Was hot spell cause of death for 2 elderly neighbors?

By Pam Widgeon
AFRO Staff Writer

On last Tuesday, June 1, Mrs. Elizabeth Littlejohn was complaining to her neighbor about the heat. The city temperature that nearly reached the 90 degree record was uncomfortable for the 68-year-old woman who lived alone in a second floor rear apartment at 704 Lennox St.

When Mrs. Evans peeped in the window and saw a pack of cigarettes on the table and did not see Mrs. Littlejohn, she said she became upset and called the landlord and police.

When police arrived and forced their way into the apartment, they found Mrs. Littlejohn dead on her bed. Police also checked Mrs. Coleman's apartment because neighbors had not seen or heard from her.

Police report Mrs. Coleman was found lying on her bathroom floor dead. According to police reports, a chair had been placed against the door.

There were no signs of foul play, according to police and a medical examiner said both women died of natural deaths. Mrs. Littlejohn had lived on Lennox Street for nearly 12 years. Her brother, who "lives in Colorado, had her body donated to the anatomy board.

The body of Mrs. Coleman is still at the City Morgue. Sgt. James Davis told the AFRO, "We have not been able to locate any of her relatives."

Neighbors said Mrs. Coleman was always seen alone and very few people would visit her. After searching her apartment, police and neighbors could not find any names or addresses of any of her relatives or friends. According to a neighbor, a bank book containing $8.33 was found in Mrs. Coleman's apartment.

Not only was Mrs. Littlejohn complaining about the hottest day of the year, but her neighbor, Mrs. Francis Coleman, 67, who lived at the same address in the second floor front apartment, had also been talking about the heat.

On June 17, a third floor neighbor Mrs. Dorothy Evans told the AFRO, "I kept telling the landlord I smelled a strong odor coming from Mrs. Littlejohn's apartment. I usually talk to her every morning but she did not answer her door around 7:30 a.m. last Wednesday.

"I had talked to her around 5:30 p.m. Monday. I thought she might have been dead and decided to climb down the fire escape and look in her kitchen window."

—Mothers

Continued from page 1

1979 about a mile from where two other victims were found.

Mrs. Selma Cobb mother of Christopher Richardson, who was reported missing on June 9, 1980 and found dead Jan. 9, 1981 told the AFRO, "I think there is more than one person involved."

Mrs. Cobb, mother of two children, who will spend their summer in camp says she formerly lived a block away from the suspect Williams.

The mother of Alfred James Evans, 13, who was last seen alive on July 25, 1979 said "I try not to think about it. I think more than one person is involved."

According to an FBI agent who worked on the case, similar trace evidence was found on the bodies of Yusef Bell, 9, who was the fourth of the 28 victims, and on Charles Stephens, 13, and Aaron Jackson Jr., 9.

Other cases authorities said might be linked included those of Anthony Carter, 9, Clifford Jones, 13, Lubie Geter, 14, Terry Pue, 15 Patrick Baltazar, 11, Curtis Walker, 13, Joseph Bell, 16, Timothy Hill, 13, Eddie Duncan, 21, Larry Rogers, 21, Michael McIntosh, 23 and William Barrett, 17.

—Atlanta case

(Continued from page 1)

"I'm not basking in glory. There's a life at stake and I plan to concentrate on that."

Ms. Welcome, a native Baltimorean who is the daughter of Sen. Verda F. Welcome and the late Dr. Henry C. Welcome, planned to return to Baltimore in August.

There was speculation that she was returning to run in 1982 for the Senate seat now held by her mother. Sen. Welcome denies those claims and Ms. Welcome's comment was that "that idea is sort of far in the future but I'm keeping all my options open."

She said while her involvement in the case had delayed her August return to Baltimore, it had not cancelled out those plans. "I haven't changed my mind. I still have a need to come back home."

In 1970, she moved to St. Croix in the Virgin Islands, following her graduation from Howard Law School and marraige to another attorney.

While in St. Croix she was appointed assistant attorney general and afer her divorce, moved to Atlanta in 1973.

There she became the city's first city solicitor when the post was created in 1976 by the mayor. She later joined a prestigious law firm and then formed her own firm.

"She has her own mind and her own career," said Sen. Welcome. "She knows what she wants to do. She always took on challenges."

The senator said she was "proud" of her daughter's decision to step into the case when Wayne Williams, the 23-year-old suspect was first questioned by police but not held as an official suspect or even charged.

"I'm all for protecting the rights of any person," said Sen. Welcome, "so when I learned she wanted to take the case I said go to it."

Then she said, "What she is, she didn't do as Senator Welcome's or Dr. Welcome's daughter. She did it on her own."

Ms. Welcome stated that her glory will come when she wins the case. "When we win the case that'll be a different matter.

"Even if my client should be convicted, as long as I know I've given my best and done all that I can do, I'll still feel a sense of personal accomplishment."

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—Public workers

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lay-off" system, which would require every worker to serve a four-day work week. The process would entail a 20 percent reduction in salaries, benefits and leave time.

If that strategy is not implemented, 225 employees, mainly social workers and administrators, may lose their jobs by fall, according to Eva Austin, a spokesperson for the department.

Ms. Austin said that most of those who would have to be laid off include workers in the adult protection, counseling, child abuse, foster care and day care programs offered by DSS.

Those workers whose jobs are in jeopardy depend on local general administration and service allocations, which means that their salaries are paid by federal funds channeled through the city.

In a press release issued at the Wednesday meeting, Musgrove said that 600 of those 1300 workers polled indicated that they would be in favor of working the four-day work week for a year. At the end of that year, they would return to their previous status.

The plan must be approved by the state Department of Human Resources before it can be instituted.

—Governor's meeting

Continued from page 1

"I don't think it was lip service," said Rawlings. "The governor has made commitments to us before . . . we have no reason to doubt him now."

Delegate Frank Conaway, (D-40), the chairman of the Black Caucus, agreed with Rawlings that the governor's intentions seemed sound, and he heaped praise upon Rawlings and Douglass, as well as the entire Black Caucus, for their persistence and concern.

But despite the optimism and the govenor's commitment to try to avert a disproportionate effect of suffering on blacks and women when the layoffs occur, Panos said that because the state must consider overall seniority, length of service in a classification and length of service in an agency, the possibility of more blacks and women being laid off because they have been the most recently hired, remains.

"You can't ignore that possibility," he said, "but by recognizing that possibility, you are better prepared to take some steps to prevent it.

"Once you have your principles out there, the hiring authorities are more or less bound to follow them."

Pnaos said that any supervisor who was cited for using the layoffs as a device to wipe out affirmative action principles would be referred to his superior, and "immediate action would be taken."

Rawlings said that one of the most urgent points pushed by the group in Tuesday's meeting was that the personnel department take note of the vacancies which normally occur in the state system, and to transfer laid-off workers.

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"No danger" of hospital closing, Provident chief says

According to the president of Provident Hospital, there is not nor has there ever been any possibility of the hospital's closing as the result of the current cost review procedures now being conducted.

Thomas W. Chapman, chief of Provident, told the AFRO that the cost review was initiated by the hospital with the Hospital Services Cost Review Commission (HSCRC) as a means of taking the lead to show the commission that "we are as cost conscious as are the other hospitals in the state."

Chapman said that the procedure is a routine rate review, and that it was encouraged by the Commission. But the president expressed strong views on the issue of high cost in inner city hospitals.

"The issue of high cost is a bogus issue," Chapman was quoted as saying.

"There are certain questions which any inner-city hospital faces, namely, excess capacity, underutilization, and longer lengths of stay.

"In most inner city hospitals," he said, "the patient population has not had equal access to patient care.

Chapman indicated that the severity of illnesses of patients of inner city hospitals is greater than the same illnesses suffered by patients in more affluent hospitals. Because of that, the lengths of stay are usually longer and treatments more intensive, thereby raising the cost of hospital care.

Chapman said that that trend has been changed recently by the introduction of new and unique programs that stress disease prevention and improvement in utilization review activities.

However, Chapman said, the length of stay will probably always be longer in hospitals which have a higher patient population of low-income patients.

Evidence exists, he said, that similar problems of longer lengths of stay and therefore higher costs exist in all inner city hospitals, including the Howard University Hospital in Washington, D.C. and Harlem Hospital in New York City.

Consumption of resources by that segment of the population, he said, is just usually higher.

Helen Shaw, director of public relations and development at Provident, explained that by the time black and/or poor people get to the hospital, their his illness got as severe than would be a similar or same illness for a better informed or better educated patient.

Because of the critical nature of their diseased state, bringing on, usually, more complications from the primary illness as well as the progression of the illness itself, treatment is more involved.

Shaw said that a patient who went to the doctor more regularly to prevent the progression of disease would probably not wait until his illness got as sseven as would a poorer person.

Shaw also said that although the Commission is conducting the cost review procedure, it legally cannot order the closing of the hospital.

There simply is no danger of the hospital closing, she said. The administration of the institution is prepared to comply with whatever cost review measures the Commission recommends.

Park Heights tutorial program holds graduation

By James M. Abraham
AFRO Staff Writer

Proud parents and Park Heights Community Corporation staff members gathered at Giovanchy's disco last week to honor more than 200 youth who had successfully completed PHCC's tutorial project.

Mrs. Margaret Wicks, director of Education and Youth Services at PHCC, beamed as she read a continuous list of names, all students who had graduated from program or were instrumental in providing assistance to the tutorial project.

Teenage boys and girls, bedecked in their finest, seemed to relish their individual moments of glory as they strode triumphantly to the dais to receive their hard-earned awards.

"I'm so proud of my students," said Mrs. Wicks, overcomed by tears following the awards presentation. She said that she was sure those in the program would someday help rejuvenate the Park Heights area through service and achievement.

Rosetta Jolley, president of the PHCC board, urged the students to continue their award winning work.

The program has been in operation for five years, and Mrs. Wicks has served as director for almost three of those years. Subjects in the project are matched with high-school tutors in subjects such as math, English, or reading.

Evening Sun holds community meeting

Several representatives from the black community met this week with editors and reporters from the Evening Sun to air their views about the paper.

The meeting, which was held June 23 at the downtown location of the Soul Shack restaurant, was a fact-finding mission by the Sun-papers to determine its shortcomings in covering the black community.

The paper was commended for its efforts to solicit help from the black community but was also criticized for its coverage of black issues and the number of blacks on staff and in management positions.

Jack Lemmon, managing editor of the Evening Sun along with Bill Hawkins, city editor and other editors plan to discuss and possibly implement some of the suggestions made at the meeting.

Both the Morning and Evening Sun have been holding meetings in the community and have opened them to interested readers who would like to meet and talk with people who produce the paper.

Proficiency scores for standardized tests rise

School officials reported, at a Thursday morning press conference that scores on the California standardized tests were at an all-time high.

The standardized tests, administered to students in grades 4 through 11, monitor pupils abilities in reading, mathematics and writing.

Until a year ago, the school system used the Iowa Achievement Tests which is usuallests and change to the California Achievement Tests which are newer and are used by more school systems across the country.

In 1977 reading scores for grades 4 through 11 fell about two years below the national norm. By this year, students in these grades were only five to six months below the national norm.

Mathematics scores were nearly two years below the national norms in 1977. For spring 1981 math scores, on the average, were less than a month below the national norm.

Robert Armacost, deputy superintendent for planning, research and evaluation, said that he attributed the improved performance to a number of policies adopted by school officials.

"We have improved the grade level expectancies in reading writing and mathematics and staff evaluations along with promotion and graduation policies," said Armacost.

In addition to standardized test scores, Armacost reported that students again faired very well on the proficiency tests and increased their percentage rate across the board by 8 to 12 percent.

Crew who expressed pleasure in the results on the proficiency tests, stated that he is considering increasing the standards on the tests for grades 11 and 12 since students did so well.

Armacost replaced Crew as superintendent of the planning office in 1975 when Crew was appointed to replace the ousted school chief Dr. Roland Patterson.

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