READY FOR LIFT OFF — Praying for a safe flight, AFRO reporter Portia Badham boards the hot air balloon with pilot, Bill Costin, who is the only black licensed balloonist in the country. At left, Costin gives remarks before running in a sprint race at Pimlico race track to determine the lift - off order.

Bill Costin—the only black balloonist

"It's hard to believe that someone would take to hot air ballooning just to get over a fear of height but that's exactly why Bill Costin got into the new sport.

"I decided that was the best way to get over it," said Costin, the only black licensed balloonist in the country.

Currently there are about 1300 licensed balloonists. The numbers of enthusiasts are constantly increasing as more and more people become interested in ballooning, a sport and airborne mode which dates back to 1783.

Costin, a commercial lines underwriter for CNA Insurance Company in Hartford, Conn. where he lives, played professional football for the Buffalo Bills for one year before sustaining an injury that put him out of the game.

It was at this time in 1975 that he was approached by a friend to go in on a deal with six other people to purchase a balloon system.

"I didn't even know these other people. And I had never seen a balloon before, but it sounded interesting so I said OK," explained the rugged 6'5" pounder, who is one of four children, and originally from Omaha, Neb.

The group bought the balloon and formed a club of which Bill was a member for only two months before venturing off on his own.

He formed his own balloon company in Hartford, called Sky Endeavors which offers balloon flights, balloon pilot training, Raven Balloon sales, and balloon promotions.

Bill came to Baltimore last weekend to participate in the seventh Preakness Balloon Race.

His next race will be in July in Philadelphia, Pa., the fourth race of the Great American Balloon Races, a newly organieed national hot - air balloon racing circuit.

Bill who has had more than 100 flights to date, has had some harrowing and interesting events happen to him.

Once while landing, the balloon hit the ground and bounced back up and right over a tree. Another time, he was forced to land and the only perfect landing spot was a large swimming pool which he gently lowered into, much to the amazement of the owner, who came out to find his pool covered with Bill's balloon.

He also points out that "everything that could possibly go wrong went wrong" during the morning of the May 12 race here in Baltimore.

Although, he cited the willingness of the crowd at Patterson Park to help him prepare the balloon for lift - off, most did not know what they were doing and only "slowed him down."

However, Costin who unfortunately did not capture the winning spot this year, plans to return next year and try again in the Preakness Balloon Race.

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THOSE WEEKLY SPECIALS IN OUR NEWSPAPERS
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THOSE FEW CENTS OFF CAN ADD UP TO $$$ SAVINGS

—Fearless AFRO reporter

(Continued from page 1)..

Not knowing all the procedures involved in inflating a hot air balloon I was somewhat oblivious to the problems the pilot was encountering as we prepared to ready the balloon for lift off.

Despite the fact that the top of the balloon came apart (it was immediately fixed), the fan stopped working and the maneuvering hatch was positioned in the wrong place letting all the air back out of the balloon.

My nerve remained steady and not once did I say "the heck with this, I'm going home and going back to sleep."

Even though we were the last to lift off to the cheers of a very enthusiastic crowd after we finally made it and that even later the pilot told me "everything went wrong that could have possibly gone wrong", I had a beautiful experience.

People came out of their houses and stopped their cars in traffic to wave at us, thrilled at the sight of our huge brown and light blue balloon which was sponsored by Cyril and Ruth Caterers.

Trusting the decision of my [illegible] reluctantly agreed that it would be best to pick a nice large field and land, forgetting about trying to find the hare balloon.

It was too much fun, I could have stayed in the air all day enjoying the incredibly tranquil flight and the sights of the Baltimore skyline.

However, low cloud ceiling made visibility increasing difficult above 700 feet and with rain threatening again, landing was the best thing to do which several other pilots had chosen also.

Nearing a large grass field I was instructed how to prepare for a possible bumpy landing which I got a chance to feel since we missed the grassy area and headed straight for a hard dirt and sandy area which was to be the spot where my feet would once again touch the ground.

Landing was abit bumpy but I held on and in the process banged my knee on one of the gas tanks but in no way did that pain take away from the most memorable event I've experienced (unless I chose to fly a balloon myself — now that will be memorable.

Hypertension screenings offered

The Provident Hospital Inc. hypertension unit recently conducted an all day screening at Mondawmin Mall, 2500 Liberty Heights Ave.

A total of 146 persons were screened and a total of 46 persons were referred to the hospital clinic for further tests.

Participating in the testing were Provident representatives Dr. Wyne Kong, director of grants and contract development; Ms. Phyllis Stewart, LPN; Ms. Shirley Nichols, LPN; Ms. Patricia Wilmore, RN; Ms. Debra Johnson, RN; Ms. Marguerite McClammy, RN, and Ms. Rosa Cain, RN

Persons interested in having hypertension screenings may call the hospital. Monday thru Friday, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. at 225 - 2030 for appointments.

The New Greyhound Ain't What It Used To Be.

Back in the 1930's most terminals were little more than a sign at the local store. Today, Greyhound gives you more of what *you* travel for: we have terminals that are bright and modern, with fast ticketing, comfortable waiting areas, and you don't always have to go downtown to go Greyhound because we have conveniently located suburban terminals in most major cities.

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GAS FORECAST

The average price of gasoline in Maryland increased almost two cents a gallon this week as supplies continued tight but adequate, according to a survey of 30 stations released Thursday by the Automobile Club of Maryland.

The auto club's price survey showed that the average price of regular gasoline increased from 79.2 cents a gallon last week to 81 cents a gallon this week.

Unleaded gasoline increased from 84.1 cents a gallon to 86.4 cents a gallon while premium gasoline went from 86.4 to 88.2 cents a gallon, according to the AAA's Figures.

Club spokeswoman Kathleen Godzik advised motorists to buy their weekend gasoline on Friday or early Saturday because the survey showed that about 50 percent of the stations plan to stay closed on Sunday, a 10 percent increase from the previous week.

"In terms of availability things look good," Ms. Godzik said. "Supplies will remain adequate as long as people drive normally and go out and do the tank - topping routine. This is really bad. It that continues to happen than we will have shortages, she said."

But Victor Rasheed, executive director of the Greater Washington - Maryland Service Station Association, was less optimistic about Sunday sales. He expects 90 percent of the stations in metropolitan areas to remain closed on Sunday.

Rasheed said motorists will be able to buy gasoline along major highways, particularly near resort areas such as Ocean City, but many other stations will stay closed Sunday.

Baltimore station owner John Banks said he will close at 4 p.m. Saturday to help conserve his monthly gasoline allocation.

"We sold five days allocations in two days (last weekend) and we cannot continue at hat pace very long," Banks said.

State Comptroller Louis Goldstein reported Thursday that March gasoline consumption was one percent higher than in March 1978, 172 million gallons compared to 170 million.

Goldstein said gasoline consumption increased 2.5 percent during the first three months of 1979 from the same period last year.

Diesel fuel sales increased by more than six percent in March and 12 percent during the first three months of the year, Goldstein said at Martin's West.

The 60 graduates of the Masonic

They were graduted and received diplomas on Sunday, May 13. They used the auditorium of the Southern High School for their graduation ceremony. These men will continue as Master Masons of The Most Worshipful Hirman Grand Lodge, F. M. and A. M.

(Mayor Schaefer's represen-

Social Services, Mrs. Ernestine Jones, acting director, Department of Social Services, Mrs. Phyllis Shelton, (director of public affairs for WJZ - TV, and Mrs. Mary Claybourne of Radio Station WWIN.

Black, white parents get together to improve Robert Poole School

Black and white parents in the Hampden neighborhood where Robert Poole Junior High is situated have joined forces against the school administration to fight for better conditions at the facility.

Gone is much of the past tension between blacks and whites in this area. It was once so thick you could cut it with a knife when the then all - white Poole school was forced to desegregate under an HEW mandate handed down in 1974 for the Baltimore city schools.

Since that time, residents of the area, upset about blacks coming into their community, have lessened their anger in order to work with black parents to fight the real problem: insuring quality education for their children.

At a public meeting held by the Robert Poole Coalition in the school's gymnasium Monday night, a platform was presented to the school's principal, Rudolph V. DePaola and the regional superintendent, Samuel Sharrow, requesting a long list of changes.

The coalition, comprised of parents and students from the Hampden, Harwood, Remington and Charles Village areas, states that the school's procedures in the areas of security, truancy and discipline are "ineffective in dealing with the extreme problems at Robert Poole."

In a very orderly and well - structured meeting, an eight - member panel read a three - page list of the various problems and necessary changes which included the addition of a female security guard. Currently, the school is staffed with two male officers who patrol the grounds as well as inside the building.

Also included in the coalition's platform for improvement were requests for more supplies, a cleaner cafeteria and regular fire drills.

Responding to the concerns and requests, Sharrow thanked the group for "calling this meeting together and putting our best efforts together."

He told the panel along with the [illegible] parents and [illegible] who had assembled that one of the two male security officers would be replaced by a female or if funds permit, a third officer would be assigned, who would be female.

He also pointed out that because of strains on the current school budget only an attendance monitor at the school four hours a day is now affordable. However, that position is currently vacant because the person in that job is out on maternity leave.

Other problems raised were teacher evaluations, adequate substitute teachers, effective discipline and class attendance, which the group will be reviewing with the regional and administrative staff.

The coalition plans to form a parent - teacher organization and a committee comprised of two representatives from each community including Hampden, Harwood, Remington, Charles Village, Barclay, Greenmount and Greenmount West, to review applications and make recommendations for the hiring of future staff at the school.

Cherry Hill's candidate Peggy Jackson fund-raiser, May 20

A campaign dinner will be held Sunday, May 20 for Peggy Jackson, who is running for a City Council seat in the Sixth District.

The black tie affair is set at the Belvedere Hotel from 6 to 10 p.m. in the Grand Ballroom.

Ms. Jackson, an attractive elementary school teacher, could be the first black and the first female ever elected to a 6th District seat.

Although she would be the first woman to claim that spot, she claims her campaign is not going to be a feminist one.

Calling herself a "people's candidate," Ms. Jackson says she doesn't intend to make the usual campaign promises. Instead she says she is offering her community "a strong voice" that won't be afraid to say "no."

She is currently planning voter registration drives which are underway in the Cherry Hill section.

SBHE takes 'unofficial' look at UMBC

The State Board for Higher Education has become involved in the current situation at the University of Maryland Baltimore County.

The board sent a representative to the UMBC campus last week to investigate charges by black students that the university administration was insensitive to the needs of blacks on the campus and was discriminate in the hiring of black faculty and staff.

According to campus sources, Joseph Durham, an official in the SBHE equal opportunity office, met with top UMBC officials and black students to discuss the racial tension that has existed since early April when black students occupied the 10th floor of the administration building and the financial aid office to protest their demands.

Durham admitted he was on the campus late last week but pointed out to the AFRO he was on an "unofficial fact finding mission" for State Board Commissioner Sheldon Knorr.

"The current position at UMBC is internal," said Durham. "I will be making an official report to the commissioner (Knorr) but our responsibility is overseeing desegregation efforts for the Maryland schools."

Durham said although he will be making a report to Knorr, state board officials do not expect to become directly involved pointing out that it was up to the University of Maryland board of regents to investigate the matter.

Sources close to the board, revealed, however, that despite Durham's denials the chance of the SBHE becoming involved is extremely strong.

Reports revealed that Durham was sent on the fact finding mission by the board expressly so that members would have certain information in case the board did decide to get involved in the situation.

One board official, who did not want to be identified said the present situation has "not gone by the commissioner (Knorr)."

The official said "students' charges are very strong," pointing out further "where there's smoke there's fire."

MSU commencement Sunday

This year Morgan State University expects to award 638 undergraduates and 245 graduate degrees at its 112th commencement exercise this Sunday, May 20 at 6:30 p.m. at the Civic Center.

Toni Morrison, author of "Song of Solomon will deliver the commencement address and administer the Officers Oath at the ROTC Commissioning Ceremony during the graduation.

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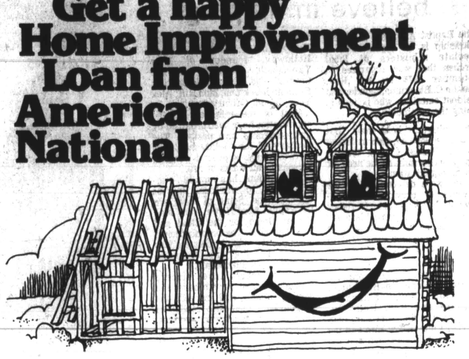

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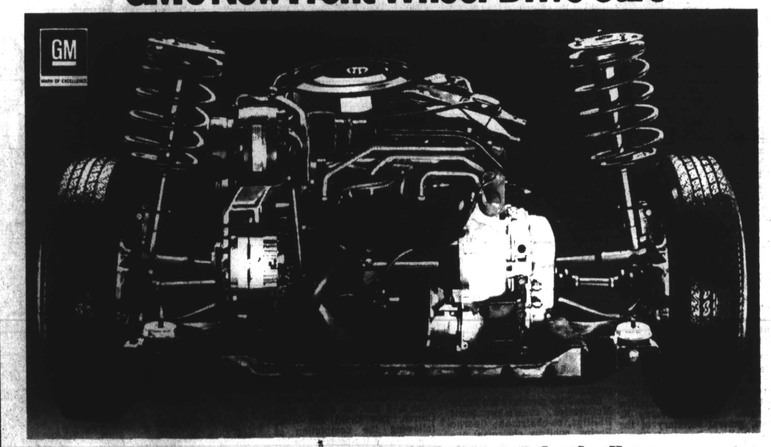
All other offices open Mon. Fri. 9-3, Fri. evening 5-8 & Sat. 10-3

GM's New Front-Wheel-Drive Cars



With a host of standard features including transverse-mounted engine, MacPherson Strut suspension, rack-and-pinion steering, front disc brakes, radial tires and more.

The above photograph contains a remarkable story. It is the heart of the new front-wheel-drive Chevrolet Citation, Pontiac Phoenix, Oldsmobile Omega and Buick Skylark. And it has a number of features that are standard equipment.

Transverse-mounted engine. Because the engine sits sideways, we can reduce overall length, yet design a car with plenty of room for passengers and luggage. The one you see here is the available V-6, a 4-cylinder engine is standard. (These GM-built engines are produced by various divisions. See your dealer for details.)

MacPherson Strut front suspension. Helps us design a roomier passenger compartment.

Rack-and-pinion steering. Offers quick, easy response.

Front disc brakes. A new low-drag design with audible wear indicators.

Radial tires. A new design with a special rubber compound to lower rolling resistance even more than "conventional" radials.

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And more. The aforementioned features are just some of the standard items you get on these exciting new front-wheel-drive cars. You also get others like self-adjusting brakes, carpeted passenger compartment, Body by Fisher construction and many more.

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