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The Associated Press

Good aim

Daniel Murphee, 4, shows the benefits of a steady hand and a good eye at the water fountain at Camp Sidney Dew in Floyd County, Ga. The Calhoun, Ga., youngster was visiting his brother at the Boy Scout camp which hosts troops from the Northwest Georgia Council of the Boy Scouts of America.

Garwood says he's found cause in MIA-POW struggle

By DENNIS PATTERSON
The Associated Press

RALEIGH — In the four years since his court-martial for collaborating with the Vietnamese while a prisoner of war, Robert Garwood says he has found peace and a cause to fight for — the American prisoners he says are still alive in Southeast Asia.

"It is comforting that only one person will have to judge me and that's Almighty God," Garwood said Friday night at Raleigh-Durham Airport. "I'm very relaxed about that and very much at peace."

Garwood, now 39, returned to North Carolina for the first time since his court-martial to meet the daughter of a fellow prisoner, Capt. William F. "Ike" Eisenbraun, the man Garwood credits with his survival.

Pinned to his denim vest as he waited at the gate was a gold and green pin that read "Vietnam Veteran."

"I was the last American to see her father alive," Garwood said seconds before Elizabeth Eisenbraun stepped off a plane from California. "If I had not done what Capt. Eisenbraun told me to do, I would probably be buried out there in the jungle with him. No one would know the horrors, the torture, he endured."

Garwood's weekend visit with Ms. Eisenbraun, who only learned of Garwood's connection with her father last month, was arranged by the National Vietnam Veterans Coalition, an umbrella group of 27 Vietnam veteran groups who are pushing for government action to have American prisoners and the remains of Americans returned from Southeast Asia.

Garwood last month produced a map he says shows where he buried Eisenbraun after the man was taken from his cage and beaten to death by the communists.

Garwood, who was captured in 1965 and freed in 1979, also says he saw as many as 70 American prisoners still held by the Vietnamese in the late 1970s, years after the communists said they had freed all prisoners.

"I have faith and always have had faith that more Americans will come home (from Vietnam)," Garwood said. "I don't want them to come home and point their fingers at me because I didn't do all I could to let people know about them. I'm taking it off my shoulders and putting it on the government's."

The Defense Department has maintained since the late 1970s that no documented evidence exists of living American prisoners in Southeast Asia. Garwood said that claim was made before he slipped a note to a Finnish economist in Hanoi in 1979, starting the chain of events that led to his release.

"I don't know how I would have reacted had I known America had given up on me," Garwood said. "The issue is alive because in 1979 I was still alive in Vietnam. The thing that binds me to those guys over there is I know how it important it is for somebody to care."

Garwood said he did not relish returning to the spotlight after the highly publicized court-martial that found him guilty of collaborating with the enemy and assault on a fellow POW, but dropped three other charges, including desertion.

New Yorkers give up swanky brownstone house for cabin

The Associated Press

RALEIGH — Way out in Wake County, close to Wendell, not too far from Rolesville, just past a dead snake in the road and down a bumpy dirt and grass path is one family's dream come true.

A one-room log cabin, a vegetable garden, a couple of dogs, various lizards and plenty of trees are almost paradise to the family. Almost, because they could use a tractor and an extra well. And they'd like to add a room onto the house eventually.

But considering what they left behind — a spacious brownstone house with seven fireplaces and original parquet floors in New York City — they're pretty happy.

Ruh?

Meet the Kambons: Kamau, 41, and Mawiyah, 38, and their children, Ayanna, 16, Yejide, 8, and Obadele, 6. When they left New York in 1980, they hoped to leave forever mortgage payments and dependence on utility companies and grocery stores.

They came South looking for a healthy life of self-sufficiency.

"In my trips to Africa and our trips to the Caribbean, we saw where people just lived off the land," said Mawiyah Kambon, who grew up in Stamford, Conn. "And we saw that the South was closest to that. Many Southerners raised their own food."

And, she said, even though some were poor, "they just didn't seem as stressed and unhappy as folks who were poor in the North."

Going from a large house in New York City to a cabin in the woods of rural Wake County might be a bit unsettling for most families. Not for the Kambons.

But then, the Kambons aren't like most families in other respects either. For one, the Kambons have a deeper sense of cultural history than most. Dr. Kamau Kambon, a New York City native, wasn't born with his name. He and his wife chose the African name, Kambon, when they were married.

All the Kambons are vegetarians — right down to the two dogs. They will tell you how much healthier they believe a no-meat, no-preservatives, no-sugar diet is. The two younger children have never tasted meat or sugar.

They also will tell you that they never get attached to "things." For that reason, they said it took no real adjustment to leave the house in the city for the cabin in the country.

The Kambons came to North Carolina in 1980. The five stayed with Mrs. Kambon's relatives until spring when they found an apartment and began planning to build a house.

But neither Kamau nor Kambon had found a job. Although both had advanced psychology degrees from Columbia University, they had no job contracts.

With savings, they bought four acres of land in Wake County and ordered a kit from Wisconsin to build a log house. Mrs. Kambon described the house she wanted, a six-sided structure with sections of the roof meeting at one point above like a teepee. The Wisconsin company designed the kit to fit her description. Kamau and Kambon decided to do all of the construction themselves.

They built a utility hut for practice. A couple of months later, partly for economical reasons, all five Kambons moved into the 12-by-22-foot building.

"We really talked about pioneering," Mrs. Kambon said, who is now a doctoral student at Duke University. "And Kamau, at one point, had talked about no electricity, but I said that was too much."

No water and no plumbing, however, wasn't too much. For the year and a half they spent assembling the log cabin, Ayanna washed the dishes with well water. Her mother and father cooked on an electric hot plate, which they also used to heat bath water.

Although the family helped with the digging, they did hire someone to build a foundation for their log house. Then the white pine logs came, tied together in bundles.

"We stood at the top of the hill and saw these 20 to 25 bundles, and we didn't know how we were going to put these together," said Kambon, who is now an assistant professor at St. Augustine's College. Kambon handed over the designs to his wife to figure out what went where.

Before the house was finished, the two laid 98 logs and pounded long nails into them for the six walls. They cut holes for the windows and doors, realized the plans were wrong, and started all over again.

Once when weather forecasters called for rain, the Kambons stayed out all night to finish the roof, using lamps to light their way.

But for now, they are satisfied.

"We wanted to be debt-free," Kambon said. "I think our lifestyle reflects what a lot of people need to be thinking about in the community now. We operate on a pay-as-you-go basis. We try to deal with what we need rather than what we want."

Higher income doesn't automatically justify more alimony, court says

The Associated Press

COLUMBIA — Just because someone's income rises and his former spouse's debts increase at the same time is no justification to require higher alimony payments, a South Carolina Court of Appeals ruling says.

The opinion handed down this week reversed a Greenville County Family Court ruling giving Annie J. Baker more alimony from textile engineer Howard E. Baker.

After her 31-year marriage ended in divorce in 1977, Mrs. Baker received $950 per month in alimony. It was raised two years later to $1,150 per month plus part of her husband's job-related bonuses.

Since 1979, the court said, Mrs. Baker has purchased a house and incurred other debts. She now works at a retail store and earns the minimum wage.

From 1979 to 1981, Howard E. Baker Sr.'s income as a textile engineer increased from $91,469 to $112,125 and his rental income also increased.

So in 1981, Mrs. Baker asked the family court to increase her monthly alimony payment to $1,475 plus part of her husband's bonus from his job.

Mrs. Baker requested the alimony increase because of the raises and bonus her husband had earned. She also asked for the increase because of inflation and to help her pay debts.

Family Court Judge R. Kinard Johnson agreed with Mrs. Baker, but a three-judge appeals court panel voted 2-1 to reverse his decision.

When alimony is "adequate to maintain a spouse at the standard of living to which he or she was accustomed before divorce, a family court is not required to increase alimony on the basis of increased income alone," Associate Judge Curtis G. Shaw said in the majority opinion.

"Equity does not necessarily require a corresponding increase in alimony," added the court, which referred to earlier divorce case law in South Carolina stating that "the purpose of alimony is to care for the wife's needs after divorce, not to provide her with a lifetime profit-sharing plan."

The court decided Mrs. Baker's extra debts were a result of "financial irresponsibility and foolish borrowing." The judges noted a $1,500 debt to clothing stores and cited a lack of evidence that her normal living expenses had increased.

"The people that are still over there have helped me maintain my sanity," Garwood said.

The family court had ordered Baker to pay Mrs. Baker's legal fees of $2,900 because, it said, she "is in serious financial condition" and Baker "has superior financial ability."

Lookout Mountain trio works together to attract tourists

By DAN GEORGE
The Associated Press

CHATTANOOGA, Tenn. — Tourism trails only manufacturing as Tennessee's biggest industry, and nowhere do its roots run deeper than on historic Lookout Mountain.

The tree-covered, 2,391-foot peak, which extends into Georgia, boasts three of the South's oldest attractions in Ruby Falls, the Incline Railway and Rock City Gardens.

The trio has had its differences, once competing for the tourist dollar in a manner appropriately fierce for a location that was the scene of a key Civil War battle.

But now they're working together to convince travelers to spend a day on the Chattanooga mountain instead of just stopping for an hour or two on their way to Nashville, Atlanta or the Smoky Mountains.

"We do a lot of joint advertising now," said Jack Steiner, owner of Ruby Falls. "'Lookout Mountain Attractions' will be the focal point of an ad with a small mention of Rock City, Ruby Falls and the Incline."

The three have jointly hired an Atlanta firm, Mike Wilson Public Relations, and are considering doing the same with an advertising company, said Steiner.

"None of us could afford a $50,000-a-year PR firm, but together we can," he said. "We feel pretty strongly about this. It's going to take all of us."

It's quite a policy change for three attractions that have routinely erected clusters of billboards along Southern highways in an attempt to draw the curious.

Some of the signs, often painted on barns, urge motorists to see Rock City, a collection of unique rock formations from which people can view — on a clear day — seven states.

Others blare the virtues of Ruby Falls, a 145-foot waterfall deep inside the mountain, or the Incline, which passes through the site of the Battle Above the Clouds, an 1863 Civil War battle.

There used to be little cooperation among the businesses. Chattanooga officials once tried to publish a map with a suggested tour of local attractions, but the plan fell through when both Ruby Falls and Rock City insisted on being the first stop on the tour.

But all three attractions suffered in 1979 when a oil shortage hurt tourism nationwide, and local racial disorders the next summer didn't help business. Ruby Falls had a peak attendance of 500,000 in 1976, Steiner said, but it's stayed at about 400,000 for the last eight years.

Rock City also draws about 400,000 customers annually, while the Incline attracts about 300,000.

They've felt the presence of Opryland, Gatlinburg and Six Flags Over Georgia, but what may have finally sold them on a joint marketing effort is a 1983 study showing that 77 percent of those who come to Lookout Mountain visit two or more of the attractions.

"So we don't have to fight. All we have to do is get them here, and we'll get our share," said Steiner.

The attractions now advertise jointly on brochures that also mention Point Park, a nearby National Park Service facility with an eye-catching view of Chattanooga. They also offer discount group tickets to all three places.

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