



Johnny Lives Life From Many Angles

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Model Worker

Johnny Lives Life From Many Angles

By KAREN COX
Staff Writer

He can make a replica of your home, office or school. He can do a portrait of your loved one. He can design a T-shirt, publicity poster, a house, a city. He can wire an electrical circuit to light a dollhouse or sound an alarm. If you want entertainment, he can play a song for you on his guitar or saxophone or he can dance a dance that would put John Travolta to shame.

To say that Johnny Lassiter, a soft-spoken 20-year-old Newport News native, is multi-talented is an understatement.

"I really began drawing in the second grade. I went home one day and drew chalk portraits of my family and several of the kids in my class. I took them to school the next day and lined them up on the chalkboard and everyone was amazed," he said.

These were no stick figure drawings but full-fledged portraits and Johnny's second grade teacher was most amazed of all. She was so impressed, in fact, that she decided to take Johnny and a few other youngsters to Hampton Institute every Saturday to see artists at work.

Johnny began making models in the fourth grade, fashioning replicas of the Taj Mahal and White House out of cardboard and poster paint. Nylon fishing string became water falls, shredded green scouring pads became trees and bushes.

In the fifth grade he discovered electronics and began wiring his model cars to give them realistic headlights and taillights. He also built a siren that sent his classmates squealing in delight.

It was then that he began designing buildings, learning the drafting symbols and measurements that would allow someone to look at his drawings and bring them to full scale.

"My drawings haven't changed much since then. I've learned a little more and my drawings show that, but I've always had an attention for detail and the patience to put that on paper," he said.

Johnny has difficulty talking about his successes and achievements. A polite, quiet person, Johnny was the type of child who would have easily blended into the background had it not been for the sharp observations of some of his teachers and classmates.

He graduated from Menchville High School in 1980 with average grades and five years of drafting training behind him.

For over two years now he has worked at McDonald's. He was considered just another one of the crew until this past few months when he went a few steps further than his coworkers and astounded them with the displays of his talent.

It cost Johnny about \$200 and seven months of his time to build a replica of the Jefferson Avenue McDonald's where he works. Every detail is there down to the exact landscape, the tiny hand-painted Ms on the doors and the air conditioning units on the roof.

"It took me a week to get on the roof of McDonald's but my boss finally gave in and went up there with me," he said.

Johnny made his preliminary sketches on the backs of bank deposit slips, store inventory sheets and placemats. They look more like finished drawings than mere sketches.

He also painted the various Muppet characters on the front window of the store during the restaurant's Muppet movie promotion.

"Future Draft," a model of his dream office building, was done when he was a senior in high school. "That is going to be my office one day," he said of the model with glittering walls, large smoked glass windows, hand-painted signs and roof-top solar heating panels.

It was presented to his class with "Dream City." Not only did he receive top grades for his work, but it was kept on display at Menchville High for almost two years.

"We had two weeks to do the project. It took me a week to decide what I wanted to do, two days to plan it and three days to build it," he said.

He apologizes for the small ketchup stains that slightly mar "Dream City".

"Someone broke into the display and squirted ketchup all over everything, but I fixed most of it and you can't even tell," he said. "You know how some people are. That's their idea of fun."

Johnny talks fondly of high school, but admits that he neglected some of his studies so he could pursue his other interests. He worked in photography, darkroom developing and off-set printing in school but found he eventually did more teaching and assisting in art class than learning.

He also continued to follow his inquisitive nature wherever it led. Wanting to learn about computers he went to the library and checked out some books.

"I guess I've done most of my studying on my own. I'd just say, 'Now what do I want to learn about today,' then I'd go to the library and look it up. I feel like I practically stay at the library, but I love it. I never read novels, just magazines and non-fiction books," he said.

Last fall, Johnny's dancing ability came to the attention of the manager of the Jolly Lobster club on Jefferson Avenue and before long, he and his friend, Grover

McIntyre, were decked out in top hats and tails, twirling about the dance floor with their white canes.

"That was what really brought me out. I always stayed out of the limelight before I began dancing before an audience, but when I did, it almost felt like I was famous."

But Johnny never considered dancing professionally. The thought never occurred to him to become an artist, selling his work at art shows and galleries.

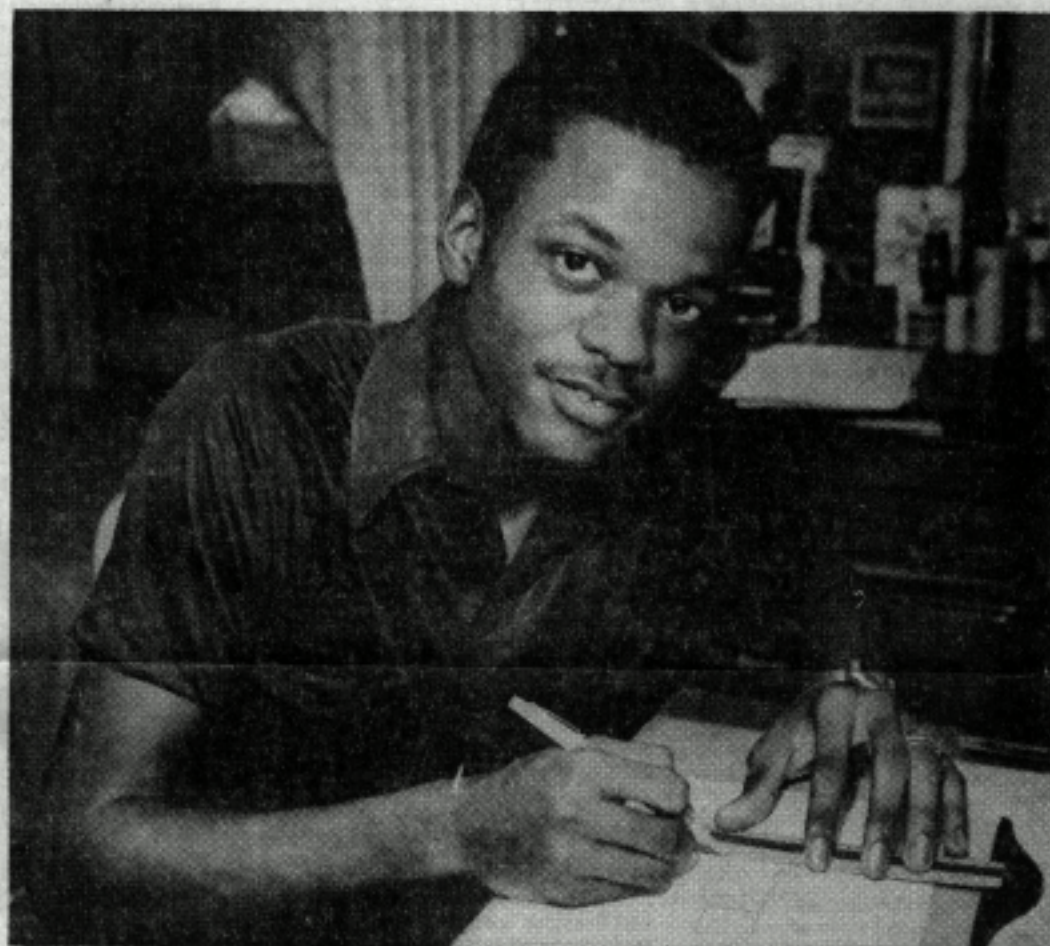
He only has one dream and is about to abandon that one — the one to become an architect.

"I just don't know anything about getting scholarships or assistance for college. I don't even know where to begin so I am thinking about going to the apprentice school at the shipyard," he said.

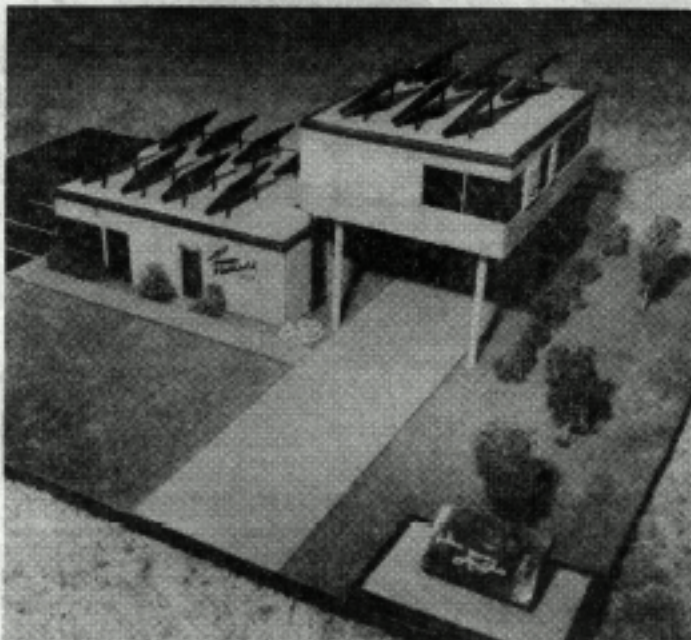
But Johnny's heart lies in designing the buildings of the future.

"I love drafting and architecture. I used to ride around and just look at houses and buildings. But I've never been the kind of person who is satisfied with just seeing something on paper. I have to see everything from all angles before I'm happy."

Johnny Lassiter, above, does the drawings for as well as building his models. Below is "Future Draft," a model of his dream office building that he did as part of a project when he was a senior in high school. A more recent project, at right, is the one he did of the place where he is employed.



Staff Photos By Buddy Norris



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Our Crew- Talent, Commitment and Creativity



Crewmember Johnny Lassiter transforms ordinary windows into a spectrum of color.

His face is familiar to many of you. Twenty year old Johnny Lassiter, Crewmember from McDonald's in Hampton, Virginia has been displaying his architectural creations to Crews Views, local community merchants and even the Press throughout the year. Johnny's name and his work have drawn much attention in his store recently as evidenced by a customer exclaiming during a recent interview, "Every time I see you, Johnny, you're getting your picture taken or your name in the newspaper!"

Johnny's response was a shy grin, almost, but not quite, concealing the excitement felt by all the notoriety.

We first featured this Crewmember a year ago after he completed a replica of his store, surprising Manager, Joe Polonski, and the entire Crew and then again a few months ago when Johnny decorated store windows with a colorful display of Muppet characters. "After everyone saw that model, I was encouraged to go to school and study architecture," he recalled.

"They told me if it meant having them by my side every minute, they wanted to see me studying." Since creating his Muppet window characters Johnny has been busy helping to decorate some of the other stores in the Hampton area with paintings and other design techniques. School projects have also kept him busy such as a recent project which entailed designing a future city plan complete with monorail and sleek office buildings.

When Johnny joined the McDonald's team in 1979, no one was aware of his artistic background. And Johnny had no intention at the time of flaunting his talents. Instead, he concentrated his efforts on performing well at his job in the grill area.

"When I first started, my Manager introduced me around and immediately I started thinking how I could help the operation. I saw the importance of QSC and how significant it was. I tried to do everything just right.

"Quality is important and everyone appreciates it when I do a good job. But, I also



appreciate good service and cleanliness. So these are qualities I try to teach to new employees. I train them how the job should be done, what's expected every day. Then, when they have some experience under their belts, I offer a few tips I have picked up along the way that help make the job a little easier.

"I really enjoy my job at McDonald's and the Managers and Crew are great! They make my job both fun and stimulating."

While Johnny's artistic talents were noticed only recently, since the second grade in school he was drawing people, "and not just stick figures," he added emphatically.

"My second grade teacher took me to the Hampton Institute to show me how an artist goes about drawing and painting. Sometimes I took my brother who also draws. We would go every week and watch the artists work. I picked up most of my experience this way."

When Johnny entered the fifth grade, he attended art classes, drawing from his head, not from objects or photographs. According to Johnny, his teacher worked with him to further develop his talents. But still, no one informed him of the many courses for furthering his education, so he continued working strictly on his own.

It was when Johnny completed the model of his store that talk and information about his future began to interest co-workers and especially CRR, Sarah Clifton, who continued to encourage and support Johnny by gathering data and information regarding educational facilities. She, along with the Managers and Crew literally pushed him through interviews.

In talking to this young man today compared to one year ago, there's been a big change. Not just in the many offers moving his way, but in his overall attitude and personality. Almost outspoken and no longer afraid of sharing the pride he feels for his

accomplishments both at McDonald's and with his architecture, he openly speaks of his hopes for the future.

"I've recently applied for a scholarship to Hampton Institute where my major will be architecture," he proudly said. "They've got a good program and I've been talking to the instructors. Now, I do get a lot of job offers and things are really picking up. I'm pretty excited about it all!"

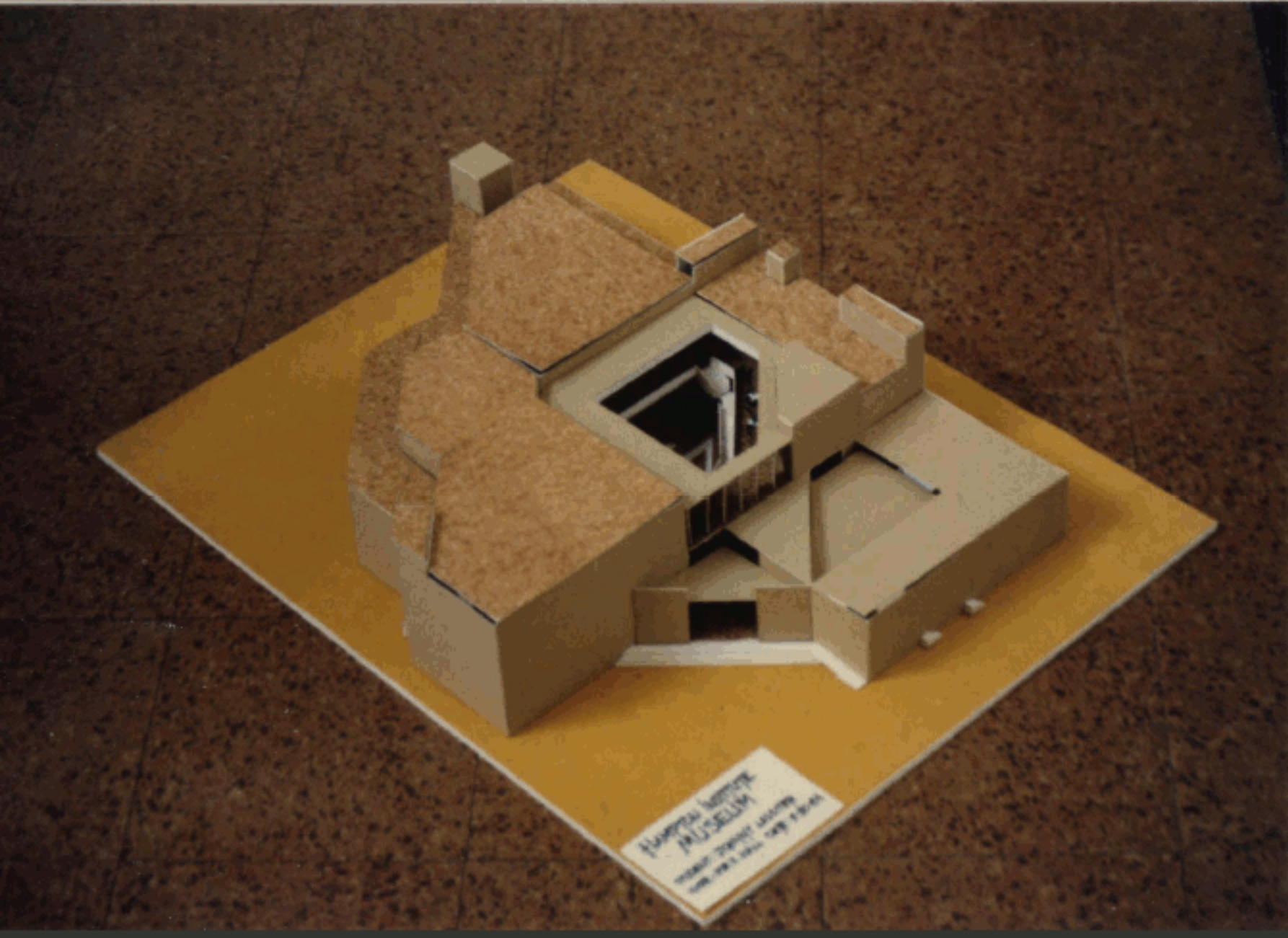
Johnny's new store Manager, Linda Hinton, is also very proud of her Crewmembers. "Johnny is a terrific person and very good at this job," she said. "He has always been one to follow direction and procedure and teaches the others well. He has the ability to be flexible, he's honest, dedicated, and can be trusted. He simply fits the bill."

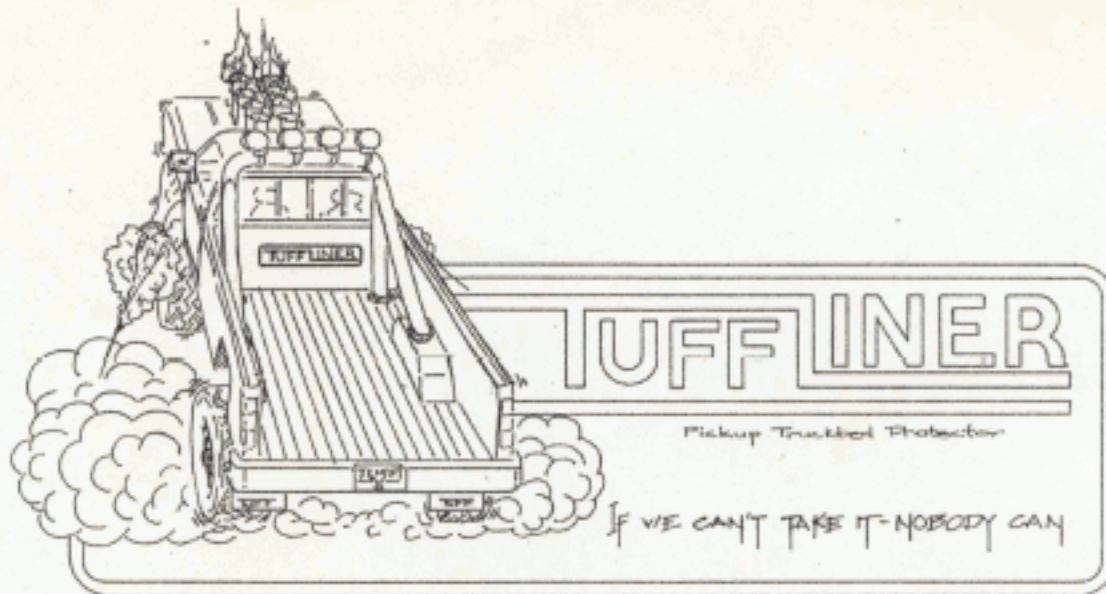
To coincide with Johnny's new open personality and confidence, he's determined to see his goals become reality. "When I think of something I want to do," he said, "I hype myself up and get it done!"

Jim Walker, Operations Manager, is totally behind Johnny. "I'll never forget when I came into the store one night, went into the Crew Room, and saw a recent newspaper article about Johnny. I was really impressed and everyone's been encouraging him. I know he wants the scholarship and he deserves it. I want the best for this young man."

All of this support from friends and peers has only served to gain further confidence to grasp what Johnny wants most — to be as good as he can at his job and future career. That means plenty of hard work and tackling obstacles as they surface, but that's all right with him. "I'm on my way," he exclaimed proudly. "It won't be long before all my dreams are recognized."

Crews Views salutes all McDonald's Crew and their creative talents. Johnny Lassiter exemplifies our Crewmembers, their achievements, aspirations and commitment to excellence.

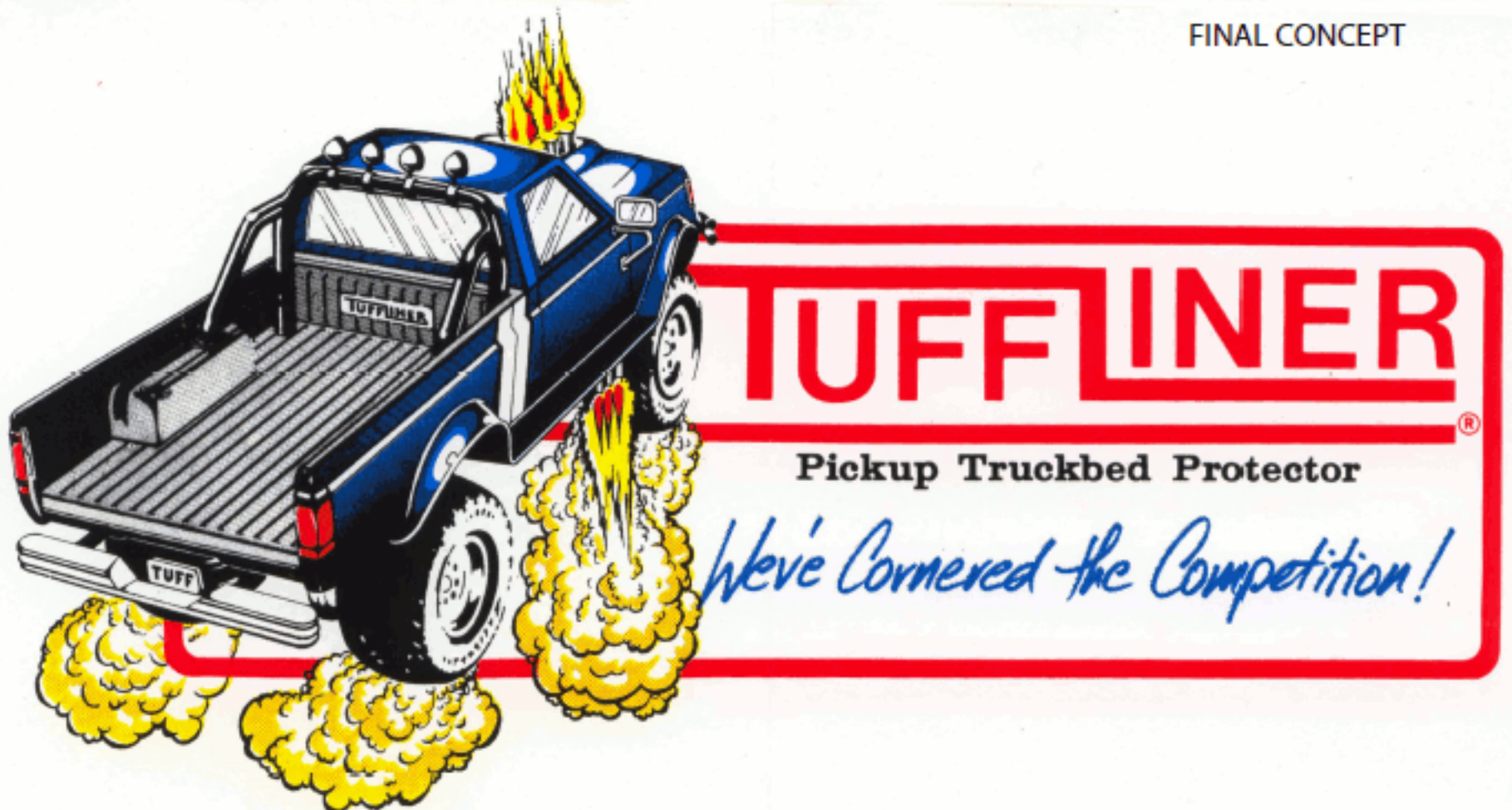




INITIAL CONCEPT



FINAL CONCEPT



Pentecostal Churches of Christ Holiness #1

CERTIFICATE

Glendell H. Whitfield

By Testimony Acknowledged The Call of God To
The Gospel Ministry

Is set apart a LICENSED EVANGELIST in the Pentecostal Churches Of Christ Holiness #1. This member is judged qualified and is hereby commended as a person to Feed the Flock of Christ and to perform other functions of the Ministry as long as HERSpirit and Practice are such as becoming Holiness unto the Gospel of Christ.

In Testimony Whereof We Have Hereunto Set Our Hands And Seal

This 30th day of June 2000 at Rising St. James PCOCH #1, Suffolk, VA

Bishop _____

Pastor _____

Exec. Secretary _____

This Certificate of License Expires Midnight, Last Friday in June 2001



Pentecostal Churches
Of Christ
Holiness #1

Identification Card
This Certifies That

Bishop Dwight L. Whitfield

Meets the requirements of the Church

Dwight L. Whitfield
Signature

This Card Expires Last Friday
June 2001

Know All Men By These Presents:

That I, G. H. STUDIVANT Bishop of the Reformed Zion Union Apostolic Church in America under the protection of Almighty God, with an eye single to His glory, by the imposition of my hands and prayer, being assisted by Elders present, have this day set apart

Rev. JOHNNY GLENN LASSITER

for the office of an Elder in said Church, as a man whom we judge to be qualified for that work, and he is hereby recommended to all whom it may concern as a proper person to administer the sacrament and feed the flock of Christ, so long as his spirit and practice are such as becometh the Gospel of Christ and Rules of our Church.

In testimony whereunto, I set my hand and seal this 25th day of AUGUST 19 88

G. H. Studivant Bishop
(SEAL)

This Is To Certify

That Rev Johnny Glenn Lassiter
is duly authorized to Preach in the R. Z. U. A. Church, so
long as his life complies with the Gospel Rules, and he
conforms to the discipline of the above named church.

On behalf of the Quarterly Conference, held at

La Cress, South Hill Virginia

on the 20th day of August 19 86

Dec. William H. Merritt
CHAIRMAN

Rev. David Johnson Sr.
PASTOR

Mrs. Theresa Johnson
SECRETARY

HAMPTON INSTITUTE
Certificate of Admission



THIS IS TO CERTIFY THAT

JOHNNY G. LASSITER

is hereby granted conditional admission to
Hampton Institute as a candidate for the
Bachelor's Degree

January 4, 1981

Hampton, Virginia

*Reduced Load


Dean of Admissions

Commonwealth of Virginia
State Board for Community Colleges

Tidewater Community College

This is to certify that

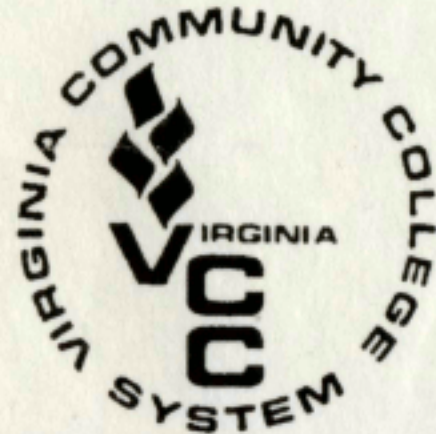
Johnny G. Cassiter

is presented this

Award of Completion

for 120 hours of Introductory and
Advanced Training in AutoCAD,
Computer-Aided Drafting and
Design

Given this 6th day of May 19 93



Ray L. Stewart
College President

Freddie W. Nicholas
Interim Chancellor, Virginia Community College System

*On Behalf of
The Bible Research Foundation & Dake Publishing*

*Your Kingdom Building Work:
Proof Reading*

*The New Large Print Dake Bible
has been instrumental in helping people to
Comply with God's Command.*

*Study to shew thyself approved unto God,
a workman that needeth not to be ashamed,
rightly dividing the word of truth. 2 Tim. 2:15*

Johnny Lassiter

*You Have Preserved The Truth
With Proof Readers in the USA, England, Israel, Australia, Canada,
South Africa and New Zealand.*



David M. Smith, M.Div., JD 4/15/99 Ps 80:18
Director of Marketing Dake Publishing & Bible Research Foundation,



Commonwealth of Virginia
State Board for Community Colleges

Tidewater Community College

This is to certify that

Johnny G. Lassiter
is presented this



Award of Completion



PHTG 1011-W039 Canon Intro to Photography (1.2 CEUs)

Given this 17th day of December Two Thousand Five

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "D. J. ...", written over a horizontal line.

President

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "John S. B...", written over a horizontal line.

Chancellor, Virginia Community College System

ACCENT SIGNING CO.

May 25, 1989

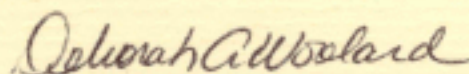
To Whom It May Concern:

Johnny Lassiter was employed by Accent Signing Company from September 1986 through May 1989. During this time he headed a "one-man" graphic arts department.

His position encompassed all phases of graphic art preparation for screenprinting, operation of a Gerber IV computerized vinyl cutting machine, as well as preparation of sign designs and scale presentation drawings for customers. Johnny's artistic talent and attention to detail are excellent in these areas.

During his nearly 3 years of employment, I found Johnny to be reliable, dependable, hardworking and a completely trustworthy employee.

Sincerely,



Deborah Woolard
President

DW/dpl