



Mr. Curtis Franklin Strickland has always been a business man and a farmer. Known for his kind generosity, integrity and not to mention his “handle-bar” mustache, he was originally from across the Lumber River in Columbus County. When Mr. Frank packed up his lovely wife (Rebecca) and three little girls and moved to Fairmont back in the mid-fifties, he worked as a sales clerk & manager of Jackson’s Dept. Store. After a few short years he opened his own store – Dixie Dept. Store (where Lucinda’s is located now). Mrs. Strickland helped to manage the dry goods store and our town folk often referred to her as “Miss Dixie.” Ladies, if you shopped their store for a new Sunday dress, you probably also came away with a new hat to match or pair of matching shoes! When their fourth child came along in 1960 (a son and Junior), Mr. Frank decided it was time to pursue additional income, and bought Robeson Hardware (*this building right behind where I’m standing*). You could buy hardware, small appliances, fishing & hunting gear, toys, snacks, and even a guinea pig! A man of many talents, if you brought in a vacuum cleaner, iron, toaster, fishing reel – anything that was broke or didn’t work right, Mr. Frank could probably fix it! Because of his “gift to gab”, townspeople loved to stop by and chat with Mr. Frank and his talking Myna bird – Michael. (He’s probably been told off a few times because of Michael’s whistling at the ladies when they passed by the open front door in the spring and summer time! And Michael did his share of telling people off when they left the front door open in the winter time.) At Robeson Hardware, you didn’t just buy fishing hooks without Mr. Frank throwing in something for free... whether it was a few extra sinkers, corks, hooks, or extra crickets into your bait cage. He was, and still is, a very generous man. He gave to our people his time, his talent, his ideas, his beliefs, and his gift of healing – mentally, physically, and spiritually. As an active member of our community, Mr. Strickland attended the First Baptist Church (S. Main St.), was a Training Union teacher, and a member of the Brotherhood. He also took part in the Masonic Lodge and Order of the Eastern Star. He could be found at one of the warehouses around town about this time of year helping his girls with the design and construction of their class Homecoming floats. He and Mrs. Strickland attended many football and basketball events at home and even away games with their family. After they built a house just a few short miles from the city limits, Mr. and Mrs. Strickland were still active business people. Even though they moved the hardware business to the country for a while, they currently run a nursery and pea-sheller out there. Not all of the green houses are currently as full as they once were, you can still buy seeds, plants, garden vegetables, trees, shrubs, or just kick back in the shaded swing and get a Bible lesson while you visit!

We thank you, Mr. and Mrs. Strickland, for being active pillars of this community and contributing for so long to our humble town of Fairmont. It is with great joy and honor that we salute you as our Grand Marshalls for the 2011 Farmer’s Festival Parade.