental policies based upon mutual respect and justice for all people, free from any form of discrimination or bias;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, JAMES B. HUNT JR., Governor of the State of North Carolina, do hereby proclaim October 11-16, 1998, as "ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE AWARENESS WEEK" in North Carolina. I urge our citizens to become more aware of the issues of Environmental Justice and to work toward a healthy, environmentally safe and just society for all citizens.



A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "James B. Hunt Jr.".
JAMES B. HUNT JR.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and affixed the Great Seal of the State of North Carolina at Raleigh this eighth day of October in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and ninety-eight and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twenty-second.

CCT has worked in neighboring communities, such as Purnell Park in Halifax, NC to help them organize and fight for justice. Purnell Park, with failing septic tanks, was within the one mile territorial limits of the Halifax city limits, yet it was not included on the sewer system. Along with the SHER project, CCT helped Purnell Park residents lobby to get their community hooked into the city sewer systems.

HELP also worked to organize survivors of Princeville who had been left homeless after Hurricane Floyd in 1999. These residents had been moved to a temporary “FEMA community”, sited on top of an unclosed coal ash landfill. HELP and CHER along with other groups such as Black Workers for Justice worked to organize the residents of this “Camp Depression” community, as named by the residents to fight for a health clinic and put together a “Floyd Survivors Summit” on February 10 and 11, 2001.

In 2000, HELP worked to organize residents from across Halifax County, to oppose a regional landfill that had been proposed by the County Commissioners. This landfill would have brought waste in from five states across the eastern seaboard and was sited in a predominantly African American community in the western part of the county, and amazingly was to be located between two predominantly African American schools. The organization that emerged assisted by HELP was Citizens Against Regional Dumping (CARD).

CCT has also been a primary leader in the field to organize Black farmers. In 1997, the Land Loss Fund worked to organize a larger, nationwide group, The Black Farmers & Agriculturalists Association (BFAA) which led the fight to bring a class action lawsuit against the United States Department of Agriculture. While this organization is run under the umbrella of CCT for its 501(c)(3) tax status, and is run out of the same office in Tillery, there are now 21 states and the U.S. Virgin Islands organizing chapters with over 6000 members. The structure of this organization is highly decentralized, and the state chapters are responsible for



most of the business of the organization. The national BFAA office in Tillery, organizes events such as large protests in Washington DC, large group meetings and other arrangements of national prominence. This group has led Black farmers from across the nation to come together, and this unity has allowed the Black farmers to make substantial gains against the racist practice in the USDA. BFAA settled its Civil Rights claim against the USDA for the largest civil rights settlement in the history of the country at \$2.4 billion dollars.

The leadership demonstrated by CCT has not gone unrecognized. As then County Commissioner John Hall said at the 1991 June Annual Meeting,



BFAA members in Washington, DC April 20, 1997

“Your example has shown not only other local communities what unity can do, but your organization is known nationally and internationally for its community struggles and efforts.”

CCT has a long history of awards. Several of the most significant include; the First International Healthier

Communities Award presented by the international Healthcare Forum, based in San Francisco,

CA in 1993; the We the People: 50 Communities Award presented by the Friends of the United Nations in 1995; the African American Environmental Justice Action Network Trailblazer Award, Atlanta, GA in 1999; The Groundwater Guardian Pilot Community Designation in 1994, presented by the Groundwater Guardian Foundation, of Lincoln, NE ; the National Environmental Success Index presented by Renew America, Washington, DC; the U.S. Forest Service Rural Community National Outreach Award for “Spirit, Hard Work and Commitment to the Future:” and the list goes on and on

LEGAL ADVOCACY

Evangeline Grant Redding Briley, Director

Good lawyers are difficult to come by in rural areas like Tillery. One of the mistakes of the CCT organization is that we did not promote law as a field of study among the community's young, with the idea of that in exchange for CCT's financial support, potential law student(s) would be contracted before high school graduation to return to the area to practice law for so many years. CCT is very proud of one Tillery native who is a graduate of UNC-Chapel Hill undergraduate and law school, and did practice law. Chrystal Redding Stanback is currently an Administrative Law Judge for the N C Industrial Commission.

There are two people from the CCT organization who are currently pursuing the study of law, Gary R. Redding, a former Nubian Youth member, and Gladys F. Walden, a CCT volunteer.

Redding is a 2003 East Carolina University (ECU) graduate, currently working on a Masters Degree in English while making application for law school. Walden is the thirty-eight year old single mother of three children and currently an undergraduate sophomore at our local Wesleyan College in Rocky Mount. Walden decided to become a lawyer after her malicious firing from the Caledonia Prison in Tillery and the hardship of being unable to retain a lawyer to represent her. She was told over and over by attorneys that no case could be won against the corrupt administration of Caledonia and the N C Department of Corrections. To date, Walden has represented herself and the civil case against Caledonia Prison is currently in litigation.

In the absence of an attorney to plead legal matters in civil court, Evangeline Briley has done an excellent job as our legal advocate. When potential legal cases are reported to our office, Briley spends an inordinate amount of time helping the client try to resolve the particular issues before any court action takes place. Barring satisfaction on that level, Briley moves forward with the client and (1) constructs the next legal steps; (2) guides the particular client through complicated pleading process; (3) seeks help in filing timely and proper paperwork from consulting attorneys and the county clerk of court; (4) grooms the client on clothing attire, speech, and court demeanor; (5) studies with the client at the East Carolina University Law Library miles away; (6) keeps meticulous records and produces visuals and appropriate evidentiary legal documents; (7) keeps CCT apprised of all financial requirements regarding

filing fees, mailings, etc.; and (8) accompanies the client to all court proceedings. In the pro se case of Gladys Walden, Briley has been allowed to sit at the plaintiff's table to lend guidance, but because she is not an attorney, only Walden is allowed to speak for herself in court.

Cases we have worked on:

- A popular high school athlete wrongfully accused of stealing from grocery store where he was employed.
- A very able public school teacher, first in her family to finish college, wrongfully arrested for drug possession and a list of other drug charges. This case was successfully litigated.
- A single mother of three spitefully fired from the Caledonia Prison in Tillery and the hardship of being unable to retain a lawyer to represent her.
- Four children taken from the young single mother, between the ages of 8 months and five years old, because the school reported a belt mark on oldest child.

Each one of these cases could be expanded into a book about the deceptive and unfair U.S. Judicial System and corrupt institutions targeting African Americans, the poor and other people of color.

CCT does accept donations for our legal advocacy work, and all volunteer legal help and advice is welcomed.

FOOD PANTRY

CCT has worked at providing food to the Tillery Community for many years. The food pantry has provided CCT members with accessible food in a variety of ways. First, once a week the Open Minded Seniors get a wonderful meal put together by volunteers. Next, the food pantry provides food boxes to members who qualify. These boxes contain staple items to help residents, who are on very limited income, eat nutritious meals. Finally, CCT has worked to be the central distributor of food for Hurricane relief, such as in 1999 in the aftermath of Hurricane Floyd, or this year after Hurricane Isabel.



The first volunteer cooks for the OMS: Elnora "Nora" Johnson, Bessie Solomon, and Jean Clark.



1994 – Dorothy Ward and Sylvestra Powell were the first Coordinators for the OMS Food



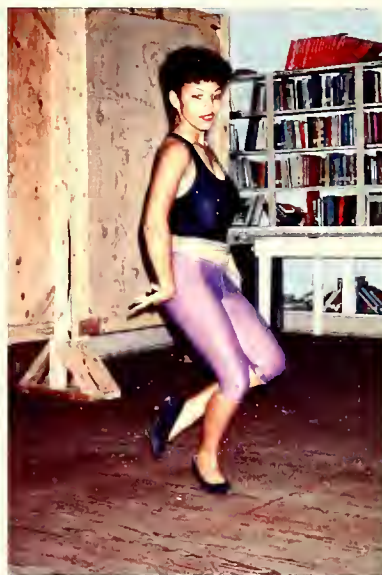
1999-Gary R. Grant unloads food for flood relief from Hurricane Floyd.

International Visitors

Throughout the years CCT has hosted a wide variety of international visitors, scholars and dignitaries. These individuals and groups come to CCT seeking to learn and share with Americans, and of course the residents of Tillery are always willing to oblige.



1986- Melanie Hatter (Scotland) with Taka Mudariki (Zimbabwe)



1988- Melanie Hatter, daughter of George Smith of Tillery, moves gracefully in the Star Search II Talent Program at the Tillery Community Center. Hatter received honorable mention for her performance. (from *The Commonwealth* Aug. 10, 1988).



1989- Gary R. Grant (I), Rick Losada (NCSRC) (2nd from left), Shafia M'Bali of BWfJ, Rafael L. Lopez Valdez, a visiting Cuban scientists, and Jonah Bullock, a Tillery family farmer.



1994- A delegation of Egyptian Agriculture Extension agents and diplomats visit Tillery.



1999- A Polish Delegation prepares to visit Tillery. Front 2nd from right is Gary R. Grant.

Collaborative Projects

In the 1990s, CCT became involved in several large-scale collaborative projects with various institutions of higher learning throughout North Carolina.

In the fall of 1995, CCT won a Learn and Serve America grant to partner with East Carolina University. This grant began in 1996 and since that time has brought a close collaboration between East Carolina University and CCT. The Tillery/ECU Learn and Serve project brought members of the Tillery Community into classrooms at East Carolina to help educate students, and it has also brought a variety of students with information to Tillery to share their knowledge and skills with the people of Tillery. This program has designed numerous activities for Tillery residents. From innovative ways to practice occupational therapy, to the Charlie Walden Baseball Clinic, to learning golf. This partnership has taught the Tillery Community many interesting and valuable lessons.



ECU's students work with CCT members, Marie T. Moore and Doris T. Davis and others, on building the "Spider Web" as they talk about the Learn & Serve Project.

The participants from East Carolina have

also gained a great deal, as can be read in the words of some of the partners in the "Partners Corner" later in this book.

In 1996, CCT worked with Dr. Steve Wing, a Researcher at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, and the Halifax County Department of Health and won a grant from the National Institute of Environmental and Health Sciences (NIEHS). This grant was used to establish the Southeast Halifax Environmental Reawakening (SHER), a collaborative project between CCT and Dr. Wing that worked to study the effects of large-scale hog operations and other environmental injustices in Halifax County. In 1997, CCT hosted the national NIEHS grantees from around the country, in Tillery, as part of the annual grantee conference held in Durham.

CCT and Dr. Wing were awarded another grant from the NIEHS in 2000, to start the Community Health and Environmental Reawakening (CHER) project. This project has continued to study the effects of industrial hog production on communities, predominantly comprised of people of color and the poor.



2000- Nan Freeland (l), Gary R. Grant and Steve Wing (R) present at a SHER workshop in Henderson, NC.

The most recent effort of CHER is the Community Health Effects of Industrial Hog Operations (CHEIHO). This is a collaborative study between CCT, Sue Schiffman at Duke University Medical Center, Jim Raymer at Research Triangle Institute's Expose Analysis Lab, and Steve Wing at UNC-Chapel Hill's School of Public Health's Department of Epidemiology, to measure air pollutants and monitor air quality in communities affected by large-scale hog operations.

CCT has also worked with the Southern Region SARE project, "Sustaining ecological and economic diversity among limited resource landholders by expanding opportunities for management of productive woodlands," with Co-principal Investigators Erin O. Sills and Sarah T. Warren, North



2003- Doris T. Davis (center) with Rachel Avery, a former member of the NCSRC who visited Tillery in the early 90s and is now a PhD Candidate at the School of Public Health, UNC-CH, and James Scott, EPA - Air Monitoring Technician, UNC-Chapel Hill with CHEIHO's monitoring equipment.

Carolina State University, Raleigh, NC. This project proposed research and education that will help bring about a long-term goal of greater diversity and sustainability in southern biogeochemical and social systems and is a multi-institutional and multidisciplinary effort, with research and education collaboration between North Carolina State university, NC A&T State University, Tuskegee University,

The Land Loss Prevention Project, the Concerned Citizens of Tillery and other public agencies, forest industry, and non-governmental, environmental conservation, and grassroots organizations.

And most recently, working with Professor Thomas Mitchell, University of Wisconsin Law School on a project funded by the Ford Foundation entitled "Forced Sales of Black-Owned Land in the Rural South: Assessing Impacts of Black Wealth and Effects on African American Participation in Civil Society." This research study "is to document some of the important benefits of black land ownership and some of the impacts of black land loss in the rural South." Two main areas of study are: 1) the impact that black land loss has had on black wealth and 2) the impact that black landownership has on the ability of African Americans to participate in political processes and local and regional civiv organizations.

These collaborative projects have had a profound impact on both the Tillery Community and the partners with whom CCT has worked. This has included a great deal of activity and participation in studies for CCT and the scholars have learned a lot about the challenges faced by Black communities in eastern North Carolina. Additionally, these partnerships have had rippling effects throughout the broader academic world. The works that have been published through these partnerships have worked to educate scholars across the globe about the situation of people in Tillery, but more importantly about how to work with people rather than to simply study people.



Part Three:
The Organizations of CCT

The Land Loss Fund

In March 1983, a group of friends of Matthew and Florenza Moore Grant's family were called to a meeting in the Tillery Community Center to discuss the desperate situation of land loss facing the Black community and to seek possible solutions. Out of this meeting, the Committee to Save Black Owned Land was formed with Grova Bridgers a teacher in the Halifax County School System, of Roanoke Rapids, NC, as the first chair. The group agreed to host a major fundraiser, the first Ms. Black Earth Pageant. The first pageant was hosted by J.D. Lewis of WRAL-TV in Raleigh. Pearl Spaulding Jackson and Ella Moore Cloyd worked to organize the pageant. The entrants in the first pageant were Delma Davis, Vicki Lynn Whitaker, Janice Price, Phyllis Parrish, Patricia Ann High, Brenda Turner, Chrystal Redding, Laura Ann Brown, Mavle Johnson and Peggy Brown. These contestants were judged on modeling, fundraising and a speech that they gave on the value of preserving Black owned land. Delma Davis was crowned Ms. Black Earth having raised over \$1200. The entire pageant raised almost \$5000 for the Committee to Save Black Owned Land.

The Original Members of the Committee to Save Black Owned Land

Bill Adler
Cindy Arnold
Grova Bridgers
Rhonda Bridgers
Maureen Fenlon
Gary R. Grant
Matthew Grant
Richard Grant
Iva Gregory
Pearl Spaulding Jackson
Ruth Johnson
B.T. Marrow
Evangeline Grant Redding
William Taylor
Rev. T. G. Weatherford

Past Presidents of LLF:

Grova Bridgers
Matthew Grant
Marcus Tillery



Educator for Legal Services, Cindy Arnold and Attorneys Brenda Wagner

Save Black Owned Land formed the Land Loss Fund. Sister Maureen Fenlon and Sister Iva Gregory, from the Catholic Order of the Adrian Dominican Sisters were instrumental in the early organization of the Fund. We also cannot forget the work of Frank Adams, who was a Community

Sumner and Martin Eakes. The North Carolina Black Lawyers Land Loss Prevention Fund (now Land Loss Prevention Project) assisted with legal fees.



Rich Square, NC Christmas Parade
1984 Ms. Black Earth Cynthia Pitchford (in sunroof) and Entourage of Dollie Bishop, Gladys Walden and Elizabeth Warwick (CCT Intern).



1988 Miss Black Earth Deborah Solomon.

There were a total of 4 Ms. Black Earth Pageants held over the years.

Ms. Black Earth Winners

Delma Davis- 1983
Cynthia Pitchford- 1984-85
Paulette Johnson 1986-87
Deborah Solomon 1987-88

These pageants were hosted by:

J.D. Lewis- WRAL-TV Raleigh, NC 1983
Janice Crump- WTVD- TV Durham, NC 1984
Gail Paschall- WINT TV- Washington, NC 1986
Rick Williams WRAL-TV Raleigh, NC 1988

The Land Loss Fund has also used other innovative methods to raise awareness and raise funds to protect Black landowners. In February of 1989, the Land Loss Fund sponsored a fundraising concert featuring Gil Scott Heron in Durham. In 1996, former CCT interns Stephanie Haffner, Ned Smock, and Rebecca Smith held a party in Berkeley, California to raise awareness and funds for the Land Loss Fund. In June 2000, Cheik Diop and his musical group Sankofa played a support concert for Black farmers in Hyattsville, Maryland where Gary R. Grant addressed the concert attendees.

Besides raising funds to support Black farmers, the Committee began holding education workshops, the first of which was held in March of 1984. These



1991- Land Loss Fund holds a tractor maintenance program organized by intern Ira Dworkin with NC A&T State University.

workshops have spanned a range of topics over the years from how to manage heir property, to how to diversify income sources, how to cut production costs and use niche marketing. Perhaps one of the most beneficial workshops over the years was the Tractor Maintenance Program sponsored by the Land Loss Fund in July of 1991 which was organized by intern Ira Dworkin.

The Land Loss Fund also established another group- the Farmers United for Survival. This group worked with Heifer Project International in the mid

1980s and early 1990s to bring livestock into the area to diversify local farmers' production.

By leading the way in the preservation of Black farmers and landowners, the Land Loss Fund has been central to nationwide organizing of Black farmers. The Land Loss Fund has sponsored workshops with the Rural Advancement Fund. Richard Grant and Gary R. Grant have testified before Congress several times on behalf of the Land Loss Fund, to bring



1993- Stephanie Haffner, Richard D. Grant Jr. and Richard D. Grant, Sr. at the Healthier Communities celebration at Tillery Community Center

awareness to the issues facing Black farmers to the lawmakers.

The Land Loss Fund has also worked to reach out to other groups. From a group of New York Dairy farmers, to the Prairie Fire organization out of Iowa, to working with a national Agricultural Health Study, the Land Loss Fund has made nationwide connections.

In 1996, the Land Loss Fund really moved to the forefront of nationwide organizing efforts. First in October 1996, Gary R. Grant attended the Farm Aid concert in Columbia, South Carolina to raise awareness of Black farmers, and presented the problems of Black farmers to Dan Glickman at a community meeting before the concert. On December 12, 1996 a historic protest occurred in Washington DC. John Boyd and the National Black Farmers Association called a protest, in which some 60 farmers participated. Members of the Land Loss Fund brought signs to the protest, ensuring more press coverage. At this protest, the United States Department of Agriculture conceded to the demand

that the protestors meet with the Secretary of Agriculture. After a two and one half hour meeting with Dan Glickman, then Secretary of Agriculture instituted a moratorium on farm foreclosure and appointed Pearlle Reed to head the Civil Rights action team. The Civil Rights Action Team began organizing listening sessions across the country to assess the problems of farmers of color. In part due to the work of Congresswoman Eva Clayton on the Congressional Agriculture Committee and the central role of the Land Loss Fund, the first of these sessions was held in January 1997 in Halifax County, North Carolina. Matthew Grant from the Land Loss Fund presented his story to the listening panel.

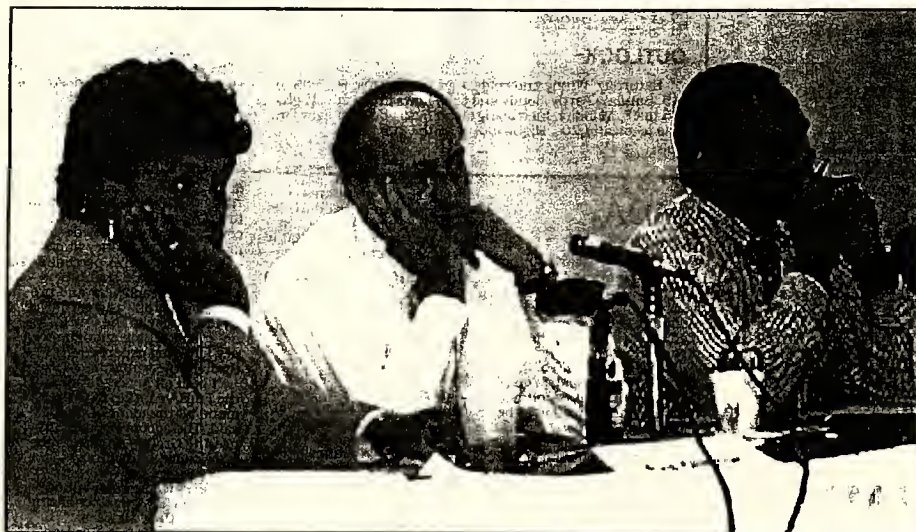
Congresswoman Clayton stated at Matthew Grant's Wake, "This man has done more to help Black farmers than any person I know. He was a giant in the preservation of Black landownership."

In 1997, the Land Loss Fund worked to organize a larger, nationwide group, The Black Farmers & Agriculturalists Association (BFAA). In 1998, the Land Loss Fund and BFAA organized a series of rallies in Washington D.C. One of the most prominent of these rallies was on September 10,

Daily Herald

82- No. 235

THURSDAY, JAN. 9, 1997, ROANOKE RAPIDS, N.C.



U.S. Rep. Eva Clayton, Agriculture Secretary Dan Glickman (middle) and Civil Rights Action Team head Pearlle Reed listen to speakers at the forum Wednesday night in Halifax.

Farmers blast USDA at hearing

By [illegible]

USDA for what they said was

Picture of the December 12, 1996 protest in Washington D.C. from Jet Magazine

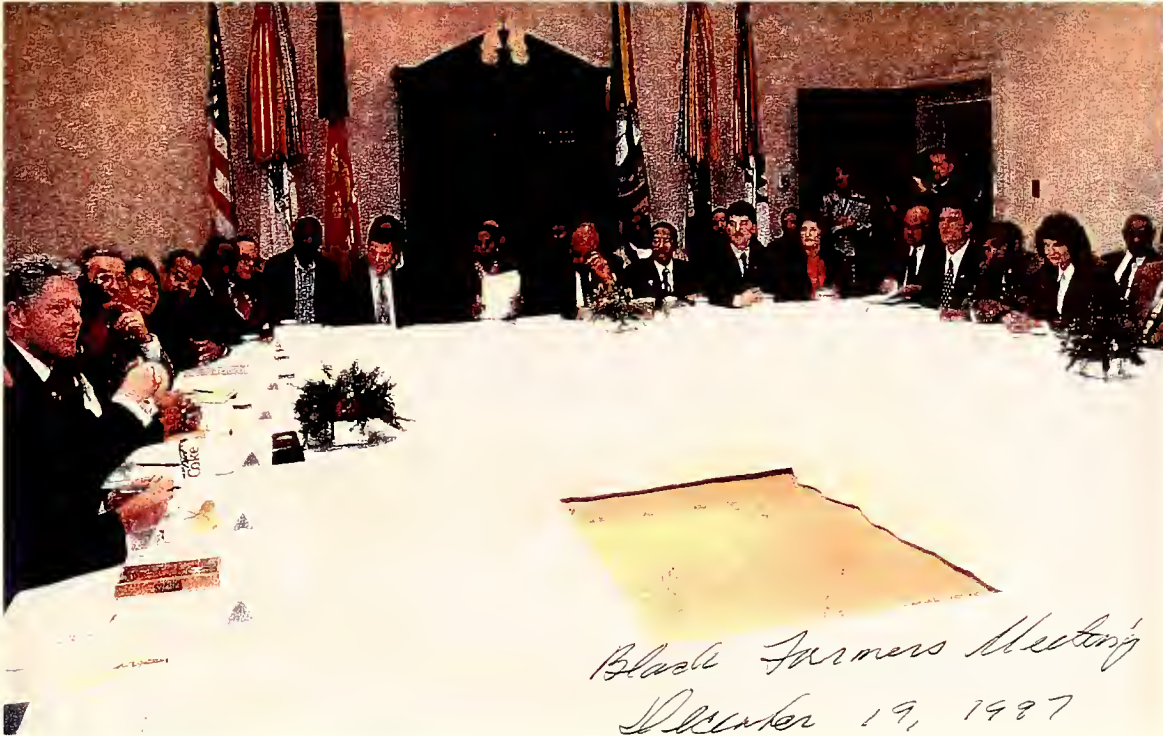
when Mayor Marion Barry proclaimed Black Farmers' Day in the city of Washington D.C.

The Land Loss Fund and Black Farmers & Agriculturalists Association have been the most significant community organization in the development of the now historic *Pigford et. al. v. Glickman* class action lawsuit. The Land Loss Fund and the Black Farmers & Agriculturalists Association organized a march on the US Department of Agriculture and several members appeared before the Congressional Black Caucus, April 22, 1997, with about 200 people attending. The culmination of the efforts of the Land Loss Fund and the Black Farmers & Agriculturalists Association was the *Pigford v. Glickman* class action lawsuit in Federal Court in Washington, DC, October 23, 1997. The Class was accepted with about 650 members, and that number ballooned to over 21,000 after the class was opened to Black farmers across the country.

▼ Members of the National Black Farmers Association demonstrate outside the White House to protest discrimination in the federal lending programs. Group members are (l-r) Doris Davis of Tillery, NC; Lessie Joyner of Ahoski, NC; Lola Williams of Tillery; Shirley Calfield of Tillery; and Gary R. Grant of Tillery.



Picture of the December 12, 1996 protest in Washington DC from Jet Magazine.



1997- Black Farmers including Gary R. Grant from CCT, meet with President Bill Clinton.
(Gary is at the upper right corner)

The *Pigford v. Glickman* case was settled through a Consent Decree signed by Judge Paul L. Friedman on April 14, 1999. This came after a Fairness Hearing on March 2, 1999 at which many Black farmers and activists brought up complaints about the proposed Consent Decree. The problems were



highlighted as failure to allow full discovery of evidence, inadequate class definition, collusion between the government and class counsel in formulating the agreement, and failure to change the discriminatory structure at the USDA. In spite of all of these complaints, Judge Friedman signed the Consent Decree declaring it "fair, adequate and reasonable."

In 2001, CCT's executive director, and president of BFAA, Gary R. Grant met with President George W. Bush on behalf of Black farmers.



OFFICE OF THE MAYOR
WASHINGTON, D. C.

Proclamation

AFRICAN-AMERICAN FARMERS' DAY

SEPTEMBER 10, 1998

WHEREAS, Washington, D.C., is declaring September 10, 1998, as "*African-American Farmers' Day*" in support of the nation's Black farmers as they struggle to keep their land holdings in rural America; and

WHEREAS, African-American farmers and landowners are losing land at the rate of 1,000 acres daily based on inequities in the distribution of loans and other resources; and

WHEREAS, thousands of American farmers are facing economic crisis and many African-American farmers are being forced to sell or otherwise give up ownership of their land and equipment; and

WHEREAS, full funding is needed since the Minority Farmers' Rights Act that was passed as part of the 1990 Farm Act, which authorized \$10 million per year in technical assistance to African-American, Latino, Native American and Asian farmers, is only funded at \$2 - \$3 million per year by Congress; and

WHEREAS, the Coordinating Council of Black Farm Groups is holding a prayer vigil in Washington, D.C. to encourage the administration, the Department of Agriculture and the Justice Department to settle a class action lawsuit filed by African-American farmers charging discrimination in the distribution of farm loans;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, THE MAYOR OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, do hereby proclaim September 10, 1998, as "AFRICAN-AMERICAN FARMERS' DAY" in Washington, D.C. and call upon all the residents of this great city to join me in supporting our African-American farmers in hopes that justice will be done.




MARION BARRY, JR.
MAYOR

Because of these perceived injustices the Land Loss Fund and BFAA have continued to seek justice from the United States Department of Agriculture. There were protests held in Washington, DC almost every month

in the years 1999 and 2000. The largest of these included over 450 Black farmers and supporters from 16 states. This march was organized around a court date where legal counsel, Land Loss Prevention Project, for the Black Farmers & Agriculturalists Association was presenting several of the problems of the Consent Decree and requesting that the Decree be thrown out.

The year 2000 had some extremely significant protests in Washington D.C. In two separate protests, organized by the Land Loss Fund and BFAA, 18 Black farmers were arrested for simply trying to enter the United States Department of Agriculture offices, which are public property. On June 19, 2000, a large protest and celebration were held in honor of Juneteenth where Black farmers spoke. Several members of Congress spoke at the event including Maxine Waters. J.C. Watts, the only Republican African American Congressman, held a special news conference with the LLF and BFAA.

The legacy of protest and innovative tactics to help Black farmers continued in 2002, when BFAA and LLF members took over a local FSA office in Brownsville, Tennessee. This forced the USDA to negotiate with BFAA, and led to the resolution of several long pending cases of Black farmers in the Administrative Process, including that of Richard D. Grant of Tillery.

Also in the late 1990s and early years of the 21st century, the Land Loss Fund has organized a series of conferences on the problem of Black land loss, which has increased the national significance of the organization. In March of 1997, the Land Loss Fund organized “And then There was None...”, the first National Black Land Loss Summit, in Tillery and Franklinton Center at Bricks, North Carolina with over 125 attending. This summit allowed academics and activists to come together and discuss the problems of Black land loss as well as to strategize about how to solve the problems. This summit was so successful that the Land Loss Fund and the Black Farmers & Agriculturalists Association held the 2nd National Black Land Loss Summit in February 1998, also in Tillery and Franklinton Center at Bricks, NC. A third Black Land Loss Summit was held in Durham, North Carolina in 1999. A Fourth Summit- “Looking for Solutions to the Crises Left in the Wake of the *Pigford v. Glickman* lawsuit” was held in Atlanta, GA in 2002. Most recently, the 5th national Black Land Loss Summit was held in Kernersville, NC, “Controlling Our Destiny from the Land to the Man,” continuing to explore opportunities for Black farmers to make a profit.

Throughout the years of struggle the Land Loss Fund has been steadfast in its attempts to improve the lot of Black farmers, in Halifax County and across the nation. The Land Loss Fund has truly proven itself to be an innovator in ways to address the problems of Black farmers.

Area Wide Health Committee

In 1984, the Concerned Citizens of Tillery organized a community health fair in conjunction with the North Carolina Student Rural Health Coalition. Thirty volunteers came in from Duke and the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill and helped the community analyze its health needs. This fair lasted two weeks but it had a profound effect on the development of the Concerned Citizens of Tillery. Out of this health fair 4 of the seven subsidiary organizations of CCT were developed.



Patients waiting to be seen at the Health Fair- 1984



Medical Students at the 1984 Health Fair



**Past Chairpersons of
the Area Wide
Health Committee:**
Clementine Hedgepeth
Stephanie Haffner
Lala Russell
Chris Stewart
Patricia Daniels
Doris T. Davis

1987- Volunteers to help renovate the Curin' House including Ric Losada (far left), Essie Arrington (2nd from left), Cornelia Janke, (3rd from left), Curt Jenniwine (back center) and Chris Clements; Titania Evans (front center), Lala Lawrence (2nd from Right) and Thurman Auburn (far right).



1989- Some of the Health Committee (l-r) Rose Whitaker, Clementine Hedgepeth, Hattie Themes, Lala Russell

The first organization to develop was the Area Wide Health Committee (AWHC), which held classes on two Saturdays a month to teach community members basic skills like taking blood pressures and doing basic first aid. It was the death of a two year old male child, who choked on a hotdog that led the health committee to know that more needed to be done. This group began to put on regular monthly health clinics with the assistance of the NC Student Rural Health Coalition (NCSRHC) and the East Carolina University Brody School of Medicine, Dr. Nina (Seghal) Shah and

volunteer medical students in 1987. At least one free clinic a month has taken place in Tillery since 1987. This clinic offers some basic check ups, testing for such health disorders as hypertension and diabetes and treatment of mild

illnesses in collaboration with the medical school at East Carolina University and a local physician, Dr. Raven Deloatch.

While AWHC has been putting on clinics since 1987, the big breakthrough in service provision came with the renovation of the old Potato Curing House that was on the Community Center property. This curing house was transformed into the "Curin' House," and instead of curing potatoes, it has become the site of the health clinics. With several private examination rooms

and office space, the Curin' House is a great clinic. The People's Health Clinic only came into being with much help from the community and from outside volunteers. In addition to the countless hours put into renovating the Curin' House by CCT members, Duke, the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill and East Carolina University on weekends, the North Carolina Student Rural Health Coalition sponsored alternative fall breaks, for students to come and participate in the renovation. After 4 years of renovation, the Curin' House was dedicated on April 27th 1991. Dr. Alton Anderson was the keynote speaker at the magnificent celebration and over 250 people attended.

The Health Clinics developed a relationship with East Carolina School of Medicine that in turn grew



1992- Vera Plummer takes Theresa Harvey's blood pressure as Annie Foreman awaits her turn.

into a new project. In 1995, CCT and the East Carolina University received a Learn and Serve America grant, which has funded a series of innovative

interactions between the two. Most notably, the Occupational Health and Physical Therapy Departments have had many dealings with CCT, planning programs such as the Tillery Experience, providing cultural awareness for the students and recording life histories of the elders, a Wellness Project, health education session with the Open Minded Seniors, the Charlie Walden Baseball



1993- CCT Members in San Francisco receiving the first ever Healthier Communities Award. (l-r) Vera Plummer, Dr. Nina (Seghal) Shah, Clementine Hedgepeth, Hattie Themes, Rose Whitaker, Percy Davis, Frank Bradham, Lola Williams, Lala Russell, Gary R. Grant. Also pictured the Coalition for Better Health Care from Solano County, CA.

Clinic, a golf clinic and many other events that try to incorporate healthy, stimulating activity with fun.

AWHC has been the source of much of the acclaim for CCT. In 1991, the Halifax County Health Department presented CCT with its 1st Ever “Rippling Effect Award” in recognition of CCT’s

efforts to promote rural health. In 1993 CCT won the First International Healthier Communities Award presented by the Healthcare Forum. CCT competed against 81 medical applicants from the United States and foreign countries. Judging for the award was done by members of the World Health Organization.

To receive this award, 11 members of CCT went to San Francisco to attend the International Healthier Communities Summit. Those attending from CCT were Lola Williams, Rose Whitaker, Hattie Themes, Lala Russell, Vera Plummer, Clementine Hedgepeth, Stephanie Haffner, Gary Grant and Percy Davis. These 9 were joined by Dr. Nina Sehgal, from the East Carolina School of Medicine, and Frank Bradham, the Halifax County Health Director. The CCT delegation paid their own way for the trip by massive fundraising efforts in Tillery and contributions from CCT support members around the country. Even though only 9 people went from Tillery, as always it was a community affair. This trip was historic and CCT was held up for a model of how creativity and dedication can bring amazing results in spite of minimal resources, and the people of Tillery were treated like royalty. Part of the award was a professional

made video of the CCT entitled “Life Choices” that aired in hospitals and other health providing agencies around the world. It was also a “short” on air plane trips around the world. CCT also hosted the Health Care Forum and representatives from Marion Merrill Dow Pharmaceuticals in a celebration in Tillery in October of 1993.

The AWHC led the way for four other People’s Clinics to be established in Fremont (Wayne County), Whitakers (Edgecombe County), Garysburg (Northampton County), and Shiloh (Wake County), which eventually formed the Community Health Collective (CHC).



1998- CCT Intern Tim Burke talks with Chrystal Manley, ECU Medical Student at a Cardio Screening Clinic.

The Area Wide Health Committee has also helped the youth of Tillery develop, by facilitating their participation in the Pre-Health Career Intern program. This gives interested youth a vision of what it would be like to work in the health care industry. In 2001, AWHC through the Tilley/ECU Learn and Serve America Project organized a new group, the Sistahs United for Breast Cancer Awareness (SUBCA). The Sistahs held a series of meetings which educated community members about how to check for breast cancer.

AWHC, in 2000, stepped out from under the umbrella of CCT and became an independent nonprofit organization in order to become a third partner in the Community Health and Environmental Reawakening Project (CHER) and to further expand health services to the community. Barbara Reynolds Demery is the first president of the independent organization.

DR. RAVEN DELOATCH

The Real Peoples' Doctor

I have been giving to the Tillery Peoples' Clinic since January 1993, when I began what is known as the first "First Monday Night Monthly Health Clinic." I have enjoyed giving the few hours that I give and wish I could give more free time.



For me, as a native of the region, Northampton County, it is a privilege and an honor to work with a group, the CCT, that is concerned about the health and welfare of others.



Dr. DeLoatch with retired nurse and CCT volunteer Katherine B. Lee with patient Kenny Thompson.



Dr. DeLoatch fills in and helps find assistance for the First Saturday Clinic when ECU Medical Students cannot come. Dr. Chatty, left, provides assistance.



Dr. DeLoatch with Kelvin Turnage, a former Summer Camp participant and future volunteer, at the October 3rd Saturday Clinic.

Open Minded Seniors

Presidents of the Open Minded Seniors:

Cossie Harvey
Ruth Johnson
John Jones
Vera Plummer
Lala Lawrence
Clarence Powell
Jacques Alexis
Clarence Fenner
Umphrey Tillery

OPEN MINDED SENIORS COORDINATORS

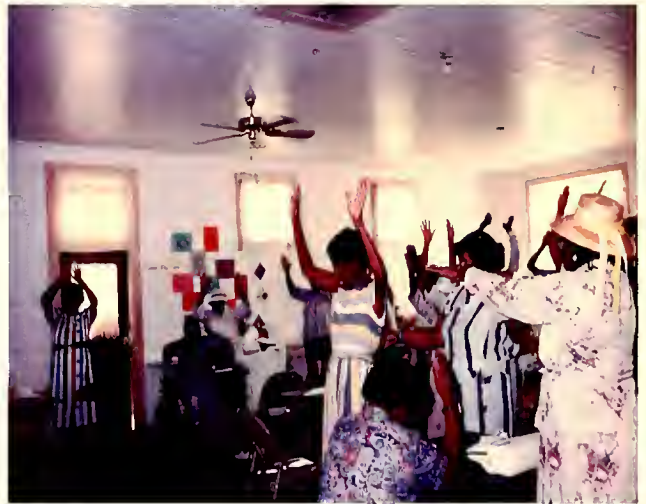
Lola Williams
Rebecca "Becky" Smith
Dorothy White Cannon
Catherine "Peaches" Thombs
Barbara Reynolds Demery

One of the findings of the 1984 health fair was that the vast majority (around 85%) of Tillery's population was over 60. Out of the concern for how the community would respond to such a large aging population, Lola Williams approached CCT about a program for the senior population. Therefore, in 1986 intern Becky Smith came to Tillery from Brown University and worked with Lola to organize a seniors' group. On July 15, 1986 the first meeting of what would become the Open Minded Seniors was held with 36 seniors in attendance. The meeting was attended by Legal Services of the Coastal Plains and food was donated by local residents. On September 10, 1986, the group decided on the name "Open Minded Seniors" (OMS) suggested by Daniel Whitaker. Cossie Harvey was elected the first president, Sylvestra Powell the first Vice President, Lillie Fenner was the Secretary/Treasurer and Elvenia Russell was the assistant treasurer.

The Open Minded Seniors immediately became active, sponsoring a Joyful Sounds concert on November 23, 1986. In the first year of OMS's existence, Elnora Johnson won the title of Ms. Senior CCT.

Without a doubt, OMS is the most active branch of CCT, holding weekly meetings at the Tillery Community Center. These meetings originally were on Wednesday but have since moved to Tuesday. The meetings start at about 11:30 with an opening invocation, reading of scripture, prayers, a bit of exercise and songs. At noon a lunch prepared by community volunteers is served. After the lunch, a regular meeting is conducted, during which roll is called, dues are collected and visitors are welcomed. Anyone who has any items to discuss is encouraged to bring them up during the meeting.

This group is really the core of CCT for a number of reasons. For example, in



The Open Minded Seniors exercising in 1988.

these discussions many problems facing the community are highlighted. For instance, it was through such a meeting that a recent struggle against a new taxation by the county began because the seniors thought it was not fair. The tax since been done away with by the county.



Ma Sue celebrates her 103rd, birthday with family members at the Tillery Community Center on September 30, 2003, accompanied by her oldest daughter Emma Dancy (behind) and her 20th child, son Claude and several of her grandchildren.

Since the first year, the members of the Open Minded Seniors have been the heart of the Concerned Citizens of Tillery, and they have been extremely active. OMS has scheduled many trips to local "hot spots," such as fishing excursions to Nag's Head, cruises on the "Spirit of Norfolk," and an annual picnics at Lake Gaston. Members have attended the Halifax County Senior games, made special trips to East Carolina University, the North Carolina State Fair, and have participated in the Tillery

Christmas Parade and other area parades in local towns and cities.

OMS always celebrates holidays with special programs -- from Martin Luther King Jr.'s Birthday, to Christmas and Kwanzaa.

Other successful projects of the OMS include the Food Pantry in conjunction with the NC Food Bank in Raleigh, Supplemental Food Boxes through the Halifax County Extension Service, and



1992 Open Minded Seniors Trip to Lake Gaston. Elvenia Russell (l) and Sylvestra Powell (r) do a bit of fishing from the dock.



OMS Members off to the Halifax County Senior Games 1991- Left to Right - (back row) Theresa Harvey and Elvenia "Boot" Russell; (front row) Howard Lancaster, Susie Weathersbee, Maggie Crowell, Vera Plummer, Thelma Phillips, Annie Mae Foreman.

the only rural Seniors group to participate in "Meals on Wheels" through the Halifax County Council on Ageing, thanks to Dorothy White Cannon and Katherine B. Lee.

The members of OMS have kept up political involvement. True to their name, the Open Minded Seniors seek ideas from a wide variety of sources, holding regular "Speak Out" days to



OMS members dressed up for a Black History Month Program. (Left to right) Virginia Hines, Elnora "Nora" Johnson, Sylvestra "Syl" Powell, Bettie Jones, Mamie Boone, and Clementine Sledge.

discuss issues such as child abuse, taxation policy and even sex education, etc.. Guest speakers routinely appear at OMS meetings, to discuss issues that related to the Tillery area or of county, state and national interest, from research projects to legal issues. Members of the OMS regularly attend the Halifax County Commissioners meetings, and are quick to report to the group when the Commissioners are

discussing ideas that would have an adverse impact on the local county communities. OMS members can be counted on to voice support for those ideas which are beneficial for all communities, and express active opposition when things hurt the citizens of the County. In addition to the County Commissioner's meetings, the Open Minded Seniors have attended countless rallies to support Black farmers and to protest corporate hog factories in rural communities.

On May 24, 2003, the Open Minded Seniors held their first senior prom with a title "A Senior Umoja* Extravaganza" which was attended by over 200 people.

*(Umoja is the first principle of Kwanzaa, meaning Unity)



2000- OMS members (l-r) Claude Ford, Virginia Hines, Sylvia West (trainer), Edith Miles and Dorothy Martin take a test to become Census Counters.



2000- OMS member Dorothy Lawrence and Clarence Powell do the "Macarena Exercise", an exercise led by Doris Simon.

Nubian Youth

The third organization that sprang out of the health fair was the Nubian Youth Group. After the health fair, CCT began organizing summer camps to work to educate the children over the summer. The first summer camp was held in 1986. In 1987, the Concerned Citizens of Tillery continued to organize the youth of the community and the Tillery Junior Activity group began. CCT has persistently organized summer camps by usually bringing in outside college interns or volunteers to organize the camps. As the youth of Tillery grew up, some

Presidents of the Nubian Youth:
Jermaine Whitaker
James Evans
Gary R. Redding
Tanika Davis
Michelle Demery



1991- The first meeting of the Looking For Inner Nubian Culture (LINC) Class. Right-Left- Kristi Whitaker, Antoine Faison, Jeffrey Tillery, and LINC class leaders.

then came back to operate the summer camp. This past summer The 14th Summer Youth Empowerment Camp was held.

The Junior Activity Group continued to grow and in 1991, the youth began a course of study titled “Looking for Inner Nubian Culture” (LINC). From this class, the Jr.

Activity Group changed its name and the Nubian Youth Group was formed.

The members of the group were very involved in activities, attending events such as the 1991 Unity Conference at Franklinton Center at Bricks, and the Connections Retreat

for young women. Frequently, the Nubian Youth were outstanding participants, as in the 1994 "Taking Charge of your Life" Conference, where Jermaine Whitaker won the award for best Senior Conferee and Gary R. Redding was named best Junior Conferee.



DONATED PHOTO

Jermaine Whitaker (left) and Gary Redding display the certificates they received at a recent "Take Charge of Your Life" conference.



Top- 1988- Summer Youth Camp- (L-R) Renada Tillery, Tameka Goddard, Tanika Davis, and Shonda Pittman.



1989 Youth Group Officers – Jermaine Whitaker, President, Catrina Hill, Vice President, Marie Lassiter, Secretary, Kristi Whitaker, Treasurer, Murray Comly, Sergeant at Arms

The Nubian Youth have attended a wide range of events, from protests to support Black



1996- Nubian Youth selling lemonade to help fund their trip to the Olympics. Heath Ryan, Richard "Little Richie" D. Grant, Connie Batts Grant and "Little Gary" R. Redding.

farmers or to oppose environmental racism in the siting of hog factories, to conferences that help shape young leaders, to large sporting events.

One highlight was the trip taken in 1996 to the Olympics in Atlanta.

The Nubian Youth raised funds from the

community to go to the Olympics.

Fifteen youth and seven adults attended the Olympics together, and spent time touring Atlanta. It was a memorable event for all who were involved. Another highlight was the trip by some Nubian

Youth to the Black Radical



These children bring back some of the... hunt to the Tillery Community Center

1989- Summer Camp Those pictured (left to right) - Pam Davis, Tamekia Goddard, Felishia Tillery and Asa Tillery, Jr.

Congress in Chicago, June 1998.



**Congratulations to the
Nubian Youth College
Graduates!**

Kristi Whitaker
Shanae Couch
Sita D. Redding
Gary R. Redding
Miron Reynolds

Pictured are: (standing-left to right) 11th Summer Youth Empowerment Camp Nubian Youth: Shanae Couch, Morissa Demery, Gary R. Redding, and Martell Epps, counselors, and seated with Camp Site Supervisor Doris T. Davis.



2003- Gladys Walden, director of the 14th Summer Youth Empowerment Camp, works with youth on creating a garden.



1990- Nubian Youth take a trip to the beach! Intern Scott Rauch pictured in back.



1989- Youth go to basketball game at North Carolina State

The Nubian Youth have also become leaders within the Tillery Community. They have taken a role to lead programs during Black History Month, the Holiday Fellowship Hour and entertaining some of CCT's out of town visitors and foreign guests. In 1996, they held an educational session to teach the Open Minded Seniors about Ebonics. They have even worked at innovative ways to take care of their own, such as the 1998 dance to support Shanae Couch's scholarship fund. The Nubian Youth has become a strong organization, which has provided its members with leadership skills, education, support, and many meaningful interactions, with each other and the world.



1997- Nubian Youth Celebrate Kwanzaa at the Holiday Fellowship Hour- (L-R) Michelle Demery, Jasmine Dancy, Tiffany Dancy, Morrisa Demery, Orlando Smith, Shameka Russell, Fred Field, Zyriphia Edmonds, Tanika Davis, Haile Redding, Derrick Whitaker, and Shanae Couch



2002- The Nubian Youth attend a presentation of *My Fair Lady* at East Carolina University.



1988- Youth Softball Team at Franklinton Center.

Grown Folk Group

In July 1991, the Grown Folk Group was organized by local parents “to help improve the quality of life of the families in our area” (Oct 1994 CCT NEWS NOTES). This organization has worked to run the annual Summer Day Camp as well as working to improve housing conditions of group members and the County educational system. The original organization came together around a July 4th Weekend Dance in 1991. The Grown Folk Group also put together the Red and Black Valentine’s Day Ball, which had started in 1990 by the Area Wide Health Committee. This added another annual tradition to the celebrations of the Concerned Citizens of Tillery.

Presidents of the Grown Folk Group:

Ann Tillery
Dorothy White Cannon
Gladys Walden
Lillian Whitaker



At the 1995 Red and Black Ball- (l-r) Sharon Evans, Mary Phillips, Chris Stewart, Lala Russell, Doris T. Davis, and Laura Foreman.

CCT Leaders cut the Rug: Gary Grant and Doris Davis at 1995 Red and Black Ball





1992: Fred Wilson (left) speaks to the Grown Folk Group on housing issues. Also pictured (l-r), Sharon Evans, unknown, Stephanie Haffner, James Mills, Gladys Walden



Halifax Environmental Loss Prevention(HELP)

The Halifax Environmental Loss Prevention (HELP) group was organized in 1992 after several members of the community found out that 17 large hog factory farms were slated for development in the area. The first meeting of HELP was held on Jan 25, and Gary Grant and Charles Tillery, Jr. were elected the original co-chairmen of the organization. This was significant because HELP was the first organization that brought together the White Community in Tillery with the Black Community to fight a common enemy, the large- scale corporate hog enterprises.

While four of these seventecn corporate hog factories came to Halifax County, HELP succeeded in getting Halifax County to pass the first regulations on the building of confined animal feeding operations (CAFO's) in the state of North Carolina. The Halifax County Board of Health initially approved the Livestock ordinance in April 1992, and then the County Commissioners approved the ordinance in May.

That June, the Halifax County Chamber of Commerce decided to celebrate hog production in the area with the first "Hogtoberfest." In direct response to this, HELP organized

"Hogtoberfest II," a demonstration to show people the problems of industrial livestock production in



1992- HELP members Vera Plummer, Gary R. Grant, Laura Foreman, Maggie Crowell, Charles Tillery, Jr., Lola Williams, and Dorothy Ward are all smiles after the County Commissioners Approve the Health Boards recommended regulations on Confined Animal Feeding Operations.

Halifax County. In addition to passing an ordinance regulating industrial livestock production in Halifax County, on Dec 15, 1993, HELP got the Halifax County Health Board to pass a 30-day moratorium on the construction of confined animal feeding operations (CAFOs). HELP also led the County Commissioners to pass a resolution proclaiming October 1998 as Environmental Justice Awareness Month.



Environmental Justice Resolution

Whereas, the term Environmental Justice has been defined as the equitable distribution of environmental contamination and equal protection under all environmental statutes and regulations without discrimination based on race, ethnicity, and/or socioeconomic status; and

Whereas, the term "Environmental Justice" rose to prominence following the burial of toxic PCBs in our neighboring county, Warren County, North Carolina in 1981; and

Whereas, Environmental Justice can only be achieved through the concerted efforts of all levels of government--local, state and federal--as well as private industry; and

Whereas, the Commission for Racial Justice of the United Church of Christ landmark study, "Toxic Wastes and Race", found race to be the single most important factor--more important than income, home ownership, or property values--in the location of hazardous commercial and abandoned toxic waste sites; and

Whereas, the multinational People of Color Environmental Leadership Summit held in Washington, DC in 1992 adopted Principles of environmental Justice; and

Whereas, President William Jefferson Clinton issued his Executive Order on Environmental Justice in 1994; and

Whereas, The Concerned Citizens of Tillery is participating in an Environmental Justice Project entitled "Southeast Halifax Environmental Re-awaking" in conjunction with the Halifax County Health Department and the School of Public Health at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, through Funding from the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences; and

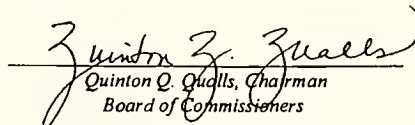
Whereas, The Concerned Citizens of Tillery has called together environmental groups from across the state of North Carolina to sponsor the first ever Grassroots Environmental Justice Summit to be held October 9-11, 1998; and

Whereas, this Summit will look at North Carolina's history and practice of Environmental Injustice while bringing people together in a positive forum to work toward a better future; and

Whereas, the Halifax County Board of Commissioners supports environmental policies based on mutual respect and justice for all peoples, free from any form of discrimination or bias;

Therefore be it that, the Halifax County Board of Commissioners hereby resolve and declare the month of October, 1998 as Environmental Justice Awareness Month, and encourages all segments of the Halifax County population to become more aware of the issues of Environmental Justice and to work towards a healthy, environmentally safe and just society for all the citizens of Halifax County.

Adopted this the 8th day of September, 1998.


Quinton Q. Qualls, Chairman
Board of Commissioners

1992- HELP members picket the Halifax County Chamber of Commerce at HOGTOBERFEST II. On the left- Vivian Parker



1994- CCT's Gary Grant (left) and Dorothy White Cannon (3rd from left) receive the Groundwater Guardian Award

While HELP started dealing with hogs, it has held other activities on the Environmental Justice front. One significant piece was Tillery's place as a "Groundwater Guardian," pilot community. This honor was given to CCT in 1994, to begin a study of the groundwater pollution in the area. This study continued for eight years.

Throughout this process, CCT held several Groundwater Celebrations, and Gary Grant was a frequent speaker at nationwide groundwater conferences.

CCT's HELP has also been a leader across the state of North Carolina and the nation. HELP worked to establish the NC Hog Roundtable, a collection of traditional and grassroots environmental

organizations that oppose the expansion of hog factories in North Carolina. HELP has also been central in organizing the North Carolina Environmental Justice Network.



The Open Minded Seniors go to Raleigh to Protest Hog Factories- (l-r) Maggie Crowell, Mamie Boone, Mildred Whitaker, Elvenia Russell, Martha Lawrence, Clarence Fenner, and Gary R. Grant.

CCT's HELP project has proven itself a leader in the struggle for Environmental Justice; it has been widely recognized for its success in leading this effort. CCT received national press coverage for its environmental justice struggles on CNN and CBS's 60 Minutes. Gary Grant always swells with pride to say he was the first person to be bleeped for using a four letter word on the show, when referring to hog "waste." HELP has also been recognized for its efforts by



receiving: a Trailblazer Award from the EPA REGION IV African American Environmental Justice Action Network in 1999, and the Renew America Environmental Success Index Award in 1997 and 1998.

1999- Clarence Fenner, President OMS, Doris T. Davis, and Gary R. Grant celebrate with the Trailblazer Award from EPA Region IV AAEJN.

Economic Development Committee

As the Concerned Citizens of Tillery pushed for environmental justice, they began receiving criticism because many of its efforts seemed to be in opposition to economic development. CCT had struggled against the location of several polluting industries in the area in addition to corporate hog factories, as well as fighting against the transformation of the school into a sewing factory. In order to respond to this criticism, in 1993 CCT organized the Economic Development Committee to "provide sustainable and just

development" alternatives to exploitive and polluting industries. This group has worked to find solutions to the high rates of unemployment in the community as well as the vast majority of people who are forced to work outside of the community.



Economic Development Training in 1994. (Right to Left) Clarence Vine, Economic Development Coordinator, James Mills, Dorothy White Cannon, Linda Abrams, Willie Lowe Jr., Barbara Reynolds Demery

Chairpersons

Matthew Grant
Barbara Reynolds Demery
Lala Fields Russell

Coordinators

Clarence Vines
Charles McCullom, Jr.
Mel Powers

The only real opportunity for work in Tillery, after the sewing factories closed in the early 1990s was to work at Caledonia State Prison. The Economic Development Committee (EDC) researched various options and began supporting the development of a local restaurant, the Resettlement. This exploration began in 1994 and by 1995 the Resettlement Café was open for business.

Nov 3, 94



Volunteers who are restoring the building (from left) are Gary Grant, director of the CCT; Clarence Powell, president-elect of the OMS; Matthew Grant, vice president of CCT; and Jacques Alexis.

Citizens group plans new store in Tillery

CCT to open convenience store and restaurant the first of the year

SCOTT SCHWEBKE

Herald Staff Writer

TILLERY — A growing concern about local economic development has prompted the Concerned Citizens of Tillery to make plans to open a convenience store and restaurant early next year.

Several months ago the CCT and a group of local investors purchased the former Johnson Convenience Mart building on N.C. 561 west of Tillery for about \$18,500.

The CCT plans to reopen the store early next year and

name it "The Resettlement" after a federal program launched following World War I.

The aim of the program was to resettle families from urban to rural areas. Tillery was one of 116 communities established nationwide through the program.

Gary Grant, executive director of the CCT, said the convenience store will be equipped with a full-service restaurant that will be able to seat about 75 customers.

The store will be the first enterprise operated by the CCT, which plans to use profits from the business to bolster its grassroots activities which include the operation of a local health clinic.

"Our goal is to create and sustain economic develop-

See STORE, Page 2



Top: (1994) Lala Russell Cleaning up in the old Johnson Convenience Mart while Larry Abram puts in a new wall.
 Bottom Left- (1995) Floyd Hendricks puts up Resettlement sign.
 Bottom Right- (1995) Jacques Alexis installs the cash register.



The Resettlement, managed by Lala Russell, has been a success, and has become a fixture in the Tillery community, providing a central place for people to meet during the day.

In 1993, Linda Abram and Barbara Demery approached the CCT regarding “early childhood care” in the community. These two women joined the Economic Development Committee and began attending economic development meetings in Halifax County, in the region with the Region L Council of Government, with local and state government representatives, such as Rep. Doc Brown, meetings called by the NC State Commerce Department with Sue Perry-Cole, NC Community Development Corporation, with Abdul Rasheed, with Day Care entrepreneurs and others. A goal was to establish a Day Care Center in one of the area churches leading to Galilee Baptist Church being approached. The efforts of these two women led to the establishment of two “home child care centers,” one in Tillery and one in the Crowells' Community. Today, the Tillery Community and surrounding areas are served by the “Abram’s Day Care,” Linda Abram, owner/operator, and the “Mouse House” founded by retired teacher Dozella Bullock.

In 1995, the Halifax County Community Economic Development group honored CCT for its work on economic development. The work of the Economic Development Committee has always prioritized the needs and wants of the community, rather than of business, and this commitment has been demonstrated through the numerous planning meetings, stressing involvement of the community in economic development. Most recently in 2003 the Economic Development Committee began a new project called “Creating New Economies” that looks at creating a craft industry to support local people.

HISTORY PROJECT



The First Meeting of the Tillery Historic Reunion Committee

Out of the original health fair, Cornelia Janke, a student at Duke University, did research on the history of Tillery and produced a manuscript entitled *Tillery: One Hundred Years of Struggle* (Janke 1986). This research began to open eyes about the rich untapped history of Tillery. In 1993, a collaborative project, *Behind the Veil*, sponsored by Duke University, North Carolina Central University, and the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, began to explore the experiences of African Americans in the South during and prior to the Civil Rights struggle, and eastern North Carolina was not omitted. Several researchers came to the Tillery community in the summer of 1993 to conduct oral

history interviews. These researchers collected oral histories of quite a few members of the Tillery community.

Eventually, one of the researchers who worked with the *Behind the Veil* Project, Chris Stewart, returned and worked to form a History Committee with CCT. In April of 1995, the first meeting of the Tillery History Reunion Committee took place, which began work to put together the project entitled “Remembering Tillery...A New Deal Resettlement” project. Those working on this project labored to put together a photo exhibition as well as produce a book on the history of the Tillery Resettlement. To put together these works, the History Committee organized several days in which community members could bring in their historic photos and the Project would produce high quality copies. Also, Chris Stewart worked to interview members of the community, and she conducted archival research in Atlanta and Washington, DC on the history of the New Deal Resettlement projects. Dorothy White Cannon accompanied Stewart on the archival research trips.

The Original Members of the History Committee

Gary R. Grant, co-chair
Chris Stewart, co-chair
Evangeline Grant Briley
Dorothy White Cannon
Marcus Tillery
Bukeka Crawford
Ned Smock, Intern

The exhibition “Remembering Tillery...A New Deal Resettlement” opened August 20, 1995 at the William and Madeline Taylor Homeplace with support from the North Carolina Humanities Council. There was a big celebration including presentations from Doris T. Davis, President of CCT; Chris Stewart; Mayor Walter Plemmer of Princeville, NC (the oldest incorporated town by Blacks in the United States); John D. Hall, a Halifax County Commissioner; Frank Ballance, then NC Senator; Merle Green, director of the Halifax County Health Department; and Willie Gilchrist, Superintendent of

Halifax County Schools. By the end of August, there had already been 350 visitors to the exhibit. A large historic community reunion was held on September 2, 1995. On August 31, 1995 William Taylor, the first president of the Concerned Citizens of Tillery and a New Deal Resettler, passed away. The September 2nd celebration became a joint celebration of the history of the community and Mr. Taylor's life.

The Labor Day festivities included guided tours of the New Deal Tillery Resettlement and a special presentation of the play "Predny and Yestidy," written by Evangeline Grant Redding Briley. The "reading play" depicts the social, economic and political struggles of the families within the community.

In 1996, the historic "Remembering Tillery... A New Deal Resettlement" exhibit was reopened for Black History Month. The History Committee also held an Oral History Workshop to teach Tillery residents how to conduct oral history interviews. Due to the wonderful work of the History Project and the committee, in 1996, CCT became the first African American group or individual to receive the prestigious statewide "Halifax Resolves Award" from the Historic Halifax Restoration Association. The award was presented during ceremonies at Historic Halifax's 220th Anniversary of the Halifax Resolves, April 12. In 1997, CCT also presented at the "Heritage Tourism for North Carolina and the South Conference" on African American Heritage Tourism.

The original history exhibit has since closed but will re-open during CCT's 25th Anniversary Celebration. History and the work of the History Committee remains a central focus of the Concerned Citizens of Tillery. After some time the History Committee merged with the Economic Development Committee after the EDC decided one of the most potential avenues for economic development was to create an



Evangeline Grant (right) presenting Predny and Yestidy, September 1995.

area for cultural tourism, based upon the Tillery Resettlement Community. To make this happen, Gary R. Grant and Theresa Harvey donated the “Thomas” house, which was moved from lot 34 along Highway 561 to a spot on the Community Center grounds. This house, which is one of the original Resettlement houses, will become the site of the Tillery History Museum.



Preparing the Thomas House for moving- 2000



Lowering the Thomas House down on its foundation.



2003

The Completed History House

Part Four:
The People of CCT

William W. Taylor

First President of CCT (1978- 1983)

Under the leadership of William W. Taylor, 1st President of the Concerned Citizens of Tillery, we reclaimed the Tillery Community Center property for the community and began purchasing an additional three (3) acres of land adjoining the Center's property in hopes of developing the Charlie Walden Baseball Field. This purchase was completed under the presidency of Matthew

Grant. During Taylor's presidency, CCT accomplished the first renovations of the Tillery Community Center, and began to set the stage for many struggles to come.



William W. Taylor in 1984.



The Tillery Community Center in 1980.

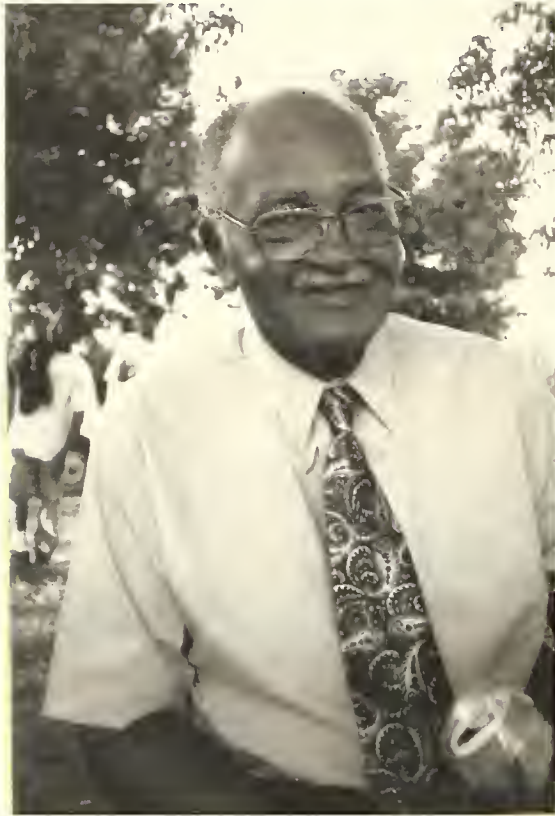


The Tillery Community Center in 1983, after the first renovation.

Matthew Grant

President of CCT (1984- 1990)

Matthew Grant brought another set of priorities and desires to the CCT. During his administration, CCT renovated the old Potato Curing House, which is now called the “Curin’ House” and houses our People’s Health Clinic. Also under this second administration, the second renovation of the Tillery Community Center occurred, which gave us the kitchen. Then, the third renovation gave us access ramps and passageways covers. It was during Mr. Grant’s tenure that the saving of Black owned land became more of a focal point for the organization.



Matthew Grant at September 1995
Celebration of “Remembering Tillery”

1991- The Curin’ House
under preparation for the
grand opening.



Doris Taylor Davis

President of CCT (1991- Present)

Doris Taylor Davis, the 3rd President, and the first woman to hold the presidency of CCT, raised the awareness of youth and wellness in the community; and a renewed commitment to the goal of “leadership development.” Under her administration, the installation of the basketball court, the walking trail and the renovation of the History House have occurred. And finally, all three structures – The Tillery Community Center, The Curin House, and The History House – are now all the same beautiful color. Hooray, Doris!!



Doris T. Davis with Dan Blue after presenting at the 2002 Martin Luther King Celebration in Scotland Neck.



The Walking Trail Bridge done through a project of Learn & Serve America.



Jacques Alexis and Gil Livingston, Vermont Farmers' Land Trust, hold a conversation in front of the History House while it was undergoing

Concerned Citizens of Tillery Board of Directors- Through the Years

William Taylor - 1st President - March 1978 - April 1984

Matthew Grant - 2nd President - May - 1984 - April 1992

Doris Taylor Davis - 3rd President - May 1992 - Present

Jacques Alexis

Delores Amason

Dorothy White Cannon

Maggie Crowell

Herman Davis

Hosea Davis

Annie Foreman

Clementine Hedgepeth

Gary Grant

Rolelia Herritage

Haywood Harrell

Marie Johnson

Ruth Johnson

John Jones

Kathy W. Knight

Dempsy Lyons, Jr

B.T. Marrow

Gary R. Redding

Lola Williams

Rose Whitaker

Charlie Walden

Those Who Run the Office

The great accomplishments of CCT over the years have come through the committed and steadfast work of CCT's office staff. Barbara Reynolds Demery has been the most long term and, therefore, the most significant, earning the title - Office Manager. However, through the years Stephanie Haffner, Kathy Whitaker Knight, Dorothy White Cannon, Chris Stewart, Naeema Muhammad and many interns have also provided substantial amounts of office work while in Tillery. Without the hard work of these dedicated individuals, CCT would not have been able to make such significant strides and achievements.



CCT President Doris T. Davis (l) with CCT Office Manager Barbara Reynolds Demery. (R)



1992- Former Intern Stephanie Haffner in the office

Major In-Kind Providers

People listed on this page have given of their time, energy, and material goods on a continuous bases to this organization thereby providing much “In-Kind” service which has served to match the dollars from foundations and proving, at the same time, the strength referred to in the old African proverb, “When spider webs unite, they can tie up the lion.”

Those Who Returned and Served

The Late Essie Arrington
Evangeline Grant Redding Briley
Tom Buller, PhD Candidate, Minneapolis
Dorothy White Cannon
Bernice Foster
Willie Hawkins
Cossie Harvey
Theresa Harvey
Richard L. and Katherine B. Lee
Kathy Whitaker Knight
Yvonne “Sis” Walden Jones
Marie T. Moore
Mildred Moore
Landis McKay
Louis “Moon” & Violetine Harvey Mullens
Clarence (deceased) & Sylvestra Powell
Fleming and Ernestine Peterson
Aubrey Powell
The Late Vera Plummer
Chris Stewart, Chapel Hill, NC
Marcus Tillery, PhD
Umphrey Tillery
Willie & the Late Dorothy Pope Ward
John Walden
Cary White Jr.
Doretha Whitfield

International Family

Jacques and Erika Alexis
Melanie Hatter
Neville and Lynette Rodney

Those Who Have Come from the Local Community and Serve

Larry & Linda Abram
Kristen Alston (youth) Halifax, NC
Carla Amason
The Late Lee & Delores Amason
Rep. Frank Ballance, Warrenton, NC
Mamie Boone
Jean Edmonds Clark
Cliff & Ann Couch
Phillip Cross
Maggie Crowell
Evangeline Grant Redding Briley
Doris Taylor Davis
Elizabeth Hendricks Davis
Tanika Davis (Youth)
Dr. Raven Deloatch, Jackson, NC
Barbara Reynolds Demery
Michelle Demery (Youth)
Morrisa Demery (Youth)
Sharon Evans
James Evans (Youth)
Rachel Edmonds
Antoine Faison (Youth)
Clarence Fenner
Lillie Fenner
Carrie Fields (Youth)
Flo-Matt United, Inc.
Claude & Hazel Ford
Annie Mae Foreman
Christopher "Nick" Foreman
Laura Foreman
Floyd Hendricks
Mary "Deedee" Glascoff, Greenville, NC
Gary R. Grant
The Late Matthew & Florenza
Moore Grant
Richard & Connie Batts Grant
Sadie Green
NC State Rep., John Hall, Scotland Neck, NC
James Harris, Roanoke Rapids, NC
Haywood Harrell
Ronald Hayste, Enfield, NC

Raymond Hayward, Roanoke Rapids, NC
The Late Clementine Hedgepeth
Forgan Hedgepeth (Youth)
Rolelia House Herritage
Ron & Rae Herritage Mitchell
David Hinds, PA, Rocky Mount, NC
Virginia Hines
Mary Phillips
Elnora Arrington Johnson
Marie McGee Johnson
Richard Johnson
Ruth Johnson
Shade "Ben" Johnson
Dempsey Lyons, JR
Dorothy Martin, Roanoke Rapids, NC
B. T. Marrow
Edith Miles, Gaston, NC
Naeema Muhammad, Rocky Mount, NC
Paul J. Nicholson, II (Youth)
Vivian Parker, Roanoke Rapids
Margaret Hedgepeth Person
Attorney Chrystal Redding Stanback
Gary R. Redding (Youth)
Haile B. Redding (Youth)
Sita Dollie Redding (Youth)
Kristie Whitaker (Youth)
Luther Whitaker, Jr.
Ronald Whitaker
Rose Whitaker
Jermaine Whitaker, (Youth)
The Late Lola Mae Whitaker
Williams
Steve Wing, PhD, Pittsboro, NC
Tillery Casket Company
Elvenia "Boot" Russell
Lala Russell
Shaheed Seabrook (Youth)
Dr. Nina Shah, Greenville, NC
Doris Simons
Clementine Sledge

Those Who Have Come from the Local Community and Serve

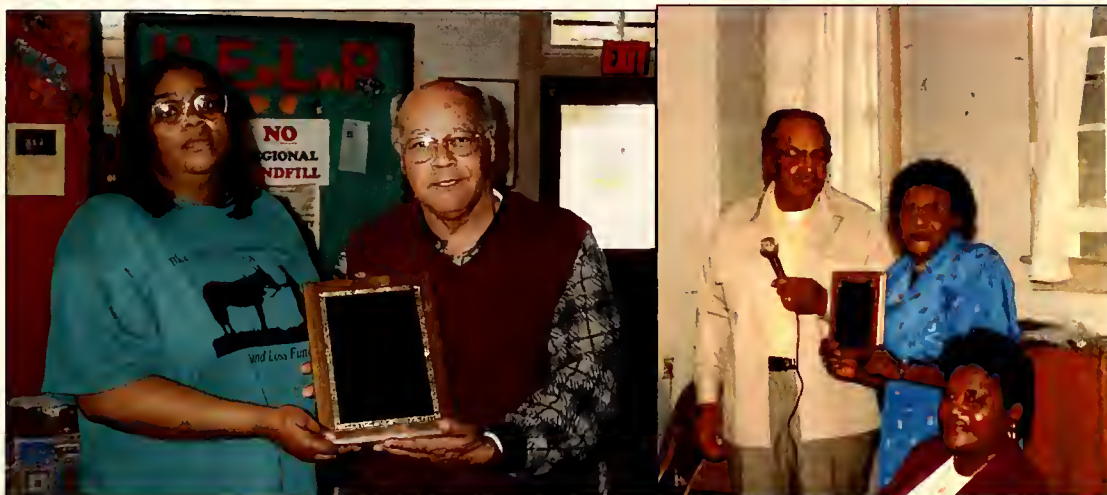
(Continued)

Bessie Marie Solomon
The Late William W. Taylor.
Hattie Themes
Connie Tillery
Ann Tillery
The Late Della Tillery

Charles Tillery, Jr.
Bethora Thomas
Beth Velde, PhD, Greenville, NC
Gladys Walden
Susie Weathersbee
Peggy Wittman, PhD, Greenville
Lillian Edmonds Whitaker
Mildred Hedgepeth Whitaker

**WE THANK YOU ALL FOR YOUR
SUPPORT AND DEDICATION!**

Awards from the Concerned Citizens of Tillery



(Top-Left) 2003- Barbara Reynolds Demery presented with an award of appreciation from the Land Loss Fund.

(Top-Right)- 1986- Matthew Grant presents an award of appreciation to Annie Mae Foreman during the 2nd CCT Citizens Recognition Day!

(Bottom-Left) 1995- Maggie Crowell receiving an Award of Appreciation from CCT and wearing the ribbon of CCT's Mrs. Kwanzaa

(Bottom-Right) 1990- Essie Arrington is Senior of the Year and represented OMS in the many Christmas Parades which as become a tradition.



A Man Called Matthew Award

In 1988, a celebration was held entitled "A Man Called Matthew" to celebrate the life of Matthew Grant and his contributions to the community of Tillery and Black farmers struggling everywhere. An award was named "A Man Called Matthew" to pay tribute to outstanding individuals who support community based economic development through African-American land retention, family farm sustainability, and the development of youth entrepreneurial leadership.

PAST RECIPIENTS

1991- Frank Ballance, Attorney and North Carolina Representative

1995- Anita Earp, Staff Attorney for Land Loss Prevention Project

1997- Steve Wing, Associate Professor and Epidemiologist, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill

1999- Timothy Pigford, lead plaintiff of *Pigford et. al. V. Glickman*

2002- Eddie Slaughter, former Vice President of BFAA

2003- Stephon Bowens, Director Land Loss Prevention Projects



MATTHEW GRANT
AUGUST 25, 1918-DECEMBER 29, 2001
Beloved Husband of Florenza Moore Grant



Chrystal Redding Stanback (granddaughter of Matthew), Matthew Grant and NC Senator Frank Ballance- recipient of the Man Called Matthew Award, and Mayor Robert Partin, Scotland Neck at the Healthier Community's Award Ceremony in Tillery, 1993.



2003- Attorney Stephon Bowens (center) receiving the Man Called Matthew Award. Also pictured (l-r) Marcus Tillery, Representative Frank Ballance, previous Man Called Matthew Award recipient, Gary R. Grant, and Evangeline Grant Briley.

CHRIS STEWART HISTORY AWARD

The Chris Stewart History Award was established in 1995 in recognition of Chris Stewart, Oral Historian and her work on the “Remembering Tillery...A New Deal Resettlement” project, and her dedication to the Concerned Citizens of Tillery.

Past Recipient:
Chris Stewart



1996- Chris Stewart receives her Ph.D. in Oral History from Gary R. Grant, and Tillery University

To Tom Buller



Honorary Son of Tillery

*You excite us with your educational and family prerogatives
spiritual connectedness*

and your

*tireless research and dedication to the
25th Anniversary Souvenir Book*

We Love You

2003 Recipient of the

Chris Stewart History Award

Concerned Citizens of Tillery History Committee

Tillery, North Carolina

Gary R. Grant, Chair

CCJ 25th Anniversary Celebration

November 1, 2003



The William Taylor and Lillie Mae Jones Fund

The William Taylor and Lillie Mae Jones Fund is a fund established in 1996, after the death of William Taylor (Tillery) and Lillie Mae Jones (Fremont), with a \$100,000 donation from Gilbert and Clara Yager to The Triangle Community Foundation in honor of these two champions. The Fund was established to support the Community Health Collective's organizing efforts for just health care in North Carolina. CCT's Area Wide Health Committee is a founding member of the Community Health Collective (CHC). The NC Student Rural Health Coalition is the fiscal sponsor for the yearly allocation of these funds.



William Taylor
1912-1994

To date, funds from the **Taylor and Jones Fund** have helped support the People's Clinics located in eastern North Carolina, the Pre-Health Career Internship Program, CHC Leadership and Organizational Training and a host of other programs. Other communities in the CHC include Bloomer Hill (Edgecombe County), Fremont (Wayne County), Shiloh (Wake County) and Garysburg (Northampton County). Mr. Taylor and Ms. Jones were community leaders in Tillery and Fremont respectively.

Florenza Moore Grant Environmental Justice Award

The Florenza Moore Grant Environmental Justice Award was established in 2001 in honor of Florenza Moore Grant, wife and mother, practicing environmentalist, and veteran sustainable farmer and entrepreneur. This award is designed to give the North Carolina Environmental Justice Network the opportunity to spotlight individuals and community groups who have made a difference in environmental struggles.

In Loving Memory of



FLORENZA MOORE GRANT
DECEMBER 5, 1921 - JULY 30, 2001
BELOVED WIFE OF MATTHEW GRANT

Past Recipients

2001- Concerned Citizens of Vance County, received by Sylvia Hughes

2002- Omega Wilson



2001 Sylvia Allyn receives first Florenza Moore Grant Environmental Justice Award- Presented by Gary Grant and Nan Freeland.

2002- Omega Wilson receives the 2nd Florenza Moore Grant Environmental Justice Award



CCT'S INTERNATIONAL TRAVELERS

Several members of CCT have traveled internationally for learning and interaction with other cultures.

THESE TRAVELERS INCLUDE

Dorothy White Cannon, who attended the 4th World Conference on Women Beijing, China 1995



Dorothy White Cannon in Beijing, China

Gary R. Redding, who studied in Belize with East Carolina University Summers of 2001 & 2002



Gary R. Redding, as Law intern at Belize City, Central America Magistrates Court with Court Secretary Bernadine - 2002



Gary at the Tikal Mayan Temples, Guatemala, Central America - 2001

**Sita D. Redding, who studied in Ghana with East Carolina University
Summer 2003**

**Sita Redding's picture of the
Elmina Slave Castle in Ghana.**



**Sita Redding with Ghanaian Host Professors Dr.
Kwadwo and Dr. Nana Opuku-Agyemang.**

**Naeema Muhammad, who attended an International Conference on Women in Senegal
– Summer 2003**



**2003 Naeema Muhammad (3rd from right)
with conference group in Senegal.**



**Naeema at Goree Island in
Senegal. This was a site
where slaves were shipped
out from Africa to the
Western Hemisphere.**

NUBLIAN YOUTH SPEAK



Top- Nubian Youth In the Making at 1983 Family Day- (left-right) Doris T. Davis, Haile B. Redding, Gary R. Redding, and Tanika Davis.

Below- 1998- Morrisa Demery and Tanika Davis in Raleigh protesting the siting of large confined animal feeding operations in eastern North Carolina



Morrisa Demery
East Carolina University
Greenville, NC

They say that it takes a village to raise a child; well, in my case it was a community, namely, Tillery, North Carolina. Although my “raising” is an ongoing process, reflection is important. It is imperative that we remember and acknowledge where we came from, how we got where we are and who helped to put us there. Currently, I am twenty-one years old, a senior at East Carolina University and doing very well. The Concerned Citizens of Tillery (CCT) definitely played a role in getting me here.



Personally, I learn by doing. So, everything that I've experienced through CCT was a learning process. It took me places I never thought I would go and provided the most memorable experiences that you can't help but learn from. CCT always felt the need to explain things to us. Even at an early age, we knew the causes we fought for. This made me feel very good. I felt very important when I was included and asked how I felt about certain issues. At the time, I thought it was “grown-folk stuff”.

My earliest memory of CCT is attending the summer camp as a child. As I played hopscotch, four-square, and volleyball, it never crossed my mind that one day I would play the role of a counselor at the camp. Further down the line, as I hoola-hooped with little girls and counseled, I never thought I would be the co-director of the CCT Summer Youth Empowerment Camp. It's amazing how the same place can give you a different feeling at different times.

I can remember attending camp as a child and feeling like the camp was a world of fun and games, and all the counselors had to do was watch us play in it. There were plenty of things to do inside and outside to keep us pretty happy and busy. All the counselors had to do was be there.

Several years later, I took a walk in their shoes and suddenly I felt the need to apologize to them. Don't get me wrong, my counseling summers were wonderful, but I could no longer look at the camp as just a world of fun and games. All of a sudden, there were hazards. As I began to try to force the corners of the four-square red tape to once again stick to the old camp floor, I realized that I had been a part of the wearing out of that tape, in my mind, only yesterday. In reality, it was several years back. My birthdays were not in vain. I had truly grown older.

CCT is big on planning, so we did lots of planning, which was well worth the time. There were so many things to take into consideration. However, with the help of CCT, we were ready for almost everything and if we were not ready for it, we knew where to go to figure how to handle it.

That was one of my most recent big learning experiences in Tillery. There were many more and I'm sure that there are more to come. Today, when I talk about some of the places I have been and some of the things I have done, people automatically know it was not through public schooling, and so I go on to tell them about CCT.

CCT is a part of my history and continues to be a part of my life, and I could not be more thankful to and for my village.

Tanika Davis
East Carolina University
Greenville, NC

What CCT means to me?

As I enter my senior year at East Carolina University, I look back at my younger days and how the Concerned Citizens of Tillery (CCT) contributed to my life. I remember the many days that my mother, Doris T. Davis (President of CCT), would drag me out of the house and make me go to meetings and events that were the last thing on my mind. I also remember the meetings and events that I would have just died if I had missed them. All in all, it balanced itself out. Now that I am older, I understand why I needed to be there.

I learned so much from CCT that has helped me through this ever-changing world, but a few things stand out the most. I learned leadership skills, the importance of respecting those who came before me, how to stand up for what I believe, and awareness of what is going on around me via the environment, politics, racial issues, and opportunities knocking at my door.

I was a part of the Nubian Youth Group for many years. CCT made sure its youth were involved. They took us places that would broaden our horizons and help us meet new people and learn new things. I've been to Raleigh and Washington to protest, the 1996 Summer Olympics in Atlanta, the Million Woman March, countless retreats to better myself, the Co-Director of the same summer youth empowerment camp that I attended when I was young, and I've learned valuable office assistant skills over the years. Everything that the organization taught me has come in handy one way or the other. I am glad that I had those experiences to help me along the way because a lot of people I know missed out on those opportunities. I would not change a thing if I could, and I could not have asked for better life lessons.

I truly believe that it takes a village to raise a child and you, CCT, have been my village. Thank You.



Sita D. Redding

My life has been intertwined with and greatly impacted by the Concerned Citizens of Tillery (CCT) since my mother, Evangeline Grant Redding Briley, moved our family to Tillery during the winter of 1980. Through my involvement with CCT, I have been on countless picket lines, attended more Halifax County School Board meetings than I cared to remember at the time, involved in rallies and marches of every kind, and I participated in tons of celebrations. Also, I was present for the arrests of the **Halifax County 5 plus 1**, witnessing the +1,



Sita with a child while visiting Komenda, a fishing village in Ghana, June 2003.

my mother and uncle, being arrested for standing up for what they believed was right and just. Through these activities I learned what true activism is, the importance of giving back to the community, and I formed lifelong bonds with other youth involved in the struggles and celebrations.

Later in life, while living in Atlanta, GA, I was kept abreast of the achievements and the struggles of CCT

through *CCT's News Notes*. And no matter how many times I moved, *News Notes* found me. I was able to visit with the Nubian Youth when they came to Atlanta for the 1996 Olympics. Even later in life, upon moving back to North Carolina to be closer to my family and to finish my undergraduate degree at East Carolina University (ECU), CCT made its presence known again. In a class my brother, Little Gary, and I attended in 2000 entitled History of African Americans, our professor, Dr. Dennard, spoke of the wonderful things a man named Gary Grant along with the Concerned Citizens of Tillery had done and continued doing in Halifax County. He then played an audio tape of a news report about the school situations in Halifax County with Uncle Gary and other members of CCT speaking out against the oppressors. That was a moment that gave me and my brother an overwhelming sense of pride and we quickly told

our professor of our connection to these wonderful people. Now, it seems that almost everyone I come into contact with at ECU knows where Tillery is and knows about the Concerned Citizens of Tillery.... And this makes me proud to be from Tillery and to belong to CCT.

My first job upon graduating from high school in 1991 was as one of two camp counselors for CCT's Summer Youth Camp. Our camp director that year was Kady Griffiths. That job was fun, it was challenging, and it was stressful. It also gave me a whole new respect for those in the field of education. At the time, the only thing that I thought I walked away with was the overwhelming feeling that "I NEVER want children!!!" and I said to myself that I would never work with children again. I also thought that the job was simply a way to make some money before entering my freshman year of college. The experience offered much more than that. It taught me leadership skills and the importance of giving back to a community that had given so much to me. Little did I know that I was being prepared to handle greater challenges.

During the summer after completing my freshman year of college (summer 1992), I visited my mother, younger sister, and brother in Nashville, TN. While there, I attended a summer class at Tennessee State University entitled Black Nationalism. This class added to what my mother, my family, and CCT had instilled in me as a youth. I learned a lot and I added quite a bit to the class through providing examples of Black Nationalism through first hand experience, thanks to my involvement with CCT.

My job that same summer was as an afternoon teacher at the Each One Teach One Learning Center. It was a Black-owned daycare center and an after school in one of the many Black neighborhoods in Nashville. All of the children were Black, most were poor and underprivileged, most of their parents worked two or more jobs, most came from single parent homes or were being reared by their grandparents, and many lacked the attention, nurturing, and love needed to grow into healthy, well-adjusted Black children. I was a bit overwhelmed at first because (1) there were three times as many children as I had worked with in Tillery, (2) learning each child's story was heartbreaking oftentimes, and (3) I had to learn the signs of mental, physical, and sexual abuse. So, I went to work everyday upbeat, smiling, and full of love and hugs. I realized that I could make

a difference in a child's day and let them know that they were loved and appreciated. This experience left me feeling quite fortunate to have been reared by the family in which I was born and the community in which I lived. Had it not been for the training I received at CCT's Summer Youth Camp the year prior, I do not believe that I would have fared as well.

Fast forward twelve years: My first job after graduating with a Bachelor of Arts degree in history from East Carolina University is with CCT. Life does truly come full circle. I feel quite privileged to be able to work within my home community doing something worthwhile. I enjoy volunteering with the Open Minded Seniors, which is always an educational experience, and the Tillery Peoples Health Clinic. It is motivating to look through the photo albums and files to see what a special, unique and outstanding organization CCT is.

While studying in Ghana, West Africa, which was quite the sobering experience, this past summer, I realized that we, as African Americans, never take full advantage of the many opportunities afforded us. Even though we live in a white, racist country whose intentions are to forever oppress people of color, we have more opportunities than most people of color, particularly Blacks, around the world. I made the commitment to take full advantage of the opportunities for which my ancestors, my family, and organizations like CCT have died and fought to insure that people like me would have a better life in a world that would like to "chew you up and spit you out."

Thank you CCT for all that you have done and continue to do for everyone. Thank you for touching my life personally and for believing in me!

With Deepest Respect and Love,
Sita Dollie Redding

Gary R. Redding
2003 ECU Graduate

Growing up as a Nubian Youth was a celebration of joy and life, and adventure!

Most adults have no idea about the intellectual poverty many black and poor youth experience. Many get through high school not ever having read a complete book, having no conception of the relationship of their home area to the



geography of the rest of the United States, not having a positive relationship with a father or male figure in the family or community, having no idea of the sacrifices made on their behalf by parents and the ancestors, with an unyielding suspicion of all white people and other races of people, and not being able to list the names of the governor and/or our political representatives. Because of a lack of discipline and direction, too many black youth enter college and immediately become more involved in drinking and drugs, unsafe sex, and more interested in perilous relationships than in their academic pursuits. To sum up the situation: Even though most students are really good people and know how to have a good time, we are the generation of pain, contempt, illusion, and a prolific mire of neglect, depression and other health problems.

The Nubian Youth organization, helped many youth in the Tillery community to escape much of this turmoil and uncertainty. Starting as young as eight years old in the organization, we were at the heart of CCT's phenomenon and formulation of long range objectives in initiating and teaching the value of collective action. Saving children in the black community should be the foundation and propagation of a new "social order" and proliferating progress.

How about the internal cohesion, the mutual confidence, and symbiotic emotions created through annual summer activities called **Summer Youth Empowerment Camps**”?

What a great experience to be introduced to the world by being sent on a five day adventure to the 1996 World Olympics in Atlanta, Georgia, after having to raise the money to finance the trip. Most of the seventeen youth and chaperones had never traveled by air plane, never spent the night in a hotel, and had never traveled on a city transit. We sent stories of our experiences by FAX back to the local paper, *The Daily Herald*, defining and documenting our experiences for posterity.

CCT had us in basic training to become the next generation of emerging great social and political thinkers by involving youngsters in voter registration, planning Black History events, electing our own officers, discussing community development, protests and picket lines, strategies for raising money, Black Theatre Festival (Winston-Salem, NC), and so much more.

Thank you CCT for all you do and CONGRATULATIONS on 25 Years of history.

Gary R. Redding, Master's Degree Candidate
East Carolina University
Greenville, NC

THE INTERNS' CORNER

Over the years, a great number of people have come to Tillery to learn and to work alongside the Concerned Citizens of Tillery. This chapter reflects on the work done and the lessons learned by the interns. In this chapter some of the interns will say what brought them to Tillery, what they did here in Tillery and what they learned in Tillery.

Here is a list of some of the interns who have helped out over the years:

- 1984- Ric Losada
- 1986- Becky Smith
- 1987- Cornelia Janke
- 1988- Eddy Cates
- 1989- Jim Benson
Lane Windham
- 1990- Scott Rauch
- 1991- Kady Griffith
Ira Dworkin
- 1992- Stephanie Haffner
Gregg Croteau
Elise Gould
Sean Green
Nicole Burrowes
Sherry Felix
Paulette Quick
Kim Jones
- 1993- David Falk
Shanti Nandi
- 1994- Joseph Costas
- 1995- Ned Smock
- 1997 & 1998- Marla Frederick
- 1998- Tim Burke
- 1999- Marcus Bernard
- 2000- Tom Buller

Rebecca Punyavati Smith



Rebecca “Becky” Smith in 1986.

I had the honor of working with CCT in the summer of 1986, as an intern with the North Carolina Student Rural Health Coalition (NCSRHC). I worked with Gary, Lola and some *very* Open Minded Seniors! I was so pleased in the latest newsletter to see that “Ma Sue” Weathersbee is still here to teach us the meaning of strength. Many community members, including beloved Della and Asa Tillery, Deacon Esau and Mrs. Martha Harvey, Mr. Charlie Walden who insisted that I call him “Uncle Charlie,” and Mr. George Smith opened their homes to me. Dinner with Matthew and Florenza Moore Grant at the Grant homestead, who became “Lala and Dede” for me, was my Sunday ritual. And many, many others of you opened your hearts and living rooms to “the white girl from up North.” My memories of each of you remain strong.

In the summer of 1987, I returned again. I was working with several down east communities, including CCT, on creating a prescription drug cooperative that would allow people to buy their medications at a greatly reduced price. Pharmaceutical monopolies being what they are, I did not have much success with that project. Instead, that summer, CCT gave me an

education in grassroots agitation as CCT and other Halifax organizations took on a racist school board and demanded justice.

I am not sure what, if any, impact I had on the community but I can say that Tillery impacted me deeply. In college, I studied about the economic dynamics that keep Third World countries impoverished and the oppressive social and political structures that support this. CCT and my experiences in Halifax County taught me that these very same dynamics and conditions existed within my country. I learned that color blindness was my white privilege. That, yes, in our country racism was alive and well. I learned that justice is not truly a right but must be fought for...that federal marshals can try to take your land with no notice and no warrant. I learned that fighting for justice requires courage, perseverance, and a lot of sweet ice tea!

Much of my life focus now is spiritual but the values that were nurtured with CCT remain the same: to become love so that we can create a world based on love, rather than fear and hatred.

I recently received my latest issue of the CCT newsletter. Reading through its pages, I marvel at how CCT has grown and matured. Now more than ever, we need the strength of community organizations like CCT.

I am grateful for this opportunity to say *thank you* and

CONGRATULATIONS!

Rebecca Punyavati Smith
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September 2003

I remember well my first visit to Tillery. It was in late September 1985. The skies were blue, the fields ripening. I camped near a small pond on the outskirts of town. My boyfriend had spent the summer working for the North Carolina Student Rural Health Coalition (NCSRHC), had lived and organized in Tillery, and, when we reconnected at the end of the summer, I could tell that his experience had affected him

deeply: he was a changed young man. I wanted to know a place that had had such a profound effect on someone I respected, and he took me there to meet the Grant family, go to church, and visit friends he had made.



Cornelia Janke, Gary Grant and Chris Clements (r-l)
work to Renovate the Curin' House in 1987

At the time of my first visit to Tillery, I was in my last year at Duke University and had enrolled in an Honors History Seminar. The purpose of the course was for students to do primary source research and to write this up in the form of a thesis. I had no clue what I would write about, since the thought of poring through musty books was not very appealing. But, after my visit to the Tillery Chapel Baptist Church that third Sunday, I was fortunate to meet and speak with some "old-timers". I recognized right away that these people had a story to tell. I thought that maybe I could help them tell it, and at the same time, I could engage in History research that would be alive somehow, and of use to someone besides me.

For the next eight months, I would return to Tillery every few weeks with a tape recorder and a pad and paper. Based on tips from the Grants and others, I would seek out the town's older residents, explain to them what I was doing, and ask if they might chat with me about what the

area was like when they were children and young adults. Each one of them was gracious, and each one shared with me a wealth of memory and wisdom.

Early on in my interviews, I noted that people would refer to “the Project.” After a little digging I discovered that they were referring to the Roanoke (Tillery) Farms Resettlement Community, part of a US government initiative begun in the early/mid Thirties as a means of assisting the rural poor who were hard hit as a result of the Great Depression.

I found out that the Roanoke Farms was the largest of five farm projects initiated in North Carolina, originally intended to accommodate between 200 and 300 families with a home, forty acres, and basic farm implements. Roanoke Farms was one of the few Resettlement Projects in the country that targeted Black as well as White families, with Black families being segregated on the “Tillery Farms” portion of the larger project.

What started out, for me, as an effort to record and “give back” a way of life and a set of experiences that was quickly disappearing, ended up as a discovery of the important place that Tillery and its residents played in US history. It turns out that the Roanoke/Tillery Farms era (roughly 1935-1943) held some rich pieces of information about land tenure, racism, farm practices and US social history. The thesis I wrote scratched the surface, but I am sure that there is much more to explore, and it is waiting to be unearthed.

My early experience with this rural community that was from a very different culture than my own has led me to my present work: supporting communities in a different South (the “developing” world), as they strive to come together around public education, so that all children, no matter what their circumstances, can have opportunities to have a rich and rewarding life. Tillery has a very special place in my heart and mind: for me, this is where my journey began. I am grateful to all of you and I can only hope that in some small way, my thesis has been of help to you. Although I had lost touch over the years, I’m glad to be reconnected and hope to stay connected this time!

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James Benson

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Department of Sociology

University of Wisconsin-Madison

August 15, 2003



Jim Benson and Fred Artis work to refurbish the Curin' House in 1989.

Personal relationships with others (Ricardo Ric Losada and Rebecca “Becky” Smith) already working in Tillery, and a sense that people in rural NC did not have many of the basic services that I considered rights, brought me to Tillery. Concerning my contribution to Tillery, I provided a service that others were simply not in a position to provide. I was young and single, without children, and accustomed to living on a shoestring budget, and thus I was able to devote time to working on the Curin’ House.

I was very impressed by the breadth of community organization in Tillery, especially the workings of the CCT, which was carrying out numerous functions at one time (a seniors group, summer school for the kids, health screenings, support for farmers, and more). So, I saw that this

impressive level of organization was possible, even in a community that was suffering from a lack of economic resources. In addition, people in Tillery were charming and insisted that I talk, so I had to learn how to communicate with people. Having grown up somewhat reserved, this was a big benefit to me.

As I spoke with and interacted with people in Tillery, learned more about the history of the community, and learned more about peoples' personal histories, I began to more fully understand the importance of employment in sustaining both communities and individuals. I learned that Tillery after World War II was a place with many families and an abundance of children. But a lack of jobs in the surrounding area led many of these children, as adults, to migrate North for employment. While I was working on the Curin' House, I saw these same adults returning from the North after retiring from their jobs, and playing important roles in CCT's seniors' group. As I worked with Fred Artis on the Curin' House, I learned of the challenges faced by men who had stayed in the community, many traveling (on a daily basis) to work as far away as the Tidewater region of Virginia. I was impressed to see that having a part-time job in the community made it possible for Fred to confront his problem, some called it "his thorn in the side.". Hollywood (Haywood Battle) and his friends would sometimes stop by the Curin' House to ask me for work, before going down to the store in order to sit and ask people for money. Taken together, all of these experiences taught me that people have to have decent employment in order to have a foundation for building their own lives, and for supporting their community.

I have taken this and other insights with me as I have moved along since leaving Tillery. Currently, I am working on a PhD in Sociology at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. I focus on issues of educational inequality, and am concerned with the conditions that make it possible for young people to transition from high school to meaningful employment.

Lane Windham
Director of Media Outreach
AFL-CIO
Washington, DC

A Touchstone

I was nineteen when I came to Tillery in the summer of 1989 to work with the summer day camp. It was one of the most important decisions I ever made.

That was before the potato curin' house was rebuilt. It was before CCT started making national news with black farmers land loss. And Tillery hadn't even begun to fight on the environmental disaster of corporate hog farming.



Lane Windham (left) and Marlow Tillery (center) in 1989.

I am proud of what I've seen the Tillery community do, and feel privileged to have been part of it in a small way. Since that summer, I've been a union organizer around the South and now direct the media outreach office for the AFL-CIO - - the umbrella organization for America's unions.

I understand now - - much better than I did at age 19 - - that there are few places where the sense of movement is so concentrated and clear as in Tillery. Tillery is a touchstone for me - - when I need to remember why I'm doing this work, and what it's really about, my mind goes back to what I learned there.

Clementine Hedgepeth took me in that summer. She certainly didn't have to, since she was very busy working the night shift at Perdue and raising two teenagers. Clementine taught me, in her own quiet way, about true commitment to the community. I hope that one day I will have the opportunity to open my life and home to a young person in the same way. And I hope that I will do it with as much grace and good humor as did Clementine and her family.

The Matthew & Florenza Moore Grant family also adopted me that summer. I didn't think I needed nurturing, but luckily they could still see the child in that 19-year-old. What a special moment in my life to have been included in the Grant dinner time, where my opinions were both respected and challenged, where I could expand my mind and heart - - and enjoy really great collards and corn bread at the same time!

Tillery is a small place where I learned very big lessons such as: Change doesn't happen unless you make it happen. Racism is still with us in all aspects of our society, and it's a constant struggle and responsibility to expose it. Small steps really matter. If you don't do it, who will?

And I hope everyone in Tillery knows what a treasure they have in Gary Grant. I've since spent fifteen years in big cities and small towns, in unions and with community groups, working with academics, lawyers and organizers. Few, if any, of them have the conviction, drive and perspective that Gary brings to this work. He's truly one of a kind. (Hopefully, he won't edit this part out!)

I feel deeply blessed to have been able to spend my nineteenth summer in Tillery. It's an experience I carry with me every day. I look forward to seeing you in October and sharing in the celebration!

Ira Dworkin

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As a nineteen-year-old college student, I came to the Concerned Citizens of Tillery in the summer of 1991. Up until that point, I had been a lifelong northeasterner and wanted an opportunity to better understand the culture, politics, and history of the South. I felt that an important part of the process of understanding could be undertaken by working and living in a rural community. When I first arrived, I knew only the skeletal history of Tillery. While



Ira Dworkin with fellow intern Kady Griffiths in 1991, getting ready to go to church

there, I learned a great deal more about the strength and commitment of its people, which remains with me today. I remain grateful for the kindness of the Grant family—Mr. Matthew and Ms. Florenza Grant, and CCT Director Dr. Gary Grant. During my time there I was able to support the work of the Land Loss Fund through modest administrative service. I worked with the Extension Program at North Carolina A&T on a tractor maintenance workshop. I got to work closely with Richard Grant on his case, where he was always willing to explain the nuances of the legal system that helped me to understand things the way things “really” work, beyond the page or the letter of the law. The community welcomed me in all regards—from programs with the Open Minded Seniors and the newly-established Nubian Youth. One of the things I took with me, literally, was a truckload of melons that Mr. Clarence and Ms. Sylvestra Powell gave me to take home for my mother on the morning I left North Carolina. I am grateful to the Powells for their generosity which emblemizes the hospitality of the entire community.

After college, I spent five years in New York working with a homeless service organization and a community-based legal services office. Both of these experiences drew on and, hopefully, built upon the work I did with CCT. Over time, I have been able to maintain a relationship with CCT. I have been involved in letter-writing and petition campaigns on behalf of Black farmers. Gary Grant invited me to speak on a panel with him at a Brooklyn, New York bookstore. I have traveled to Washington, DC, to demonstrate at the Department of Agriculture, attended a Congressional Black Caucus hearing on the plight of Black farmers on Capitol Hill, and have returned to North Carolina to attend the National Black Land Loss Summit.

On Juneteenth 2003, I successfully defended my Ph.D. dissertation. Currently I am a Postdoctoral Associate at the University of Miami in Florida, where I will be teaching and doing research for the next two years. As I reflect on the educational journey that has provided me, the first person in my family to graduate from college, with so many blessings in my life, I count Tillery among them.



Thanks and congratulations to CCT on its 25th Anniversary!

Ira Dworkin in 1998 at a meeting with Gary Grant in New York

CCT 25th Anniversary Celebration

from Stephanie Haffner, who ran away to California, but who still hasn't taken up surfing

I came to work with **Concerned Citizens of Tillery** (CCT) in 1991 after I graduated college, with a major in African-American Studies. I saw an advertisement for a group of educators, social workers, farmers, and others who were preserving Black land ownership in a rural area. That turned out to be the **CCT's** Land Loss Fund. I remember my first telephone call to Tillery. Mr. Matthew answered the telephone and said, "Well, if you want to work with Gary, you'd best talk with him." After that, I knew I wanted to work with CCT.

I interned with the Land Loss Fund for five months, worked in an ice cream shop in Durham for three months, then came back to work another year as the Community Based Health Coordinator. I helped to write the story of CCT's Health Project that won the first International Healthier Communities Award in 1993. Our trip to California was quite exciting as there were many who had never been on an airplane, never been off the east coast, and even some who had not had the opportunity to stay in a hotel. It was an exciting time.

We caught wind, by way of Charles Tillery, that factory style hog farms were moving into the community. I wrote grant proposals, made flyers, helped put together the newsletter, took announcements to churches, attended CCT



Stephanie Haffner with Gary R. Grant at Stephanie's graduation from Law School in Berkeley, CA.

meetings (OMS, Grown Folk, Health Committee, **HELP**), rounded up people to attend County Commissioners meetings, and much more. We traveled to Raleigh to demonstrate and to the Sea Islands in South Carolina to talk with Oxfam America. We took 12 people in a 13-person van to an Environmental Justice conference in New Orleans, **called by the Southern Organizing Committee (SOC)**.

We also worked with lawyers **from the Land Loss Prevention Project (LLPP)** – on land problems and hog problems. We complained about lawyers, too – the ones who had a limited view of what they could do in their jobs, who set their own agendas rather than responding to community needs. All of that inspired me to become a lawyer who would work with community groups and respond to community agendas. Off I went to law school in Berkeley, planning to come back to North Carolina. Turns out I stayed in California.

I live in Stockton, a city in the agricultural Central Valley, south of Sacramento. I work for California Rural Legal Assistance as a staff attorney, handling mainly housing and government benefits cases. I live alone, garden a little (I do best with hardy flowers and winter vegetables), play music. I host “open micas” in Sacramento and play singer/songwriter concerts in Northern California, Oregon and Washington.

I honestly don’t know what impact I might have had on the Tillery community; I only know we all cried when I left. I also don’t know how to describe the impact the community had on me. I think the main impact was learning something about politics from the heart, about what makes a community that takes care of its members, about incredible creativity and resourcefulness, and about treating everyone with love and respect.

I cannot express how grateful I am to have had the opportunity to work with CCT. Everyone I met taught me so much. I hope I gave back something valuable in the process. I gained friendship, love, family, community, vision, and possibility.

CONGRATULATIONS on 25 years! Congratulations for all that you have built, all you have done to bring hope and vision to your community, all you have done to share that hope and vision with North Carolina, the U.S., the world.

Ned Smock

August 12, 2003



Ned Smock in 1995 practicing to be a “cracker” in *Predney and Yestidy*, also pictured Shanae Couch.

I learned about the Concerned Citizens of Tillery while I was in college in Connecticut. Graduation was approaching, and although I knew that I was especially interested in civil rights issues, I was not certain about what specifically I wanted to do in life. I decided to spend the months after my graduation volunteering at an organization focused on social change, hoping that the experience would give me more focus. I was especially interested in CCT because it was so rare to see a community-based organization involved in such a wide variety of issues.

The summer of 1995 turned out the most memorable period of my life. I had never been challenged to think seriously about issues of race and class in the ways that I was in Tillery.

It was impossible to ignore the history of racism and its continuing manifestations – most obvious during my stay in Tillery was the placement of hog farms and industrial incinerators in poor African-American communities. In addition, although my neighborhood and schools were relatively diverse, being in the minority was entirely new to me. It was a new experience to be somewhat of a curiosity when I walked into a room, and to feel as if people had preconceived notions about me based on my appearance. Nevertheless, I was touched by how welcoming members of the community were to me, despite the fact that I was an outsider only in the area for a few months.

I learned a tremendous amount from Gary Grant, whom I still admire immensely. Gary was nice enough to allow me to stay in his spare room and to welcome me into his extended family. He devoted hours on end to teaching me about the history of Tillery, the complicated issues that CCT was focusing on at the time, and, more generally, talking with me about my impressions of the experience and my plans for the future. I was amazed by his boundless

energy and commitment to his community, despite the personal sacrifices required of him. He has served as a role model for me as I move through my life.

I will also never forget the kindness shown to me by Gary's parents, each of whom did so much for the community during their lives. I spent almost every evening in their home for dinner, and especially enjoyed speaking with Gary's father about his family's experience in Tillery. From each of them I learned the importance of selflessness and humility. I especially looked forward to the weekly meetings of the Open Minded Seniors. Those afternoons were particularly uplifting, and I still remember many of the regular attendees by name because I spent such enjoyable times with them eating lunch or driving with them in the van. I learned much more from speaking to people like Sue Weathersbee than I could reading history books in college.

I also learned a great deal about community activism and organizing groups of people to fight injustice. I was especially impressed by the influence CCT had in local government because members packed meetings of the county commissioners and were regular contributors to the editorial pages of the local newspaper. It was clear that the work of an organized community holds tremendous potential for change. The sheer number of different initiatives CCT was involved in – from provision of health care, to fighting corporate hog farms, to seeking to sustain land ownership among African-Americans – was stunning.

Looking back on the summer, it is hard to say that I had a significant impact on the community. CCT was already well established and involved in activism and organizing on numerous fronts. The most impressive thing about the organization is that, because it has such a committed Executive Director and active members, outsiders, like myself, are only needed to provide minimal support. Gary made clear upon my arrival that it was the members of the organization who were the fuel that kept CCT going.

After I left Tillery, I returned to the San Francisco Bay Area, where I was raised, and started working as an investigator at a law office that represented men and women who were facing the death penalty. My interest in representing those involved in the criminal justice system stemmed in large part from conversations I had with Evangeline Grant while I was in Tillery. My experience with lawyers working with CCT on preventing land loss among community members also convinced me to pursue a law degree. After I worked for two and a half years at the law office, I went to law school at Columbia in New York. I am now working as a public defender in Manhattan.

Congratulations on 25 years of amazing accomplishments, CCT!

Marla Frederick

Dear Concerned Citizens of Tillery,

Writing as a former intern with CCT and as a researcher with the UNC-Chapel Hill in celebration of your 25th Anniversary is a great privilege. In 1997/98 I traveled to Tillery and embarked upon what would be not only a learning experience for me, but for dozens of my future students as well. As a graduate student at Duke University in cultural anthropology, I was invited to participate in a research group entitled the North Carolina Public Sphere's Research Project which was housed in the anthropology department at UNC. Researchers Dorothy Holland, Cathy Ewing and Don Nonini, as principle investigators on the project, selected five graduate students to



conduct research in five North Carolina counties. Our objective was to come to understand the ways in which economic restructuring impacted communities in NC during a period of neoliberal government and economic changes. We were to record not only the changes, but also how communities organized and responded to these shifts. Knowing the history of CCT, they strongly suggested that I visit Tillery. The rest is history!

My time in Tillery over the course of the year proved to be one of the greatest learning experiences in my graduate career *and* in my life. Attending protest rallies in Washington, DC and Raleigh NC; witnessing the development of the Black Farmers and Agriculturalists Associations; seeing the struggle over Black Land Loss; watching the Seniors engage in health

and wellness seminars; and participating in functions at the Health Clinic all brought to life the struggles and the vibrancy of communities like Tillery. Most important to me were the relationships I formed with the men and women who offered me a more complex and enriching understanding of their experiences in Halifax County. It is impossible for me to give back all that was given in the course of my visit, but I do hope that my research and writing contributes to the work that has been the history of CCT.

After completing my work in Tillery, I returned to Durham to complete my work on the NC Public Spheres' project, sit for my qualifying exams and write my dissertation. In September of 2000, I successfully defended my dissertation which looks at the significance of religious faith in the community organizing efforts of women in Halifax County. Upon graduation, I was awarded a post-doctoral fellowship to continue research at Princeton University's Center for the Study of Religion. Following my time in Princeton, I assumed two other teaching and research positions at the University of Cincinnati and at the Interdenominational Theological Center in Atlanta. Both positions allowed me to share with students my experiences in Tillery and open their eyes to issues that should be of concern to each of us. The fellowship time allowed me to devote energy towards turning my dissertation into a publishable manuscript which highlights the faith, struggles and triumphs of women in Halifax County. *Between Sundays: Black Women and Everyday Struggles of Faith*, published this year by the University of California Press, stands as a testament to the richness of my experience in Tillery and Halifax County. I hope that you are able to assume pride in this book as a lesson in history and triumph that we have all worked to document. Thank you for your invaluable contributions.

And, just a few weeks ago -- as if moving three times in the last three years was not enough -- I assumed a new position as assistant professor of African and African American Studies and of the Study of Religion at Harvard University. Surely now, from New Jersey, to Cincinnati, to Atlanta, and now to Cambridge Massachusetts, people will hear from me the story of my time in Tillery, NC!

Congratulations, again, on 25 Years of Positive Social Change!

Strength and Blessings for the Journey,
Marla F. Frederick, PhD



Marcus Bernard (center) at the Resettlement Café in 1999 with Staff Attorney Savi Horne (2nd from left) and a group of future attorneys from the Land Loss Prevention Project.

In the summer of 1998, I interned with the USDA-NRCS. I worked directly with the District Conservationist for Brunswick County in southeastern North Carolina. He would randomly take me to USDA trainings as well as client (mostly hog farmers) inspections. He carefully explained many of the practices farmers, especially corporate hog farmers, used to make our communities environmentally safer while still making a living. It was an eye opening experience for me. I told Gary Grant about this experience (fall 98), when he told me if I really wanted an eye opening experience, I should come and intern with CCT/BFAA in Tillery. We worked out the details and my CCT tour began about the third week in May '99. Like my USDA experience, I was looking to maybe go to a community meeting, maybe answer a few calls, and go to Church on Sunday. Well, Mr. Grant had something a little bit different planned for me. My second day, he took me to a meeting with Wisconsin Tissue, a factory that was looking to bring toxins and dioxins into Tillery and its surrounding communities. He and a few community leaders clearly explained to the corporate representatives that hell would freeze over before they would allow them into their communities without acting fairly in their hiring practices and acting

environmentally responsible to the communities. That was only the beginning. After a few days of work, I said in slang to Mr. Grant, “I guess you gonna get your money’s worth out of me.” He replied, “And then some.”

The citizens of Tillery transformed my outlook on community life forever. They showed me determination, hard work, and commitment with good leadership can set up a community center, community health clinic and recognition from all over the world. I also paid close attention to the overlapping ties with other organizations and institutions such as The Hog Roundtable, UNC-Chapel Hill School of Public Health, and Johns Hopkins University. I was amazed that the folks in little ole “Til’rys”, had these world renowned institutions at their beckoning call.

After working with CCT, I declared that I would stay in touch with their community and use my CCT experience to make my own community better. I always call about once a month for an update of what is happening now in the Tillery community.

In closing, I thank you CCT and Mr. Grant for a “real” eye opening experience. Most recently, I returned back to my community to apply all I learned from CCT so that one day not long from now, the world may one day regard my community as a model community.

CONGRATULATIONS ON 25 YEARS OF REAL SOCIAL CHANGE!

Marcus Bernard

Entrepreneur

Supply, North Carolina (Southeastern NC)

PS – I would like to tell you all about the snake taking a bath in “Mr. G’s” bathtub, but I’ll leave that for another time.



Tim Burke, center, at a CCT planning meeting in January 1998. Also Pictured (l-r) Rose Whitaker, Dorothy White Cannon, Lola Williams, Barbara Reynolds Demery, Charles McCollum Jr., Burke, Laura Foreman, Gary R. Grant, Maggie Crowell, Jacques Alexis, Marie Taylor Moore, Doris T. Davis, Annie Mae Foreman.

Tim Burke, CCT Intern 1998

After graduating from college in May 1997, I returned home and wandered through a number of jobs. Towards the end of 1997, I accepted an invitation from Gary Grant to intern with the Concerned Citizens of Tillery. I had first met Gary through Steve Wing, a professor at the University of North Carolina who offered to assist me in my senior thesis. As part of my project on environmental racism, I created a web page for CCT. It was then that I began learning about HTML (building a web site) and hogs, but more significantly, about myself and about the connections between the environment, racism, economics, politics, and people.

I arrived in Tillery in January 1998. I worked, what felt like long days, and was learning new things around every corner. I was working primarily on the hog farm and land loss issues, but also attended Open Minded Senior meetings, health clinics and more. I remember traveling to Washington DC and also helping to organize a national conference on Black land loss. Almost every day I had meals with the Matthew & Florenza Moore Grant family and felt welcomed and

cared for at all times. I remember Mr. Matthew Grant and how much meaning I found in doing something as simple as watching The Today Show with him each morning.

In many ways, Tillery was a community different from anywhere I had spent much time. By opening my mind to new cultures and communities, I grew into a more open-minded person. By opening my mind to the many and constant injustices, I grew into a more restless person. By seeing the efforts and courage of many different people, I grew into a more respectful person. I don't think that the work of mailing flyers, designing web pages or reserving hotel rooms has stuck with me. But the work of re-evaluating my own life experiences and perceptions, including my own racism, biases and stereotypes, has surely stuck with me.

After leaving CCT, I entered the construction field and roamed around the West for a few years. Eventually I moved back to Massachusetts to participate more fully in the life of my extended family. I also began working at the largest cultural institution in Boston, the Museum of Science. I am still there, working on the team that is trying to make the institution more accessible and more inclusive of all communities. I often use what I learned from my internship at CCT in my current work.

I haven't done well in keeping in touch with the people I met while in Tillery. I do receive the mailings and appreciate the opportunity to read about the work being done. I am not sure what impact I had on the community. I know that I went down thinking that my help was needed, but I left knowing that I took away more from the relationship than I could have offered. This lesson has since come up for me many times and it affects the way I approach many new relationships.

Thank you for the opportunity to participate in CCT's 25th Anniversary Celebration!

Tom Buller

Minneapolis, MN

First, I would like to congratulate the Concerned Citizens of Tillery (CCT) on its 25 proud years of work for social change. I have only been around for the most recent of these years, but my research in writing this book, and for my schoolwork have taught me about the powerful history of CCT.

I came to work with CCT in the summer of 2000. I first came here to do preliminary research for my Master's degree and I wound up working as an intern for the



Tom Buller saying good bye to Gary as he ends his first trip to Tillery in 2000.

summer. I have come back to Tillery repeatedly over the past few years, sometimes to work more with CCT, sometimes to do more research, and sometimes to visit and most recently to put together this book on the history of CCT. While staying in Tillery, I have been welcomed into the community with open arms by all, especially the Matthew and Florenza Moore Grant family who have always made a place for me at the table and at all their family events, and Gary R. Grant who has always allowed me to stay in his home, with or without the snakes (trust me this story you would love to hear). I have maintained contact with the Concerned Citizens of Tillery because participating in the ongoing work of the organization continues to inspire and inform me and because the people of Tillery continue to welcome me back.

During my time here, I worked on many tasks related to organizing- putting together newsletters, writing press releases, attending meetings and taking notes. I guess, then, my primary aid to the community has been collecting and spreading information. My most recent effort in this regard was the Teach-in, "Farming While Black: The Tillery Connection," which I presented on August 16, 2003. The audience was the most receptive I have ever spoken in front of, and I think that says a great deal about the way that I have felt welcomed into the community. I feel honored to be a part of so many important events that have been going on such as historic visits to court or the organization of the Black Family Land Trust.

CCT and the Tillery Community, in turn, have had a profound effect on my life. Before coming to Tillery, I was never politically active in any significant way. By participating in the work of CCT, and seeing how people organize, and what an organized community can achieve has led me to become more active in my community. Since working with CCT, I have worked in Minnesota to organize various community responses in the aftermath of September 11, 2001, and the wars that have followed. I have also taken an active role in the spirit and development of the neighborhood I currently live in, Kingfield in Minneapolis, MN. My work with CCT and especially the leadership provided by Gary Grant have led me to profoundly question my position in life, something that I was never asked to do by anyone before.

Working with the Concerned Citizens of Tillery has also changed my outlook on the academic system and how to conduct research. Gary Grant has spent a great deal of time teaching me how to do research that is truly collaborative, involving an exchange between the community and researcher, not just a one-sided relationship, with the researcher taking from the community.

This lesson has been serving me well as I continue in graduate school. I am still at the University of Minnesota, where I am pursuing a Ph.D. in geography. I am continuing to use the ideas that were shown to me in Tillery, as I study how United States Agricultural policy has been used to privilege large-scale, white farmers and push Black farmers, other farmers of color and small farmers out of business.

THE PARTNERS' CORNER

North Carolina Association of Black Lawyers' Land Loss Prevention Project Tribute to the Concerned Citizens of Tillery

Celebrating Twenty-Five Years of Service Attorney Stephon Bowens, Esq., Executive Director

The North Carolina Association of Black Lawyers' Land Loss Prevention Project (LLPP) wishes the Concerned Citizens of Tillery (CCT) well as it celebrates twenty-five years of community service. CCT has been a leader and innovator in engaging the residents of Halifax and surrounding counties in strategies, which foster community.

During the years, LLPP and CCT have worked together to provide Northeastern North Carolina with the type of service and community involvement that heretofore was reserved for the bustling metropolises of Raleigh, Durham, Greensboro and Charlotte. This year alone, LLPP and CCT teamed up to provide seniors in Tillery with monthly meetings with lawyers.

LLPP's lawyers educate the "open minded" seniors on the importance of making a will, developing a durable power of attorney, consolidating heir property, and addressing tax issues before their land is jeopardized. The seniors in turn educate the lawyers on issues of life and how things get done in the real



1999- Stephon Bowens, Executive Director of Land Loss Prevention Project (front left) and Land Loss Prevention Project interns work with Black farmers.

world. The exchange of ideas and information is informative to all.

Moreover, CCT and LLPP have worked together to address issues of local, regional and national concern, whether it be issues of job creation or environmental impact associated with new industries such as Wisconsin Tissue Paper Recycling Plant, a cotton gin, or the siting and placement of regional sanitary landfills. CCT has worked closely with LLPP to help Black farmers plagued by years of discrimination from the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) obtain a semblance of justice. Without CCT and the steadfast leadership of Gary R. Grant, Executive Director of CCT, Black farmers would not have realized the potential of their collective strength in Pigford and its progeny of cases that followed seeking economic and social justice for Black farmers throughout the United States.

LLPP is happy to say that we have been a major supporter and partner of the national Black Land Loss Summits launched by CCT in 1997. These Summits have served a major role in educating and networking for farmers, farm activists as well as farm advocacy groups.

CCT has stood at the forefront of social, political, and environmental change as the essential line of defense for limited resource and elderly citizens in the Northeast and throughout North Carolina. LLPP has truly been enhanced by the relationship it has enjoyed with CCT in the past. LLPP looks forward to continuing its work with CCT in the future and celebrates twenty-five years of community action, involvement, and achievement unparalleled.

Beth P. Velde Ph.D., OTR/L
Associate Professor
East Carolina University Department of Occupational Therapy
306 Belk Building
Greenville, NC 27858
252-328-2301



In 1998 I arrived at East Carolina University to interview for a teaching and Administrative position in the Department of Occupational Therapy. As my colleagues spoke about their past and current involvement in occupational therapy practice, I was struck by Dr. Peggy Wittman's description of a community built health practice she was involved in. Of course, it was in Tillery! What caught my attention was the interdisciplinary nature of the work, the empowered community members and the unique history of Tillery. The opportunity to work in Tillery helped me to make my decision to come to ECU.

My involvement in Tillery, I believe, has been truly collaborative and beneficial in nature. As I learned from my Tillery partners about their lifestyle, their strengths and their needs--they listened to me about my values and my respect for Black history. What I found in Tillery was a home. It is home because I feel accepted, valued and welcome. Hugs abound, smiles are a ready reward! Tillery has extended the same response to our occupational therapy students who come with us to offer both in-home and community center services. The impact of Tillery has extended far beyond a personal one! Our students talk about finding refuge and strength. They talk about finding tolerance for difference and value for diversity. Above all, they talk about our community partners as excellent teachers. Our work in cultural competence has been strengthened and expanded because of Tillery.

When I think of the impact of Tillery on my own life, I can't help but visualize the people I have worked with. Ma Sue taught me that life experience when viewed in a reflexive manner is an excellent teacher. Ms. Charlotte reminded me of the power of occupation and what a powerful motivator fishing can be. The members of the wellness groups over the past two years broadened my personal view of health and made me understand the complex and interrelated components of quality of life. Gary and Doris supported me personally and professionally through a difficult time at my place of employment. My husband has been a visitor to the Open Minded Seniors luncheon and still talks about his experience.

Above all, Tillery is a constant reminder of the need for justice that is embedded in historical context. We can't change history, but it can change us--personally, professionally and spiritually. I am thankful each day that I have been a part of Tillery and I thank each of you for letting me in.

Beth

Peggy Wittman, EdD, OTR/L, FAOTA
Professor, Occupational Therapy
East Carolina University

August 5, 2003

I first went to Tillery in 1997 when Dr. Glascoff asked for volunteers from the School of Allied Health Sciences to join her in providing services to residents with funding from the Learn and Serve America grant. I joined Dr. Teresa Conner-Kerr and Mary Susan Templeton from the Physical Therapy (PT) department to develop and implement an interdisciplinary project.



I think that residents in the community now know about services that they can receive from occupational therapy and I continue to be willing to provide these as needed. I think residents have enjoyed participating both individually, in groups, and as a community in the groups we have done, and in some cases have achieved a greater independent and satisfaction in occupational performance as a result. I hope that residents have also benefited indirectly from the research we have done on their engagement in occupations that enable independence.

I have gained more from my experiences in Tillery than I ever imagined and certainly more I think than I have given. Knowing residents personally and collectively has inspired, humbled, and challenged me personally and professionally. Exploring their life histories with them has been a unique and valuable experience. Their perseverance, commitment to each other and community, use of spirituality to make meaning in their lives, and willingness to share with others from outside the community are qualities I admire and respect. My awareness of, and commitment to attaining, principles such as cultural competency, equality, and justice will never be the same!

I doubt that I will ever again have the opportunity to be part of such a unique, collaborative partnership with residents of a community. However lessons learned about true partnership, collaboration, and open and honest communication will hopefully be relevant to my life as a person and as an occupational therapist.

Mikki Sager
North Carolina Representative
The Conservation
Fund
Chapel Hill, NC

The
Conservation Fund's
Resourceful
Communities
Program staff
members were
privileged to connect
with the work of
Concerned Citizens
of Tillery in 1995, when
we initiated a regional
planning process in the
five counties bordering



2003- Mikki Sager (center) with Gary R. Grant (center back), Tracy Green (left), Ajulo Norman (2nd from right) and Bernie Mayzck at the National Rural Funders Collaborative in Nebraska City, Nebraska, September 2-6, 2003.

the Lower Roanoke River. In our search for strong grassroots leaders and organizations to guide the process, we consistently heard that CCT was a powerful force in the Halifax County area. Chris Stewart, the CCT historian, attended a few meetings and the entire group of regional community leaders was fascinated to hear about the community history project that CCT was undertaking. When Gary Grant attended one meeting, he issued an invitation (and a challenge!) to the group to visit and experience Tillery during the next meeting.

During that first visit to Tillery, we met with Gary and Chris in the Tillery Community Center, heard a brief history about “Old Tillery” and the Tillery Resettlement Community, and toured the area. When we visited the photo displays in the old Taylor Family house/museum, we were deeply moved by the depths of feelings those photographs evoked, the stories they told, and the overwhelming sense of spirituality, strength-of-character and true community that a viewer could feel from those glimpses into the past. As has happened with so many others, once we “dipped our toes in the waters” of Tillery, there was no turning back – we were hooked and would be back again and again and again!

Over the years, we have worked with CCT, Open Minded Seniors (OMS) and Black Farmers & Agriculturalists Association/ Land Loss Fund (BFAA/LLF) on a variety of projects, in an on-going process to promote economic and social improvement while protecting the

environment and family landownership in the Tillery community. As part of the Sustainable Economic Development Committee's efforts, we helped facilitate a community "asset mapping" process in which residents of all ages identified important natural, cultural and historic resources in the five-crossroads Tillery area. The process helped youth and seniors share stories about the community's resources and heritage, and the "asset map" is being used to develop African-American heritage tours that share the history and culture of Tillery with visitors, schoolchildren and family reunion participants. As the "asset map" was being developed, the "Thomas" house became available for use by CCT as a heritage museum and visitor center. We were able to work with CCT to help raise the funds needed to move and renovate the historic Resettlement home, and we continue to work with the Sustainable Economic Development Committee to implement plans for small business development and job creation opportunities that protect and showcase Tillery's amazing resources – especially the people!

We have helped facilitate planning processes for the Black Farmers and Agriculturalists Association (BFAA) and the People's Health Clinics. In the past two years, we have worked with CCT, and a number of community-based organizations across North Carolina, to create a grassroots movement that will work to change the ways in which mainstream conservation and economic development leaders work in rural communities. Along the way, we have had the chance to share some of Tillery's story with funders and nonprofit leaders across the country, to help make sure that the world knows about this community treasure in Halifax County, North Carolina.

In the past year, our work with CCT has turned to a focus on the land and landownership that is the key to independence, self-determination, family stability and economic and social power in Tillery and Halifax County. With strong leadership from CCT, the nation's first Black Family Land Trust (BFLT) was established in February 2003 to use the techniques and dollars of the conservation and community development movements to stop – and hopefully reverse – the loss of landownership that is devastating Black families across the country. The BFLT will be modeled on, and work closely with the Land Loss Fund, that was established in Tillery to help families address the issues that lead to land loss, including the need for preparation of wills, need for estate planning, and need to clear title to heir property. It will also help protect the "non-renewable resources" – the soil, water and air that are vital to the health of families for the long term, by blending environmental protection and community economic development efforts that enable families to "make money off the resources without messing them up."

During the past eight years, we have seen organizational growth in CCT, much of which can be attributed to CCT's on-going commitment to empowering individuals, families and communities to work for peace and justice for all. There are visible community improvements, including the community center renovations, the History House, and the walking trail

renovations that are getting underway through the Voices Reaching Vision program. There has been tremendous individual growth, too, as a result of CCT's dedication to lifelong learning, leadership development and engagement of all community members in creating a positive future for all. We feel honored to be a partner in these positive social and economic changes, and to be able to help connect CCT with some of the resources and expertise that are making it possible.

At the same time, we truly value all that CCT and the Tillery community members have shared with us, and have helped us to learn, in order that we might help share some of the lessons with other rural communities across North Carolina and the Southeast. Honest, open discussions have helped us better understand the challenges and the barriers that are faced every day in rural communities like Tillery. CCT leaders and members have been extraordinarily patient in their education of our staff members and our community partners and national partners; and in their willingness to work toward alternative solutions to racism, class-ism and other problems that have been around for many, many lifetimes. The energy, enthusiasm and unflinching resolution to work for economic, social and environmental justice that we have experienced in Tillery and in our work with CCT has given us high hopes and even higher standards to work toward in our professional careers and our personal lives.

Perhaps most importantly, though, the love and caring that are the hallmark of all associated with CCT are what has truly made an indelible impression on us. We have been embraced, and "brought into the fold" of CCT and Tillery, so we will have that connection with us forever. We have grown in many ways ourselves, and we continually share the story of Tillery so that others may learn the very important lessons being taught by CCT. We have grown to become friends, advocates, and passionate supporters of the CCT "family" and all its good work.

We stand in awe of the CCT founders who had the vision and the strength to persevere in their commitment to community. We congratulate CCT for its many accomplishments over the past 25 years, and look forward to even more amazing work that will take place in the coming decades. Thank you from the bottom of our hearts for all you have shared with us, and best wishes for a peaceful and just future!

Nan Freeland,
writing on behalf of
North Carolina Environmental Justice Network

The North Carolina Environmental Justice Network (NCEJN) is proud to participate in CCT's 25 years of positive local, state, national and international social and environmental change. CCT has grown and accomplished so much in 25 short years that it is truly an example for any group of citizens trying to achieve a safe, healthy and economically sound community.

NCEJN is a seed that was planted and nourished at CCT, our roots are all over Tillery. Gary Grant, Executive Director of CCT, along with several other concerned citizens, organizations and universities decided that an entity was needed to address environmental justice in North Carolina. The weeds of injustice were growing rapidly and insidiously all over the state with no signs of abatement. The task was too onerous for CCT to handle alone while still addressing monumental obstacles regarding Black land loss, health care and many other disparate conditions. A North Carolina Grassroots Environmental Justice Summit, facilitated by CCT, was held in the Fall of 1997 with one of the goals being the establishment of a statewide organization that addressed environmental injustices. In 1997, CCT agreed to become sponsor the EJ Network and a year later NCEJN opened an office at 112 S. Blount Street in Raleigh, NC.



Nan Freeland speaking in 2001.

NCEJN has encouraged and facilitated the formation of community groups to address environmental racism and injustice locally and nationally. Community groups from the piedmont to the coast have risen up, organized and made an impact on local policy decisions that affect them and their neighborhoods. Calls are continually coming in from individuals, town officials, churches and organizations seeking assistance in dealing with local and institutional racism, sexism and "classism."

NCEJN was designed to be a community-based organization and, as a result, the community directs the EJ Network. NCEJN tries to stay in touch with local communities and their needs. We help them to organize, provide leadership training and technical assistance when appropriate in order that the EJ Network remains strong. The community is the pulse of NCEJN.

The EJ Network is a viable organization, the EJ Summits are annual events and we are all better people because of CCT. Therefore, we are part of this wonderful anniversary because CCT is a major part of who we are.

Spencer D. Wood
PhD Candidate in Sociology, University of Wisconsin-Madison
1350 SPAIGHT ST • MADISON/WI • 53703
PHONE: 608.294.9442 • FAX: 608.262.6022

December 15, 2002

The Concerned Citizens of
Tillery
P.O. Box 61
Tillery, NC 27887

Dear Gary and CCT:

Congratulations on your
25th Anniversary!

Organizations such as yours
serve important, if not the
most important, purposes—
ranging from educating
people locally and
nationally to organizing
and advocating for justice.
It seems that the most



2003- Spencer Wood presenting a paper at the 5th National Black Land Loss Summit.

significant social changes in our collective histories result from grass-roots efforts such as yours. CCT stands proudly among such significant groups as the Southern Tenant Farmers' Union, the Congress of Racial Equality, the Federation of Southern Cooperatives, and the Montgomery Improvement Association. Thank you for your enduring efforts, commitment, and sometimes lonely stand for justice and equality.

I started working with CCT roughly six or seven years ago on the problems affecting the decline of African-American farmers. I'll never forget the day I first met folks from CCT at a Black farmers' rally and protest in Washington, D.C. I heard about the protest and decided I wanted to be involved. After contacting Gary Grant I drove from Madison, breaking down on the way, but arriving just in time. I approached Gary and said that I had put some statistics on the current numbers of Black farmers together in case he needed a handy reference to answer questions or make points. Gary looked at me, and said, "Now who are you?" The rest of the morning was spent outside the USDA's main building hearing speakers such as Maxine Waters from California and Marcus Tillery from Tillery, NC speak about the urgency of condition of Black farmers. We then marched over to the capitol to testify before the Black Congressional Caucus

and address questions to Secretary of Agriculture Dan Glickman. I was blown away. Here was a group from the small, rural town of Tillery organizing folks from around the country and shaking the foundations of one of the largest federal institutions in our country. If I had any reservations about the efficacy of social organization the success of CCT put them out of my head for good. Even more significant for me, I found that this partnership helped give my research meaning, grounding my work in the fabric of our society. Collaboration between academics and community-based organizations is central to solving social problems. CCT has made significant efforts to foster such relationships and should be commended.

My benefits to CCT are no doubt less significant than CCT's effect on me. Since that initial encounter, I have been involved with CCT in two ways. As an academic I have spent most of my time studying the condition of Black farmers and providing that information with community-based organizations including CCT. I have also delved into the historical significance of African-American owned farmland. It is my hope that by summarizing government statistics and documenting the powerful roles played by African American landowners I can provide occasional ammunition for CCT in its struggle for racial and social equality.

I am confident that progress along the path of social justice will be lead by CCT and other groups, not academics or politicians. I only hope that I can continue to contribute in some small way to those efforts. Thank you again and congratulations.

Sincerely,

Spencer D. Wood

Steve Bader, Field Organizer
NC Public Service Workers Union, UE150
Raleigh, NC

I first came into contact with Concerned Citizens of Tillery (CCT) in 1988, when I became coordinator for the North Carolina Student Rural Health Coalition (NCSRHC). At the time, the Coalition had supported CCT's efforts to begin one of the first two monthly People's Health Clinics and was also helping restore what was to become the Curin' House. I am fortunate and proud to have been able to work closely with CCT through the ups and downs of working to build a people's health movement for the next 11 years. Through my work since 1999 with UE150, the NC Public Service Workers Union, I am glad to have maintained some contact as we all work to build the overall movement for justice.

I think the Coalition was able to lend some support to several of CCT's programs, particularly the health work. The People's Clinic, the Pre-health career internship program, the Curin' House, some of the summer interns, the Healthy Church Program, the fights for Single Payer Health Care, environmental justice and occupational health, and supporting the health committee were some of the programs the Coalition was able to support.

I have been inspired by and learned from CCT's example of helping people have a strong voice through organization. Tillery was the first rural, African American community I stayed in; this experience and the relationships I was able to develop helped move me to decide to stay in the south and commit my life to participating in the movement to organize the south. Among the many lessons I learned from CCT's Executive Director Gary Grant, in particular, include more deeply understanding the impact of racism on every facet of life and paying greater attention to the land question.

Steve Wing
Epidemiologist
UNC School of Public Health
Co-Principal Investigator
Community Health & Environmental
Reawakening Project



2001- Steve Wing (l) with OMS President
Clarence Fenner.

Mary Lee Kerr from the Institute for Southern Studies accompanied me on my first trip to Tillery. It was March 20, 1995. The Institute had been involved in documenting destructive environmental and occupational impacts

of corporate hog production in eastern NC. Mary Lee told me about CCT's leadership in forming Halifax Environmental Loss Prevention and the Hog Roundtable. So it was capitalist pigs that brought me to Tillery!

In 1996 I attended a meeting of the Open Minded Seniors for the first time. I was nervous and wanted to make a good impression. I felt like I wasn't dressed up enough. When it was my turn to speak I tried to make up by being formal. I talked about how we were conducting research into the impacts of industrial swine production. Right away the expressions on faces around the Community Center told me that something was wrong, but I didn't know what it was. Later, Gary told me: folks in Tillery talk about pigs and hogs. Academics talk about swine. It seemed like I was being uppity. However, over time folks in OMS got to know me better. When Gary and I were called to the NC General Assembly after our research showed that the corporate hog invasion was an example of environmental racism, it was OMS that came to the legislature to watch our backs. They heard the corporate hog growers in the NC House of Representatives attack us for our research on the swine industry. So, what was my impact in the community? Now folks in Tillery say "swine!"

One of the good stories that Gary and I now tell in our presentations across the country is about who said swine and who said hogs. Now I say "hogs!"

CCT has had a tremendous impact on my life. Mainly I have learned a lot about myself and the world around me, especially about topics that aren't covered in school and aren't talked about by most Americans even though we are all surrounded by them: injustice, white privilege, institutional racism, industrial agriculture, Black land loss, community organizing, leadership, social change, history, politics, psychology, language, religion, friendship, loyalty, love, life, death, music, soul food, Kwanzaa, and much more. CCT has made my life more full by helping me and the people around me see the world more clearly.

CCT is providing leadership for positive social change across North Carolina, the United States and the world. **Happy 25th Anniversary to CCT!**

Mary Deedee Glascoff
Associate Professor of Health Education
Director of the Community Health Education Learn & Serve America Project
East Carolina University
Greenville, North Carolina



2001-Deedee Glascoff presents information on AIDS to the Open Minded

I first visited the CCT Community Center in 1996 to observe a health clinic. Dr. Nina Shah had told me about a grant she was starting to work on and had invited me to help out with the grant writing and planning. We traveled to Tillery in a line of about five cars, many of them carrying young medical students. Many of these med students were in their first year of professional school and they were eager to see, talk to, listen to, touch, and help "real people".

That first visit convinced me that Tillery was a unique place with wonderful citizens. From the cooks who so graciously prepared food for us, to the teenage greeters at the door, to the dedicated nurse who patiently taught these new students how to do some of the procedures, to the patients themselves, the clinic was an amazement.

Dr. Shah and I got that grant which was named "ECU - Tillery Learn and Serve Project". A year later, Dr. Shah left East Carolina University to enter private practice in Virginia. She left the responsibility of administering that grant to me. Since that time, CCT, Learn and Serve, and Tillery have been a source of joy, comfort, challenge, and friendship for me.

The community has been wonderful to me. I have become personal friends with many of the community residents. As a "city girl Yankee" I had a lot to learn when I first came to Tillery and the community was more than eager to teach me. As a result, I have received a wonderful education in Tillery. Perhaps CCT should consider offering the honorary title of DTC (Doctorate in Tillery Cultural) to those who have pursued the offered coursework. The Tillery community has graciously offered to teach my community health students as well. They have all been changed by their experiences.

While CCT has had profound impact on me, I hope that I have had some impact also. I believe that my impact might come from the fact that I have been able to get faculty from a variety of professional departments to go to the community to partner in efforts to offer services to community residents. As the years have passed, these faculty and projects have changed, but a number of good things have happened both in Tillery and at ECU. Members of the community have become very active in providing guidance and help to the various projects. Many of the community members have become well known visitors to the campus. Many have guest lectured in a number of departments. It is almost as if Tillery is an unofficial part of campus for ECU.

Many of the grant projects have left behind equipment, facilities, and skills that the community have adopted and refined. I hope that the community benefited from working with the diversity of faculty and students and that they now can put a face to East Carolina University. I know that the faculty and students have put a face to the community.

The grant allowed the rest of the nation to learn about Tillery. Community members, faculty and students made presentations all over the country -from Boston to Seattle. There were even presentations in Chapel Hill. Two faculty members went to Sweden to make a Tillery presentation. The Learn and Serve Project received the Point of Light Award presented by President Bill Clinton.

Personally, I should not receive credit for all that has happened over the past seven years, rather I do that my efforts have created ways for things to get done by others.

I hold an advance degree (a doctorate) in community health studies. I have worked in the rural areas of Mississippi, Alabama and West Virginia. While I learned quite a bit in those places, it does not compare with what I learned and experienced in Tillery. I am a better researcher, teacher, planner, citizen, mother, cook, and person because of working with CCT.

Major Financial Sustainers

Those listed on this page have, over the years and without request, made considerable financial contributions to the Concerned Citizens of Tillery. We acknowledge their support and applaud their benevolence.

Jacques and Erika Alexis, Tillery, NC
Louis & Rolelia Edmonds Alston, Chesapeake, VA
The Late Essie Arrington, Crowells Community, Tillery, NC
Cara Benedetto, Durham, NC
Dorothy White Cannon, Scotland Neck, NC
Crowells Baptist Church, Former Pastor James McFarland, Crowells Community
Evangelist Church of Deliverance, Elder William Cheek, Weldon, NC
Drew Enterprises, Inc., Watson Drew, Owner/Operator, Rich Square/Apex, NC
Clarence Fenner, Dawson Community, Enfield, NC
Ford Foundation Employee (Anonymous)
(Ford Foundation Matches the Contribution)
The Late Matthew & Florenza Moore Grant, Tillery, NC
Willie Hawkins, Crowells Community, Tillery, NC
William (deceased) & Rolelia House Herritage, Tillery, NC
Jesse James, Elizabeth, NJ
Rama Mills & Jo Ann Abel, Durham, NC
The Late Amanda Smith Nesmith, Washington, DC
Dr. David & Marjorie Pearsall, Greenville, NC
Fleming & Ernestine Peterson, Waterbury, CT
The Late Vera Plummer, Crowells Community, Tillery, NC
Nina Slosberg, Raleigh, NC
Clarence (deceased) & Sylvestra Powell, Tillery, NC
Neville & Lynette Rodney, Scotland Neck, NC
Mr. & Mrs. Ernest Simpson, Tillery, NC
William & Ann Smock, Berkley, CA
Daniel Taylor, Milford, CT
(Daniel had CCT Added to the United Way List at His Work Place)*
Joseph & Shirley Biggs Taylor, Randallstown, MD
Tillery Chapel Baptist Church, The late Rev. Edward Flemming, Pastor, Tillery, NC
Daniel Whitaker, Tillery, NC
Elizabeth Williams, Scotland Neck, NC
Steve Wing, Pittsboro, NC

Rudolph Hines, the late Joe Clark and James “Bro” Wiggins, Tillery, NC
(These former employees of Champion Paper Company successfully garnered Champion Paper Company Foundation funds to help run the early CCT Summer Youth Empowerment Camps.)

*Employees who contribute to the United Way at their workplace can designate CCT as recipient of their contributions.

Major Foundations Sustainers

***Z. Smith Reynolds Foundation**

Winston Salem, NC

(Gave CCT its first grant of \$15,000 to renovate the Tillery Community Center and has continued to support through the years.)

Public Welfare Foundation

Washington, D.C.

(Largest Sustaining Foundation)

****Fund for Southern Communities**

Atlanta, GA

(Provided \$1,500 to help establish The Land Loss Fund)

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Oakland, CA

NC A&T State University

Greensboro, NC

The Beldon Fund

New York, NY

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Bryn Mawr Presbyterian Church

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Greensboro, NC

North Carolina Martin Luther King, Jr. Commission
Raleigh, NC

National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences (NIEHS)
Research Triangle Park, NC

Park Foundation
New York

Presbyterian Church on the Self Development of People Fund (U.S.A.)
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Roanoke Electric Cooperative
Rich Square, NC

U.S. EPA
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VEATCH
Manhasset, NY

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Durham, NC

As we Move Forward!

A vision for the Next 25 years

The Concerned Citizens of Tillery has made great strides in organizing for social change and justice in the past 25 years. This book is a testament to the many outstanding victories that have been won, and the hard fought struggles in Tillery and across the nation. The Concerned Citizens of Tillery have proven to be a shining example of the power of the people, and how an organized and united group can oppose the large forces of racism and exploitation in American society. CCT continues to be on the front lines fighting for justice for Black farmers, environmental justice, quality health care in rural areas and a multitude of other issues.

The Concerned Citizens of Tillery have shown that true democracy begins at the bottom, with people coming to know each other, to support each other and work towards common goals. To continue to allow this democracy to flourish, the collective work of organizing and struggle must continue. CCT has worked to bring people together, not just in the community of Tillery, but across the nation. This work of grassroots democratic development is truly the direction of hope for the future.

However the struggles are not over. There is much work left to be done. Many of the victories that have been won are fragile, and can only be preserved with continued attention and dedication from the people of Tillery and from people across the nation. We ask you to join the struggle, as CCT continue to make the difference for the next 25 years.

What You Can Do:

Visit the CCT website – <http://members.aol.com/tillery/Index.html>

Join us in our struggle by becoming a member of the
Concerned Citizens of Tillery

P.O. Box 61
Tillery, NC 27887
(252) 826-3017
tillery@aol.com

Active Membership \$7
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Support Membership \$10 and up
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By joining CCT you will receive the quarterly CCT New Notes
and
Help Make a Future
for



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Roanoke Rapids, NC

Michael & Glenda

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Raleigh, NC

Doretha Whitfield

Tillery, NC

In Memoriam of
Matthew Grant (A Founder of CCT)

(1918 - 2001)

and his beloved wife Florenza Moore Grant

(1921 - 2001)



The Grants were lovers and wonderful parents and grandparents, progressive farmers, entrepreneurs,

political leaders, and were legendary in their service to the Tillery Community, North Carolina, and the nation. Florenza was the first African-American in the region to successfully register to vote in 1954, under America's laws of "Jim Crow". Matthew was the first African-American chairman of the Board of Rural Electric Co-op in the United States, the first black to serve on the NC Electric Cooperative, and he served for more than 30 years on the Board of Directors for the Roanoke Electric Co-op, Rich Square, NC.

e

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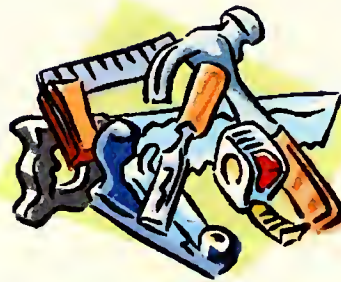
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CCT ON 25 YEARS OF PROGRESS**

**CARY WHITE, JR. & FAMILY
MARCUS TILLERY, SR.
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WANDA WHITE SABB
GARY D. WHITE**

**Congratulations to CCT
Congratulations to CCT**

**CARRIE BRADLEY
PAINESVILLE, OHIO**

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*Congratulations
On Your 25th Anniversary
Of the Concerned Citizens
Of Tillery, NC*

*May GOD Continue
To Bless You*



*Allen Mitchell, Jr.
Washington, DC*

Citizens of Tillery,
RiverStone would like to add our
congratulations for the
outstanding achievements to your
community and to each
member of CCT for your excellent
leadership and continued
accomplishments.

Best wishes for ongoing success!
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**WE ARE PROUD TO HAVE WORKED WITH YOU
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DEDICATION TO THE PROTECTION OF BLACK
FARMERS, AND YOUR TIRELESS QUEST FOR
SOCIAL JUSTICE FOR ALL!**

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On Your 25th Anniversary



Clarence and Ethel Fenner

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In Memory of Beloved
Father Raymond Crowell
Son Anthony Crowell
Grandson Marcus Crowell

We Will Always Love You,

Your Family



Happy Anniversary CCT!

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CONCERNED CITIZENS OF TILLERY
FOR
25 YEARS OF PIONEERING SERVICE

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HALIFAX COUNTY AND THE NATION

IN LOVING MEMORY OF MRS. VIRGINIA AVON HIGH
September 12, 1931 to May 2, 1999

MARILYN M. HARRIS

CLARENCE HIGH, JR.

1978

CCT

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GOD BLESS YOU

I TRULY APPRECIATE YOU

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**for 25 years of positive
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Mary Ellen

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**CONGRATULATIONS CCT ON
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OF
POSITIVE SOCIAL CHANGE**

Shanae Monique Couch

Tanika Davis

Morrisa Shareé Demery

Imani Smith



Black Workers For Justice salutes CCT on its quarter of a century work to bring dignity and self-determination to a majority African American community. Without CCT, Tillery and similar rural communities will become graveyards deteriorating from toxic waste dumps, industrial hog farms, and no means of empowerment.

CCT has shown the importance of building the collective sense of community where the old and young have independence, productive lives and self-respect.

KEEP UP THE GOOD WORK!

Best Wishes,
BLACK WORKERS FOR JUSTICE



**CONGRATULATIONS
TO THE
CONCERNED CITIZENS OF TILLERY**

**ON 25 YEARS OF WORK
THAT HAS MADE A DIFFERENCE
IN SO MANY LIVES.**

In Remembrance Of
Clarence Powell
Your wife,

Syl

We are glad to be connected to the CCT family. CCT gives people a sense of community and purpose, and provides them a vehicle to speak out against injustices.

Like the African villages of old, CCT does not throw away the elders, they are a source of our history and must have a place to live and continue to struggle in dignity.

Best Wishes,
Saladin and Naeema Muhammad

CONGRATULATIONS CCT

You Deserve Much Praise

For these

25 Years

of

Positive Change in the Lives of

Many

**In Memory of
Former CCT/OMS Member
Mabel Savage**

**Marie Savage Tillery
Scotland Neck, NC**

Happy 25th Anniversary CCT

We are proud to be members of the Tillery Community
and the

Concerned Citizens of Tillery.

Thank you for making a difference in, both, the local and global communities.

We wish you 25 more years of Positive Social Change!



Love,

Chrystal, Sita Dollie, Haile Biko, Gary Rudolph

The Children of Evangeline Grant Redding Briley
and

Grandchildren of the late Matthew & Florenza Moore Grant

We love you Uncle Gary!



IN MEMORY OF AMANDA SMITH NESMITH

*Who was a loyal and faithful member and contributor to the
Concerned Citizens of Tillery*

**Still with thoughts of you,
your family
Ruth Smith Mallard and Ulysses S. Smith**

**Mary's Chapel Community
Scotland Neck, NC**



CONGRATULATIONS CCT

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Congratulations CCT

From

Woodrow Boney & Landis B. McKay

*Continue the leadership and Fellowship
That inspires a unity of Concerned Citizens
From various communities
"To Be Concerned."*

*CONGRATULATIONS
CONCERNED CITIZENS OF TILLERY
ON YOUR 25TH ANNIVERSARY*

**CCT/OMS Member
Laura Cotton
&
Family
Enfield, NC**

*Congratulations
and
Happy Anniversary*

JACQUES & ERICA ALEXIS

IN REMEMBRANCE
OF
GAYLORD & EARLINE BISHOP
MOORE

Congratulations CCT

The Moore Children

Fred, Alfred, Evonne, Milton (Red),
Marshall (Rat), Roy (Turk),
Gail, Kenny, Gaylord, Jr. (Bookie)

CONGRATULATIONS To the CONCERNED CITIZENS OF TILLERY

God Be With You Always.
Thank You Mr. Grant and all
the seniors' staff.

Connie Harvey
(USA) Singer,
Songwriter, Composer



Gospel Singer
&

Insurance Agent for
RBC Liberty Insurance
Connie.harvey@Libertyagency.com
Tillery, NC

IN MEMORY
OF
STEVE PERSON

We love and miss you.

Your wife & children,
Margaret, Joyce & Carl

*Our Best Wishes to
The Concerned Citizens of
Tillery*

25 years

*From the
Faculty & Students
Department of
Occupational Therapy
East Carolina University*

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**“Tillery Taught Me a Sense of Pride in Being an Owner.
This led me to start my own business and pushed
me down the road to independence.”**



Off to church



ELIZABETH WILLIAMS

There are many people
Who come and go in our
lives.

A few touch us in ways that
change us forever,
Making us better
From knowing them.

You have made a Difference
In My life
And for this
I am Grateful.

**CONGRATULATIONS CONCERNED CITIZENS OF TILLERY, AND TO GOD BE
THE GLORY FOR THE WONDERFUL THINGS HE HAS DONE THROUGH THIS
ORGANIZATION.**



Arriving at the first "A Senior Umoja Extravaganza"
Ruth Mallard, Limo Drive Arthur Williams, Ulysses Smith, Mamie Whitaker and
Elizabeth Williams

HAPPY 25TH ANNIVERSARY CONCERNED CITIZENS OF TILLERY

You have certainly lived by the Acts of Faith and Taken a Bold Stand.

ACTS OF FAITH

If we stand tall, it is because we stand on the backs of those who came before us. As painful as it may be to accept, our ancestors were required to die as part of the evolution of the race. They died in order that our genius could be spread throughout the world. They died so that their energy would be shifted into the invisible, untouchable force that sustains life today. They died in order that we could stand in a new place, do new things and Create a new order. We must stand tall knowing the power, strength and wisdom of the ancestors is as close as breath. All that we ever need to be, to do, to know, to have is available. All we need do is take a stand.



Yoruba Proverb

Dorothy White Cannon

....CONCERNED CITIZENS OF TILLERY
CONGRATULATION for
25 Years....



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Congratulations CCT
Never Stop the Struggles
Until the Battles are Won!!

Pat Ponton-Farrow
& Family

CONGRATULATIONS
CCT
AND
KEEP UP THE GOOD
WORK

Delores Harvey Amason

In Memory of
Cossie Harvey
First President of OMS

CONGRATULATIONS
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West End Revitalization Association

CBEP/CDC



"Community-Based Environmental Protection" • "Community Development Corporation"
501 (c) (3) Not-for-Profit Organization

Mission: Preservation, stabilization, and planning/development for Mebane's low-income and African-American communities. These communities are threatened by:

- 1) Failing septic systems that create health risks and contaminate surface water.
- 2) 119-bypass/interstate plans for "displacement without relocation" of St. Luke Christian Church and homes.
- 3) 10,000 gallons of petroleum leaked from underground storage tanks that threaten groundwater and well water.
- 4) Exclusion from Mebane's land-use and facilities plans which deny access to basic amenities.

Goal: Compliance with the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Environmental Justice Executive Order - 12898 (1994) by local governments. For EPA Environmental Justice Study results and updates click on www.wera-nc.org.

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Phone/FAX: (919) 563-8857

Email: wera@wera-nc.org • Website: www.wera-nc.org

CONGRATULATIONS CCT

ON 25 YEARS

OF *INSPIRING* LEADERSHIP!



with much love & gratitude,
Stephanie Haffner
Stockton, California
CCT Intern 1991-1993

Chester J. Deloatch, Sr.



License – Real Estate Broker

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License – Property & Liability Insurance Agent

United Parcel Service – Retiree

Roanoke Electric Cooperative – Board of Directors

**CONGRATULATIONS TO AN ORGANIZATION THAT
TRULY MAKES A DIFFERENCE
THE
CONCERNED CITIZENS OF TILLERY
ON YOUR 25TH ANNIVERSARY**

**The North Carolina Northeast Partnership, Inc.
119 W. Water Street
Edenton, NC 27932**

WELL DONE CCT!

In Honor of



Annie Johnson – 101 (1902-)



**And Her Life Time Companions
The Late Hattie Johnson White
& Almira Johnson Clark**

**Loving Cousin
Dorothy White Cannon**

Rolelia House Heritage



Mrs. Rolelia House Herritage

*I have always believed that people
Working together could produce good works.*

CCT is a fine example of this belief in action

I am proud to be one of the

FOUNDERS.....

And to be a member for the past TWENTY FIVE years.

May we go forward together!



**HAPPY BIRTHDAY MA SUE
WE LOVE YOU MUCH**

**Your "adopted children"
Jacques & Erica Alexis**



**Congratulations
CCT!**

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PRESIDENT

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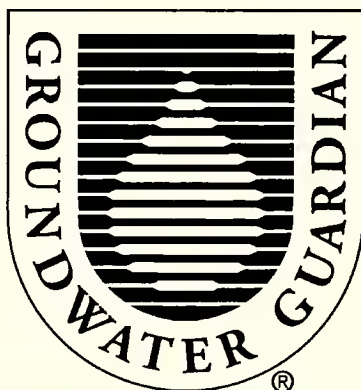
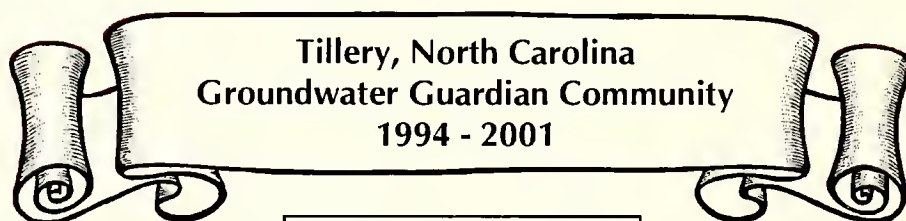
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The Groundwater Foundation and Bob Kuzelka
proudly salute Tillery, North Carolina,
for their efforts promoting groundwater protection as a
Groundwater Guardian Community.



Groundwater Guardian is a program of The Groundwater Foundation which supports and recognizes communities taking positive steps towards groundwater protection. For more information on Groundwater Guardian, call 1-800-858-4844 or visit the website at www.groundwater.org.

**BEST WISHES to
THE CONCERNED CITIZENS OF TILLERY and
HAPPY 25TH ANNIVERSARY**

*In Memory
of*



*Hattie Johnson White (December 1888 – June 1993)
and
Johnnie Thomas White (March 1894 – February 1970)*



*Almira Johnson Clark (April 1894 – August 1989)
and
Bernard McCoy Clark (September 1894 - December 1967)*

**Your loving
Granddaughter & Niece,
Dorothy White Cannon**

CONGRATULATIONS TO CONCERNED CITIZENS OF TILLERY

**ON ITS
25TH ANNIVERSARY**

**IN MEMORY
OF
WILLIAM W. AND MADLIN SMITH TAYLOR**



WILLIAM W. TAYLOR, FOUNDER AND FIRST PRESIDENT OF CCT

The Taylors Children,

**Marie, Addie, Joseph, Maxwell, Jane, Willie, Delester, Carrie,
Donnie, Doris, Samuel, James, Daniel**

*CONGRATULATIONS
TO
CONCERNED CITIZENS OF
TILLERY*

**In Memory
Of
Moses Reynolds
Calena Tillery Reynolds
Smora Reynolds
Nathaniel Reynolds
Debbie Denise Reynolds Fields
Lee Andrew Reynolds, Sr.
Lee Andrew Reynolds, Jr
Susie Mae Reynolds***

The Reynolds Family

Art By

Mary Ellen

ARTIST / ART INSTRUCTOR

Pencil, charcoal, oils, acrylic and more...

MaryEllen Jones
54 Marble Drive, Scotland Neck, NC
(252) 826.5499
email: groovygranny0512@earthlink.net



(Photo) Gary Grant, MaryEllen Jones, and Mayor Robert Partin; Scotland Neck Public Library, Scotland Neck, North Carolina.



**Happy 25th Anniversary
Uncle Gary and CCT!**

**I hope to be a great community leader
like you some day!**

- CHAD

**I'm just busy washing dishes,
Uncle Gary.
What did you say
this anniversary is all about?**

- ELLINGTON



Chad and Ellington are the sons of Chrystal Redding Stanback and Anthony Blalock, and the great-grandsons of the Matthew and Florenza Moore Grant.

George “Billy” and Alberta Majette

Rich Square, North Carolina

“We lived in Tillery from 1948 to 1954.
Our dreams were big for a life in Tillery.
The Tillery Community and our neighbors
were such blessings to us. We were young parents
and didn’t know many people in that area.
Our twin sons, ‘Larry and Jimmy,’ were born
in the house on Manley Drive. Now, most
of the people we knew
and learned to love have faded away...”



GOOD LUCK CCT ON YOUR NEXT 25 YEARS!

THIS SUPPORT SPONSORED BY DAUGHTER MILDRED “PINKY” MAJETTE SMITH; ZEBULON, NC



In Memoriam
Jasper Earl Smith
(1939 - 2002)

You were such a fighter, Earl . . .
in the industry for which you worked,
for the church you loved,
and for the family you cherished.
You will remain forever in our memory
and in our hearts.

You’ve done such an outstanding job, CCTI

SPONSORED BY YOUR DEVOTED WIFE, MILDRED MAJETTE SMITH, ZEBULON, NC

Congratulations!!!

You Really Know How To Do It Up Right!



Photo: Dr. William B. Olds and Gloria Grant Olds



Photo: The Olds children: Grant and Rena seated with their godfather, Uncle Gary. Grant is a graduate of Carnegie Mellon University, Pittsburgh, NC; and Rena is a graduate of UNC-Chapel Hill.

Bill Olds is a native of Scotland Neck, NC and is the son of the late Hiawatha and Mary Lee Lamberson Olds. Bill has operated a family medical practice in Roxboro since 1984. Gloria is a native of Tillery, and the daughter of the late Matthew and Florenza Moore Grant. Gloria teaches in the Person County Public School System.

CONGRATULATIONS CCT!
and to our famous cousin
GARY R. GRANT



Godwin and Dollie Bowser Grant Early Family Reunion
(The late Godwin and Dollie Potecasi, NC were parents of Matthew Grant)
Vincent Family Retreat Site; Gaston, NC
Pete Grant, Chairman • Deborah Hicks, Corresponding Secretary
Ida Langford Vincent, Bookkeeper • Gary R. Grant, Treasurer
Evangeline Grant Redding Briley, Historian

2 0 0 2
Grant Family Reunion

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