# —Community Calendar—

**ADULT EDUCATION OPPORTUNITIES**

Are you one of those people who loves to learn about anything and everything - not necessarily for credits or grades, but just for the sheer joy of learning something new?

If you are, then take advantage of the mail-in registration for an adult continuing education course offered by Harford Community College. With the emphasis on convenience, the courses are scheduled at off-campus sites in addition to the HCC campus.

Courses in 46 areas include such favorites as the "ABC's of the Stockmarket," to "Working with Stained Glass." Scores of other subjects await adult learners who love to learn how to speak a second language or how to redesign a home interior or how to sing or play an instrument.

For details on various offerings, interested persons should refer to the brochure mailed to every Harford County resident in the past week. Questions related to any course may be directed to Noncredit Registrations, 836-4376.

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**HEARTS! HEARTS! HEARTS!**

Bored of the same old valentine ideas each and every Valentine's Day? Take heart! The Maryland Committee for Children, Inc. (MCC), invites children of all ages and their parents to a "Valentine's Day Extravaganza" on Saturday, Feb. 9, from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. As part of MCC's regular "Saturday Fun Festivals" series, the Valentine's Day workshop offers children the opportunity to make cards, decorations, postal accessories, and, for the first time this year, "Heart Creatures." These special masterpieces of the heart may be made from an exciting variety of materials, including stickers, ribbons, cardboard, paper, shoelaces, boxes and buttons of all shapes, sizes and colors.

For more information, please call Carole Bentz at 752-7588.

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**CCB OFFERS AUTOMOTIVE SEMINAR**

With the high cost of today's new automobiles, it's more important now than ever to make your present car last as long as possible. The Community College of Baltimore will offer a one-day automotive maintenance seminar on Saturday, Jan. 26, from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., in the Forum of the Harbor Campus Bard Building, Lombard Street at Market Place.

According to Paul Glock, coordinator of CCB's automotive technology program, "The seminar will focus on passive and active approaches to automobile maintenance." Tips on what to look for when buying a car and how to make the car last 100,000 miles. Other topics to be discussed include cars of the future, fuel mileage and emissions. There will be a one-hour lunch break. The fee is $12.00.

To register, please call 396-1854.

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**FINANCIAL AID WORKSHOP**

The Harford Community College Office of Financial Aid will offer a Financial Aid Workshop on Wednesday, Feb. 13, from 7:00 to 9:00 p.m. in Room J-1 of Joppa Hall on the HCC campus.

The purpose of the workshop is to assist parents of dependent children and self-supporting students in completing the Financial Aid Form to determine eligibility for state, federal and local funds for the 1985-86 school year. A copy of the 1984 1040, 1040A or 1040EZ tax forms as well as any other verification of income should be brought to the workshop. The workshop is instructional and informational in nature.

Everyone interested in attending college is invited to participate. For further information, contact the Financial Aid Office at 836-4257.

**FREE DIABETES SCREENINGS**

The American Diabetes Association, Maryland affiliate, will offer free diabetic screenings on the fourth Wednesday of every month from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon.

The first screening will be held on Jan. 23 at the affiliate office, 3701 Old Court Rd., Suite No. 20, Pikesville, Md. For more information call the affiliate office at 486-5515.

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**DIABETIC DOCTOR PATIENT RELATIONS**

The American Diabetic Association, Maryland Affiliate, - Diabetic Support Group, will present an open meeting on Doctor-Patient Relationships on Monday Jan. 21 at 7:30 p.m., at the Holiday Inn Pikesville. This meeting is open to all diabetics Type I and Type II, their spouses and significant others. Refreshments will be served.

For more information call the Affiliate Office - 486-5515.

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**HISTORICAL SOCIETY BOOK SALE**

The Maryland Historical Society's Book Sale will be held Saturday, Jan. 19 from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. and Sunday, Jan. 20 from 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. (Snow dates- Saturday, Jan. 26 and Sunday, Jan. 27). In addition to fiction and non-fiction categories will be Marylandia, art books and cook books. Call 685-3750, ext. 305 for information.

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**APARTHEID FILM**

The Baltimore Anti-Apartheid Coalition will present a public forum and a film on Apartheid in South Africa, on Friday evening, Jan. 18, 7:30 p.m., at Centennial United Methodist Church, 1029 E. Monument St. The principal speaker will be Dumi Matabane, the African National Congress (South Africa) representative from the Washington, D.C. office. Other speakers will include a spokesperson from the United Steelworkers of America, as well as local church and community leaders.

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**TRIBUTE TO BLACK FILM**

The Adele H. Stamp Union of the University of Maryland in College Park will celebrate Black History Month with "A Tribute To Black Film. "

On Feb. 11, 1985 at 4:00 p.m., in the Hoff Theater, the following five films will be shown free of charge: "Emperor Jones" at 4:30 p.m., "Sander of the River" at 6:15 p.m., at 7;50 p.m., "No Man Is An Island," "A Raisin In The Sun," and the "Brotherhood of Man." A guest speaker will highlight the tribute.

For more information call Michael Coleman at 454-4987.

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**ADMISSIONS TESTING AT BRYN MAWR SCHOOL**

Testing for applicants to Bryn Mawr's Middle and Upper Schools (grades 6-12) will take place on Saturday morning, Feb. 9.

Lower School testing will be as follows-: Jan. 28 for grade 3, Feb. 13 for grade 5, Feb. 21 for grade 4 and Feb. 22 for grade 2.

For further information, call 323-8800.

**Nominations For Firefighters of Year**

Nominations are now being accepted in the second annual Firefighter of the Year Awards. The awards, co - sponsored by WCBM, and the Baltimore Equitable Society, will honor firefighters who have provided outstanding service in the protection of life and property during the period from March 1, to Feb. 28.

Two cash prizes of $1,000.00 will be awarded in March 1985. One winner will be selected from Baltimore City. Another firefighter will be chosen from one of the participating suburban counties which include Baltimore, Anne Arundel, Harford and Howard.

Residents of Baltimore City and neighboring counties may request an application to nominate a candidate by calling the Baltimore Equitable Society at 539 - 1072 or by calling WCBM Radio at 363 - 2000. Applications are also available at local fire stations. Nominations will close on Feb. 28.

**Children's Theater Class**

An "Introduction to Children's Theater" will be offered for the first time during the upcoming Spring semester at Anne Arundel Community College.

Scheduled to meet Monday, Wednesday, and Friday from noon until 12:50 p.m. in the Center for Performing Arts on the Arnold campus, the class will be taught by Professor Robert Kauffman, coordinator of the College's theater arts program.

Kauffman said the three - credit course will introduce the students to the broad spectrum of children's theater, including such aspects as children performing for children, storytelling, readers theater, and the literature of children's theater. Major emphasis will be on adults performing for children, however.

**NURSES' Legislative Buffet**

Maryland Nurses Association, District 3, Legislative Committee will hold their annual legislative Buffet on Monday, Feb. 11, 6 p.m., at the Lowe Building, 2nd floor, Anne Arundel County Delegation Room, Annapolis. The Lowe Building is located on Rowe Blvd. and free parking is available.

ALL NURSES (members and non - members) are invited to attend and utilize this opportunity to meet their legislator and to become informed on issues facing nursing and the health field.

For further information, call 757 - 6011 or 437 - 7284.

**JHU Language Courses**

Intensive non - credit courses in Arabic, French, Spanish, Japanese, Italian, German, Chinese, Russian, Latin, and modern Greek are offered on evenings and Saturdays this Spring by the Johns Hopkins School of Continuing Studies.

Beginning Feb. 16, Saturday classes meet from 9:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. and weekday evening classes meet from 6:15 to 7:55 p.m., at the Homewood campus in Baltimore and the Columbia center.

Courses cover basic conversation and readings with an emphasis on the use of the spoken language in everyday situations.

For more information, or to receive a copy of the spring bulletin of non - credit courses, call 338 - 8550.

**Volunteers Needed**

Do you have a few hours to spare every other week? Would you like to make a difference in someone else's life? If so, become a volunteer advocate - companion for a mentally retarded person who could benefit from a one - on - one relationship.

Volunteers are matched with mentally retarded people to develop friendships, and engage in activities such as church, shopping, ball games or whatever leisure activity you enjoy.

Arrangements are flexible and may involve evenings or weekends. Call Brian Cox at Service Coordination Systems, 235 - 8110.

**4-H Fun Day**

Children and adults are invited to 4 - H Fun Day, Saturday, Jan. 26 from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. at Mt. Royal Recreation Center, 120 West Mosher Street.

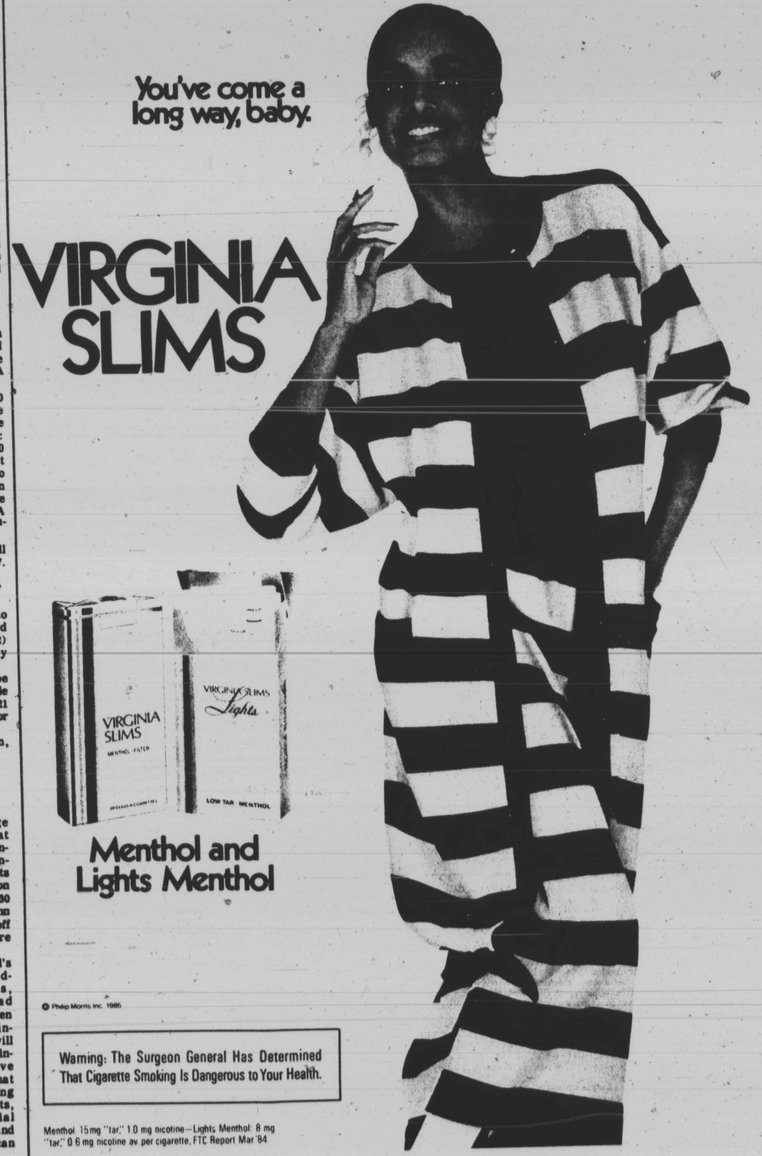
A small registration fee allows participants to join workshops in entomology, terrariums, modeling, nature craft, bird feeders and other topics.

The Fun Day workshops are sponsored by the 4-H and Youth Program in Baltimore City and are open to all regardless of race, color, sex, handicap, religion or national origin. Call 528 - 6990 for registration and details.

**Salisbury Open House**

Salisbury State College officials announced today that they will be hosting an information session for interested high school students in the Baltimore area on Wednesday, Jan. 23, from 6:30 to 9:30 p.m. at the Holiday Inn Belmont in Woodlawn, just off Exit 17 of the Baltimore Beltway.

In addition to the school's top academic and administrative officials, Salisbury State's head coaches from its nineteen men's and women's intercollegiate sports teams will be on hand to provide information for prospective students. It is anticipated that all questions concerning admission requirements, financial aid, potential majors, course offerings and intercollegiate athletics can be answered on the spot.





# SHOWTIME

## 'The Reluctant Jazz Star'

By Racine S. Winborne

"You can't judge a book by its cover."

How many times has that packaged binding only to discover that its contents aren't worth the money it cost to purchase the darn thing.

However, Sallie Kravetz's new book, *The Reluctant Jazz Star*, is that pleasant exception.

This engagingly delightful little-big book is the biography of singer Ethel Ennis, a Baltimore native daughter, and her rise and fall, and rise again if you will, as an entertainer.

Its cover illustration (a moody black and white photograh depicting the singer in the throes of song and frozen by a brilliant spotlight) and a poignantly magnificent title are of themselves likeable enough to deserve a sizeable reading audience.

But the treats don't stop there as Kravetz, a longtime Ennis fan and confidante (she took the cover photograph), has added just enough spice to the storyline--to keep the reader actively involved.

By compiling the stacks of research materials and combining them with the many vintage photographs documenting the singer's progress through the years, and by extracting only the choice tidbits from the many conversations exchanged between the two women over a ten-year period, she has woven a near-perfect biography.

*The Reluctant Jazz Star* is a compact book (the paperback runs only 109 pages long) filled with heart-felt accounts of a women's "life and times"; a woman who teetered on the edge of certain noteriety and who for conflicting reasons walked away from stardom's promise.

Or, on the other hand, it is the tale of a singer blessed with a certain natural musical ability, but who just wasn't gifted enough to sustain the success.

Whether the book reconciles that question, and it may have very well failed in that effort, its strength lies in its attempts at honesty.

It tells a candid story as it probes into the minds of its characters, especially Ennis', in search of motives and answers.

In one passage she asserts unhesitantly that it was due largely to a handful of "white fathers" that she was able to rise from local prominence and venture off to perform in Europe and sign several major recording contracts.

That assertion is courageous when one pauses to consider that Ennis has come dangerously close to possibly antagonizing those black supporters who played an important role in her development as a woman and musician.

Beyond its frankness *The Reluctant Jazz Star* is a credible work because it helps to place the times in which Ennis evolved into a more cohesive perspective. The reader, whether a product of her time or not, is given a reference point throughout the book (whether it be the birth of the Motown sound or the riotous sixties) upon which to connect the strangely mapped course of Ennis' career.

It is also well-written.

*The Reluctant Jazz Star* reveals Kravetz as a skilled wordsmith. She can produce serling poetic images and mind-boggling introspections that send the reader gasping for the appropriate sounds to emit to relieve the excitable tension.

Her words are like the weight of gold and land with a bang from the forcefulness of their implications.

Consider for example Kravetz opening comments as she attempts to explain her reasons for writing the book, "This is the story of the life and times of a jazz singer (though she doesn't like to classify herself as such) named Ethel Ennis.

"It is also the story of a woman headed for stardom and who, in the 59th minute of the hour of her breakthrough, decided to return home to examine her life." Kravetz magnificent here.

Again later in the same thought she writes, "I was inexplicably haunted by a nagging question: What really is the truth about Ethel Ennis' career? In my most secret thoughts I felt that Ethel had been given more opportunity than most of us and that somehow she had failed.

"Something about Ethel's story seemed murky to me. The facts as I knew them just didn't seem to jibe."

Ethel Llewellyn Ennis was born without fanfare on November 28, 1932 to Arrabell and Andrew Ennis who had just recently lost a baby girl, Arlene, and, according to the book, were still trying to afford the cost of her funeral.

Reared under the pulse of the black community and educated at the Frederick Douglass High School and the Cortez W. Peters Business College, she and younger brother Andy (himself a local musician) were raised under the stern religious influence of "parental domination."

Recalling those restrictive early years in the opening chapter to the book titled simply "God Bless the Child", she confides, "I would do my regular five-hour gig at school and have to come straight home.

"It was always, 'Come straight home!' I couldn't belong to any choirs, any dramatic classes, nothing. I wanted to be a drum majorette. Never! No.!"

Those parental restraints no matter how uncomfortable a the time were not sufficient enough to stop the inevitable wheels of fate that somehow gave her the space to evolve into a singer.

Kravetz's biography, was published locally by Gateway Press Inc., chronicles that evolution from the smoke-filled remote city clubs where she played piano accompaniment to several all-male groups to those marathon years when her open-ended singing engagement at the legendary Red Foxx Lounge made it the most popular spot along Pennsylvania Avenue.

She blossomed and the critics watched and followed her career pausing to compare her to Ella Fitzgerald and Sarah Vaughn. They said she had a "sweet" voice, "a sultry jazz contralto' and was destined to be the next risen star.

The book will undoubtedly rekindle the nostalga of those lost years between 1955 and the mid-1960's when Ethel Ennis was truly at the height of her musical career.

Today, at 52, while she continues to perform and record (her most recent album was produced locally in 1981) and has just opened her own nightclub, Ethel's Place, Ennis is hardly the entertainment force she seemed on the verge of becoming 20 years ago.

*The Reluctant Jazz Star* isn't without its flaws.

While Kravetz must be congratulated for the depth of her knowledge where Ennis is concerned, that familiarity at times does get in the way.

Especially, when her obsession with her subject loses all objectivity and her prose rambles on almost purposelessly, creating streams of conscience that sound more like the thought of a hopeless heroworshipper and less like the unbiased explorer.

Perhaps she and not Ennis has had the hardest time reconciling herself to the fact that whatever success was waiting out there before is no longer present with the same intensity and potential for glory.

In Chapter Seven when Ennis decides (of her own courageous volition or in desperate fear) to turn her back on the bright lights of show biz, and returns to Baltimore in 1967, Kravetz reaches near hysteria.

"Admirers were glad she was home again, yet they also harbored unspoken feelings of disappointment (you wonder if its just her heartbreak).

"The door to that glorious kingdom of show business had been opened for their object of adoration and what did she do? She, the chosen one, had turned on her heel, slammed the door and walked that's what she did. Unthinkable."

Now who is the assailed and who is the assailant?

The book's other failing is that it cuts short much of the adversity actually experienced by Ennis throughout the more than 40 years she has spent as an entertainer. Somehow in Kravetz version of things her life was basically grand. The singer's own recollection of certain events paint a more troubled picture.

She does, however, attempt to explain to anyone who will listen just why she decided to quit the big time. "I wanted to be whole. I had seen other performers when they were no longer in the limelight, they seemed like lost souls--only because they didn't take time to 'do time', to develop the inner self. I didn't want that to happen to me," she tells the reader all the while exhibiting signs of her human frailty.

But somehow her friend and biographer Kravetz doesn't buy the excuse at all. "I feel there is a level of Ethel's personality that is very reluctant...a jack of ambition...passion...fire."

Perhaps *The Reluctant Jazz Star's* legitimacy lies in its willingness to create a setting where these opposing philosophies can be argued out and ultimately allow the reader to decide the answer to the Ethel Ennis question.

But whatever the results of the reader's analysis of the facts, as they appear in this biography or the consensus opinion of those musical historians who will weigh her contributions against those of her contemporaries at the time of Ethel Ennis's death *The Reluctant Jazz Star* has earned its good marks as an important literary achievement simply because hers is a fascinating tale that is worthy to be told.

By the early 60s, Ethel had been in the business for 13 years. over and over, she was spoken of in the same breath with Ella Fitzgerald, Billie Holiday, Peggy Lee, and Sarah Vaughan. But fans were growing restless for the big break, which had yet to manifest itself. Here Ethel relaxes between sets in a New York supper club on the East Side called, The Toast.

## Free Events for Children

**Wednesday, Jan. 23**

**Pennsylvania Avenue Branch**, 1531 W. North Ave., Films: "Luke Was There" and "Big Henry and the Polka Dot Kid," 3 p.m.

**Brooklyn Branch**, 300 E. Patapsco Ave., Films: "The Ransom of Red Chief" and "Winter of the Witch," 3p.m.

**Gardenville Branch**, 5427 Belair Rd., Film: "Elsa and Her Cubs," 3:30 p.m.

**Dundalk Avenue Branch**, 912 Dundalk Ave., Film: "Snowbound," 4 p.m.

**Thursday, Jan. 24**

**St. Paul Street Center**, 2521 St. Paul St., Films: "Storm Boy" and "Winnie the Pooh and the Honey Tree," 10 a.m. and 3 p.m.

**Friday, Jan. 25**

**Brooklyn Branch**, 300 E. Patapsco Avenue: Preschool films, "Warty the Toad" and "Winnie the Pooh Discovers the Seasons," 10 a.m.

**Waverly Branch**, 400 East 33rd St.: Arts and crafts, 3:30 p.m.

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"Resume-Writing" will be the focus of a workshop at the Pratt Central Library, 400 Cathedral St., from 5:30-8 p.m. on Monday, Jan. 21. To register, or for further information, call Pratt's Job and Career Information Center, 396-5394.


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