March Funeral Home one of largest in country

William C. and J. Roberta March, founders of the William C. March Funeral Home Inc. attribute their business accomplishments to several things. First, to the grace of God.

Next, to the togetherness they share working as husband and wife, determination because they challenged the odds in establishing the business and dedication because of hard work and long hours.

March worked the mid-night shift at the U.S. Post Office from 1967, the year the business began until 1972. These two jobs only allowed him three to four hours of sleep a day.

March and his wife are both products of East Baltimore, attending Dunbar High School through the 11th grade, dropping out in 1941 in favor of war time jobs being offered.

March was drafted into the Army in 1942 and was married during his first furlough. He was discharged after three years, two battle stars and the rank of first sergeant in 1946.

He returned to his job at Edgewood Arsenal as a machine operator, resigning in 1947 to attend mortuary school in New York City.

In the meantime, he and his wife attended and graduated from Douglass evening school in 1946.

Entering the funeral profession was quite by chance, according to March who says it was a friend's idea that he pursue the funeral profession. March planned a career in architecture if he had attended college.

The initial financing of the firm came from small loan companies. The first sizeable loan was made through the Small Business Administration in 1967 for $15,000 which allowed for renovation and the purchase of a second building.

Ten years later and being the first black firm to service 1,000 burials in 12 months, the March Funeral Home entered into a major improvement with loans of $350,000 from SBA, $430,000 from Advance Federal Savings and Loan and $65,000 from Ideal Savings and Loan Association.

The new facility at 1101 E. North Ave. is valued at more than $1 million and in 1979 serviced 2,090 funerals, placing the William C. March Funeral Home Inc. as one of the largest single funeral home operations in the country.

MILLION DOLLAR FACILITY — The William March Funeral Home which was founded by William C. and his wife, Roberta March is located on E. North Ave. and is one of the largest minority-owned funeral operations in the country.

Charles Wright promoted to airlines manager

Charles E. Wright has been promoted to manager, market development of Eastern Airlines. He was formerly a sales representative.

His responsibilities will include directing and recommending policies and marketing plans to promote Eastern in special markets and among ethnic and special interest groups.

Wright joined Eastern in April 1969 as a ticket agent in Washington and was promoted to sales representative in February 1976.

Charles E. Wright

Wright, 34, attended Howard University and served as a staff sergeant in the District of Columbia's Army National Guard from 1970 to 1976.

He is a member of Prince Hall Masonry and a former member of Big Brothers Inc. and has served on the advisory board of the Baltimore chapter of Future Business Leaders of America. He is married to the former Barbara Howard and lives in Miami.

Baltimore Federal promotes Archie Shaw

Archie Shaw Jr. was recently promoted to assistant secretary in the lending division of Baltimore Federal.

Shaw, who received his undergraduate and graduate degrees in business administration from Morgan State University began his lending career in 1977 as a loan underwriter. He is current position, assistant manager in the loan origination department. He is a member of the Society of Certified Consumer Credit Executives and the Maryland Improvement Contractors Association.

Archie Shaw

—Dorothy Brunson

Continued from page 14

practice.

The first station, WOAK-AM was purchased in May 1974. In five years Henry had developed the largest minority controlled broadcasting company in the country.

Urban National Corporation (UNC) and the Palmer Organization, two Boston venture capital firms, recently invested $600,000 in a subsidiary of BEN in connection with the acquisition of two radio stations by the minority firm.

UNC operates as a private profit-making investment firm, receiving no government assistance. As manager of one of the largest private venture capital funds for investment in minority business, UNC recently completed the closing for BEN radio stations WPDQ-AM and WJNJ-FM in Jacksonville, Fla.

This brings the total of BEN radio holdings to eight plus one television station, WHEC Channel 10, as CBS affiliate in Rochester, N.Y. The other radio stations are WAOK-AM, Atlanta, Ga.; WGIV-AM, Charlotte, N.C.; WTAN-AM and WKOF-FM, Clearwater and Tampa, Fla.; WCIN-AM, Cincinnati, Ohio and WOKV-FM, Hamilton, Ohio. In addition to BEN UNC has invested in a black Baltimore supermarket chain Community Foods, Inc.

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Brothers share family business

Dentist advances at young age

By Theresa Humphrey

The men who run the corner grocery store or the neighborhood laundromat are considered businessmen. But the family doctor or dentist is just that... the family doctor or dentist.

But doctors and dentists are businessmen too, and can be very lucrative ones, as evidenced by Dr. Ogden M. Belt, a 29-year-old Baltimore native who has a "family" dental practice in the Park Heights area.

"I know I'm a businessman but I hate business," he said. "I don't understand things like real estate and insurance. I let the professionals handle that."

Dr. Belt basically has one love, his dental practice. But he admits that he has come a long way in his business at such a young age.

He started his private practice in July 1975 with Dr. Willie Richardson, who had an office at Garrison Avenue and Duvall Road. Two years later, Belt moved out, bought an apartment building at in the 3800 block W. Rogers Ave. and has been there since that time. He made that move when he was 29 years old.

Belt has since turned the apartment building into what he has named the "Professional Building" in the middle of a residential neighborhood. He has made it a family venture.

Belt's living quarters are on the ground floor of the three-story facility. His dental practice is on the first floor and his brother, Leon Belt, who is president of Assurance Title Company, occupies the second floor.

"I'll admit I had my own selfish reasons for buying this building," he said. "And it was a business venture to commercialize this building.

"It was a reasonable move for my brother, too. Our businesses complement each other. We constantly refer clients to each other."

But, he stated that his main motive for moving into his own building was to develop a family dental practice.

And as a family dental practice, Dr. Belt's office offers the latest in equipment and services needed for dental care.

The office has five treatment rooms and Belt works with two associate dentists. They are Drs. Deborah E. Davis and George E. Evans.

Belt explained, "The associates work out of this office but they have their own private practices. Patients who see them are their patients."

Karen N. Ray, a registered dental hygienist, is also on the staff. Belt said Ms. Ray's role is to provide services in preventive care. "It's more than just cleaning teeth and giving fluoride treatments," he said. "She also gives dental hygiene instruction, such as how to brush teeth and she makes recommendations for follow-up treatment for patients."

Belt also employs an office manager, an assistant manager and six other employees.

First black title company

The nation's current economic slump put a big dent in the housing industry, not only for consumers buying and selling but for all those connected with the real estate business.

And that includes Assurance Title Company, Maryland's first black-owned title insurance company.

When the economy drops, black and minority-owned firms are usually the first and hardest hit. Many go out of business. But Assurance weathered the storm.

"When people stopped buying houses, I suffered like everyone else," said Leon Belt, president of the company. "But things are picking up now."

Assurance will be three years old this fall. It is a multi-service, broad-based real estate title company capable of providing real estate title and title-related information tailored to individual business or personal needs.

Located in the 3800 block W. Rogers Ave., Assurance is capable of conducting property settlements and title searches anywhere in Maryland.

In its first year of operation, the company wrote more thor an $20 million worth of the insurance. Belt states that Assurance has now written more than $60 million in title insurance.

Why does a potential homeowner need a company such as Assurance?

"Anytime one purchases a piece of property it is important that a thorough examination of the land records pertaining to that particular piece of property be conducted," Belt said.

"This is needed to determine that the purchaser is obtaining title of the property free of any liens, mortgages or other encumberances that would call the purchaser's ownership in question."

Assurance, however, does more than just make sure the purchaser is acquiring a marketable title to property. The company also handles settlements, the final leg of a purchaser's journey to becoming a "real homeowner."

Settlement involves the actual transfer of title to the property from seller to buyer as well as making all necessary monetary adjustments between buyer and seller so costs such as property taxes, ground rents and water bills be equally shared by the buyer and seller according to the date of settlement.

And the company's attitude is to treat each buyer as an individual as opposed to a property address.

"Few property purchasers are familiar with the various terms and procedures involved ed in purchasing a piece of real estate," pointed out Belt, "as Assurance strives to simplify and fully explain each item, procedure and adjustment encountered by the purchaser."

The company offers property purchasers pre-settlement consultation and an explanation of each of the services in regards to the purchase. In addition, Belt stated that Assurance "can meet any reasonable settlement dealine."

Leon Belt

He added that Assurance will close a transaction within five business days from receipt of a buyer's request and contract copy.

As a settlement disbursement agent for most mortgage banking companies in Maryland, Assurance handles near;y $1.5 million a month in mortgage loan proceeds.

Assurance also provides property and judgement report services to second mortgage and unsecured loan lenders. An outgrowth of this has been L & H Abstracting Services, the only such black-owned firm in Maryland, of which Belt is a partner.

Assurance also has a commitment from the city of Baltimore to utilize the company to provide title insurance and settlement services for the city's real estate acquisitions and sales.

A major project completed under this agreement was the title search in connection with the Patterson Village Shopping Center in Northwest Baltimore.

CARIBBEAN FOOD — Manager Tyrone Williams and Larcenia Swann who work at Dianna's Caribbean Foods serve customers during busy lunch hour. The food place, owned by Erol H. Bishop, is also located in Washington, D.C. and offers side dishes, main dinners, desserts and drinks in a Caribbean style.

AFRO Photo by Mark Gail

Women's National Bank growing fast

Emily H. Womach, chair of the board and president of The Women's National Bank has announced that the bank made a net after-tax profit for the first six months of 1980 of $72,130.

Net-profit for the first six months of 1980 before the payment of the D.C. Gross Receipts Tax was $86,000 as against $7,000 for the same period of 1979.

The D.C. Gross Receipts Tax of $12,000 paid in the first six months of 1979 actually made the bank show a net loss of $6,000 for that period. This first six month earnings of .72 per share for 1980 compares favorably to (.60) per share loss for the same period in 1979 when the bank was only a year old.

The bank's deposits increased 42 percent during the year and totaled $9,651,965 as of 6 - 30 - 80. Total assets increased 41 percent during the same period and totaled $12,867,749 at the end of the first six months of 1980.

Ms. Womach stated that she attributes this successful progress to the continuing high profile the bank has achieved in its personalized banking services and participation in community endeavors.

The series of Evening and Brown-Bag Seminars covering all facets of credit, financial management and planning continue to be very popular and well attended. The changing professional art exhibits of known and unknown artists have also attracted much interest and support and are listed with gallery exhibits in local publications.

Mrs. Joan Mondale, honorary chairman of the Federal Council on the Arts and Humanities, reviewed the exhibits in June and complimented the bank on this program and expressed her interest and appreciation.

The Women's National Bank is the first federally chartered women's bank in the nation and the first women's bank to become a member of The Federal Reserve System. The bank has been in operation since May 15, 1978, a little over 24 months.

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