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McNeely serves as role model for future journalists

Furman University

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92 THIS YEAR IS REUNION!

Keely Burrell of Greenville is an attorney with Anderson and Herlong LLC.

Chuck Meyers was recently promoted to account supervisor by the William Mills Agency of Atlanta, the largest independent public relations firm serving the financial industry.

Carl Sullivan, who is news editor of Newsweek.com, has been named a senior writer for *Newsweek* magazine as well.

MARRIAGE: Julie Mabry and Mike Dotson (M.S. '94), September 2.

They live in Greenville.

BIRTHS: Kevin and Leslie Clugston

Andres, a son, James Dominic, September 12, Macon, Ga.

Keven and **Lisha Bridges Burnett**, a son, Jake Thomas, January 12, 2006. They live in Denver, Colo. Lisha heads communications and public relations for the U.S. headquarters of Suncor Energy, and Keven

works for the Stapleton development, the largest urban redevelopment project in the country.

Kevin Liske and **Lalah Manly**, a son, Kylin Brin Manly Liske, February 15, 2006, Pine Lake, Ga. Lalah is a music therapist with Clayton County (Ga.) Schools.

Alden and Stacy Milam, a son, Tate Anderson, September 5, Charlotte, N.C.

Trey and Twyler Palmer, a son, Mason William, March 20, 2006, Decatur, Ga.

Trey is a teacher, coach and athletic director at Druid Hills High School.

Ken and **Shellie Moses Shipley**, a son, Caiden Sterling, July 28. They live in Sahuarita, Ariz. Ken is a pharmacist and Shellie, a teacher at the Arizona School for the Deaf, is pursuing post-graduate work toward a reading specialist degree, focusing on the needs of deaf students.

McNEELY SERVES AS ROLE MODEL FOR FUTURE JOURNALISTS

As a child, Patricia Gantt McNeely would sit in a pecan tree in the front yard of her family's farm in Greenville and dream of becoming a writer.

She first attempted to break into the journalism field while a freshman at Furman, when she approached the regional manager of *The Greenville News* and requested her own paper route. He responded that girls couldn't have paper routes, but offered to help her find another position.

That's how she became the *News*' first female copy "boy." As such, she worked 20 hours a week typing reporters' assignments, tracking down pictures and running errands for the city editor.

Then one day she was offered the opportunity to write a review of "The Lady's Not for Burning," a play at Furman that she was studying in an English class. The paper published her article exactly as she wrote it, and when she went to work the next day, her name was on the assignment sheet.

From that time forward she was a writer. She became a full-time reporter at the *News* after earning her English degree in 1960.

Pat met her husband, Al '57, while working in Greenville, where he was a sports writer for the afternoon paper. They married in 1961 and moved to Columbia. Al went on to a career in advertising, and Pat became an award-winning reporter for both *The Columbia Record* and *The State*, covering city and county government, health, education and welfare, and women's news. They have two children: Allison, a high school drama teacher and resident director at Town Theatre in Columbia, and Alan, a software developer in Portland, Ore.



After Pat earned her master's degree in journalism from the University of South Carolina, she was offered a part-time teaching position in the university's journalism school in 1972. The job became full time in 1974.

Her success as a reporter transferred to the classroom, as she became the only woman in the 83-year history of the journalism school to be promoted to full professor. During more than 30 years on the faculty she served as the school's associate dean and chaired the news editorial and the print and electronic sequences, and she is the only woman to hold an endowed professorship in the school.

In 2001 she was named National Distinguished Educator of the Year by the Newspaper Division of the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication. She served for 14 years as national coordinator of the *Reader's Digest* writing workshops, and she is the author of two books on the media in South Carolina.

When she retired from USC at the end of the 2006 fall semester, colleagues and former students sent notes praising her supportive attitude, "tough but tender" approach and encouraging nature.

Bob Bentley, a former newspaper editor, wrote that she is "the kind of journalism educator that editors love. That's because we know she could step into any newsroom in the nation and immediately improve the paper. . . . She brings a special credibility into the classroom that can be earned only in the field."

Pat's Furman pedigree is strong as well. Her twin brothers, Bill and Dick Gantt, are 1959 graduates; her father, William A. Gantt, Sr., earned a master's degree from Furman in 1955; and her mother, Alice Woodson Gantt, was a 1952 graduate. The family established the Alice Woodson and William A. Gantt, Sr., Scholarship in 1998.

As for her "retirement" plans, one of her main goals is to complete two books, which she says she's "determined to finish in the next couple of years."

Adapted with permission from an article in the Fall 2006 issue of Intercom, a publication of the University of South Carolina School of Journalism and Mass Communications.