



COURTESY OF DONNA BISE

Joe Martin and his wife, Joan, at the children's theater in *ImaginOn: The Joe & Joan Martin Center* in 2005.

# 'A great example for all of us'

## Martin from 1A

Joe Bacon Martin III learned social justice early. He and three brothers grew up in Winnsboro, S.C., where their convictions were shaped by their Presbyterian minister father, the Rev. Arthur Martin, and mother, Mary Martin.

The Rev. Martin preached racial equality when it was unpopular and often dangerous.

At Davidson College, Martin was a cheerleader and pushed the school for a mascot - a live wildcat - which he found. As a student leader, he constantly questioned the practice of segregation. In 1962, the college enrolled its first black student, who was from Zaire. Martin had graduated, but was working at the college. He roomed with the student to make him feel welcome.

After a master's degree in American studies at the Univer-

Funeral arrangements weren't complete Saturday. Family members are planning a memorial service for Wednesday at Covenant Presbyterian Church, 1000 E. Morehead St., Charlotte.

bishop from Charlotte, said in a previous interview. "I don't know of a greater tribute to a man's life when he knows he's made a difference to the poorest of the poor."

### Bank expansion

Martin was part of McColl's "inner sanctum" that made the decision to expand NCNB into Florida, which led to the formation of NationsBank, Bank of America's predecessor. Martin coined the name NationsBank.

During that expansion in the 1980s, the NationsBank team checked into a Florida hotel as The Martin Group, an effort to keep their visit secret. McColl

others."

He also proposed "Race Day," calling for everyone to invite someone of a different race to lunch. And later, he impolitely declined the county's highest award, writing in a scathing letter that he didn't want any part of the commission's intolerant, anti-gay faction.

"The harder it has become for me to speak, the more attention people seem to pay to what I have to say," Martin once said.

### Prolific writer

The degenerative disease that killed baseball legend Lou Gehrig left Martin paralyzed and unable to talk, walk and move a single body part except for a finger, eyes and few facial muscles. Each year, 5,600 people in the U.S. are diagnosed with the disease, according to the ALS Association.

Martin used a special computer that allowed him to write by focusing his eyes on letters of the alphabet. He spent his days rattling off e-mails and letters by let-

away, but not his brain," Jim Martin said. "He could still live and be creative. He was still part of family and gave love and received it. He was engaged.

"Joe would take great pride that he had survived ALS."

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