

Charming Jeanne Robertson fills the hall with continuous laughter

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Jeanne Robertson and her Fabulously Funny Tour rolled into Washington last Thursday night. I was waiting for her arrival in front of The Pope Center expecting a big, black Cadillac when a Honda Accord rolled up, driven by Ms. Robertson's college sorority sister, Washington's Carolyn Reynolds. Opening her own door, out popped Jeanne. Tall, slender, silver hair (Miss Clairol #18) trimmed short, elegant as ever, and moving with a grace than can only be had by using a walking stick. She's having some knee trouble, she says, but it's better. Asking if she wanted to use the side entrance to avoid the crowd, she declined, entering the main doors to embrace her admirers. She charmed the throng with a practiced grace and began moving to her dressing room. Must have taken 45 minutes. Everyone wanted to see and talk to her and she them.

At 7:30 the show began. Henry Harris, in his inimitable way, monologued the intro, priming the audience for Miss Jeanne's impending march onto the stage. Henry, in his closing remark, told our guest that if anyone asked her where she had been she "...could tell them that had been in Washington, working for NASA." That got the ball rolling. (Our NASA doesn't launch satellites but is the acronym used for the North Alexander School Association, our local organization responsible for bringing Jeanne to town and the beneficiary of the show.)

Jeanne Robertson took the stage. And I mean took it. She began stalking the floor, cane in hand, and went into her 1963 Miss North Carolina/Miss America glide. Folks, she can still do it, bum knee or not. Elegance personified. Because of her inflamed knee joint, it is difficult to pace the floor as she likes to do, so she confines herself to a rocker and regales the masses from a sitting position. No matter - she was in command the whole night.

For the next hour and a half Jeanne held her audience in rapt attention. Folksy, with her soft North Carolina accent and charm, she wove story after story of life and what happens when you live it, and how you can find funny in everything. Good advice. She made people laugh, and laugh, and laugh. Her husband, Left Brain, caught a lot of flak, poor man. The last story Jeanne told was of Left Brain and the grocery list: "Don't Send A Man To The Grocery Store." If you are not familiar with it, go to YouTube and watch <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v+-YFRUSTiFUs>. Her son, Beaver (Beaver?) was also feeling the heat. If you ever meet him, ask him about that red Porsche and that piece of a car. (YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4UroljO7ykE>)

Did I tell you that the audience laughed? Continuously. Rip-roariously. Gales of laughter filled the hall. The Pope Center has never heard such funny. She never touched on politics, religion, or any divisive issues of the day. She was all about humor in everyday life: how to deal with it, how to find it, and how to enjoy it. Mark Twain, another noted humorist, would have approved.

People from all over tarnation were here in Washington for the show. North Carolina, South Carolina, Virginia, Tennessee, probably even Washington state. Jeanne's rocking chair was raffled off and a woman from Birmingham, Alabama, took it home. Speaking of Alabama, Jeanne is an Auburn graduate. The Auburn connection was the only fault the audience could find with her and since it's not football season the Washington crowd kind of let it slide.

The show sold out. 500+ seats for 90 minutes of good clean fun. 500+ people loving every minute, wishing it would never end.

Jeanne was our friend. Her offering was like listening to your aunt that knows and remembers everything telling funny family stories while sitting in that old rocking chair on the porch. You know that peculiar cousin? That's the story.

When it was all over, Miss Jeanne glided back into the Accord and disappeared into the warm spring night.

Did I tell you that she was fabulously funny?

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