

"Faith in Technology. Faith in God. Faith in Myself." — John Dove

Faster than a speeding gigabyte.

More powerful than a 56K modem.

Able to leap tall monitors in a single bound.

Look, over at the computer.

It's Bill Gates.

No it's Steve Jobs.

Actually, it's John Dove.

When John Dove was "coming up," as they used to say back in the '20s and '30s, in Kinston, North Carolina where his father raised tobacco and cotton and his mother was a church organist, the gathering of any important information might take days, weeks or years, if it was even available at all. John certainly had to leave home to get it.

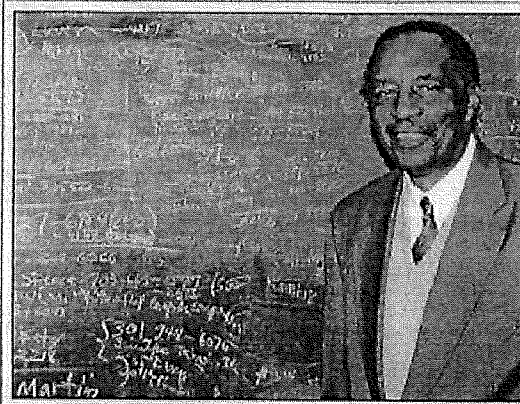
When John's daughter, Susan, was growing up in Rome, New York in the '60s and '70s, it might have taken her a day or two to look for and secure vital information. Longer if she had to go to the library and it was closed.

Now, John's granddaughter, Zayla, who is five years old, has instant access to any information from all over the world — and she doesn't have to budge.

Instant means, now.

RIGHT NOW!!!

Unlike Al Gore, Zayla's grandfather, the aforementioned John Dove, didn't exactly invent the computer or the internet. He did however, have a lot to do with the computer's ability to record, store and retrieve information, and its ability to zip it around with breathtaking speed. John's first technology breakthrough, for



John Dove...as "high tech" as he is, still relies on his trusty blackboard.



John and his wife Zelder, at a NATO reception.

which he has several patents and was made more than 30 years ago, led to the subsequent mass commercial manufacture of CDs, ADs and VD's. John pioneered the use of electron beams or light beams to burn images onto metal discs or other recording surfaces for rapid storage and retrieval. John's latest technological achievement, which he developed on the third floor of Link Hall, the physics building on the Syracuse University campus, working with professors Phillip Kornreich and Doug Keller, utilizes light beams through narrow wires called fibre optics, to transmit information at faster and faster speed, at lower and lower cost. Technically it's called an Optical Amplifier and most simply explained, it uses light beams to transmit information and does it faster and cheap-

er. John Dove is a resident genius. He's been in the news recently, especially in Syracuse where he's probably more well known than he is in Rome, even though he has lived in Rome for the past 45 years, and in the same house here for the past 30. John, interestingly, despite his inventive mind and whiz-like knowledge of computers, is not much for change. His car is 12 years old. His office in downtown Rome looks like the set of a 1930s movie. It could well be used today as say Jimmy Stewart's office in the movie, *It's Wonderful Life*. His clothes are neat and clean, but he's not going to win any modern best-dressed awards from *Gentlemen's Quarterly*. John says, "The only change I believe in is technology for the betterment of

mankind. I am perfectly happy doing research and building prototypes. I don't want to change."

Maybe his trappings aren't terribly modern or sophisticated, but his mind sure is. While John's tastes and lifestyle might be slightly old-fashioned, his brain is high powered, active and well into the next century.

Among the many patents John holds there must be one for youthful ideas and appearance. Ponce de Leon may have stumbled on the Fountain of Youth, John Dove has found a way to make it work. Somebody else may have invented the computer, John Dove has found a way to make it better and keep his youthful appearance at the same time. He looks young, thinks young

and will undoubtedly stay that way. He is a man very much in demand these days. Not for his financial wealth, but for the wealth of ideas he has had and continues to have.

Not that John is ancient, but how many other 70 plus year olds are being wooed as actively as he is? A front page picture in a Syracuse newspaper early last month, a unanimous resolution passed by the Onondaga County legislature urging him to locate a manufacturing plant in Syracuse, daily phone calls from important people with invitations to social activities, cultural events, lunch, dinner or just to inquire as to John's health, well being and needs. Not only that, but the Urban League of Onondaga County has opened several inner-city learning centers in Syracuse and named them in John's honor. Currently there are five John Dove Community Access Centers in Syracuse where youngsters can, "...get connected, navigate cyber space, communicate with the world, develop their potential, have fun and learn, develop their creativity, learn team work, stay off the streets, and be safe," which is just exactly what John Dove wants to do with his life and for other lives, especially kids. Particularly inner-city kids.

Beyond his scientific bent, John is also very much in demand as a motivational speaker. He tells kids, "It can be done. I did it." John shows the kids how many times his picture has been in a newspaper. "You can't imagine,"

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John Dove

he says, "how much it means to inner-city kids to see my picture in the paper, and then for me to tell them that they can do it too? I can make them believe." However, John not only wants to motivate and inspire inner-city people, he wants to hire them too. That's why he's being so actively pursued by Syracuse and Onondaga County. If John, indeed, builds a plant to manufacture his newest invention, he wants it to be in the inner-city and he wants to employ inner-city people.

The resolution passed by the Onondaga County legislature in August of this year, reads in part:

"Whereas, John Dove's unsurpassed knowledge and experience in the field of laser optics has made him a sought-after master of innovative technical developments.

"Whereas, John Dove, a worldwide recognized authority on laser optics, has embarked on a new business venture named Dove Photonics and has developed a new product which is a semi-conductor fiber light amplifier that allows more information to be transmitted at a lower cost, and has secured exclusive rights to supply the device to companies like Corning and MCI/ WorldCom, for which he will need a new manufacturing facility.

"Whereas, it is the desire of this legislature to have John Dove locate his facility in Onondaga County.

"Therefore be it Resolved that this legislature encourages John Dove, President of Dove Electronics to locate a Dove Photonics Manufacturing facility in Syracuse, New York."

John's reaction, quoted in the *Syracuse Post Standard* was, "Wow. I've never had anybody do this for me."

So, is it a done deal?

Not quite yet. "So far," John says, "the people in Syracuse have shown the most interest, but there are other possibilities." First of all, investors are needed. John estimates that it will take about \$4,000,000 to get his plant up and running, and to start producing Dove Optical Amplifiers. Potential investors, and there are apparently a sufficient number standing in line, are awaiting the results of some independent testing before they commit. Test results are expected very soon. Government funding might be available, but John prefers private money. He's not sold on government's ability to get things done quickly or efficiently. Not that he harbors any ill will or grudges, but his years with the government as an employee of the Rome Air Development Center (RADC, now Rome Lab) weren't always easy or pleasant. John retired from RADC in 1983 after 30 years

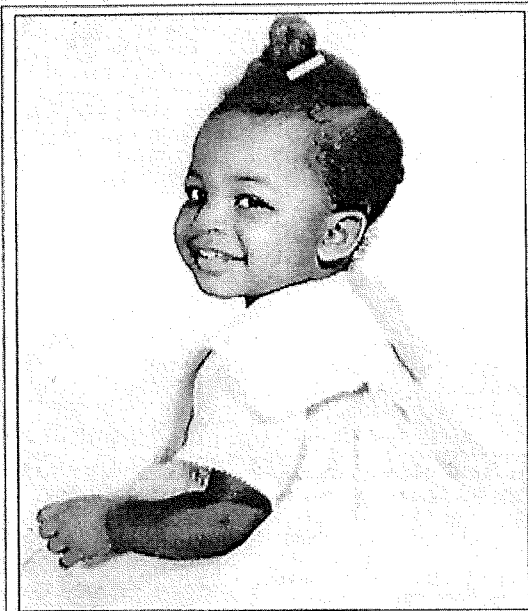
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of distinguished, if not always comfortable, government service.

The story of how John Dove, inventor, scientist, entrepreneur, technology developer, dreamer, motivator, father and grandfather, benefactor - (Should we add philanthropist? "No. I don't have enough money to be one.") — got from there (Kinston, North Carolina) to here (Rome, New York) is an interesting one.

"Life was a struggle for us back in Kinston," John reflects, "but my parents emphasized learning. Education was the name of the game for us." Growing up with five brothers and sisters on a farm in Kinston, North Carolina was difficult for John and his parents back in the '20s and '30s. The Dove children were encouraged to aspire to great heights. John decided he wanted to be a doctor. "Being a man of medicine, a doctor, was the highest ambition a kid could aspire to in those days. We didn't know about engineers then," John says. He wasn't all that sure he wanted to be a physician, but it was a worthy goal and inspired him to work hard in school. After graduation from high school in the late '30s, John went off to college at North Carolina Agricultural and Technical. There wasn't enough money available for him to finish, and so after two and a half years, he left school and joined the Army. He left the Army after three years in 1949 and with the GI Bill went to Columbia University to study math and physics. John could probably have gone to Switzerland to study medicine, but his mother didn't want him so far from home. Turns out to have been a very good choice. While he was in school at Columbia, John met a beautiful young lady, a nurse from Arkansas named Zelder Bernice Mitchell. They were married in 1950 and were together for the next 30 years. Zelder suffered from a painful, serious kidney ailment and despite a kidney transplant, succumbed to the illness in 1983. John and Zelder had one daughter, Susan, who in turn has a daughter named Zayla. Susan, who has degrees from Northeastern and the University of California (MBA), and her now five-year-old daughter live in California, where Susan is a contract specialist for LA Transit. "She moves people," John says, "while I move information."

Back to 1953. When John with his bachelor's degree from Columbia in hand and lots of ideas in his head, was hired as an engineer by the federal government and assigned for the next two years to the Brooklyn Army Depot. He's still not sure exactly why, but in 1955, John was reas-



John's daughter, Susan at about one year old. John says his granddaughter Zayla looked exactly like Susan at this same age.

signed to the Rome Air Development Center (RADC) at Griffiss Air Force Base in Rome, New York. That was 44 years ago and except for a period of three years when he was on loan to NATO headquarters at the Hague in Holland, where he served as a radar expert, John has been a Roman.

When John first showed up at RADC, as the second black hire (Haywood Webb was the first), RADC officials, according to John, "...weren't exactly sure what to do with me." So for a while, John was the only black in his building; Haywood Webb worked in another RADC area on the base. "I was hired for RADC in New York City while I was at the Brooklyn Army Depot. When I got to RADC, they just weren't sure what to do with me, so I got an office, but no specific assignment. For a while I just sat in the office and answered questions from other engineers. I was like a consultant, a doctor. I was helping solve problems." One day a new Colonel came around and saw me in the office. "Who the hell is he?" the Colonel wanted to know. When he didn't get a

real good answer, I was moved out of the office and assigned to another work area to help figure out how to speed up the transmission of data which was being done then by the mechanical punching of holes in a paper tape." A very, very slow method.

"Use electronics, electrical impulses, an electron beam," John suggested. "I had been an X-Ray technician in the army and it made perfect sense to me, but not to them. 'No, No,' they said, 'it won't work. Yes, Yes,' I said, 'it will work.' I was sure it would. Two civilian RADC scientists, Dr. John Burgess and Dr. Joseph Ryerson encouraged me. 'Go ahead. Work on it,' they said. I did and that's what led me to come up with the technology that created the compact disc."

At one point during his research, John says he was told by other RADC officials to "STOP! Look, we know you believe in what you're doing, but we don't." Further, he says he was instructed to, "Keep working on your own time if you want to. Take the patent rights if you want."

John kept working on his the-

ory that you could use electronic beams to record and store information. When John's dream was perfected, he applied for, and after nearly five years of waiting, was awarded patents for the technology. At one point during that period, some RADC people suggested that John's research was either "borrowed" or "faulty" and he was confronted by an Air Force officer. While John was being questioned, another higher ranking Air Force officer interrupted the proceedings and told the participants that they were wrong. "No," he told them. "This is absolutely John's work. No question about it."

Case closed. Patents granted.

John congratulated — and after he retired in 1983, John received a number of important RADC contracts, allowing the government to keep utilizing John's considerable scientific talents.

Although his years as a government scientist were not always smooth, John harbors no resentment or anger. "No," he says, "I can't afford to feel that way. It ties up too much brain power. I can't afford to waste any brain power or time. Maybe once I did, but no more. Harboring hostility is no way to live."

A man of quiet confidence and great ability, John Dove continues to have "Faith in technology. Faith in God. Faith in myself."

His faith is well placed.