

## 'I'm So Honored'

### Whitelow Coached At BC Before Retiring

### Searching For Smiles

Commonwealth's Attorney Gives Community Member Citizenship Award

By **PETE DeLEA**

*Daily News-Record*

**HARRISONBURG** — Each morning, Carlyle Whitelow stands on the sidewalk between BB& T Bank and Dairy Queen in Bridgewater waving to people driving by.

The 80-year-old Mount Crawford Avenue resident has been doing it for years.

"Rain, sleet and snow ... I try not to miss," Whitelow said. "I always want to make people smile ... to make them happy."

When he's not out by the road in the morning, people become concerned and are quick to call.

"The telephone rings," he said. "Where are you? Are you sick? I didn't see you." For his lifelong commitment to making the community better, Marsha Garst presented Whitelow with the fifth annual Commonwealth's Attorney Citizenship Award at the Rockingham County Administration Center on Wednesday morning.

"He's always been a role model for the entire community," said Garst, who has known Whitelow since she was a child.

Whitelow said he was grateful for the award.

"This is another highlight of my life," he said. "God is so good. I'm so honored, but there are many others that are more deserving than I am."

Each year, Garst gives a plaque to a resident who gives back to the community.

In attendance this year were two previous winners, Harrisonburg Mayor Deanna Reed and Karen Thomas, president of the Northeast

See **HONORED**, Page A5



**Carlyle Whitelow (left) is awarded the Commonwealth's Attorney Citizenship Award by Marsha Garst at the Rockingham County Administration Center on Wednesday.**

Holly Marcus / Special to the DN-R

---

**Honored FROM PAGE A1**

Neighborhood Association.

Reed, who received the award in June 2015, co-founded Precious Gems Academy, a mentorship program for girls, in 2009.

Thomas, who helped form the Northeast Neighborhood Association in the city in an effort to combat crime, received the award in December 2013.

Like Reed and Thomas, Garst said, Whitelow is dedicated to his community.

"He always sacrifices," she said, adding that Whitelow was at first too humble to even receive the honor. "I had to beg and plead with him to accept this award." While humble, Whitelow has accomplished a lot in his life. In 1955, as a student at Bridgewater College, he became the first black football player in the Old Dominion Athletic Conference. Whitelow went on to become a professor at the college and coached football, basketball and tennis before retiring in 1997.

"Carlyle set examples in breaking barriers," Garst noted. Although retired, he remains active in the community, including at his church, John Wesley United Methodist.

Whitelow also has been making visits to nursing homes and shut-ins regularly for the last 52 years, helping to bring a smile to the faces of those he sees.

"They are the forgotten people," he said.

Whitelow and Garst had one regret about Wednesday's ceremony: Garst's father wasn't there.

Marshall Garst, who died at 83 in December, was a lifelong friend of Whitelow, including during the tough times of segregation.

"Marshall looked at me as one of his good friends," Whitelow said. "He didn't look at me as a person of a different color."

Contact Pete DeLea at 574-6267 or [\\_\\_\\_\\_\\_](#)



**Carlyle Whitelow waves to morning drivers in Bridgewater in November 2011. Whitelow was honored for his work in the community by Commonwealth's Attorney Marsha Garst with the 2017 Citizenship Award on Wednesday.**

Nikki Fox / DN-R