Baltimore Afro-American

Founded August 1892 by John H. Murphy Sr., 1840-1922. Published every Tuesday and Saturday by the AFRO-AMERICAN CO. of Baltimore City, Inc. Carl Murphy (1889-1967) Editor-Publisher (1922-1967).

Sports modernization

With the recent recommendation of a committee studying whether or not Baltimore should replace Memorial Stadium and the tenative approval given by the city for the Mitsubishi Co. to build a scoreboard at the stadium that also gives instant replays and flashes other forms of useful information, it seems that Baltimore is moving into the modern era of sports facilities.

Some people have been grumbling about the antiquated character of local sports facilities for years and some people go as far as saying that the Colts might still be in Baltimore if a new stadium had been built.

That is speculation to be sure.

Baltimore is a bit cautious about taking on new ideas and projects. When other cities had exploding scoreboards to enliven baseball Baltimore continued with its conservative scoreboard while other cities jumped on the domed stadium and artificial turf bandwagons Baltimore resisted.

The new scoreboard and the proposed new stadium may make Baltimore modern and chic as sports facilities go, but an aura of grandeur will always surround the memories created at Memorial Stadium.

Someone once said that change is inevitable and all progress involves change. But every change is not progress. Hopefully when Baltimore makes its great changes to accommodate the new national sports scene it really will be making progress.

Celebrating Black History

Now that Martin Luther King, Jr's Birthday is a national holiday, it is the perfect time to begin thinking about the many ways that Black History Month which occurs in February can be best commemorated. King's Birthday is the beginning of the black heritage season of the year.

We should utilize the fervor for the study of Martin Luther King's life in January to prepare for extensive investigation of the entire spectrum of black history.

This time of year should be used for studying the key issues, movements and personalities that have impacted on the black struggle for freedom. This should be done in a proper context. Correct black history is not studied through isolated biographies of standing individuals but rather through an approach that puts the individual in his or her proper historical context.

Family study should be emphasized through the use of children's books, games that emphasize black heritage and other educational materials. It is not enough to depend on external programs to teach our young about our heritage. It is also not enough to wait for February to teach black history. It should be a year round project, but at least it can begin in earnest around the time of King's birthday and extend through February.

The African village

In response to an article I read a few weeks ago on The African Village in Druid Hill Park, by Tea Montier. I must say I am appalled at the hoopala over The African Village at Druid Hill Park.

Dr. Beryl Williams gave what I thought was an excellent explanation...I don't have any reason to doubt this especially since she has shared many of her African visit experiences with me.

I see this whole thing as another diversionary tactic...you know be ripping off our land in Georgia, supporting South Africa by purchasing TIPBITS, ringing our neighborhoods with booze, lottery, video games, drugs and boarded up houses while we concentrate on The African Village, which I think is a perfect setting.

Yes, NAACP and fellow clergymen, I feel if we don't get our priorities together, we will continue to live in fear of those standing on corners, some wandering aimlessly because of the lack of recreational centers (by the way, which are rapidly closing down because of lack of funds, so they say). We could open the church facilities through the week if some weren't afraid.

Please, Let's Leave The African Village in Druid Hill Park and concentrate more on what's happening right under our noses. I'm a staunch supporter of The NAACP, that's why I am saying what I'm saying.

Isaiah D. Hill
International Bishop Conf.,

You are what you read

Another year has passed and once again, Black History Month approaches. February has been designated as Black History Month. However, blacks should always be mindful of achievements and accomplishments of blacks. One should always delve into the pages of tomes on black history.

Reading is a passport to places unknown and information is power, to use an old cliche. If one is well read he or she is armed to fare well in most situations.

I become disconcerted at the thought of the many lost pages of black history which will never surface again unless we make a concerted effort to learn as much as possible about our history.

It is not enough to learn about Benjamin Banneker, George Washington Carver and others who are always in the forefront but we must liberate information about obsure and less mentioned blacks.

For example, did you know that? John W. Cromwell was a historian and secretary of the American Negro Academy for the promotion of literature, science and art founded in 1897.

George W. Williams, a lawyer and historian authored a book A History of Negro Troops in the War of Rebellion, published in 1887.

William Wells Brown was the first black in America to write a play or a novel. Edmonia Lewis was a pioneer sculptress.

This is a tiny sample of knowledge which can be found lurking between the covers of books on black history waiting to be explored.

One should always have the procivity to peruse the voluminous pages of tomes of blacks history. Reading is essential for survival.

It is imperative that one reads not only about black history during February but every month we should read as much as possible. One cannot stress the importance of reading too much.

In order to fill our mind or our reservoir with positive thoughts and ideas upon which to draw, we must continually read good material to improve cogitation. If we nurture shallow ideas we will be shallow individuals.

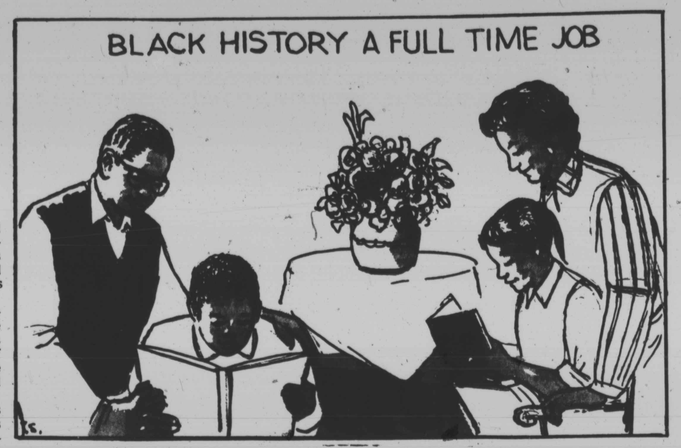
Remember you are what you Read!

Simmona E. Simmons
Librarian, UMBC

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.

BLACK HISTORY A FULL TIME JOB



Legal services for the poor

There is a continued controversy surrounding an extremely important resource for the economically disadvantaged - the Legal Services Corporation (LSC). The LSC is a federally funded, semi-independent, nonprofit corporation that distributes federal funds to local nonprofit legal aid corporations across the nation.

It was established by legislation in 1974 in an attempt to satisfy the rapidly increasing demand for lawyers' services for civil cases.

Much of the controversy has arisen because of some of the types of cases handled by public law firms funded by the LSC. Some critics say that the taxpayers' money is being used to bring wholesale class actions against every level of government.

While I do not deny that there have been cases handled that should not have been, I certainly do not think that this is sufficient reason to advocate the abolition of the LSC as President Reagan has done.

The Reagan Administration has consistently and zealously sought to dismantle the LSC. For every fiscal year that the president has been in office he has proposed the elimination of all federal legal services funding.

Luckily, each year a bipartisan coalition in Congress has overwhelmingly rejected the Reagan proposal. However, in fiscal years 1982 and 1983, the Reagan Administration did succeed in cutting the legal services by a devastating 25 percent.

Given the effects of inflation and a requirement beginning in 1982 that mandates programs devote at least 10 percent of their funds to involving private attorneys in the delivery of legal aid, the 25 percent cut in reality approaches 60 percent.

The Baltimore legal aid program, which is the main headquarters of the Maryland statewide program, is in a somewhat unique situation in that only approximately 49 percent of their total funding comes from the LSC. The remaining percentage is received from organizations such as the United Way.

Therefore, this program was able to weather the brunt of the budget cut because of a decision by a dedicated staff who decided to forego salary increases instead of reducing the services offered. Still, the budget cuts have taken their toll.

Currently, the starting salary for an attorney working for the LSC is about $6,000 per year less than that of a starting states attorney or public defender thus making recruiting difficult. The inadequate funding has also placed a burden on the number of people served.

While the Baltimore Legal Aid Program has valiantly fought to maintain its current level of services offered to clients, these services could be expanded and the number of people served increased if there were adequate funding.

Remember, this program is only partially funded by the LSC. What about those programs that are primarily or Solely funded by them. The effects of the 25 percent budget cut were ruinous.

When the president's plan for eliminating funds for legal services did not meet with Congressional approval, he attempted to pack the corporation's eleven member board with its opponents. For this effort, his tool was recess appointments made while the Senate is out of session (All permanent appointees must be confirmed by the Senate and recess appointees are not).

These appointees do not last indefinitely, but long enough so that Reagan appointees have always constituted a majority of the board since January of 1983.

The first Reagan appointed board members were themselves involved in controversy when it was learned that they were receiving $231 a day consulting fees. The full impact of the negative input of these appointees is not yet known.

The legal services agency fills a very important need. Without some form of legal aid, a great number of people in this country would be cut off from legal representation leaving them vulnerable to those able to afford legal fees and further enlarging the disparity between the economically advantaged and disadvantaged.

Perhaps the answer to this dilemma is to develop long-term sources of funds that are not dependent on the federal government such as the interest generated from lawyers' trust accounts.

Until, however, utilization of funds such as these can sustain legal aid programs across the country these programs will have to rely on Uncle Sam.

It is time to recognize that the Legal Services Corporation cannot and should not be abolished. Instead, it should be administered carefully and sensitively.

Anthony Armstrong

Say Nothing

Getting people in the street to talk about Provident Hospital has proven to be a very easy task. The amount of interest about the hospital is, understandably, at the highest level since Provident's last bout with financial disaster.

Back then several prominent and effective Baltimoreans worked to raise more than a million dollars and to give the hospital stronger operating procedures.

It was thought then that with good management Provident Hospital could finally and permanently become solvent enough to end the crisis-management patterns, that had dogged the institution since its relocation on Liberty Heights Avenue.

In part, because of the George Russells; the Walter Sondheims and, the Lou Grassmicks (to name just some of the people), the state of Maryland had also pitched-in to assist the hospital.

Their job done and because of mounting pressure from a small but vocal faction in the city, who felt they should "reclaim control of Provident for the black community"; these men and others decided in favor of damage control, rather than a fight, and left the Provident policy making structure.

The man or woman, in the street, knows nothing of the internal problems at the hospital that have lately surfaced in the local press. However, people aren't stupid.

One sentiment seems clear in the statements of almost everyone who would comment to me, about the Provident circumstances. In one form or another, the same question comes back again and again: who is running Provident Hospital?

Further, people are wondering aloud, if the people who are charged with running the hospital aren't doing their jobs properly why not get rid of those people, rather than allow the whole hospital to go down the drain?

One woman used a situation she was familiar with to make her point about Provident. She described a fight being waged at her job, between the founder of her company and the other management people there.

It seems that the founder has simply lost his effectiveness, due to age and a changing business environment. The company is suffering badly and leaner more competitive companies, in her industry (newspaper and magazine distribution), are consistently chipping away at her company's market share and profits.

The management, knowing that something major is required to again make her company healthy again, asked the founder to relinquish his day-to-day operations control of the firm.

The founder, sighting his role in the building of the company, refused to step down. The management team, feeling it had no choice if the company was to be saved, forced the founder to retire.

The woman said to me, "Hell, this man had started the company but, the people there now were not willing to accept that while the whole company went down the drain".

"Frankly, she said, I didn't want to see the founder replaced but, it was a hard necessity if the company was to make-it." She concluded by saying, "In the long run, if the founder had not been replaced none of us would have a job; I know it's hard but it's fair."

That's life: hard but fair. So it is for Provident Hospital too. Again, you can fool some of the people some of the time but, anyone who tries to fool all the people all the time is usually a fool himself.

"Why should I pay higher rates to go to Provident Hospital, when those rates are higher because of the actions of some people who don't know what they're doing."

"Black people can't pay their hospital bills now and; the people at Provident want me to pay more because they messed-up." "Before the state gives them anymore money, for rates or anything else, they ought to look into the reasons why Provident is having so much trouble." So go the comments.

There are some others too. I was told we shouldn't be "attacking" the management of Provident Hospital. It appears that there are certain sounding coconut and palm oil will produce the killer cholesterol in abundance.

Butter, eggs and the fat under the skin of chicken are also deadly items. Which may be why butter consumption is down by 30 percent and eggs by 14 percent.

And speaking of butter. You croissant lovers might want to know that one bread has 118 of the 200 calories in the form of butter.

Fish oils (EPA and DHA) do the exact opposite; they produce health and reduce cholesterol. But no oil is beneficial for frying foods. Bran also reduces cholesterol.

Needless to say, Blacks die at higher rates from their diets than do Whites and at younger ages.

But nature may have given Blacks added protection against heart attacks—protection that may have been squandered with an excessively fat diet.

One study found that around puberty boys experience a 25 percent drop in their ability to keep their negative cholesterol levels low

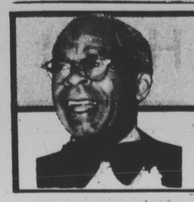
One study found that around puberty boys experience a 25 percent drop in their ability to keep their negative cholesterol levels low. Women, it was discovered, retain theirs—which may account for the fact that they have 60 percent fewer deaths from heart attacks than men.

It is also very possible that women suffer less from heart attacks due to fat because they are more diet conscious.

But back to race and heart disease. The aforementioned study concluded that the drastic-changes in boys at puberty are more drastic in White boys than in Black boys.

TONY BROWN'S JOURNAL, the television series, can be seen on public television in Washington on Friday, Channel 26 at 11:30 pm; Sunday, Channel 32 at 8 pm and Sunday, Channel 31 at 5 pm. Please consult listing.

G. James Fleming



Miss. makes history in court elevation

If you are old enough — and not too old at that — you probably rubbed your eyes and pinched yourself when you read, a few days ago, that a black lawyer had been appointed to the Supreme Court of the state of Mississippi.

But, it did happen here! Or there, believe it or not!

The new justice, as is well known by now, is Reuben V. Anderson, a 43-year-old Circuit Court judge and a graduate of the University of Mississippi School of Law. The appointing power is Governor Bill Allain of Mississippi, who was glowing in his supportive statement of the appointment.

Here is another reminder that change has been taking place across racial lines in the Deep South. No wonder that there is a steady migration of trained black men and women to the South—reversing the trek taken by their grandparents and parents not so long ago.

In industry, in high-tech, in communications, an increasing number of Blacks are heeding the advice to "Go South, Young Man (and Young Woman)." And the new frontier is not limited to Atlanta and Durham, or to the places where there are black colleges. The flourishing frontier is everywhere, even in Mississippi, even in Texas, even in the not so large urban areas.

Just how far Mississippi has changed and moved forward, is reflected in the words of Justice Anderson, as quoted by the Associated Press. He said:

"When I first started practicing law (1967), I had to take my diploma with me wherever I went. Judges would not allow black lawyers to practice in a lot of courts in this state....It makes you proud, so proud that Mississippi has come so far."

A first reaction is "If this can happen in Ole Miss, it can happen anywhere." There is also a feeling that, perhaps this time, this change for the better will last for all time.

Unfortunately, there cannot be reckless celebration; there cannot be any throwing of caution to the winds. There were many changes for the better shortly after Emancipation; there were many blacks in high places in the South—long before there was similar recognition in the North; Blacks also voted, as they do today.

The hands of the clock were eventually turned back, however. By official action in Washington, by the collusion of the Northern power structure, and by the revival of the Ku Klux Klan, Jim Crow in all its manifestations was enthroned, beginning about 1876:

Lynchings mounted, blacks were ousted from pivotal positions and from colleges, discriminatory-treatment grew in public places and in transportation, prejudice spread in the justice system and, worst of all, educational inequalities, became concretized.

Present gains, north and south, must summon all concerned to take steps to perpetuate these gains and escalate them.

If high registration and large turnout of voters at elections is responsible for such political recognition as has been given to (or earned by) blacks, then blacks must keep up their voting activity.

If being politically "savvy", and using it, has been useful, then political intelligence must be promoted and supported.

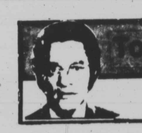
If contributing monies substantially to political parties and candidates is one route to political power, then those who can, must contribute.

If training and education are keys that open doors, economically and politically, then training and education must be given the highest priority by blacks.

The change in Mississippi, as marked by the elevation of Justice Anderson, will not easily help many thousands of blacks who are unemployed, especially the adolescents (42 percent unemployed), but it does again serve notice and reminder that (1) that blacks must pay the price and make the sacrifice of obtaining as much training as possible and (2) that they must endeavor to reach the mountain-top of achievement in the skilled vocations, the professions and business.

The new justice must abide by a statewide election next year, but for time being it is many congratulations to Justice Reuben Anderson and many congratulations to Mississippi.

Watch the fat



In response to his appearance on my television series, my office has received over 100 calls a day from viewers who want to know how to get "Dick Gregory's Bahamian Diet." The information, if you are one of those who may want to know, can be obtained by calling 1-800-543-1300.

But what has really thrilled me about the hundreds who called and are writing for transcripts is that there is such broad interest in nutrition. As Dick Gregory warns, fat—saturated fat— is a real villain,

I know that many Blacks have been raised on foods, loaded with fat and the taste of fats is psychologically synonymous with a "good" taste. But the overwhelming wisdom of the medical community is that high-fat, high-cholesterol eating habits reduce life.

About a year ago, the federal government released the results of the most expensive research project in medical history. It dealt with cholesterol, a dangerous substance in the bloodstream. The more cholesterol and fat in your diet, the more likely you are to have a heart attack.

Cholesterol clogs your arteries and they become brittle and hard and burst, much like the leaky pipes in your basement. Meats and cheeses supply you with a deadly amount of cholesterol. The saturated fat in bacon, beef, whole milk, or any food of animal origin as well as innocent

-AFRO SURVEY-

How should Black History month be celebrated?

Karen Dennis

Larry Jackson

Brenda Morgan

Katherine Richardson

This week the question to the man and woman in the street was, "How do you think Black History Month should be celebrated?"

Karen Dennis, 26, camerawoman, "We should pay tributes to those blacks who have done things for us, who have contributed to our growth as a people. Young folks need to have these heroes as their guide."

Larry Jackson, 28, manager, "It should be celebrated by promoting all the blacks that have made significant contributions to the black community and have led to the advancement of our race. This is important because it allows our youth to know they too can share in bringing prosperity to their own. That month should let them know they can be a part too."

Brenda Morgan, 21, janitress, "Don't you think we deserve a black history month for whatever purpose it serves. Why, we have a wonderful history, and that month should help us focus on it."

Katherine Richardson, 47, telephone operator, "It should be celebrated to the highest because our roots should be known. We need to know who Jesse Jackson is and what Martin L. King has done. Their actions along with others serve as motivators for us."

Rose Taylor, 42, contractor, "To begin with, it should be continuous throughout the year. Our history is too rich to be dealt with in one month. That is unfair to us as a people. I also suggest we get away from cliquish history projected upon us and digress back even further and focus on others. I'm tired of hearing about Martin L. King. There are just too many others, even as far back as the ancient Pharoahs and queens who were black."

Julia Tabb, 50, housewife, "We recognize our black people. I personally feel all blood is the same, but since we have separated everything, why not a special month where we focus on us?"

Margaret Brown, 49, housewife, "It is a month where each and every person should take an interest in learning about our heritage, and this is the month in which it should be most taught.'

Terry Booker, 19, typist, "The month makes me look harder at my own achievements. When I look back in the past and see what other blacks have done, I am convinced I can achieve too."

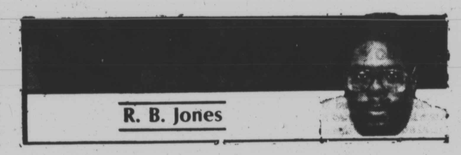
Rose Taylor

Julia Tabb

Margaret Brown

Terry Booker

R. B. Jones



Myth of black matriarchs

As a rider of public transportation, I am often privy to the unvarnished thoughts of everyday members of the black community. Frequently I hear about their jobs, their families, their love affairs and marriages, which occur at the same time. Often, I hear their opinions on the burning issues of the day.

Sometimes their statements are brilliant and incisive and sometimes they are appallingly reactionary. More often than not they reflect the ideas that mainstream America promotes.

On a recent crosstown ride, I listened with little surprise but a great deal of sadness to a group discussing the proliferation of female bus drivers. The usual stereotypical remarks were made about women drivers and the cyclical influences on women's dispositions. The most disheartening remarks were made about black women being already liberated and the supposed control by women of the black community.

The absurd notion that a black matriarchy exists in this country or has ever existed here is a very destructive notion. I have often heard over the years that the only two free individuals in America have been the white man and the black woman.

The notion of a black matriarchy was popularized most recently in 1965 by Daniel Patrick Moynihan, who attributed the pathology in the black community to a matriarchy they undermines the role of the black male. According to the infamous Moynihan Report, the black community will not progress until women are placed back in their traditional subservient role.

A black matriarchy is a myth as pervasive and as pernicious as the myth of black inferiority. It is a myth because by definition, a matriarchy is a society ruled by women. Women have never controled American society.

Women were essentially the property of their husbands until this century. They did not even receive the vote which in the secular theology of America is the badge of citizenship and personhood, until 1920.

A women's rights movement has been active in this country, at least since the 1840s, when it branched out from the abolition movement. The movement resurfaced in the 1960s with renewed vigor and more far reaching demands. Many of these women demanded a complete reordering of the unequal power relationships between men and women. If white women feel oppressed in America how can black women be oppressors?

Black women did not come to America as conquerors or immigrants seeking economic opportunity. They came here in chains with black men to become the property of white people. They were raped, beaten at will, killed capriciously or purposefully and worked as beasts of burden as caretakers of their oppressors, lives and children. They were torn from their families and saw their men brutalized for the sake of white convenience.

While suffering this oppression, black women for the most part joined with black men to resist their mutual oppression in small everyday acts of resistance in more dramatic slave conspiracies and revolts. From the earliest records of slave rebellions to every phase of the black liberation movement since then women have fought for black liberation.

If black women have suffered through chattel slavery, tenant farming and other forms of racial oppression, how could they have been matriarchs? Persons who make such a statements are either ignorant of black history or they are aiding and abetting the divisive distortions of black people's history perpetrated by films such as "Gone With the Wind" and academic propagnda such as the "Moynihan Report."

Many black women have had to be heads of households because of circumstance, but to accuse their sense of duty and commitment to their families are overbearing dominance that drove away their well-meaning men is a divide and conquer tactic.

Black women have been heroines and healers. They have been soldiers and teachers. They have been mothers and lovers. They have not been and I would dare say they will never be the oppressors of black men. They have sometimes been the victims of our sick imitations of white patriarchal behavior, but they have never been our enemies.

Black women have been and will continue to be our partners in the struggle to recapture the greatness that African people were known for in times past.

On this coming Sunday at 2 p.m. a panel discussion will be held at the main branch of the Enoch Pratt Library on Cathedral St. concerning the concept of a black matriarchy. All thoughtful persons not obsessed with watching the interminable pregame buildup for the Super Bowl are encouraged to attend.

Education should come first

The newspaper, radio and television reports this week have been full of "news" that a star player on the national championship basketball team of Georgetown University is planning to transfer to the University of the District of Columbia.

The irony of the "news" is that the player they all are talking about is not playing on the Hoya team this season. The reason he is not playing is that Coach John Thompson advised him to sit out this year and devote more time to improving his academic status.

From our point of view this is what coaches should be doing. In other words, this is the right way to go. From time to time we hear of reports that some coach has had an athlete's scholastic record padded in order to keep him eligible for competitive play. Whenever this is done, it always results in a bad future for the athlete who, in his later years, invariably puts the blame on the coach.

At this point we don't know what the true story is with this particular Georgetown athlete as he has eluded the press to date, and there is no public explanation of why he wants to make the switch to UDC. UDC coaches naturally have indicated that they would welcome him, and they should, but we hope the welcome is not because he is an outstanding basketball player or that UDC is willing to overlook any academic deficiencies he may have. If the latter is true, we suggest that UDC take another look because they won't be helping the athlete and certainly will not be enhancing the reputation of the university.