—School kids

continued from page 1

began its drive in November and in four weeks, it collected 6,000 pounds of food. This week, it delivered its food to the Franciscan Mission on Maryland Avenue and the Open Door Diner at Dunbar High School.

More than 30 schools and offices participated in the drive. Thomas bush, head of this project in the Department of Education said in addition, more than 200 schools donate food and clothing to the needy in their own neighborhoods.

"We've been overwhelmed by the success of this," said Bush. "Last year, City Hall said we collected two tons of food, but this year, we're so far ahead."

Bush said food was being stored in two rooms at 25th Street and while some of the personnel might have had a little trouble maneuvering past all those cans, no one was complaining.

"It just reminds them just how nice everybody is out there," he explained.

"People have been so great in this particular effort," said Jobe. "They just continuously support you."

The last of the food was delivered to Dunbar on Thursday morning. Bush said that seeing all the food come in "was a beautiful sight."

"I just never experienced such an overwhelming response. It proved to me that people are very caring."

(L to R) Matthew W. Wright, Mike Ward, James R. Miles, Joseph Cherry, James I. Darden, Loran Cooper and William S. Johnson, Jr. all lend a helping hand as members of the Department of Education donate food to Dunbar's Open Door Diner. The food is a part of the city's Health and Human Services Division September Hunger Drive. The Department of Education started late, but ended up collecting more than three tons of food, enough to help feed the hungry through the winter months.

—Energy Watch

continued from page 1

ed person from Energy Watch, go into the 25 selected houses and look for ways to make them more energy efficient," Ms. Upton told the AFRO.

Ways of doing this, according to Ms. Upton, would include checking doors, windows, and other openings for leaks through energy escapes and checking furnaces and heating systems for ways to improve their efficiency.

"Wednesday night's meeting was a good beginning dialogue between consumers and BG&E . . . Very positive," Ms. Upton added.

According to people who were at the meeting, Energy Watch representatives negotiated with the representatives from BG&E. Although no definite date was set for the above-mentioned program, Energy Watch representatives feel that the outcome was beneficial to low-income residents.

Another concern of the community-based group was funds to compensate volunteers who assist low-income customers by working on the mezzanine at BG&E and referring them to the proper channels to receive assistance.

"This is the first time that we've met with BG&E in person. Since our first request, BG&E granted us permission to set up volunteers who assist customers facing shut-off. Now, we'd like to get together with BG&E and work out a way to pay this person. We plan to discuss this idea further in the future," Dan Livingston, a Energy Watch representative, told the AFRO Wednesday.

After their "energy carols" the group of about 40 cheered when the results of the meeting were announced.

—Richeson

Continued from page 1

up "by trick, scheme or device, the naterial facts" the government states he was actively involved with not only Hassan, the Pakistanian source of the heroin, but also with two Baltimoreans.

The local persons in the alleged conspiracy are Junior Ison and Deborah Matthews who have already been indicted and are out on bail. Ison is free under $500,000 bail.

Another person involved in the conspiracy is Dewar Shaikh, found guilty in June of narcotics violations, has turned government witness and is under protective custody.

In fact, the government's information gained through Shaikh led their agents to Mahmood Ul-Hassan who dispensed the Heroin from Lahore, Pakistan.

Due to the fact that the federal investigators are still following leads they have uncovered in the alleged Richeson narcotics traffic, the trial has been delayed until Feb. 10, 1986.

When the AFRO reached William H. (Billy) Murphy, Jr., the attorney representing Richeson, he refused comment except to say he will pursue the matter in court.

—Fleet

Continued from page 1

behind the gun when she fled the scene of the crime on April 7th.

"Me and Ricky were walking up Stricker Street when this man came up behind us and asked ricky if he had any caine. Before Ricky could say anything, he opened fire," Ms. Thomas told the Circuit Court jury Monday.

At the time of the shooting incident, Thomas was reportedly living in the 1800 block West Lexington St. where Fleet also resided.

She testified that she ran back to the house after the shooting and Fleet arrived there shortly after. When Fleet arrived, the girl told the jury, he threatened to kill her if she told anyone what she had saw.

"Mr. Harold told me to go over to Ricky's mother's house and tell her that two men came up behind us and demanded drugs and then shot Ricky. I did what he said becaue I was scared," Ms. Thomas told the court.

However after questioning

Continued on page 8

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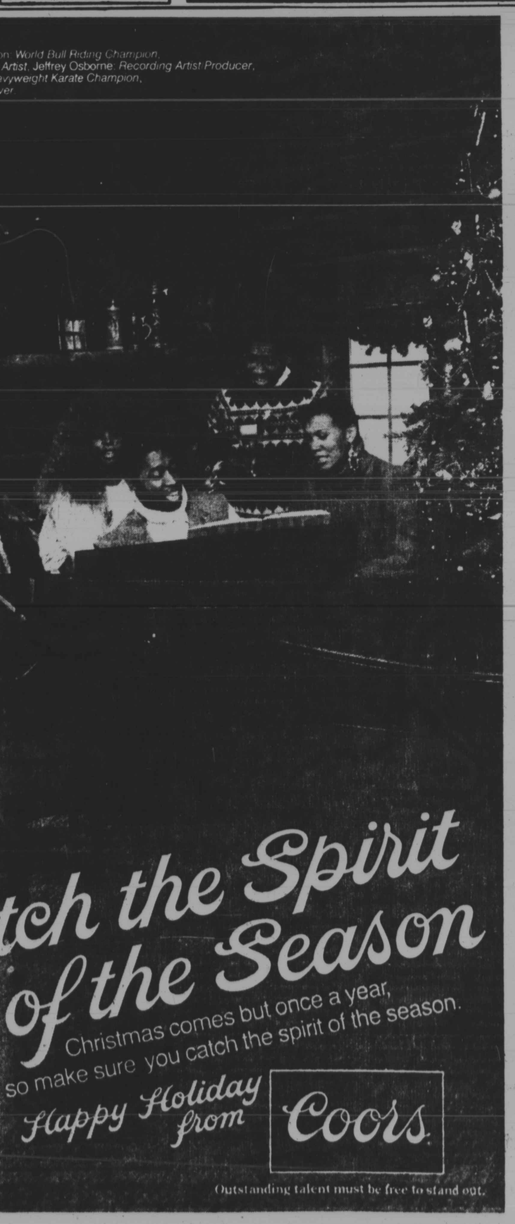

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Sun Cards offers black consumers a choice

WASHINGTON, D.C. — Three years ago, when Maurice Holtz got fed up buying cards with only white faces on them, he decided to do something about it. Sun Cards, Inc., his Washington, D.C.-based company, is today a growing business that manufactures and distributes quality greeting cards featuring black and brown faces with complimenting themes made from original designs of black artists.

A self-starter and former U.S. Department of Labor employee, Holtz began his company by tapping into the $123 million Christmas card market where over two billion cards are exchanged annually during the December holiday season alone. Packaged in boxes of 24, the cards depict a mahogany-hued mother and child, and ebony-skinned angels and choirboys. Other Sun Cards portray several generations of a black family celebrating Christmas.

"There was and still is a need to express Christmas from a positive black perspective," says Holtz. "And we also found a way to showcase the many talents of black artists by featuring their works on our cards."

With a small sum borrowed from family and friends, a printer who agreed to delay the billing, a commissioned artist and original artwork, Holtz set out to begin his company.

But the money soon ran out. Holtz relates how he dropped off a "solid" business plan at a venture capital firm early one morning. Unaware of the weeks and often months it takes for loan approval, Holtz called the firm shortly after noon to see if his application had been accepted. Surprisingly, it had, and by the end of the day he had landed an investment in exchange for a small piece of his company.

Not all of his business went so well. Shortly after he began manufacturing Christmas cards, with Christmas just around the corner, Holtz had to undergo emergency surgery for a ruptured appendix. To his great disappointment, he had to pass up two potentially lucrative contracts to supply major department stores with Sun Cards. But his first break came when K-Mart Corporation, the country's second largest retailer, offered him a contract to put his cards in a small number of their 2,000 stores.

The following year, the K-Mart contract increased by more than 1000 percent, to stores mostly in black communities. Seeking to capture the talents of black artists, he conducted a national art search sending out some 17,000 letters to junior and senior high schools and colleges across the country. Of the numerous responses, Holtz chose the works of only eight artists whose work symbolized the themes he wanted to display and met the artistic standards of excellence he insists upon for his cards.

Maurice Holtz

"Today, Holtz, a father of two, spends long days perfecting his greeting card line and convincing buyers to purchase his creations which now include cards for all occasions, "priced so everyone can afford them," he says proudly.

Sun Cards are distributed through small retail stores, major chain stores and by direct mail to eager consumers who have heard about them or received one from friends.

Fighting for shelf space is the most difficult part. "Once our product is on the store shelves, our cards sell as well or better than our competitors," says Holtz who is disturbed that the lack of black independent representatives (approximately 10 nationwide) forces him to rely on white reps who refuse to go into black neighborhoods.

Not easily deterred, Holtz notes his accomplishments as well as his setbacks. In addition to perfecting the black oriented greeting cards, he has begun to diversify his product line to include coloring books, children's books, party products, birth announcements and invitations — all positively portraying black role models and themes. Original artwork and lithographs by black artists will be made available through various mail order catalogs.

This Christmas Holtz will offer Sun Cards to selected magazines and newspapers with large black readerships to be given free with new subscriptions. He is also working to expand his distribution to African and Caribbean countries where he has received favorable responses from retailers there. Next year, consumers will find Sun Cards and products in Federated Department Stores, as well as K-Marts and a growing number of drug stores and supermarkets.

"People should buy because they feel good about a product and not because they don't have a choice," says Holtz. "Black people consume more than hair care products, but that is the only black manufactured product you see in stores today."

Freedom Cards, one of the largest manufacturers of black oriented cards, is a white-owned company. "White retailers are comfortable taking money from black consumers, but when they are asked to start spending money with a black manufacturer, then that creates problems for them," says the 6' 4" 260-pound former football player whose surveys reveal that many black consumers are unhappy with greeting cards that have actual photographs of black models on them.

Holtz says his growth expectations for his company — $200 million in 10 years — is not unrealistic, given the market and the need. "But money is not my goal, it is my yardstick," says Holtz who grew up in poverty in the sixties and never lost his commitment to the black community. He now puts his profits back into his growing business, but in the future plans to develop a scholarship fund for young blacks and work toward better housing and nutrition for minorities.

"What is important for me is that I work to expand the civil rights of blacks to include our economic rights," he says. "If, through my business, I can be a role model to this end, then I will consider my venture a success."

ST. MARK BAPTIST CHURCH

The Maryland Chapter of the James Cleveland Gospel Workshop of America proudly presents its First Annual Christmas Candlelight Service, Sunday, Dec. 22, at 7 p.m., at St. Mark Baptist Church, 3905 Springdale Ave.

Also the Youth Division of the Gospel Music Workshop of America, the Charles E. Coates Chorale, and the host choir, the Allen Jones Chorale Ensemble, will be featured.

For more information please call 456-8038 or 233-2296.

ST. PIUS V. CHURCH

St. Pius V. Church will sponsor the musical "Dream Girls" on Saturday, Dec. 14 at 2 p.m. at the Lyric Theatre, Mt. Royal Ave. Box seats are $34.50, Orchestra: $32.50, 1st Mezzanine: $27.50, 2nd Mezzanine: $22.50 For tickets call: 669-0512, 728-1382 or 578-8969.

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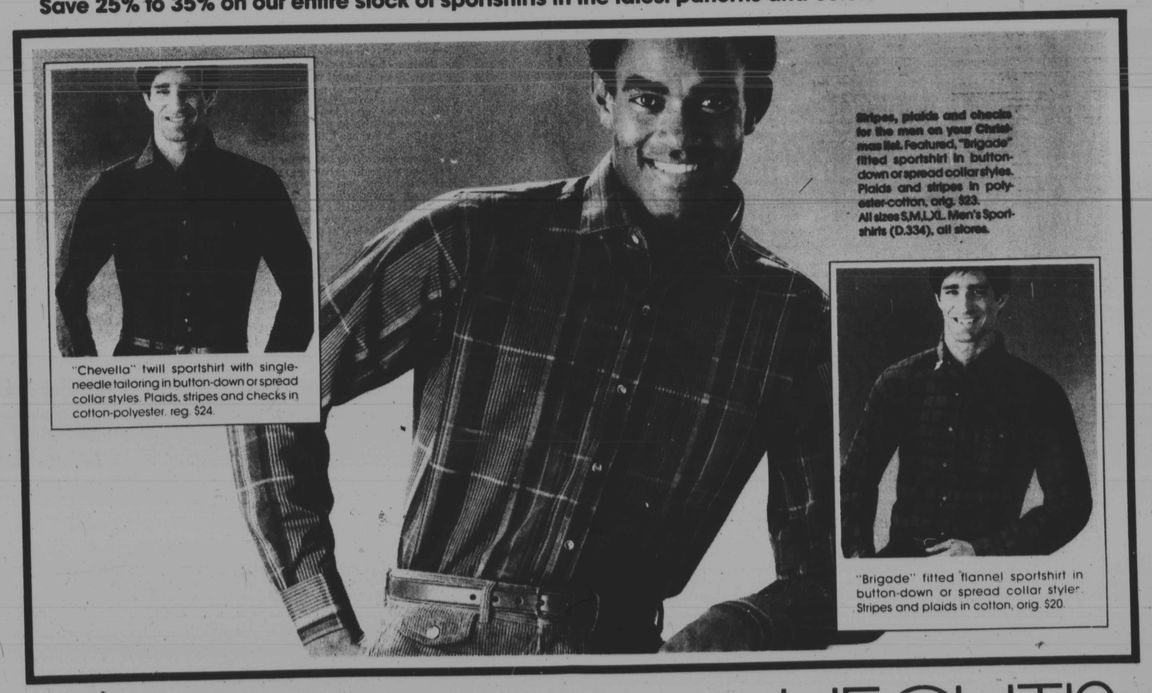

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