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OPINION

Generosity

It is a tradition with this newspaper, through its annual Mrs. Santa campaign, to help needy families and bring together in this effort those many generous individuals and organizations who are able to give.

In 1982, a time when many black Baltimoreans find themselves in an economic crunch as rough as anything experienced during the Great Depression of the Thirties, we are slightly overwhelmed with the generosity of our friends and neighbors as this year's Mrs. Santa campaign nears its end.

The clothing, toys, food and cash contributions this year exceed Mrs. Santa's goals in more prosperous times.

This evidence of a community caring about its less fortunate is indeed encouraging.

We thank everyone who gave of self and substance and wish all of our readers a heartfelt Merry Christmas and bright New Year.

The spirit of Christmas

Most of us celebrate the birth of Christ today by gathering around the warm hearth of family reunions or catching up on visits with friends of long standing. There is a spirit of generosity and warmth toward our fellowman that takes precedence this time of year. 'Tis the season when animosities and petty jealousies are shoved aside. Even the very atmosphere is charged with good will and a festive spirit.

But in the real world it is difficult to ignore the poverty and destitution that clouds the lives of a growing segment of our society less fortunate than many of us. In local jurisdictions, especially in the District, there is an uncommon amount of evicted families who have been set out on streets with their possessions exposed to predators. Others in this category are teetering on the brink of eviction and are barely able to maintain body and soul with severe heat conditions during this period of frigid weather. The cupboard for our brothers in this position will not exactly brim over with nutritious foodstuff or fanciful gifts that titilate the hearts of their offspring.

Recently a great deal of stress has been put on homeless individuals or "street people" as the designation goes. There is a great tendency to characterize this group as vagrants, aimless drifters or undependable derelicts. Many of this group find shelters wherever possible to escape nature's harsh elements. Some hover in abandoned basements, doorways and the luckier ones converge in places open all night with the consent of humane and understanding managers.

To help with this growing problem, many churches have set up food and clothing programs while other community organizations are attempting to provide more shelter than currently available. But these valiant and spontaneous efforts are not enough to meet a problem that is gowing in magnitude all the time.

Another area of great concern during this holiday season is that of jobs. The local area is one where government employment prevails for most workers. But the amount of RIF's or reduction in force has put a severe crimp in many household budgets. Through necessity many families have had to forgo frills and concentrate on bare essentials, thus depriving young adults of a luxury period. Reduction in government employment has had a rippling effect in the private sector and greatly diminished purchasing power. Small shops and stores are feeling the brunt and are unable to hire young adults because of a downturn in business.

The small portion of heavy industry is declining because many firms are moving to nearby suburbs while retaining access to the District market. This, of course, reduces revenue for the District government and in the long run curtails goods and services it is mandated to provide for its constituency.

Our community self - help programs are to be lauded for their efforts in attempting to ease the plight of those who have lost their bearing for one reason or another. We cannot afford to dismiss a segment of the population as "forgotten people" whose misfortune is of little consequence. The Yuletide is an appropriate opportunity to reveal the spirit that He showed all mankind without regard to race, creed or sexual preference.

Parren J. MITCHELL

Mixed thoughts at Christmas

I am writing this column in Washington because the Congress will be in session on Saturday, Dec. 18; Sunday, Dec. 19; and at least on Monday, the 20th.

I have made no preparations for Christmas, and yet, in the midst of all the bedlam of a lame duck session of the Congress, my thoughts constantly stray to the Christmas season.

This is the time of "peace on earth, goodwill towards men."

Peace on earth. Eighteen more people died in street fighting in Lebanon. South African commandoes massacre civilians in Lesotho. South African aircraft bomb an Angolan settlement.

In Ireland; the Israeli-Lebanon area; Afghanistan; and in countless other places on this globe, war, rumors of war, and threats of war continue.

Peace on earth. In America, Congress continues to fund the MX missile; it continues to approve further nuclear arms excalation.

It continues to pump billions of dollars into the military; dollars which can never, not ever, be spent wisely.

This is the season of goodwill towards men. The Attorney General of the United States continues to lead the fight against affirmative action and civil rights, and, thereby, undermines the gains we black people have made during past decades.

In this season, capital punishment is reinstated, and various states search for "palatable ways" to execute human beings. Texas finds execution by injection of chemicals to be "palatable."

Twelve million counted unemployed persons are desperate, frightened, and often hopeless. Two million people are homeless, sleeping in the streets, or in cars, or in tents.

While these situations exist, an arrogant, disdainful President vows he will veto any legislation which would use federal funds to create jobs.

The city of Phoenix has declared its garbage to be public property, and will impose criminal penalties on any persons who forage for food in the garbage.

A city in Florida sprays its garbage with pesticides to prevent foraging.

But the miracle is despite the cruelty, inhumanity, and insanity that abounds in today's world, thousands of acts of compassion and love are shown every minute.

My friend and brother, the Rev. Vernon Dobson, selflessly watches over his ill mother, and, thereby, shows a love-of-son-for-mother that is awesome in its dimensions.

Marva, Jason, Johnny Mae, and others who, throughout the year, validate and authenticate the Birth of Christ by their acts of kindness.

The churches, police, fire fighter organizations, and hundreds of other groups also make Christmas happy for so many families.

For the New Year, I sent cards to as many friends as possible. This year's message on the card goes to all who, by their acts of compassion and care, validate and authenticate the Birth of Christ.

Hold fast to truth in a time when half-truths test verity. Cleave to peace in a world that seeks war.

Strengthen your humanity while acts of inhumanity abound. Deepen the spiritual dimension of the universe which, Tho hidden Breathes at the very core of your being.

Have a good holiday season.

Calling it like it is

If I were you...

By James E. Nichols

Letters

Comics are for adults, too

As a regular reader of the AFRO I have come to appreciate the focus on local issues and reporting of positive happenings in the Black community.

I am however, disappointed with the only occasional running of Butch Berry's comic strip "Chuck's Crowd." I have found it to be not only a humorous, thought-provoking social commentary looking at not only everyday occurrences, but also community and national issues which affect us all. Examples of this are his strips done on the KKK and cross burnings, the closing of D.C.'s YMCA. The characters in his strip are refreshingly not stereotypical, too.

While I cannot pass judgment on all Black journals, I do wonder why there are so few Black comic strips run in them and the ones that do appear tend to perpetuate stereotypes and juvenile images.

Humor and comics are not solely for our youth; but for all of us. Our young have very few role models and I believe that we should support our up and coming Black talent and not make the mistake of looking at comics as trivial with no place in "serious newspapers."

Let us not make the mistake of shunning our own talent and not recognizing it until it is discovered by White newspapers. Humor is one form of effective commentary which sometimes gets the message across better than preaching.

Please begin to regularly print Butch Berry's comic strip and support this fine talent.

S. BEECHAM

Madeline MURPHY

Drinking and driving

With the recent surveillance by the police statewide, check points for sobriety tests (whether constitutional or not); with all the talk about crime in the streets, murder and mayhem, it would be wise to look at the most serious of all deaths that occur especially in this joyous season.

Many of us, who consider ourselves social drinkers, take a great number of risks, with that "one for the road," and end up as another statistic, an auto fatality.

Alcohol related auto fatalities account for the loss of 28,000 lives a year— 50 per cent of all fatalities.

Even combat deaths, 54,000 in the 10- year Vietnam war, can not top the average of 55,000 alcohol related auto fatalities in two years in this country.

And because social drinking has become the acceptable way of life, no one gets too upset that even though every 30 minutes there is a homicide, that every 19 minutes there is a drink related auto fatality.

Moreover, according to an insurance company, alcohol related auto accidents are the third largest accident cost to our economy per year—$7.3 billion.

Indiana University Institute for Research in Public Safety claims that four drinks in two hours consumed by a 160 pound drinker, imbibing one ounce of 86 proof alcohol, needs three and one half hours to sober up.

With 6.5 drinks in two hours, he needs six and one half hours, and with nine drinks in two hours, he needs 10 hours to sober up.

Scientifically, there is nothing whatever that will sober up a person except time. No known chemical will do it.

After four to six drinks, impairment of ability and judgment set in, motor skills and reflex action, visual and hearing ability are reduced. There is slight speech impairment, disturbance of balance, accompanied by mixed feelings of elation and depression.

And after nine drinks (when he is all wigged out, bombed) there is an increase in irresponsible behavior, a general feeling of euphoria, difficulty in standing, walking, talking, with distorted perception and judgment.

No one at any of these levels should be permitted to drive. If there is no one around to tell him so, he becomes as lethal as a gun—a potential murderer, as we have seen in recent trials.

And while we are at it, we blacks are prone to hypertension. Many reasons such as stress, heredity, are given, but hypertension can be controlled by diet. Which means that hypertensive people should not go overboard with salty fatty foods, heavy in cholesterol. And if you follow your doctor's advice you will not be one of those aforementioned fatalities either, since drinking alcoholic beverages is a no-no.

During this time of re-birth, nearing the New Year's resolution ritual, let us develop saner attitudes.

To be safe rather than sorry, do not drive when you drink, and do not drink when you drive. Remember that coffee will only buy time not sobriety.

Between you and me, there really is a tomorrow, when you are needed desperately to make this a better world for family and community.

Consequently, with these sobering thoughts, let this Christmas, despite the treacherous economy, unemployment, be an added reason to make this your safest, sanest one ever. We have work to do and miles to walk before we sleep.

Merry, Sane, Christmas!

"Professor," said Rollo. "Crystal hasn't stopped talking about our trip to Columbia, South America since we got home. I enjoyed it more than any one thing in my life. That was an inspired idea of yours to suggest our taking our vacations with you and Galatea."

"I'm glad you and Crystal had such a good time, Rollo. Your company made the trip the most enjoyable ever for me and Galatea."

"The thing that gets me," said Rollo, "is that it cost less to fly to Columbia and spend three weeks there than it does to go to California and spend a weekend."

Rollo stretched out in his chair and said, "You sure know your way around the country. And you and Galatea speak Spanish like natives. How did you you ever find a place like Ebejico?"

"Galatea and I lucked up on it," I replied. "When we were on our honeymoon nearly 20 years ago, we stayed at a private home in Medellin. On a whim, we rode a bus over the mountains and found Ebejico, a predominately Indian village in Antioquia. As you know, Galatea and I stayed in Ebejico on that honeymoon trip for over a year. We've often thought about living there."

"And I wouldn't blame you a bit," Rollo said. "Those folks treated you and Galatea like a god and goddess. They treated me and Crystal nice, too. But, Pardner, if I were you, I'd go there and live for good and permanent."

Rollo thought about it for a moment, and then he said: "That place is heaven on earth. Most America go to Bogota and Cartegena. They were nice. But to see you and Galatea sashay through Ebejico, and to watch you make yourself completely at home, and to see them folks treat you like long-lost angels did something to me that made tears come to my eyes.

"All I can say, Professor, is that if I were you I'd kiss the good ol' U.S. of A. goodbye, lay on the beach at Cartagena, take a daily trip to the Museum of Gold in Bogota and bust over the shiny stuff, and then go on back home to Ebejico and sit in the town square every afternoon and sip on some vino tinto and chew on some naranjas and quoso."

Rollo laughed, then said: "Crystal got a bit upset to see the women down there waiting on us hand and foot. She also got upset because those pretty senoritas grabbed us in that cantina and made us dance with them. I'm telling you, Professor, if I was a single man, there ain't no way you could keep me from hooking up with one of those belles in Ebejico, Antioquia."

"But you're not single, Rollo."

"Wouldn't have it any other way. But just one for the heck of it, if I was a single man, Ebejico, look out!"

"Do you want to go back next year, Rollo?"

"Do I want to go back! Does a duck like to swim on a pond? Does a dog like to chew on a bone? Do I want to go back! Does a preacher like chicken? I'm telling you: I'm keeping my passport at ready; I'm keeping my shot record up to date; and the Colombian embassy on Leroy Place, N.W. is on alert to get my visa ready!" and Crystal should consider living there permanently, since you like it so much."

"No, Professor," said Rollo. "I've got to stay here in the States to keep the KKK in line, to monitor Ronald Reagan's activities, and to second guess Mayor Barry. But if I were you, there's no way I could help but live there. You're a writer, and you can write anywhere. Galatea's needs a doctor, and she can doctor anywhere.

"But, in addition to my law practice, I'm a signifier. And the only place I can signify is in good ol' Washington, D.C. This city was made for me and I was made for it: "D.C. is heaven for a signifier."

"I like D.C., too," I said.

"And what about Galatea?"

"Wherever we are together, there we are content."

"Don't get poetic on me, Professor."

"Don't intend to," I said.

"Howsoever," said Rollo. "In addition to the good time I had in Colombia, the most beautiful thing I withessed was the way you and Galatea seemed so much at home with those Indian farmers and how gracious and hospitable they were.. The poorest of them carried themselves and acted like kings and queens."

"Every man's a king, Rollo. And every woman's a queen."

"Amen!" Rollo agreed.". "The King of the signifiers and you're the king of cool."

"You said it Rollo."

"That I did."

AFRO welcomes letters

The AFRO welcomes letters from its readers. Letters should be brief and must bear the writer's name and address. All letters will be given consideration for publication.

G. JAMES FLEMING

Christmas present for Kurt

There is one "best" Christmas present that can be given to Kurt Schmoke, the soon-to-be state's attorney for Baltimore City, by the thousands upon thousands of voters who elected him.

They must allow him to become the most effective state's attorney Baltimore City has ever had, by giving him the time he will need to perform his duties— to run his office, to oversee his staff, to study and plan, and to attend those many meetings and conferences which are inevitably a part of the job.

Of course, we love him; of course, we are proud of him; of course, we will want to show our high esteem. But, if he is to be an outstanding, history-making state's attorney, he will not be able to say "Yes" to every invitation from every church which permitted him to campaign within its walls; he will not be able to say "Yes" to every matron who poured coffee for him and to every Greek-letter society which contributed money and recruited its members to man polling places.

Kurt Schmoke, being Kurt Schmoke as we have come to know him through . . . . through these 100 days of his successful campaign. He will not forget that there are many movements that merit his assistance, but, if his friends and supporters want him to succeed in his new high office, they must do all they can to prevent the amiable, people-loving husband, father and now public servant from burning himself out.

The political king-makers who steered Kurt Schmoke to a headlines victory, have a special responsibility. They will have to weigh mightily, and they will probably have to overcome, a knawing temptation to maneuvre him into running for mayor of Baltimore in 1984, against the very popular incumbent William Donald Schaeffer.

(Nearly everyone agrees that Schmoke is the best bet to become the first black mayor of Baltimore, sooner or later).

It seems, in this corner, that the political optimists can do the new state's attorney and their own main objective much harm, if they detract Kurt Schmoke from his highest immediate priority— that of being the fulltime and most effective state's attorney.

He, himself, would also let down countless thousands who believed his campaign promises: To be a fulltime state's attorney, with a full-time staff; to give topmost attention to driving the drug overlords out of the city; to reduce crimes on the streets, etc.

The time will come when Kurt Schmoke, now still young, can run for almost anything he wants. A prerequisite may be, however, his maintaining the confidence of his followers and earning a "Well Done" for his first electoral, paid, fulltime position.

The political pros, most of the time, are sane, practical people. Sometimes, however, they treat young, promising political hopefuls (sometimes old ones, too) the same way football coaches (college and pro) treat young potential winners.

The ambitions of the coaches and sponsors blind them to the welfare of their charges and their heroes (Such kinds of political pros pressured Franklin D. Roosevelt into running for a fourth term as president; similarly, such political pros insisted on Jack Kennedy visiting Dallas).

There is that saying, outworn but applicable here: Kurt Schmoke may often find himself praying: "God, I can take care of my enemies; please save me from my friends."

POSTSCRIPT: If this column may relish in over-optimism (being "unrealistic"), the next group to send Kurt Schmoke a needed Christmas present would be the thoughtless young men (mostly young men) who, for no sound reason, are over-crowding the jails and prisons.

If out of pride in his achievements, these young people would help to show a noticable drop in crime during his term of office, they, too, will be saying not only "Merry Christmas" but "Happy New Year"—and many more.

Just thinking

A season for rejoicing

By Al Sweeney

To many persons Christmas time is a time to be jolly in the spirit generated by the "Oldest Story Ever Told."

And thank goodness, this majority cuts across all racial lines, but not necessarily religious.

But, to those who genuinely celebrate the Christmas period, a feeling of compassion and love abounds. No person, who has caught the spirit of the season, hates his fellowman. Maybe after the New Year comes in the redemptive powers fade. But, enjoy it while it lasts.

During this month, in spite of the voices of gloom and an environment that could lead to despair, this writer has appreciated the month of December, 1982 more than ever.

It was a month that I got a vicarious feeling out of the National Press Club's honoring of a long - time associate in journalism — Simeon Booker.

It was a month I got the same thrill out of the Pigskin's annual banquet that honored Gaston F. (Country) Lewis, the classy veteran football coach at Wilberforce University because it was split into two institutions — namely Central State University and Wilberforce.

While Country Lewis was turning out some of the best football machines among the Black Colleges, I earned my way through college writing sports stories about the Lewis teams.

While handling sports information for the Greenwave, as the Wilberforce teams were called before the split and during the administration of Bishop D. Ormonde Walker, I learned about the power of the pen.

As the team's publicist, I modestly pointed out the gridiron prowess of Ted Brown, a quarterback, Lorenzo Carter and Rusell Adrine, two ferocious linemen, and trumpted them into Black college All - American selections of the Courier and the AFRO.

The Country Lewis teams made annual visits to Chicago's Soldiers Field back in the 1940's to meet Cleve Abbot's Tuskegee Institute's eleven before some 30,000 persons.

For the Pigskinmen to cite Lewis and Langston's Zip Gayle, took some selling. Even though the Pigskin Club has saluted top players from all over the nation for top awards, its members mostly of graduates of CIAA schools, believed that the sun set on teams coached by Eddie Hurt at Morgan, Harry Jefferson at Virginia State and Herman Reddick at North Carolina Central.

Thanks to Frank Bolden, the retired D.C. schools physical education head, the club widened its horizons beyond the CIAA.

Another symbolic gathering during the month was the combined Yule party co - sponsored by several black media organizations at the Howard Inn's Founders Room last week.

The oldest of the black journalist clubs is the Capital Press Club, founded in 1944. While the name remains and its membership in the last few years has topped 100, it is no longer led by print journalists. It is the nature of the modern communications field.

There are some critics who feel that it is led by public relationists. A check of history will indicate that club has been headed by information officers from the federal and local sectors. But its policies have been, over the years, set by working journalists.

With the opening of doors to black journalists, a number of competing communications groups have developed. One is the Black Journalists.

There is the Washington Area Media Organization, called WAMO.

The groups were joined by the local chapter of Black Music Association to stage the affair.

It was an excellent example of professionals getting together even though, come January, they will have their own opinions of the competing groups.

Fred Thomas, the television personality who has dropped his bow tie, says that he is a member of a dying breed of electronic journalists who are becoming extinct on the tube. The black make as on - camera news anchor is going the way of the Buffalo.

Another interesting Christmas affair was the annual Yule event of the Century Club. The Century Club is probably the best kept secret among black social clubs.

The Century Club is a very exclusive black social organization that has its own club house on Delafield Place and is a low - keyed organization. Its members are among the most successful professionals, businessmen and public executives of the area.

It has been operating for 20 years and has the aura of one of the plush white Cosmos, Harvard or Sulgrave institutions. It was organized to build a country club. The Centurians cut across political, fraternal and religious lines. They make no pretense as being more than a social club.

It has members who have paid their dues and owe it to themselves to enjoy life as they see it without the moralizing et al.

To me it is refreshing to find a group that doesn't try to put on phony fronts by trying to emulate the Urban League, NAACP or OIC. Every time you join a group, you have one of the so - called conscience stricken members sounding off on why can't we spend this money with some of the social organizations.

Nothing gripes me more than to hear these super patriots try to upset a social club meeting by throwing in a damp blanket with some social conscience scheme.

If these persons who like to sound off at a social club meeting after three drinks, if they were really sincere, they can volunteer their efforts with the established agencies.

As far as I am concerned those office parties held in many federal offices, are impressive. It is at these parties, many employees spend their nights cooking food or baking cakes to enhance the festive affairs.

Sure morale is low, but there is something about the Christmas season that perks many persons up to capture the spirit.

In another yule symbol, the number of Christmas cards exchanged have been limited by high cost of postage. The greetings are valued by the recipients.

As for me, I treasure every holiday greeting that I receive. Each one stimulates fond memories and renews that spirit of love and peace.

And to all of you who read this trivia may you have the Merriest of Chistmases and a Very Productive 1983.

A world without words

I've just had a dream that would blow your mind
All the words disappeared . . . not a word could I find
I was trying to buy food in the grocery store
Nothing on the shelves had a name anymore
Every can, every bottle, every wrapper was plain
Trying to find what you wanted could drive you insane

Refrain
A day without words would be weird indeed
I'm glad we have words, I'm glad I can read

Came out of the store, tried to catch a bus home
The destination signs on the busses were gone . . .
Hopped on a bus that took me downtown
Names of streets and stores had disappeared I found . .

Went into a large department store
Folks in a daze wandered around the floor
"How much is this"? "What size is that?
Hey! You need words to read numbers — words are really where its at!

Refrain
A day without words would be weird indeed
I'm glad we have words, I'm glad I can read

Went to a Restaurant for something to eat
The menu was empty . . . so were the seats
"Sorry, we can't serve you," said the witress,
"You see . . .
The cooks can't cook without a recipe
And all the words on the recipe disappeared
So you can't get nothing to eat in here."

Stopped in the library to pick up a book
With no words around - librarians really were shook . . .
No novels, no poetry - not even one rhyme
In dictionaries - encyclopedias - not a word not a line . . .
No research journals - no magazines
Believe me - the library was a tragic scene!

LaVerne Byrd Smith

Elizabeth M. OLIVER

FOR ALL WE KNOW

Highlights of this week's news

Plus spotlight on the Dugger Affair

SOME QUESTIONS on the Milton Dugger Affair:

Even if this School Board member does have a relative waiting in the wings for the Supertendency, don't you think SOMEBODY should have warned the Norfolk applicant that Baltimore school superintendents always seem to end up in the cemetery?

Is Dugger the only one violating secrecy?

Why not shake out all the dirty linen? The applicant would have found out anyway. No?

After squandering the taxpayers $20,000 on weeks of "pretending" to search for a superintendent, will the school board want another $20,000 "to start the hoax all over?"

Why not throw out the whole "search" crowd over there on 25th Street since they have bungled the deal from the get-go?

Remember? Personal animosity, vindictiveness and just plain jealousy kept the committee from selecting the right man in the beginning.

Isn't it plain to see now that the board has been exposed as full of tricks? Isn't that whole group inefficient?

Don't you see now that Norfolk's applicant was using the Baltimore offer to force the powers-that-be there to put him in his city's top post?

Isn't Norfolk's school system in shambles, 41,000 mostly Black youngsters left in despair? (Check this out.)

How could anyone accustomed to only 41,000 children handle Baltimore's 125,000? THE THE BOTTOM LINE

(The Norfolk man wasn't coming here anyway and both he and the Baltimore Board used Dugger as a scapegoat.)

Isn't it true David C. Daneker, board president, (who is NOT an educator) botched the whole thing? Led us all down a Primrose path to avoid hiring the fully-qualified man, Dr. Samuel L. Banks? (Daneker has always been hostile toward Banks.)

Banks has every high qualification to handle the Baltimore schools to the great benefit of the children.

If Banks had been chosen weeks and months ago, the schools would have been on the road to recovery and Daneker and the board and the "Search Committee" could have taken a nap or read a good book.

AFTER more than 100 years, why can't Baltimore have a black board president? We have men with wisdom and education, and the knowledge of what the children need.

Have the teachers and parents "gone fishing"?

Isn't it time they denounce this capricious game the Daneker crowd is playing?

Why not hail this wanton, disgraceful playing games with the schools and the main beneficiary, the children, and insist upon wisdom and decency?

Isn't Baltimore's perpetual habit of embarrassing the city far and wide across this land surely pathetic?

GOOD NEWS

INSTEAD of sending personal gifts, Mayor Schaefer is making contributions to St. Frances Academy in the names of his friends.

HIS MOTHER who has been in the hospital is improving.

THE 1983 ALMANAC still insists that January will start out on the "bad side" and then turn into an early Spring, early planting and early thaw.

THE NEIGHBORHOOD PARENTS CLUB and the Cultural Arts Program, 1400 Orleans St. will present "Hansel and Gretel" at the Lyric Opera House, Tuesday, Dec. 28. On stage will be the Pittsburgh Chamber Opera Theatre with members of the Maryland Children's Chorus and the Baltimore Ballet School.

PERFORMANCES are at 2 and 8 p.m.

CALL 276-4646 and get your youngsters' tickets NOW. The Urban Services Cultural Arts Program has performed wonders to bring this delightful affair here for children during Winter vacation. Very good.

CONGRESSMAN MITCHELL HONORED

The American University honored, among others, Cong. Parren J. Mitchell Thursday, Dec. 23 at a dinner celebrating the 35th Anniversary of the American University's Washington Semester Program.

Mitchell was honored for his support of and participation in this innovative program which brings students from colleges and universities from across the country to the American University for a semester of study.

Thirteen members of the Congress were honored in addition to Mitchell. Other honorees: Senators Nancy Kassenbaum, Richard Lugar, Paul Tsongas and Edward Zorinski. Representatives honored were: Lindy Boggs, Thomas Downey, Shirley Chisholm, Geraldine Ferraro, Henry Gonzalez, Henry Hyde, Trent Lott, Jone Conyers and Clement Zablocki.

THANK YOU MRS. SANTA

A BEAUTIFUL SIGHT is that one in front of the AFRO's Mrs. Santa Shop on Eutaw St. with the parents and children lined up and going in to pick out toys and clothes.

SOME ARRIVE with shopping carts and bags and leave happily, carefully carrying their Christmas gifts.

OUR CONGRATULATIONS and gratitude go to Mrs. Santa (Ida Peters) and her crew of Elves. They have worked cheerfully and tirelessly.

I estimate they have spent over 80 hours a week gathering toys and clothes, working late and carrying out the project which is now a Baltimore tradition.

ON BEHALF of the scores of parents and kids, we salute Mrs. Peters, her helpers and the Baltimore citizens who support the AFRO's Mrs. Santa each and every year. Blessings to you all.

CLIFF HARRIS, president, and his postal Local 202 have the prettiest Christmas card I have ever seen.

This Local 202, the largest union in town, has done a great job every year in looking after the needy and again this year, they have fed 5,000.

DR CREW BANQUET

The School Board and staff have issued invitations for you to attend the Retirement Banquet in honor of Dr. John L. Crew, Sr.

DATE: Feb. 11, 1983
PLACE: Hyatt Regency Hotel
TIME: 6 p.m. cocktails - 7 p.m. dinner

SOOO get your tickets NOW. (The deadline for payment of $28 each is Feb. 1.) Before tickets are all gone. Hurry!

Make checks payable to John L. Crew, Sr. Retirement Dinner CO
Mrs. Juanita Lewis
Executive Assistant to the Superintendent
3 East 25th Street
Baltimore, MD 21218

MARY CARTER SMITH'S Christmas Letter is brim full of inspiring notes and helpful things. Try your best to get one of the many she has so generously left about town.

The cover is beautiful with the Christmas star glowing over the skyline of the city. The entire folder includes delightful recipes, African Proverbs and a letter from Jesus.

MARY CARTER SMITH is a blessed friend to all.

JERRY LYMAS, for many years the executive assistant to Cong. Mitchell, has his own business here in Baltimre now.

Tony Brown's Comments

Is sickle cell breakthrough here?

Hydergine, a powerful antioxidant prescription drug manufactured by Sandoz, is the answer to preventing sickle cell anemia crises or reducing the length of a "crisis" by about 25 percent.

That revolutionary claim of a medical breakthrough in the treatment of this painful disease is made by physicist Durk Pearson and chemist Sandy Shaw, authors of the best-selling book Life Extension (Warner Books), in an interview with me on public television.

To the sufferer of sickle cell anemia, about 1 in every 60 Black Americans (about 1 out of every 10 carry the sickle cell trait), a "crisis" attack is very traumatic.

These crises consist of severe pain, usually sudden and recurrent, affecting any organ in the body. The attacks are frequently accompanied by jaundice, fever, vomiting and muscle spasms. A sickle cell patient can experience these crises as often as one to four times a month, with the pain, which is relentless, continuous and throbbing in character, lasting from a few hours to two or three weeks. You can see why Pearson and Shaw's claim that Hydergine can relieve crises, could prove so beneficial.

Although the treatment is unorthodox and flies in the face of traditional medical advice, Durk Pearson, one of the designers of the space shuttle, says, "The damage that's done by sickle cell to organs and, particularly, to the brain is caused by hypoxia (insufficient oxygen). When the cells sickle up, the blood can't flow and it can't carry its oxygen.

The absence of adequate quantities of oxygen leads to a lot of free radical damage which Hydergine can prevent."

Experiments have been done in a number of French speaking West African hospitals on the use of Hydergine to both prevent and to shorten sickle cell crises," Pearson told me.

"We were surprised to find out that a number of research papers have been done on this and some of them were done quite a long time a go. I have here three papers of studies with sickle cell anemia in French speaking countries of Africa, like Senegal one of which is eight years old," Shaw added.

"What were the findings?" I asked. Shaw continued: "Hydergine was used in two different ways. One, it was used to try to stop attacks that were already going on, sickle cell crises that were already ongoing and intervening in those, the Hydergine was able to decrease the length of the attack by about twenty-five percent.

And also reduce the pain that was involved to the patients. Where people were taking the Hydergine on an ongoing basis, in order to prevent recurrences of crises, the Hydergine was much more effective.

For example, one adult patient had crises every week. Over a 15 month period that he was studied, it would have been expected that he would've had 60 crisis. Instead, he only had four. Children who were having crises several times a year were reduced to zero in most cases. They were not having crises any more. On doses of Hydergine that were more than the 3 milligrams a day that the FDA is recommending for people who have senility in this country, but less than the 20 milligrams a day that Durk and I are taking for antiaging and intelligence increase effects."

But is it approved by the Federal Drug Administration and is it safe?" I wanted to know.

Pearson explained, "This is another case where it will never be approved by the FDA for this purpose, even though the drug's been around for some 25 years. It's extremely safe. If you tried to commit suicide by taking a jar of a 1,000 tablets of this stuff, you'd get a splitting headache and you'd throw up, and you wouldn't even have to go to the hospital.

People have tried to commit suicide with it. Nobody has ever succeeded in hurting themselves. One of these children was accidentally given four times the dose that the child was supposed to get. The kid got sick to his stomach, but it also really shortened the crisis attack."

For scientists or persons in the field of sickle cell research, you can get information on and samples of Hydergine from Sandoz Pharmaceuticals at 59 Route 10, Hanover, NJ 07936.

Although this is potentially good news, I can't help but think that Jacklyn McDonald will miss it. I also interviewed her for this program, called "A Killer Of Dreams." She died about six weeks later, before it was broadcast. N.C. searched for her dreams—some denied by such a turbulent and short life. However, she left a legacy of courage for other sufferers of this disease as she looked death in the face and found new life.

In a poem following a painful crisis, she wrote, "Probably be planning my funeral soon. Wonder what kind of coffin I'll get. Look at me people, I'm not dead yet."

TONY BROWN'S JOURNAL TV series can be seen on public television Friday, on Channel 22 at 11 p.m. It also can be seen on channel 27, Sunday at 5:30 p.m.

Please consult listings.