William Thomas: A handy-man who works to serve

By LaMont Curry
AFRO Staff Writer

Although necessity is common-thought to be the mother of in-ention, William Thomas, 84, is riven by a desire to serve peo-e. He is an inventor whose time shared.

"He's a likeable, easy-going an who likes to do things for eople. He tinkers and tinkers ith things until he comes up ith something useful for hers," said his daughter, Mrs. lary Brooks.

"He's a genius that has never een given a chance because he's lack.

"When we were children," said is sister, Mrs. H.N. Gibson, "he ould dream of houses he wanted build for us."

Born in 1901 in Howard County, ID, Thomas designed a tubeless re in 1924.

"He dreamed up a tire-woke up nd made it," said Mrs. Gibson. He was serious... He contacted lawyer, got a patent and sent it to Washington, but soon learned that he was a black man (in the '20s) trying to break into a white man's game." Thomas sees it differently.

"Things were changing so fast it became outdated in no time. My invention didn't amount to a row of peas," he said.

Thomas, who has never been to a traditional training program, is a mechanic by trade. He was employed 50 years by Freemont Auto Parts, a car recycling shop that recently moved to Jessup.

His 1924 tubeless tire was designed with springs instead of air, which eliminated the poten-tial of blow-outs. Until that time tire hubs were made of wood, but

William Thomas

a revolution in the industry ushered in the steel-framed hubs which proved to be to heavy for his tubeless idea, he said.

"He does it for other people, not for fame or fortune," said his daughter.

"When people were falling in-to the harbor, he designed a safe-ty net to catch people. He actual-ly drew up the concept and sub-mitted it to Mayor Schaefer," she said.

"They responded, but said the nets would interfere with the boats (along the docks) and would therefore pose another pro-blem," he said.

Thomas' latest invention is designed to prevent trailer trucks from jack-knifing, but discussed the details off the record to pro-tect the idea.

He has built a model which is in Washington, D.C. and was ready to submit a proposal to the proper authorities when he took sick last April and was admitted to the Veterans Hospital. It's been on the back burner, he said, but it won't be for long.

He combs alleys for parts that he converts into wagons for children, etc., attributing his gifts to motherwit and common sense.

"There are floor lamps all over this town that be made with marbles, broken glass and plaster of paris. He just gives gifts or discovers that things are broken and sets out to fix them. His flower and Christmas gardens are famous in his com-munity. He lives to serve others. That mind of his stays occupied.

"Can you imagine a pocket-book made out of an inner tube? He's done it," said his daughter who paused to ask aloud, "I wonder what he did with it?"

His sister summed it up. "Slaves built this country from scratch and Billy is from a generation just behind the slaves. He knows how to create from scratch... He knows how to make something from nothing. Today's children should understand how valuable his spirit is-he's got a lot to give."

The late Del. Joe Chester saluted

Approximately 150 people turn-ed out on a Saturday night in November to pay tribute to the late Del. Joseph A. Chester, Sr., at the Fifth Regiment Armory's Officers' Dining Room. Del. Chester represented East Baltimore in the Maryland House of Delegates for 16 years.

During his tenure, he served on the Ways and Means Committee, the Appropriations Committee for Health and Environment and the Task Force for Prison Reform.

The event was sponsored by the New Era Democratic Club of East Baltimore, Inc., — Leroy Kirkland, president, and coor-dinated by Thomas Saunders. Proclamations, citations and reflections were presented by City Council President Clarence H. "Du" Burns; State Senator Nathan Irby; Del. Hattie Har-rison; Del. Clarence "Tiger" Davis; and Ms. Alma T. Bell representing Mayor Schaefer.

After which in a show of unity, the attendees joined hands mak-ing a chain around the room and sang, "We Are the World."

Other notables in attendance were: Fannie Mae Alston (the late delegate's daughter), Del. Wendell Phillips, Attorney Dwight Pettit, Doris M. Johnson, Carolyn Colvin, Norman Brailey, Travis Winkey, Marie Hender-son, Lillian B. Jones, and serving as hostesses were members of the North Central Young Democratic Coalition.

Community Calendar

A course on Stress Manage-ment and Prevention will be taught at the OASIS club Hecht's Reisterstown Plaza from 1:00 to 3:00 p.m. from January 13 to March 17. Nancy Tankelson will be the instructor.

STRESS MANAGEMENT

The OASIS club, a club for peo-ple 50 years of age or older, is a cooperative effort of the Baltimore City Commission on Aging, The Maryland Institute's Arts and Aging Program, and Hecht Company.

For further information call 396-2799.

Presenting Baltimore, Inc. and The American Crossword Federation announce **Presenting Baltimore's First Annual Crossword Open** to be held February 28 - March 2, 1986. Headquarters for the Crossword Open is The Baltimore Plaza Hotel at the Inner Harbor.

ANNUAL CROSSWORD OPEN

Puzzles have been commission-ed especially for this tournament and are designed for people of all ages and interests. Cash and other prizes will be awarded.

Special events planned for the participants include a Reception Dinner at the Aquarium and an unusual Baltimore Tour.

For further information and registration brochures call Presenting Baltimore, Inc. at (301) 539-1344.

The Easter Seal Society of Central Maryland provides a Voca-tional Readiness Program (VRP) for adults with neurological impairments resulting from brain injuries due to accidents, brain tumors, con-genital learning disabilities, and stroke.

VOCATIONAL READINESS PROGRAM

Services include diagnostics and a five-day-a-week program. The VRP prepares individuals for actual job training or job placement. In addition to voca-tional services, psycho-social and cognitive services are also provided. For more information call Lisa Reeves, Easter Seal Society of Central Maryland, 355-0100.

TRADE APPRENTICES

The Baltimore Metropolitan Chapter of Associated Builders & Contractors Inc. is currently ac-cepting apprenticeship applica-tions. Trades offered are: Elec-trical, Sheet Metal, Carpentry and Plumbing.

If interested apply in person at 5716 York Road on THURSDAYS ONLY

TIMES 9:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. and 1:30 to 4:00 p.m.

Applications are accepted January through September.

SUPPORT FOR MENTAL ILLNESS

The Alliance for the Mentally Ill of Baltimore is sponoring a support meeting for families or primary care givers of persons with mental illness. The meeting will be held at 7:30 p.m. on Tues-day, JANUARY 14, 1986 at the Anchor Fence Building, 6500 Eastern Avenue in Highlandtown.

For more information, call 732-8634 or 467-9797.

SCHOLARSHIP BREAKFAST

The Howard L. Cornish Chapter of The Morgan State University Alumni Association will sponsor The First Annual Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Scholar-ship and Recruitment Breakfast on Saturday, January 11, 1986 - 8:30 a.m. at The Forum. Donation $15.00 For further information call 664-6041 or 462-2066.

Holiday Special
20% OFF
the regular subscription price

The Perfect Christmas Gift!

With an AFRO-AMERICAN Gift Subscription you can:
- Shop Early
- Shop At Home
- Avoid The Crowds

A fine gift for your family and friends. It will bring many hours of reading enjoyment in the years to come.

Take Advantage of Our Holiday Special

Use the order form below to fill out the names and addresses of relatives and friends on your list.

Enclose Payment and Mail To Us Today!

AFRO Holiday Gift Order Form

Gift Card From ____ Edition ____ For-Name ____ Address ____ City ____ State ____ Zip ____

Gift Card From ____ Edition ____ For-Name ____ Address ____ City ____ State ____ Zip ____

Gift Card From ____ Edition ____ For-Name ____ Address ____ City ____ State ____ Zip ____

My Subscription
Edition ____ Name ____ Address ____ City ____ State ____ Zip ____

Special Holiday Offer

SINGLE EDITION	U.S. Mail Rates
☐ Baltimore Tuesday	☐ 6 Mos. $9.60
☐ Baltimore Friday	☐ 1 Year $17.60
☐ Washington Tuesday	☐ 2 Years $31.20
☐ Washington Friday	☐ 3 Years $41.60
☐ New Jersey	
☐ Richmond	

	U.S. Mail Rates
☐ New England	☐ 6 Mos. $10.40
☐ Philadelphia	☐ 1 Year $20.80
☐ N. Carolina	☐ 2 Years $36.80
☐ S. Carolina	☐ 3 Years $46.40
☐ National	

COMBINED EDITIONS — U.S. Mail Rates (Included Postage)
☐ Baltimore Tuesday and Friday — ☐ 6 Mos. $17.60 — ☐ 2 Years $60.80
☐ Washington Tuesday and Friday — ☐ 1 Year $35.60 — ☐ 3 Years $77.60

Please Enclose Your Payment

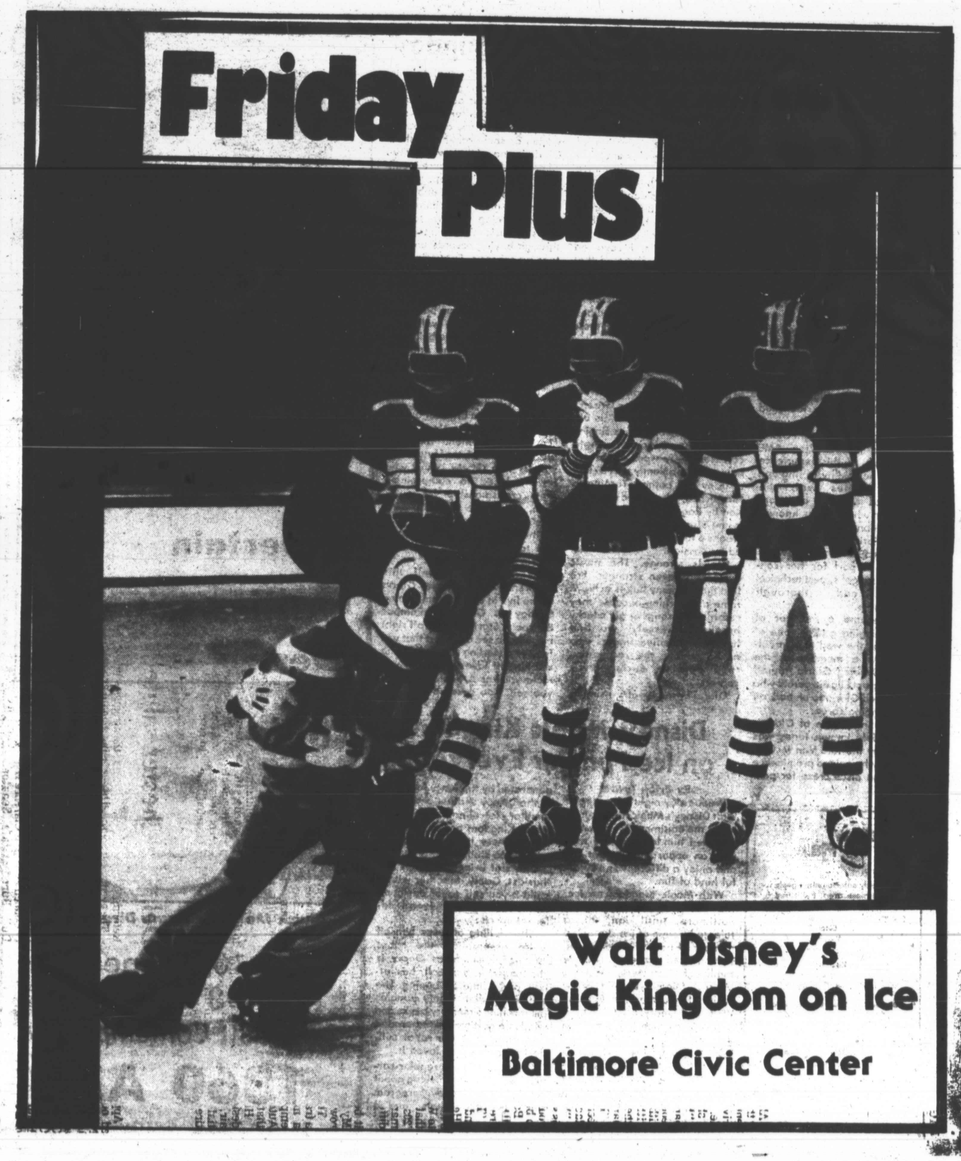
OFFER EXPIRES JAN. 31st, 1986

Check - Money Order - Visa - Master Card
CHARGE CARD NUMBER ____ EXPIRES ____
Send To:
The AFRO-AMERICAN Newspapers
P.O. Box 1857 • Baltimore, MD 21203

We're open!

PIMLICO
6310 PARK HEIGHTS AVE. • BALTIMORE, MD 21215
664-5100

Come one, come all! To our new McDonald's restaurant. There's all your favorite McDonald's food, plus a few extra surprises, too. So, come on in and help us celebrate.
There's fun waiting for the whole family at McDonald's.

IT'S A GOOD TIME FOR THE GREAT TASTE

McDonald's SM