-Commodores

(Continued from Page 6) Country & Western oriented tunes such as "Sail On," the title track of the new "Heroes" album.

Milan Williams, keyboard wizard and composer of hits like "Machine Gun' and "Midnight Magic" states that the C&W

sound has been present in several of the Commodores' albums.

"The way I see it, all musics are coming together and so you hear all kinds of influences in our music. By the same token, we are influencing other artists, both black and white, and our songs

like "Easy" and "Sail On" are being covered by white artists. But it's just a part of the total Commodores' music al experience.

"What we hear on our albums is what we feel, it's the music that's valid for us. We use all kinds of approaches. When we're ravelling, we discuss different ideas and catalogue them for future use. But who knows what we'll do next.

"We might even do a Duke Ellington song, Commodore's style - that's something we've really been thinking about doing. At this point in time, we really don't know what will go on a next album and we won't until we review all new material and vote on which songs we should

Continuing their tradition on experimenting with new kinds of material, the Commodores give gospel music a whirl on the ballad "Jesus Is Love," which brings down the house at their concerts and "The Mighty Spirit."

Waker Orange, the group's drummer and composer of hits says "gospel, the gospel feel and influence have been present in every tune the Commodores have ever recorded. Check out 'Sorry To Say' and every other tune on our new album. The gospel is

"We all come from religious backgrounds and it was inevitable that gospel music would influence our style. But gospel is just another part of the style. We have something for everybody on our albums and this variety makes us an 'album' group.

"That's right" chimed in Thomas McClary, the group's guitarist, we are total perfectionists and we believe an artist should give 100 percent to his fans from the beginning to the end of the performance. We work hard at our craft."

But the most impressive aspect of my whole encounter with the Commodores was meeting them face to face and finding out that they are truly down to earth

Scores of articles have commented about how "straight" the Commodores are because they don't use drugs and avoid the party scene associated with musicians. These stories are all true. The members of the Commodores are clean living, dedicated to their

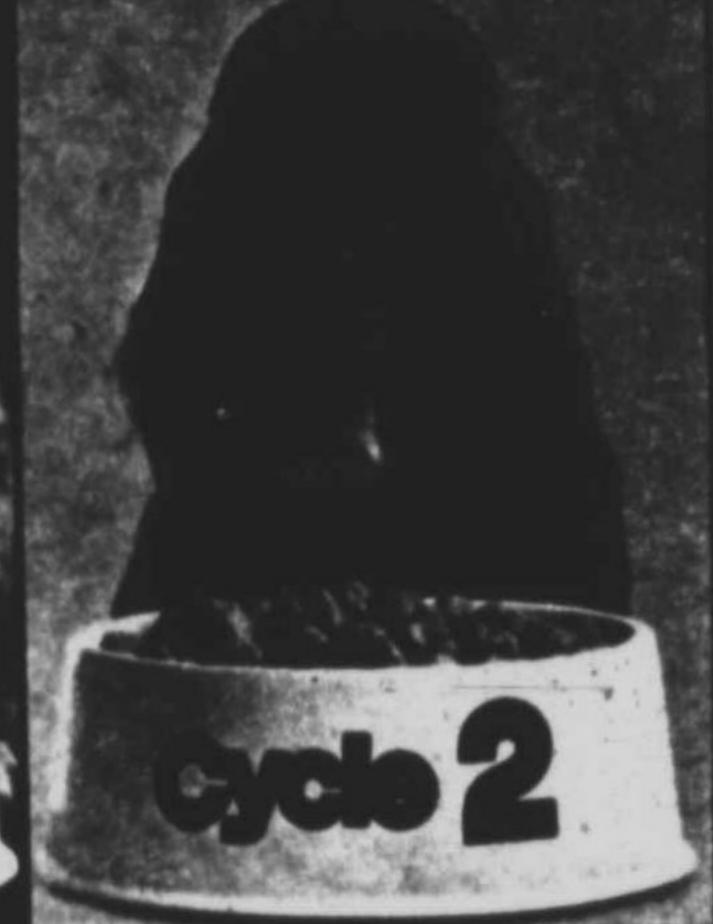
But they don't try to preach to you about how you should lead your life. The level of camaraderie among the group members lets you know that they really like working with each other and that what they do is not just a

"If you really want to tell the readers of Dawn Magazine something that sums up what being part of the Commodores means to us," says Walter Orange, "then tell them it's more than being part of a family or an act. We're all doing what we want to do in life.

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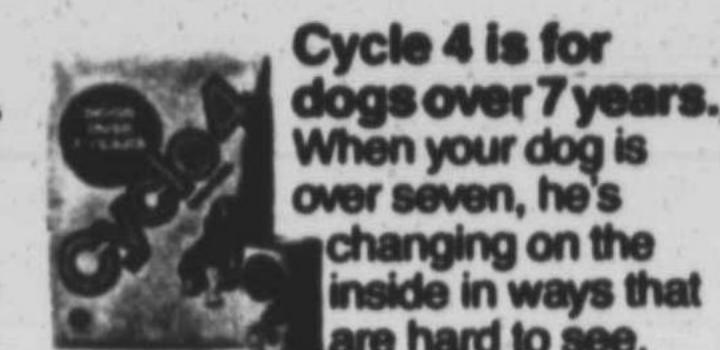






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-Marina (Continued from Page 9)

10,000 lakes as an idyllic one: summers of swimming in one lake or another, winters of skiing or tobogganing.

"I was part of a community in Minnesota," he recalls. "There were fewer than 10,000 blacks in the whole state, which posed no threat to the whites there. I wasn't even aware of racism until I moved from Minnesota to Indianapolis, Ind. when I was about

eleven."
After securing a B.S. degree in social work at the University of Minnesota, Wilson worked for the Urban League from '48 to '52, when he finally acknowledged that he was business oriented and went into advertising sales at Ebony Magazine. He remained at Johnson Publications for seven and a half years, and credits John H. Johnson, publisher of Bbony, with providing him a seminal orientation to making money and making it work for you.

"Johnny Johnson was a hard nosed achiever," Wilson said reflectively. "He's shrewd; so much so that I realized after a while that no matter how much advertising I sold, my salary would never reflect the kind of money I was making for him. Around '58, '59, I was looking around for other things to do."

While at Ebony, Wilson met and married his wife, Jean, who also sold advertising. They quit shortly after their marriage.

"The day we left Johnson, I told my wife I didn't want her to work ever again. But, at the time, I didn't have the slightest notion of where I was going to work next."

For a brief period, Wilson ran his own marketing company. Then in 1961, he went to the Chicago Defender as director of advertising. He found in John H. Sengstacke, publisher and nephew of the founder of the Defender, another mentor.

"Sengstacke gave me an opportunity to test my marketing skills," said Wilson. "But again, I realized that in family-owned businesses, as most black businesses are, it is very hard to make a place for yourself if you are not in the family."

Still, Wilson was to leave the Defender to come to another family-owned business, the Afro-American Newspapers. He credits Dr. Carl Murphy, then publisher of the AFRO, with "rounding (him) out" as businessman. Although he is complishments, Wilson does not deny that he brought as much to the Afro as he got.

According to Wilson, the AFRO grossed \$4.5 million in 1979, compared to \$800,000. in 1963.

For the same year, '79, the marina grossed \$225,000., a figure with which Wilson says he is pleased. He projects \$1/2 million in sales at the marina for 1980.

Wilson, whose birthday is November 5th, makes frequent references to his mentors, the first

people who hired him, and says he boks forward to passing it on.

"I had a lot of help getting here," he said, "Lester B. Granger, who was in charge of the Urban League helped me get here; Johnny Johnson and Sengstacke were teachers. Dr. Murphy was very unselfish and finished me off.

"There are a few things I want

to do over the next few years. I want to run the marina for another seven years or so. But now, I'm not sure how much beyond that I can fool around with this.

"Right now, I am totally involved with the business establishment of this city and very involved with young men and women. Maybe for some of them, I'm a role model."

