AFRO photo by Mark Gail

CONTEST WINNERS — Area students were honored this week at a Push Excel Essay Contest Luncheon at Western High School. In the photos above (L to R), Cheryl Compton, a Western High School student and grand prize winner, received a hair dryer. Mallory McClure, a Powhatan Elementary School student, received a camera. Anita Stewart is an Edmondson High School student and she was awarded a hair dryer. In the photo at right, Martin Sullivan, a Hilton Elementary School student, looks at his honor certificate with his mother Charlotte.

## AFRO Teen Scene

The Teen Scene is a new column and is your chance to share your opinions on educational, political, economic, and social affairs.

Does the Jesse Jackson controversy live on? a lot has been said about the mission of Rev. Jesse Jackson. Many believe that he is offering an excellent school program. But the controversy seems to arise when you ask the question, "what are you doing to excel?"

Reverend Jackson's program is good, but the only problem is whether or not he reached the kids who really need to excel. Most of the students that attended the assembly held recently at the Civic Center have no problems in excelling. The parents that were there are the ones who show a special interest in their children's education.

It seems that everyone Jackson did reach were "turned on" to what he said. Even the students and parents who watched the program on television seem to share an attitude of working harder to make themselves better persons.

"Kids of all ages need the encouragement that Jackson brought. I am a mother of three students who I always push to be successful. I think that just saying "I am somebody, I count, I am successful, I make a difference will help a person learn to seek those opportunities that are waiting for them," said Mrs. [illegible] Taylor, a resident of Southwest Baltimore.

Several people asked Jackson what can they do to keep students in the "excelling spirit". Many have watched, waited and wondered how long students will keep the agreements they made at the Civic Center.

Jackson said that he did what he was told to do, and that he couldn't stay to see how Baltimore exercised what he preached.

"I think what Jesse Jackson said will keep students wanting to excell, because what he said was the truth" replied Adrian Loche, a senior.

Ms. Loche said that she appreciated speeches that are based on facts, not opinions. She also feels that Rev. Jackson based his speech on "easy-to-see" facts.

This has been a well organized program that has grabbed everyone's attention from elementary students to adults.

"I think the program was a very interesting one, and I know it has helped make a change in my life" said Bernette Pressley, a Calverton Junior High student.

Recently a group of students who are members of the local Legislative Liason Program journeyed to Annapolis. These students are affiliated with the Associated Student Congress of Baltimore City, and the Baltimore City Council of Youth.

Students were greeted in Annapolis by Dennis McCoy, chairman of the Baltimore City Delegation and David Shapiro, D-42nd, a 1973 graduate of Northwestern Senior High.

During the day students attended committee hearings and used this opportunity to share their opinions on altering the legal age to purchase alcohol from 18 to 19 years of age.

After the meetings, the students walked through the Annapolis shopping district and had lunch at a local restaurant. At lunch they talked with Benjamin Cardin, Speaker of the House of Delegates.

The students went to the Legislative Services Building to pick up bills that they had requested for their own personal use and later went on a tour of the state building.

"It was a terrific learning exerpience, and I am looking forward to returning to testify against raising the age to purchase alcohol."

said Leslie Holcombe, a student representitive for the Maryland State Advisory Council for Food and Nutrition.

On Feb. 16, the Baltimore Chapter, Delta Sigma Theta Sorority Inc. Teen Lift Committee sponsored an international "food fare".

Adults and Teens gathered in the Emmanuel Chambers auditorium at Providence Hospital for the affair. The topic of the program was "Friendship and Love Through International Cuisine".

Following the welcome address given by Marian Finney the audience joined together and sang such songs as "You've Got A Friend," "We Have Love For You" and "Our Love," by Natalie Cole.

After the musical selections, the adults had a discussion on countries in the news and teens tasted the food from Africa, Italy, France, Asia, Hawaii, Rhodesia, Russia, Australia, Europe, China, Canada, and Mexico.

I am one of the teens that attended. And I'd just like to say that I think more organizations should sponsor activities of this kind.

If you have an opinion or editorial on any topic of interest, please write me, Anthony Pressley, AFRO - AMERICAN Newspapers, City Desk, 628 N. Eutaw St., Baltimore, Md. 21201.


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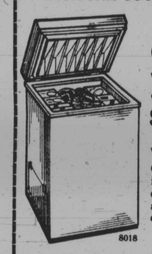

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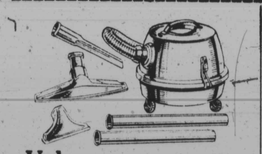

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MONTGOMERY WARD




# SHOWTIME

★ THEATRE ★ ARTS ★ MOVIES

## Palmerstown, U.S.A.' new Alex Haley TV series

By Ida Peters

"Palmerstown, U.S.A." a new TV series on CBS which teams the co-executive talents of the acclaimed author of "Roots", Alex Haley and the award winning writer-producer Norman Lear, premieres in a special two-hour segment on Thursday, March 20.

"Palmerstown" will replace "The Waltons" for the special two-hour presentation and six one-hour segments through May 8 when "The Waltons" return to their regular time slot.

Alex Haley called the AFRO from New York this week, where he is doing East Coast interviews for the show, visiting New York, Chicago and Milwaukee before returning to the coast.

His first words were "I just wish I was in Baltimore". He said he would like to be doing the interview in a restuarant over some famous Maryland crab cakes. From his Coast Guard days he remembers our great port. His most vivid memory is of Baltimore's long blocks of row houses with white marble steps.

He says they first started to call the series "King of the Hill" but changed it because there is a book by the same name. He then took the name of his grandfather Will Palmer for the series.

"Palmerstown, U.S.A." is the story of life in the rural South during the 1930's as seen through the eyes of two 9-year-old boys. In the opening segment, the plans of the two boys to participate is destroyed by a heated dispute between their fathers.

Haley says the town he portrays has about 500 people where everybody knows everybody else and everybody was known for something distinctive, whether you were the town drunkard, the town gossip, the town busybody or made the best blackberry pie.

He also said that a great many of the technical crew who worked on "Roots" are involved in the series including Joe Wilcots the cinematograper who is "joyfully, one of the best in the buniness". Kenny Orme is the prop-director.

The series has a budget of $5 million and some of the episodes are "The Lesson", "The Travellers" (on baseball); "The Old Sisters".

Jonelle Allen, Beeson Carroll, Bill Duke and Janice St. John star with Michael Fox and Star-Shemah Bobatoon. Jermain Hodge Johnson and Brian Godfrey Wilson are introduced as the boys.

In the opening episode Luther Freeman (Duke), the town's blacksmith, and W.D. Hall (Carroll), the local grocer, argue over a grocery bill, and the dispute ignites the town's repressed racial hostilities. Violence threatens Palmerstown and the parade, the biggest money-making event of the year, is jeopardy - as well as the friendship between Booker T. Freeman (Johnson) and David Hall (Wilson), who are forbidden to see each other by their fathers.

Jonelle Allen portrays Booker T.'s mother, the town's midwife. She appeared in the original Off Broadway production of "Hair" and on Broadway in "Two Gentlemen of Verona". Her television credits include the motion pictures - for - television "Foster and Laurie" and "Cage Without a Key", both seen on the Network.

Beeson Carroll appeared in the feature films "Lady Liberty", "Somebody Killed Her

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"Palmerstown, U.S.A.," Brian Godfrey (top, left) stars as David Hall and Jermain Hodge Johnson (top, right) stars as his best friend, Booker T. Freeman. Janice St. John and Beeson Carroll (left) star as David's parents; Michael J. Fox (kneeling, front) portrays David's brother, Jonelle Allen (striped dress) and Bill Duke star as Booker T.'s parents; and Star-Shema Bobatoon portrays Booker T.'s sister.

Alex Haley, the acclaimed author and co-executive producer, Norman Lear, of the new dramatic series, "Palmerstown, U.S.A.," premiering with a special two-hour episode on Thurs., March 20.

Donta Brown, 10 of E. Eager St. was the happy winner of the AFRO Circus Clown Coloring Contest. Above, he is being made up by Tom Dougherty, Ringling Brothers clown backstage.

## AFRO Clown Contest winners

**Top Winner**
Donta Brown, age 10, E. Eager St.

**3-4 Group**
Monique Reed, 4, Luzerne St.,
Annette Gregory, 3, Upmanor Rd.,
Latoya Griffin, 3, Mountmor Ct.

**5-6 Group**
Markenya King, 5, Park Heights Ave.,
Marquette Van Dyke, 6, N. Aisquith St.,
Nicole Neale, 6, Oakford Ave.

**7-8 Group**
Celena Stansbury, 7, N. Monroe St.,
Quinn Marshan, 7, Harlem Ave.,
Terry Cummings, 7, 23rd St.

**9-10 Group**
Charnette Reed, 9, N. Bradford St.,
Anita Buckson, 10, Monument St.,
Rachel Dupree, 9, N. Washington St.

**11-12 Group**
Kim Owens, 12, Woodland Ave.,
Yolanda Singletary, 11, Seabury Rd.,
Montressa Carter, 11, W. Franklin St.

Boss Clown Tom Parrish and Tom Dougherty take Donta Brown by the hand as he paraded around the Civic Center in the Clown Band and participated in their early skits and activities. On stage you couldn't tell him from the real clowns.

## Odd Fellows Hall—September 18, 1926

Grand United Order of Odd Fellows Hall as seen September 18, 1926. Located at Lanvale and McCulloh Streets next to Booker T. Washington High School, the building was razed in 1959 and the site is a playing field for the school. This hall was the center for most black social gatherings in the early 1900s.

## 'Vincent'-moving story of love, hate

By Ida Peters

"Vincent: The Story of A Hero", a multi-image dramatic production based on the play "Van Gogh" by Phillip Stephens, adapted by Leonard Nimoy and starring Nimoy is a story about a love-hate relationship and sibling rivalry between two brothers.

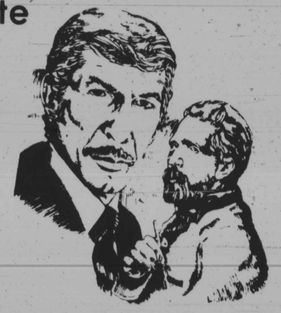
What better person than the popular Mr. Spock of the "Star Trek" series and the host and narrator of the popular "In Search Of..." TV series to turn the life of the tortured Vincent van Gogh from a museum lecture tour into a moving colorful theatre piece.

The play is set in Paris, France in the summer of 1890, shortly after the death of Vincent van Gogh. The script is built around the bereaved brother, Theo, who reads from letters he exchanged with his brother from 1872 until his brother's death in 1879 at age of 37.

More than 661 of Vincent's letters have been preserved and 36 of Theo's. Of his paintings van Gogh left 1700 paintings and sketches, many of them priceless and only available for viewing to the general public in museums around the world.

The thread that runs through Leonard Nimoy's dissertation on his brother Vincent is that Theo never was able to come to grips with his brother's genius, and while he was an art dealer, he never sold any of his brother's paintings. And, his grief at his brother's death was more guilt and jealousy which drove him into a depression and death a year later in 1891.

They were buried together. Theo wrote after Vincent's death..."Life was such a burden to him; but now, as often happens, people are full of praise for his talents...Oh my friends! He was so my own, own brother".



The staging of "Vincent" at the Mechanic is breathtaking for those people who have not been exposed to van Gogh and only know that he cut off his own ear in an raging Epileptic fit; was condemned to a insane asylum and in the last 70 days before he shot himself, he turned out 100 pieces of work.

The stage is bare except for a desk, chair, oil lamp, easel, work table and

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## Night Scene Seen

By Bob Matthews

As predicted, the tastes of the nightclub public is in the throes of transition, and enterprising club owners are moving to take advantage of the new trends.

Live music is now THE thing, and if you don't believe it, just look around. Whether it is rhythm and blues, rock, Bluegrass or jazz, people are beginning to pay more and more attention to the live offerings.

The evolution of The Closet, in downtown Baltimore, is a prime example of the new scene. Henry Baker, Sr. has kept the place programming live music since its inception—often at monumental expense.

Henry Jr. is now manager of the establishment, and is keeping the club in the mainstream, First of all, The Closet has been enlarged. As Baker projected more than a year ago, the next door building has become a part of the new Closet, with the wall beteen the buildings knocked down.

This gives the place a seating capacity of 75 or more, and allows them to bring in out-of-town acts, which begins tonight (Friday). On hand will be Bill Hardman, trumpet, and Junior Cook, tenor sax—two stalwarts in the jazz field.

The rhythm section is composed of Marc Cohen, piano; Hugh Walker, drums, and Bob Gibson, bass. Henry told Nightseen that this trio has been engaged for a three-month period, beginning with this week.

They will also be the backup section for vocalist Brenda Alford, who will be appearing Thursday nights during March. Mondays have been given over to the fusion-modern sounds of Eddie Harrison and Flight One.

Tuesdays, the Spirit of Malik Theatre Group holds sway, and each Wednesday, the Free Spirit Theatre puts on live performances. The Thursday sets with Brenda happen on the designated Ladies Night, and according to Henry, ladies are given a free drink (champagne or wine, we're told).

Cover charge for the weekend sets is $4.00, but unlike the D.C. clubs the house is not cleared after each set. And actually, when you come right down to it, Baltimore is now offering more live top-flight musicians in clubs than that district down the road.

The unparalleled Left Bank Jazz Society will headline the South African trumpeter Hugh Masekela and his troupe this week. You can look for some African rhythms with touches of Latino at this performance.

We predict it will be crowded—weather depending, after all, it is snowing as we write these words. Actually, LBJS has become THE place to visit on a Sunday afternoon, and we have found nothing yet to compare with the fried chicken prepared by Chef Willis.

And, of course, we would be remiss if we did not mention Ms. Gladys, who dispenses those homemade pies and cakes. Actually, we think so much of them that we have a standing order for a slice of that apple pie each week.

Then, there is The Bandstand where vocalist Janet Lawson will be the featured performer. She has a long history of jazz singing with most of the top bop groups and is lecturing at Goucher College during this stay.

She'll be accompanied by Ratzo Harris, bass; Bill O'Connell, piano, and Dude Brown, drums. Haven't personally heard Janet live before, but we will—have been getting top reports about her work.

Bob Haynes continues his live music sets—this club as featured live acts for over 20 years—with Richard Groove Holmes, featuring Marshall Booze, guitar; Bobby Ward, drums, and Vernon Wolst, vocalist.

Groove also takes part in the Saturday afternoon jazz jams, which has Donald Lane heading the proceedings this week.

The Electric Eye continues the live music tradition with a party for the group The Whispers, which Georg e Mitchell says will go on from 9 p.m. until 9 a.m. the next morning.

He says such groups as Pockets, First Class and MFD are also expected to pay tribute to the Whispers during this gala, which has been entitled: And The Beat Goes On!

Thursday nights at The Ritz during happy hour is a showcase for Carlos Johnson et al, but next week, the Arthur Prysec-Red Prysock revue is scheduled to begin residence in the Penthouse of the club.

Just a reminder: The Atlantic City Jazz Festival is definitely on for this year, with activities scheduled to begin on July 3. There'll be lots more later, of course.