Friday night basketball and one of best games ever

If you lived in Baltimore, Maryland in the early 1930's come Friday night you put on your best suit, got a hair cut, picked up your best girl and headed for Carpenter's New Albert Auditorium in the 1100 block of Pennsylvania Avenue.

Here for fifty cents you could dance to music of the best jazz bands in the city and watch the best independent basketball clubs in the East as well as see all of the teams from the big colleges as well.

You had to go to the basketball game on Friday because no one would be home for you to visit. Anyone who was anybody went to the game.

This social event was sponsored by a basketball club called the Athenians. The nucleus of this team was the YMCA Big Five Basketball Team.

At a meeting one Sunday afternoon, it was suggested that the YMCA team form a new basketball squad. The name "Athenians" was suggested by Dr. George Pendleton and was patented after the Spartan Club in New York.

The moving spirits behind the Athenians were the late two Wright brothers who were affectionately known as "Big Ike" and "Little Ike." Big Ike was a familiar athletic figure in Baltimore. For many years he was athletic director at Dunbar Senior High School.

Big Ike was the coach of the Athenians and Little Joe Saunders was the general manager. Saunders had the responsibility of arranging transportation to out-of-town places with very little money on hand.

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SAUNDERS' ASSISTANT was a postal employee named Weyman Meyers. These two, Saunders and Meyers, kept the team going. Some of the best cagers in the country played for Athenians.

Originally at the center was Dinky Dink Gee and then long John Rich (6', 2") a Baltimore School teacher.

At forward there were pharmacist Dr. Bill Harris and Everett ("Ev") Butler. The team boasted also one of the most colorful players in the country, an art teacher, "Chippy" Leroy Taylor who seldom shot the ball forward but nearly always from some impossible position. He shot more from behind his back than forward.

A long list of players included Herbert ("Red") Kellar; the best all-around athlete in this area, William "Scrappy" Brown from Washington, D. C.; and also from D. C. came Bill (Sugar) Cain, now the head of the physical education department of Dunbar Senior High School; also imported from Washington was Lanky Tibbs.

Another great Athenian star was the great dribbler and foul shooter, Googies Poles. In those days each team had a special foul shooter who shot all the fouls for his team. At the end of one season, Googies had shot 90-odd straight fouls without a miss. Leonard "Lena" Lyles was one of the team's outstanding guards.

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THE CLUB sponsored a junior team called the Arrows. From time to time players from the Arrows would advance to the big team. Ernest (Cutie) Brown, "Shoeless" Joe Jackson, Moe Veney, Mack Payne, Big Rap Wheatley, Jack Spencer and "Blinkey" Powell Sheffey were Arrows then.

In addition to the regular Friday night schedule, the team made an annual tour to the West. This tour carried the players as far as Chicago. The team also played the New York Renaissance Basketball team which featured such players as the great West Indian athlete, Ayers Saitch; Pappy Ricks, now with the Harlem Globe Trotters; Longy Saunders; Fats Jenkins and Yancey.

The Athenians had the basketball field to themselves for many years. They were the only independent club until the AFRO-AMERICAN Newspaper backed an all-star team from a YMCA league.

These players banded together and when they defeated a Washington, D. C. High School team, Armstrong, that was fresh from a victory over the phenominal Randolph Phillips High School team of Chicago.

The Baltimore team felt it was strong enough to play the top club squads because they were all young boys still in school. They called themselves the Scholastics.

This team was made up of these players: Ed Ailor Jr., the late Eggy Ward, Clarence Wake from the YMCA; Mack Payne and Cutie Brown from Douglass High School, Rip Day, Jack Spencer and Powell Sheffey from Morgan, and the late Dickie Jackson from the Battling Sikies.

The advent of the new team should have meant more and better basketball but it didn't turn out that way. The Athenians refused to give up their Friday date or to play the younger Scholastics.

A feud developed and the Scholastics ended up playing on Thursday nights. Baltimore would not or could not support two teams at that time and the Athenians began to lose some of their patronage.

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UNDER THE urging of Ed Ailor Jr.'s father, a game was arranged between these great teams, "The Scholastics" and "The Athenians." Before the largest crowd ever to pack the New Albert Auditorium, the younger Scholastics defeated the Athenians.

This was one of the most exciting basketball games ever played in Baltimore.

When the score tied, a well known Baltimorean collapsed and died. Shortly after this defeat "Big Ike," the coach, of the Athenians died.

It was not hard to get games because teams coming to Baltimore to play knew they would get fair and honest officiating. These games were handled by two excellent referees, the late Leonard (Duck) Gibson and Mr. A to Z himself, Sam (Sizing) Lacy, now AFRO sports editor.

Most people thought the New York Renaissance was the strongest team in the New York Area. However, the players knew Brick Top Wright's Collegians was the strongest team in the area.

Another team that gave the Athenians a struggle was the Arundel Boat Club, a team out of South Baltimore, composed of Big Max Waxman who later became Jack Dempsey's manager, the Blond Bomb Shell; Dead Eye Jerry Voith; Buck Hartung, Dutch Lentz; and the imported player, Nate Natey Klein.

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FRIDAY NIGHT basketball and the era of the Athenians passed with the demise of Big Ike Wright. Though Morgan College then played her basketball game on Friday night she could not draw such crowds.

The Morgan College team led by a one-handed shooting star invaded the basketball picture in Baltimore. He was Dr. Edd (Lanky) Jones. This Morgan team also included Marse Hill (later a professor at Morgan College); Pinky Clark; Powell Sheffey; Cutie Brown; Rap Wheatley, Mack Payne.

Any memorabilia connected with sports in Baltimore must nclude mention of horse racing. The AFRO's most prized connection with the thoroughbred game is dramatized by the presence of Isaac Murphy in the Maryland Jockey Club's Hall of Fame gallery at Pimlico. Murphy was the greatest of all colored jockeys.

The history of recreation in Baltimore one of growth

The recreation movement in the United States is relatively young when compared with other professions.

It originated about 75 years ago in Boston with the first "sand garden" for little children—a pile of sand placed in the yard of a settlement house. From that small beginning, the recreation movement in this country grew.

In 1897 Baltimore entered the recreation picture by establishing the Children's Playground Association which was organized to serve children under 10 years of age.

In 1906 the Public Athletic League was formed to meet the needs of boys and girls for athletic activities. These two organizations functioned separately until 1923 when they were merged to form the Playground Athletic League.

After the merger, an adult program was added. Doctor William Burdick was the director.

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SEPARATE FROM the P.A.L. at that time were three community recreation centers (Roosevelt, S.B.R.C. and Carroll Mansion) which had been established by civic minded persons.

Also in existence was yet another organization, the Baltimore Amateur Athletic Council, formed because of the growing popularity of sandlot sports.

With so many different groups serving the populace, the Mayor appointed a Committee on Recreation in 1937 to study the administration of public recreation in Baltimore.

This committee employed the National Recreation Association to analyze the situation. The result of the analysis was a recommendation that all these organizations be combined into one—a Department of Recreation, which became a branch of the city government when the voters approved this as an amendment to the City Charter in May, 1939.

Members of a board were appointed by the Mayor. Harold S. Callowhill was the superintendent.

JOHN G. WILLIAMS was appointed superintendent of recreation in Baltimore City on Jan. 1, 1938 after Mr. Callowhill retired.

The Bureau has 284 full-time workers 500 part-time workers and uses an estimated 7,000 volunteers.

Mr. Williams sees recreation as an important aspect of the community because "people now have a great deal of leisure time."

The staff feels that it is the duty of the Board of Recreation and Parks and the entire staff of the Bureau of Recreation to give to the citizens of Baltimore a recreation program of the highest caliber and the best professional standards.

Its major responsibility as professional recreation leader is to work persistently toward the highest standards in the development of good citizens with healthy bodies and good attitudes. The recreation activities which are provided in the daily programs are useful tools in bringing about the desired results.

Good sportsmanship, fair play, respect for the rights and property of others, regard for authority, the acceptance of responsibility, the recognition of the importance of education, good morals and honesty are just some of the character traits which we, as recreation leaders, should be on the alert to develop in all young people.

THE DEPARTMENT of Recreation begins its program of summer fun on June 20, 1966. Programs have been planned for tots, teens, mothers and fathers, senior citizens and a new

(Continued on Page 29)

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Baltimore Afro-American

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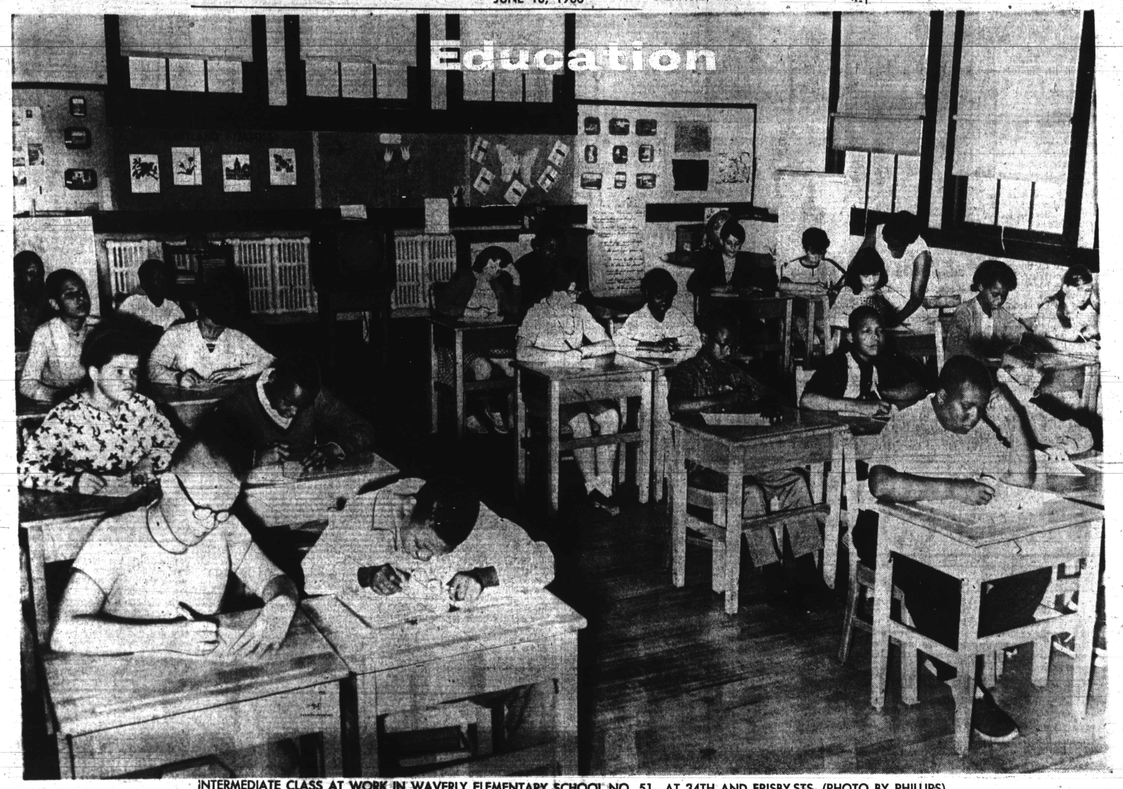

INTERMEDIATE CLASS AT WORK IN WAVERLY ELEMENTARY SCHOOL NO. 51 AT 34TH AND FRISBY STS. (PHOTO BY PHILLIPS)

CITY PROVIDES EDUCATION AT EVERY LEVEL

By FRANK A. DeCOSTA
Dean, Graduate School
Morgan State College

Introduction

One of the essential hallmarks of the outstanding city in the United States today is the superior quantity and quality of education that is provided for the city's population.

Of course, a second hallmark is that the city's population avails itself of the education that is provided.

There is enough comparative evidence available among cities to support these two hallmarks as necessary, although not sufficient, criteria of the outstanding city.

The evidence includes: high per capita income; high standard of living; increased development of art, music, libraries, and other leisure time pursuits; and increased provisions for social welfare.

The evidence is sufficient to enable one to conclude that the American Experiment in Education has been tentatively validated.

Experiment has been in process since the early days of the United States and has been based upon the assumptions: that an educated citizenry is necessary for the success of democracy;

That education results in the progressive improvement of the individual members of society, and consequently, of society itself; that the financial investment of society in education is one of the soundest financial investments society can make; and that, as the democratic society becomes more developed and complex, there is the need for society to provide education at increasingly higher levels.

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SEVERAL OF these assumptions may be found in the speeches and writings of early Americans. Thomas Jefferson, for example, stated, "If a nation expects to be ignorant and free in a state of civilization, it expects what never was and never will be."

And, writing from France to a former teacher in Virginia, Jefferson advised, "Preach, my dear sir, a crusade against ignorance; establish and improve the law for educating the common people."

Later, Horace Mann concludes in one of his **Lectures and Reports on Education**, "Finally, education alone can conduct us to that enjoyment which is, at once, best in quality and infinite in quantity."

The presence of the assumptions that were stated by these early Americans, as well as of other assumptions, may be found in the provisions that are being made, increasingly, for the education of the citizens of Baltimore City.

Consider, for example, the assumption that, as the democratic society becomes more developed and complex, there is the need for society to provide education at increasingly higher levels.

In this connection, two facts seem to indicate that this assumption has been present in the historical development of education in Baltimore City

First, the number of high school graduates in 1963 (6,392) was more than twice as large as the number of high school graduates in 1943 (3,072). Second, the percentage of high school graduates entering college increased from 16.8 percent in 1943 to 30.4 percent in 1963.

The purpose of this article, therefore, is simply to describe the provisions that are being made for education in Baltimore City with some indication of the extent to which the city's population avails itself of the educational opportunities that are present.

Kindergarten, Elementary

The Baltimore City Public School system includes a well-coordinated network of kindergartens and elementary schools that are easily accessible to all children of the city.

During 1965 - 66, the kindergartens enrolled 16,181 pupils; and the regular elementary schools enrolled 95,674 pupils. Further, other children were enrolled in programs for early admissions, opportunity, physically handicapped, home instructed, and hospitalized pupils.

Thus, Baltimore City, during 1965-66, provides public education for more than 110,000 of its children of kindergarten and elementary school age.

Furthermore, Baltimore provides a well-established and substantial system of non-public kindergarten and elementary education. During 1963-64, the enrollment in the non-public kindergartens and elementary schools was 24.5 percent as large as the enrollment in the public kindergartens and elementary schools.

Thus, if this same percentage exists in 1965-66, it may be concluded that the present enrollment in the non-public schools is approximately 29,000.

In other words, through both public and non-public sources, Baltimore provides kindergarten and elementary education for approximately 140,000 of its children.

This represents practically 100 percent of the children of kindergarten and elementary school age. Thus, the

(Continued On A-2)

SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENT LAURENCE G. PAQUIN CONFERS WITH HIS BOARD OF SUPERINTENDENTS DURING A RECENT PLANNING MEETNG. FROM LEFT: DR. SAUL M. PERDUE, WALTER A. MACCUBBIN, DR. M. THOMAS GOEDEKE, AMBROSE CHLADA JR., SIDNEY N. CHERNAK (STANDING), DR. PAQUIN, DR. HOUSTON R. JACKSON AND MISS EDITH V. WALKER. NOT SHOWN IS DR. VERNON S. VAVRINA. (AFRO PHOTO BY PHILLIPS).

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