

Opinions

STREET SENSE

For what did you give thanks on Thanksgiving Day?



Nkereuwem
Matthews
teacher
Urbana

"I'm giving thanks for my family and friends, and that I'm healthy."

2.

Negro Woman Takes Petitions for Council

Iva Matthews, a member of the Champaign Human Relations Commission, has taken out petitions for the city council, according to City Clerk John Upp.

If Mrs. Matthews files for the election it could mean that as many as three blacks will be running for council seats.

James Ransom, the choice of almost all leaders of the black community, is running as a unity candidate, but the unity again appears in jeopardy. In addition to Mrs. Matthews, Joe Somers, a veteran North End politician, has also taken out petitions to run for the council.

Leaders backing Ransom's candidacy include former Councilman Kenneth Stratton, Vernon Barkstall and Melvin Mitchell of the Urban League, William Smith and Lonnie Clark of SOUL, Ernest Westfield of the NAACP, Phillip Walker, a member of the Board of Fire and Police Commissioners; Paul Hursey, former Urbana alderman and candidate for mayor; Mrs. Erma Bridgewater, Rev. James Offutt, Rev. W. R. Stewart, Jesse Perkins, Robert L. Harden, Arthur Davis Jr. and Steve Jackson.

Seely Johnston and George Cloyd, both white, had filed for the council election this morning. Ransom had not yet filed.

Iva Matthews

Her Crusade Is Against Loneliness, Helplessness

By SUSAN MARKS
News-Gazette Staff Writer

Despite two heart attacks, and poor health, nothing stops Iva Fykes Matthews.

"The devil don't want me because I'm doing too much good, and God isn't ready for me yet," said Mrs. Matthews, affectionally called Big Mama by young and old.

The towering, stout, 56-year-old Mrs. Matthews has spent the last seven years of her life in Champaign working to help others, first with the Urban League and then on her own.

She is the founder, programmer, floor-mopper, financial provider, — "the everything" — of the Anna Tutt Honeys, a senior citizens group. The Matthewses recycle donated junk cars to finance the program. But the untold services and supplies donated to the Honeys by "people who believe in what is being done" are the result of what Mrs. Matthews calls her "begging."

She is the founder and coordinator of the foster grandparent program. It involves senior citizens in work with youth at day care centers.

The founder of the Champaign County Girls Club — the Sugars, Mrs. Matthews was later forced to abandon the program to devote full time to the Honeys.

She was the first secretary of the Opportunities Industrialization Center (OIC) an organization to encourage adult and childhood education in Champaign - Urbana. The OIC was in part conceived in Mrs. Matthews' tiny living room amidst the clutter of pasteboard boxes of papers, books, pictures, a rickety old desk, overstuffed chairs and a sign on the wall that reads "Expect a Miracle."

Applied to life, "if you close up your heart and don't share, you will have nothing," Mrs. Matthews said.

"This 400 pounds of me is all I have. I'm not rich, but what I have, I give to the Nth degree. And that," she said, "is my why and my way how."

Someone once told Mrs. Matthews she "catered to the scum," referring to the senior citizens. "I don't need to help the saved. What I have to give is for those who need it," she said.

Self-admittedly, Mrs. Matthews is stubborn and opinionated. "I'm not a rubber-stamper," she said.

"This town doesn't believe in progress. Heary (her husband) and I get fought all the way in our programs to help the elderly."

"Blacks and whites have assassinated us. They (the rabble-rousers) propagandize to stop us, but we fool them. We are gradually hearing from people all over," she said with determination.

"If anyone had ever told me that they (the City of Champaign) would allow two poor blacks to organize and carry on this long and this far supporting it (community programs) themselves, without getting behind them, I never would have believed it," said Mrs. Matthews with her characteristic forcefulness. "It's a damn unique thing!"

Several years ago she and her husband donated property and were able to get financial backing in the amount of several million dollars to construct a nine-story senior citizen apartment building in Champaign. However, the financial backers wished to remain anonymous.

In 1974, Mrs. Matthews received a \$5,000 revenue-sharing grant from the City of Urbana. This enabled her to hire an assistant, a young University of Illinois graduate. However, this grant will run out soon, and once again Mrs. Matthews will be on her own.

Nevertheless, Mrs. Matthews has 'faith' in the community. "I sincerely believe that people will come around. We have been pulling on our boots and gradually lacing them up. 'We are gradually hearing from people all over,'" she said optimistically.



"BIG MAMA" OFFERS HELPING HAND. Exchanging stories at a weekly meeting, senior citizens and members of the Anna Tutt Honeys talk with Iva Fykes Matthews, better known as "Big Mama" (3rd from left). Mrs. Matthews founded the Honeys,

along with other youth and elderly social programs. Left to right: Effie Ransom; Eunice Terson, Honeys president; Mrs. Matthews, and Williams.

Matthews Family File

Iva Matthews

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News-Gazette Staff Writer

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Mrs. Matthews was one of the first chaperones at Douglass Center youth dances, before what she calls the "burn baby burn era", when the "rabble-rousers" took over and "infiltrated every black organization."

Big Mama is always there to help anyone, young or old, even if it means depriving herself and her husband.

She recounted a story of "one of her sons," an Urbana youth, who asked her for a dollar to buy gas to return to school at Bloomington. She gave him all she had, which was \$3 and told him to invest it wisely.

Several months later, "bless his heart," said Mrs. Matthews, choked with tears, "He came back, put his arms around me and said 'Big Mama, thank you.'" He brought back not \$3, but \$300 to help her help others.

Big Mama's reason for giving

is a lesson her mother taught her as a child. Scoop sand and hold it in a tightly-clenched fist — run with it and you have nothing left. Scoop the sand and hold it in your wide open palm — run, and there will always be something left.

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Wisconsin's
unner, and Dick
Grabowski and Ray
of whom went on
ial careers after
dinois.
spect of this squad

play the finest football of his
career during the next four
years.
"And, third," added
Blackman, "he should never do
anything to make his family
ashamed of him."

The iron industry is the na-
tion's second largest — but well
behind oil — and brings in
about \$150 million a year.
The iron mining takeover
"opens very favorable per-
spectives for the more difficult

Loneliness, Helplessness



News-Gazette Photo by Jean Korab

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NEWS / OBITUARIES

FAM.
FILE
MATTHEWS

William Ernest Brasington

16 Aug 1995 N.G.

William Brasington

OAKLAND — William Ernest "Jack" Brasington Jr., 76, of Oakland, formerly of Bradenton, Fla., died Saturday (Aug. 12, 1995) in St. Moritz, Switzerland.

Memorial services will be at 10:30 a.m. Saturday at Taber Funeral Home, 221 E. Main St., Oakland. Mike Houk will officiate.

Waycross, Ga., services will be announced at a later date.

Mr. Brasington was born April 18, 1919, at Waycross, Ga. He married Eunice Barlow. She preceded him in death. He married Nina Rutherford. She survives.

Also surviving are three daughters, Deborah Tyler of Brooksville, Fla., Lynne Morrow of Grapevine, Texas, and Susan Rasmussen of Bradenton, Fla.; two stepsons, Mike Houk of Oakland and Gary Houk of Steele; a stepdaughter, Jill Good of Fort Myers, Fla.; and two sisters, Margaret Anne Dethman of Moultrie, Ga., and Mary Dell Pararo of Tallahassee, Fla.; and 15 grandchildren.

He was preceded in death by a daughter.

Mr. Brasington was a retired U.S. Air Force major. He served in the Air Force from 1941 to 1964. He retired from the service to Bradenton, Fla., where he was the director of the Physical Plant at Manatee Community College for 24 years. His hobbies included traveling.

Memorial contributions may be made to the American Heart Fund, the American Cancer Society or an organization of the donor's choice.

Mary Dahlquist

ROSSVILLE — Mary A. Dahlquist, 79, of Rossville died at 7:23 a.m. Tuesday (Aug. 15, 1995) at United Samaritans Medical Center, Logan campus, Danville.

Funeral services will be at 11 a.m. Friday at the Rossville

Local junk dealer, 'litigator' Matthews dies

By The News-Gazette

CHAMPAIGN — Champaign County's circuit clerk's office may notice a significant lightening of the load.

Henry Matthews, demolition contractor, junk dealer, landlord and one of Champaign County's most active pro se litigants is dead at 83.

A pro se litigant is a citizen who files his own lawsuits. And Mr. Matthews filed a lot of them.

Some of the bigger targets on the prodigious list were Urbana, Champaign, Champaign County and Round Barn Manor.

Mr. Matthews seldom won in his legal struggles, yet no matter his setbacks, he was always ready for another round. A constant visitor to the University of Illinois law library, he was able to tie his larger opponents up in court for incredibly long periods of time.

Perhaps the most epic struggle in Mr. Matthews' constant trips to the circuit clerk's office was a 25-year battle with the city of Champaign over the Harriet J. Lawhead school building that once stood at 412 E. Grove St., C.

The Lawhead school was closed in 1959 and Mr. Matthews bought it at auction in 1960 for \$4,000.

For five years, Mr. Matthews and his wife, the late Iva Fykes Matthews, used the building as a youth center and senior citizens center.



MATTHEWS

In 1965, the city cited Mr. Matthews for zoning violations on the building. For 25 years, Mr. Matthews proved an able foil to the city, holding off city action until 1990, when the final appeal was heard and the final judgment rendered.

Mr. Matthews maintained that he did not own the property. Ownership was in the hands of ADIC Inc., created by Mr. Matthews, which was dissolved by the secretary of state in 1979 for failing to file annual reports and pay franchise taxes.

The property was then reportedly bought by Mr. Matthews' wife in 1985. Many of his properties were listed as being wholly or partly owned by the Iva Matthews Senior Citizen Development Corp.

But the appeals eventually wore out and Champaign won. The building, which had since slipped into a state of advanced decrepitude, was demolished almost exactly five years ago in August 1990. While the building was gone, as recently as 1992, Mr. Matthews was talking about building a Head Start school on the site.

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Champaign City Attorney Fred Stavins said Mr. Matthews had the city in and out of court "for at least 20 years."

"He was a vigorous litigator," he said. "He always represented himself. In another time... he would have been a good lawyer."

Stavins recalled one time in the early 1980s when one case against the city seemed particularly well done. Stavins said he later talked to a law clerk with the city who mentioned how he'd recently helped an older gentleman at the UI law library.

"I told him 'You just helped Henry Matthews sue us,'" recalled Stavins.

Stavins recalled another time when a judge told Mr. Matthews he'd have to stop "junking."

"Henry responded, 'Your honor, I'm sorry. Junking's in my blood,'" Stavins said.

Urbana City Attorney Jack Waaler would say only "He was an interesting character" about Mr. Matthews.

In another of his more famous cases, Mr. Matthews fought with Champaign County and Urbana over property he owned along Wilbur Road near the J.M. Jones warehouse which was operated as a junkyard.

For 10 years, Mr. Matthews feuded with them over the op-

eration and maintenance of the junkyard. At times junk from Mr. Matthews' junkyard leaked out onto Wilbur Road, which Mr. Matthews claimed he owned.

In 1986, Urbana firefighters battled several fires on the property, which then was in Champaign County, and then in 1987, the city of Urbana charged that several barrels of suspicious waste had been deposited at the junkyard. The Illinois Environmental Protection Agency was called on the scene to do the cleanup.

Champaign County took Mr. Matthews to court in 1988, and a judge found that Mr. Matthews was operating a junkyard without a permit and that the land was a nuisance.

Champaign County hired a company to clean up the property and presented the \$14,878 cleanup bill to Mr. Matthews. He never paid.

Instead, he filed a new lawsuit against Champaign County and Urbana.

In a sense, Mr. Matthews also got the last laugh on the junkyard property. Young Auto Salvage of Peoria rented the property from Mr. Matthews to use as a salvage yard.

According to counsel for Champaign County, the county couldn't deny issuing a permit to Young Auto Salvage because a junkyard was a permitted use on the property.

She survives.

Also surviving are a son, Frank Terry Jr. of Champaign; a daughter, Lillie Terry of Champaign; two stepdaughters, Zakia Patterson and Lirahrisha Patterson, both of Milwaukee, Wis.; three grandchildren; six brothers, John E. Terry and Joe Bishop, both of Champaign, Eddie Bishop of Rantoul, Jessie Terry of Frankfurt, Germany, Elliott Terry of Oxon Hill, Md., and Benjamin Terry of Racine, Wis.; four sisters, Debora Johnson of Atlanta, Ga., Alesia Bishop of Westville, N.J., Altha Marie Pelmore of Milwaukee, Wis., and Lysette Terry of Urbana.

He was preceded in death by his parents and a sister.

Mr. Terry was a member of Providence Baptist Church, Milwaukee, Wis.

Memorial contributions may be made to an organization of the donor's choice.

Charles Ward

ARMSTRONG — Charles Edward Ward, 79, of rural Armstrong, formerly of the Newman area, died at 2:05 p.m. Tuesday (Aug. 15, 1995) at home.

Funeral services will be at 2 p.m. Friday at Joines Funeral Home, 301 W. Gillogly St., Newman. Burial will be in Pleasant Ridge Cemetery, near Newman.

Visitation will be from 5 to 8 p.m. Thursday at the funeral home.

Mr. Ward was born Dec. 29, 1915, at Hume, a son of Herbert and Corda Chapin Ward. He married Maxine Vaught on Dec. 1, 1938, at Urbana. She survives.

Also surviving are two sons, James E. Ward of Hoopston and Herbert D. Ward of Fithian; two daughters, Janice Rae Dreyer of Gadsden, Ala., and Carolyn K. Frost of St. Joseph; nine grandchildren; five step-grandchildren; seven great-grandchildren; and three step-great-grandchildren.

before that.

She was the oldest member of the Rossville Church of Christ, where she taught Sunday school for many years. She was a member of the Hubbard Country Club, where she enjoyed playing golf and bridge, and the Ross-

Survivors include a son, Billy Miles Edwards of Port Gibson, Miss.; two daughters, Jane Duvall of Dunedin, Fla., and Susan Love of Tucson, Ariz.; 17 grandchildren; and 19 great-grandchildren.

She was preceded in death by

Masonic Lodge, the Catlin Church of Christ and the Fairmount Conservation Club. He served with the National Guard.

Memorial contributions may be made to the Carle Foundation Hospital Oncology Department, Urbana.

Visitation will be from 1 to 2 p.m. Thursday at the funeral home.

Mrs. Rose died at 4:15 p.m. Monday (Aug. 14, 1995) at home.

She was born Dec. 2, 1897, at Licking River, Ky., a daughter of John M. and Elizabeth Halsey

MATTHEWS
FAM. FILE

Pallbearers
Rodney Armstrong
Joe Ash
Vincent Carter
Johnnie Harris
Leroy Meeks
Edward Mitchell

Flowerbearers
Friends of the Family

Life on earth is a transient affair-
Just a few brief years in which to prepare
for a life that is free from pain and tears,
where time is not counted by hours or years...
So death is not sad- it's time for elation,
a joyous transition, the soul's safe and free
to live with God through eternity.

Acknowledgment
We are deeply grateful and have been comforted by all
the loving expressions of sympathy and deeds of kindness
shown during this period of bereavement.
Each will be acknowledged at a later date.

The Family

Arrangements entrusted to
Bluitt-Parker Funeral Home
704 North Fourth Street
Champaign, Illinois

Funeral Services
of
Henry "Tutt" Matthews

(1912 - 1995)



Friday, August 18, 1995 -- 12:00 P.M.

Canaan Missionary Baptist Church
402 West Main Street
Urbana, Illinois
Rev. B.J. Tatum, Senior Pastor

Rev. Willie L. Jones, Officiant

OBITUARY

"Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His saints." (Psalm 116:15). Again death has visited Canaan Baptist Church.

Henry Matthews was born June 21, 1912, in Farmer City, Illinois, to the union of Rulen and Beulah Tutt-Matthews.

At age seven, Mr. Matthew's family relocated to Urbana, Illinois. On September 7, 1957, he was united in Holy Matrimony to Iva Fykes Matthews in Chicago, Illinois. No children were born to this union. The Family relocated to Milwaukee, Wisconsin. After residing in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, the couple moved to Champaign, Illinois on November 24, 1963.

Henry Matthews attended the Champaign Schools. He was baptized at Freewill Baptist Church in Terra Haute, Indiana. He was an entrepreneur in the ABC Wrecking Company in Terra Haute, Indiana and the Cole Egg Industry in Champaign, Illinois. He was a Charter Member of Canaan Baptist Church, Urbana, Illinois.

Mr. Henry Matthews departed this life on Tuesday, August 15, 1995 at Covenant Medical Center in Urbana, Illinois. He leaves to mourn a cousin, Marion Webb, Kingston Heights, Indiana; one sister-in-law: Eva-El, Chicago, Illinois, and other relatives and friends.

He was preceded in death by his parents and wife, Iva Fykes Matthews.

"I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith."
II Timothy 4:7

ORDER OF SERVICE
Rev. Willie L. Jones, Officiant

- Prelude.....
- Processional.....
- Selection.....Choir
- Scripture and Prayer.....Minister
- Acknowledgment of telegrams, cards, and condolences
- Obituary.....Dorothy Friend
Church Clerk
- Selection.....Choir
- Eulogy.....Rev. Willie L. Jones
Outreach Minister
- Recessional.....

INTERMENT: MT. HOPE CEMETERY
CHAMPAIGN, ILLINOIS

"Thy testimonies have I taken as an heritage for ever:
for they are the rejoicing of my heart."
Psalm 119:11