

# Iglesia bash flip side reminder of realities outside funhouse

Sometimes, something happens to make you feel glad you're living in Durham — contentious, schizoid as our City of Bull may be.

That, of course, can be taken, and intended, two ways.

Even in Durham, once in a while things work out right, then a little better. The flip side is: Remember, things could be worse.

Contention and Who's-on-First routines we had going on last week wound down.

There was another installment on Eno Drive, with half the city-county Horse-and-Camel Design Group wanting to meet the DOT's Nov. 30 line in the sand, and the other half insisting the job will take more time. True, after 30-some years and counting, another 30, 60, 90 days doesn't seem like so much to ask.

After, in other words, about as long as it took the dinosaurs to evolve. Which is fitting, since, as transportation schemes



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the north, where Buck Duke's U has plans for colonizing Trinity Heights. Can anybody say, "Party!"?

The city was going back to the Constitution to figure out if its crackdown on parking tickets was really doing the right thing; meantime, the county did do

go, Eno Drive as we know it is nothing if not brontosaurian.

In south Durham, a k a Bull(dozer) City, the raise-it-'n'-pave-it crowd was having a set to with the indigenous inhabitants over quality of life, which in that country is sort of like arguing with the fox after giving it the chicken coop. Similar things were going on at

the right — or at least better — thing by helping Temporary Quarters' last survivors move out and move somewhere. Stay tuned — the landlords still have a day in court, and the razor wire is still in place across from Eugene Brown's real-estate office.

Still — something went on Friday night that, for the moment at least, helped shift the old paradigm a little. That was the dedication celebration for Iglesia El Buen Pastor, Church of the Good Shepherd, in East Durham.

El Buen Pastor is a Hispanic Episcopal church. (Interestingly enough, the Episcopal church used to be the Church of England in these parts.) And Friday night was quite a bash — clerics in full regalia, a service alternating Spanish and English, Latin music, south-of-the-border food and a crowd in all the hues of Durham.

There were maybe 75 people in line

when the procession approached the church door at 7. More kept flowing in as the service went on, such that the formal sounds of the liturgy and the folksy ones of the music vied with those of extra folding chairs being hastily set up. By the time the fiesta started around 9, one visiting priest guesstimated there were 200 people on hand.

Now, that's a great way to get a new venture going, but it's only one side of that gladness equation. Another was implied by the presence of Nicolas Menjivar, vicar at El Buen Pastor.

The man has stories to tell. He shared some around town after he moved here last winter.

For instance, about an ambush.

Menjivar is a native of El Salvador, an associate of Archbishop Oscar Romero, who was murdered by terrorists while celebrating Mass in 1980. Soon after, Menjivar learned he was on the death list,

too.

Priests were targets during the protracted El Salvador civil war. Menjivar was harassed at army checkpoints; one night in a rural area, he learned a trap had been set for him on his way home. Twice, he had to leave the country to stay alive.

Such tales, delivered in matter-of-fact tones on a normal morning in surroundings familiar and comfortable, make Eno Drive, Southpoint, et al. a little silly.

There are, after all, reasons why Durham has a Hispanic church. Reasons why people come north of the border. Reasons to be glad, reasons to be welcoming, reasons to remember there are other realities out there — just as real as this funhouse we call home.

Have a comment, or a suggestion for a column? You may contact Jim Wise by phone at 419-6680 or e-mail at [jew@herald-sun.com](mailto:jew@herald-sun.com)