Personality Shows Through In Whittler Wolfe And His Creations

Mountain Carver Returns to Show

When you meet mountain man Tom Wolfe you'll think he has life's problems licked. He spends his days rocking, carving, hunting coon and telling tall mountain tales. He has a studio at Mystery Hill, Blowing Rock, NC, and travels to select shows in the South. What a life, you say. Tom agrees. He loves what he does, and it shows.

Tom, who's been a regular at the Southern Christmas Show for 14 of the 20 years, will be back again this year when the show returns to the Charlotte Merchandise Mart, Nov. 12-22.

Visitors won't notice anything different about Tom, but a close look among his intricately carved pieces will reveal a book titled "Country Carving" — the author is Tom Wolfe. Just off the press, the book sells for $15.95 and gives step-by-step instructions as well as the tools you need to carve each piece. Plus, it includes some of Tom's tall but true tales.

One of his tales is about his "good old dog" Reckless, a pure bred hound, and another dog named Hitler who was a great big mean old dog, appropriately named. Reckless and Hitler, we're told, could tree any coon within miles and have the reputation of treeing the only pure white coon Tom has seen. The dogs got Tom and his friends into some hair-raising predicaments which Tom describes in detail in his book.

Tom uses all his dogs — Reckless, Hitler, Brothel, Roscoe, Sparky and others as models for his carvings. He also draws on his friends and neighbors to create real country people hunting, fishing, water witching, milking goats or riding mules.

Whenever you find Tom Wolfe, whether it's on his front porch at the Southern Christmas Show or in his studio at Mystery Hill, he's surrounded by people. "People love to watch me whittle," says Tom. "They think it looks easy — and it is. All you need is a good eye, the right tools and lots of patience. "Here," he grins, turning salesman, "buy one of my books."

Tom's advice to would-be whittlers is simple. "Carving should be a continual growth pattern. If you don't get any better — quit!"

The Wolfe sense of humor and amiable personality show through in his carvings and each piece has its own personality. All the characters or animals have exaggerated features, a glint in the eyes and a whimsical expression. "Life," says Tom, "is serious enough. People need things they can look at and feel happy."

According to Tom the southern Christmas Show is his favorite, and he looks forward to it all year. He enjoys it because he's always joined by some 350 or 400 of his fellow craftsmen. This year will be no exception, they'll all be back for their reunion.

In addition to crafts there will be an Olde Towne with festive shops. Channel 9 has created decorated holiday rooms called 'Celebrity Corners.' There's a bake shop, a gingerbread house, lots of food to sample, Christmas Tree Lane, a train depot, minature doll house, a holiday marketplace, colorful tents, fresh greenery and cooking clinics. The entire show, from the minute you enter until the time you leave, is decorated in holiday trim.

Admission is $4.50 at the door and $4.00 in advance for adults; $2.50 for students ages 6-18. Children under 6, excluding groups, are free with an adult. Group tickets of 30 or more are available prior to the show for $3.50 each. On November 11, from 5:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. there will be a Benefit for The Charlotte Observer Empty Stocking Fund. Tickets for this evening are $8 in advance and $10 at the door.

Show hours are 10 a.m. to 9:30 p.m. weekdays and Saturdays, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Sundays.

SEEDS FROM THE SOWER

By Michael A. Guido
Metter, Georgia

Recently the FBI nabbed 4 men with 4 million dollars worth of counterfeit bills.

The word "counterfeit" means "a copy made in imitation of something else to deceive." These men hoped to go to a paradise by their deception. Instead they're in prison.

As long as the United States makes bills there'll be counterfeits, and as long as Christianity makes believers there'll be counterfeits. No one imitates anything that's worthless, not even the Devil.

You'll find counterfeit bills in stores and counterfeit believers in churches. But you'll not find any counterfeit Christians in heaven.

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Woods Elementary School Announces Honor Rolls

Naurice F. Woods Elementary School's honor rolls for the first grading period of the 1987-88 school year have been announced by Chalmers C. Bankhead Jr., the school's principal.

Named to the academically elite lists were:

Fifth Grade

A Honor Roll — Robin Donaldson and Jeff Robinson.

Majority A Honor Roll — Shea Alexander, Kory Barrier, Michael Brady, Kim Bumgarner, Julie Bryden, Brandy Compton, James Cook, Blaine Cox, Lennie Deal, Greg Edwards.

Also, Holly Fries, Jennifer Hallman, Hoy Hicks, Amy Huffman, Ben Johnson, Gary Linebarrier, Jennifer Moore, Karen Murdock, Joyel Oliphant.

And, Adam Poore, Jason Pope, Doug Portis, Jeffrey Richardson, Jerryn Smith, Patrick Stutts, Danny Thain, Trena Thompson, Krystel Violette, Jeff Warren, Chezley Wilson and Erin Witcher.

B Honor Roll: Amy Bullard, Sara Deal, Jessica Jones, Dee Patterson, Felisha Rankin and Shannon Whetstine.

Sixth Grade

A Honor Roll: Michael Burns, Andrew Coates, Angie Jones, Wesley Hart, Robert Richardson, Joannah Roseman and Mandy Stewart.

Majority A Honor Roll: Paula Blythe, Amber Boan, Amanda Chelius, Amber Cohen, Lesley Craig, Patty Davies, Laura Deaton, Charley Dymond, Kelly Frye.

Also, Tanya Halstead, Melanie Keller, Sabrina Keller, Ben Lombard, Patti McNeely, Ashley Minton, Adrienne Nixon, Kelli Norman, Erin Proctor.

And, Katrice Rankin, Mark Reyes, Marcia Saltz, Kristi Seamon, Sunny Snider, Jason Stephens, Susan Tighe, Danielle Washington, Tammy Williams and Michael Wright.

B Honor Roll: Hope Brawley, Jamie Bunton, Pepi Campbell, Jimmy Campbell, Blake Crymes, David DeCaron, Thomas Eddleman, Sally Guin, Ricky Hall.

And, Damien Harris, Tina Hartsell, Steven Howard, Sarah Hunt, Caroline Kelly, Arlene Poland, Andy Sloan and Carl Swart.

Auto Inspection Fee Hike

North Carolina motorists will notice a slight increase in the cost of their next motor vehicle safety equipment inspection. The annual cost if uo a nickel — to $5.05 per vehicle.

In Mecklenburg and Wake counties, where exhaust emissions inspections are required together with vehicle safety inspections, the total fee for each inspection will increase from $9.25 to $9.30.

The increase is a result of legislation enacted by the 1987 General Assembly to fund the North Carolina Rescue Squad Workers' Relief Fund. The fund compensates rescue squad and emergency medical services personnel for financial losses "occasioned by sickness contracted or injury received while in the performance of duties."

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BEAUTY'S BABY

One day, recently, the children and I stopped, on our way home, to pet Beauty and her baby. Beauty lives at Mr. Ryder's farm, not far from our home, and the coming of her colt had been a prime topic of conversation for several weeks.

This particular day Carla's question about Starlight's Daddy and his whereabouts sparked a discussion with my threesome that ranged from God's plan for the birth and care of baby animals, on to people and their babies.

It was a rare and precious moment, such as parents and teachers treasure, when young minds reach out effortlessly for information and understanding.

As we drove home, I thanked God for the opportunity He had given me to share in this eager unfolding of my children's thoughts and ideas. I thanked Him, too, for His Church which had inspired my religious growth and thus helped me keep peace with the developing queries of my children.

Let your Church or Synagogue become your source of inspiration. Visit there this week.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Psalm 52:1-9	Psalm 54:1-7	Psalm 63:1-11	Psalm 75:1-10	Psalm 92:1-15	Psalm 118:15-29	Psalm 138:1-8

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Remembering Lathan Lineberger, The Gentlest Of Men

By JO HINSON

Sixteen years ago, when we bought our lake place in Byers Creek Cove, Lineberger's was a little country store on N.C. 150. It was a very important place to us — easy in, easy out — the nearest stop for gas, cigarettes or bread. I don't think it was air conditioned. Inside, it smelled of country ham and ice cream wrappers.

My teenage daughter, Angela, was living by then, and she was the first of us to discover the little store and its proprietor, Lathan Lineberger. Having grown up in Charlotte, she was not used to Lathan's country cousin friendliness: coming out to meet her, opening her door, seeing her off.

Lathan Lineberger was a tall, large-boned man who was always squeaky clean, his clipped shiny hair brushed neatly. He wore overalls, a plaid shirt, and a big gold watch. He smiled and chatted constantly. He had a way of saying words twice: hello hello. Yesmam yesmam." He called Angela and me "Young lady."

We wondered if Lathan was for real.

Lathan's father, Grover, small by then from old age, often was present in the little store. In a little white house at the edge of a nearby wood, the old man cooked their midday meal, then came to watch the store while Lathan went home to eat. Noting what he took to be the prosperity of neighboring farmers, the elder Lineberger one day was heard remonstrating the fact that he and Lathan no longer farmed.

Not so for Lathan: "Daddy, we were starving, trying to farm!

Lathan made change from a shockingly large wad of bills that filled his big hand. I watched as he slipped a rubber band around the roll, dropping it into his overalls pocket.

Lathan talked: "It's just me and Daddy. I got a lady friend, though. We go dancing at the Lake Norman Music Hall. Why don't y'all come! It's fun-n-n-n!"

His voice would rise toward the end of a sentence; the word "fun" had three syllables.

"I got a boat," he said during one of our stops, "me and my lady friend go boat riding on Sunday. Tell me where your place is on the lake, and we'll stop by if you're in the yard."

He was serious, intent on my answer. I gave him directions.

Lathan did stop by one Sunday with his lady friend. They told us what a good time they had the night before at Lake Norman Music Hall, and pressed us to join them some Saturday night.

Over the summers, we learned that Lathan Lineberger was indeed for real. He was just what he seemed — an exceptionally friendly, sweet man.

My husband, Billy, happened to be in the store when Lathan's friend, Jim Fisher, stopped in to return a faulty battery. Mr. Fisher lugged the bad battery in and set it down. Lathan picked up a new battery and set it down. Mr. Fisher picked up a new battery and left. Not one word was spoken.

We were at home in Charlotte when we learned from a June 29, 1972 TV news report of Lathan's murder. I stood frozen at the brief report. I was shocked, outraged, frustrated by an irrational desire not to believe it.

It was an armed robbery. At about 6 p.m., Ruth and Bob Cavin of Mooresville happened to stop at Lineberger's just as three black men ran from the store and jumped into a waiting pickup. (Another escape car was parked on Perth Church Road.)

The Cavins found Lathan on the floor, bleeding from a gunshot wound in the throat. He had been alone in the store.

They called the police and an ambulance. Ruth held the dying Lathan in her arms. He still wore a diamond ring, but money had been taken.

The men, according to Captain Cecil Cook of the Iredell County Sheriff's Department, were from Charlotte. They entered the store with a 12-gauge shotgun and pistols. Lathan, who was 55 years old, probably pled for his life.

It took five years to catch the criminals. Cecil Cook's lifelong friendship with Lathan strengthened his determination to accomplish this. The man who actually shot Lathan was killed during another robbery before being apprehended; the other two now are serving time.

It's been a long time since Lathan's death. When I remember him, somehow he is part of the joy of our first summer at the lake, part of the sunshine and water.

He wanted to be friends, and he made us feel welcomed — our serendipity in a strange place. I wish we had gone to the Lake Norman Music Hall at least once.

Lineberger, left, with salesman Doug Wilson of Kannapolis, at the store at Doolie in the late sixties.

Civitan Junior Citizens Honored

[Civit]an Junior Citizens for September and October recently [rece]ived certificates from Jim Bullard, president of the [Mo]oresville Civitan Club. From left, the honorees are: [C]armen Johnson, Jennifer Robinson and Sandy Goins. Johnson, a ninth grader at Mooresville Junior High School, is the daughter of Milton and Darlene Johnson of Mooresville, while Robinson, also a ninth grader at Junior High, is the daughter of Carol and Larry Robinson of N.C. 801. Goins, an eighth grader at Brawley Middle School, is a daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Walter Goins of Mayhewtown. Kelly Underwood, son of Mr. and Mrs. Henry L. Underwood of Huntington Woods, was also honored as a Civitan Junior Citizen. He is a seventh grader at Brawley Middle School.

Wingate Students Aid In County Election Coverage

A group of students from Wingate College — including Donna Bowles of Mooresville — helped to provide the first live television coverage of Union County elections.

The two-hour program aired on cable television on the evening of Nov. 3.

Students took part in this event as part of their studio televison production class. This course is aimed at building a proficiency in each of the various roles necessary for effective television production.

The election night coverage was provided as a cooperative effort between the Monroe Enquirer-Journal, cablevision, the Union County Elections Board and Wingate College.

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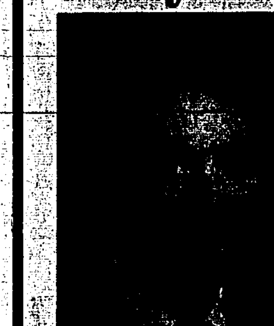

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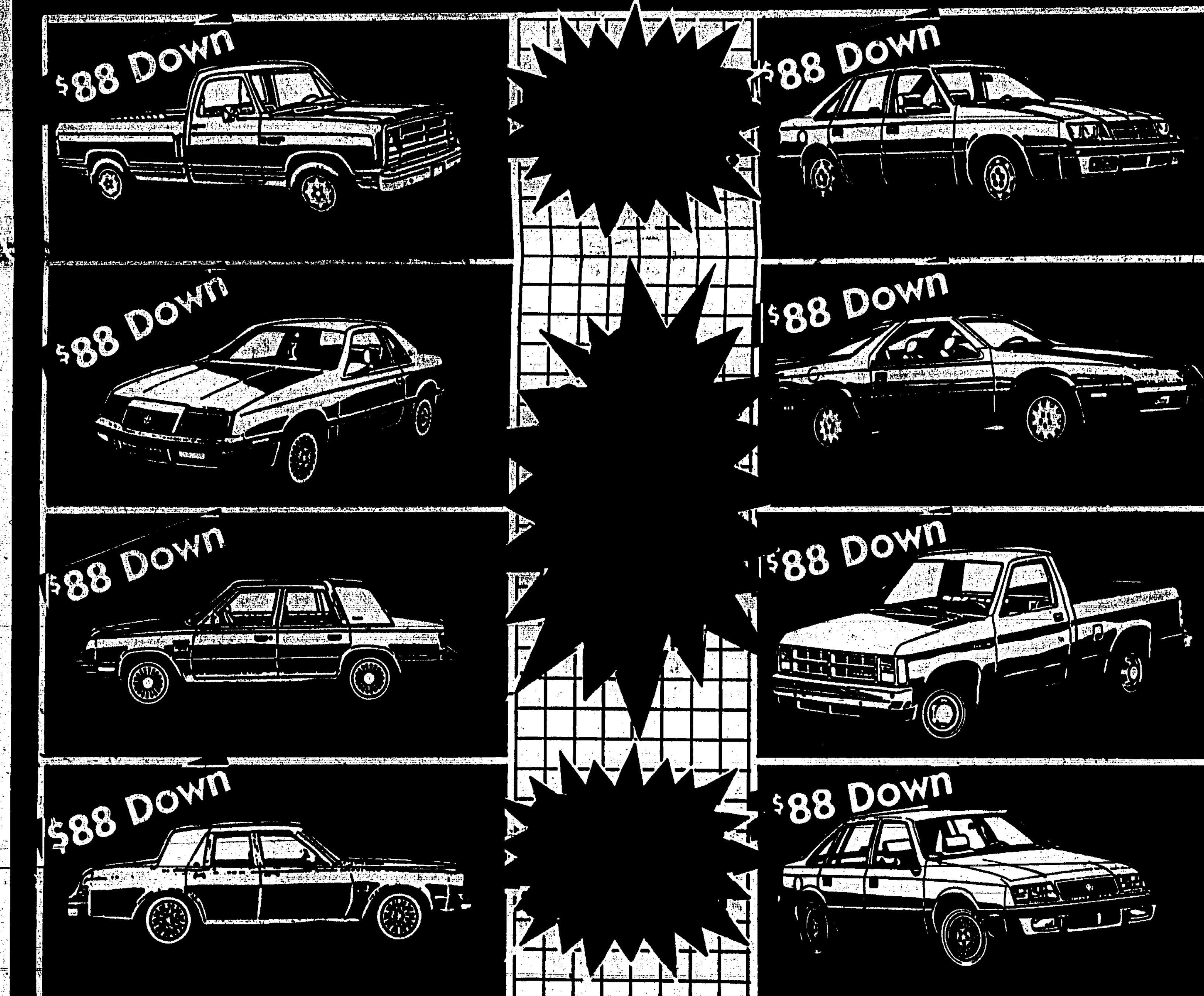

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