IF YOU ASK ME

By Bettye Moss

Smile orchids

Smile orchids to the 15 Douglass High School students who exhibited real talent when they sang at the George F. Bragg Church School Fund Dinner on Monday evening at the Palladium.

Special orchids to the soloist. **Derrick Miller, Charles Nolan** and **La'Tarsha Bridgeforth.** Perfectly beautiful — their rendition of "Prepare Ye the Way of the Lord."

Also deserving orchids-pianist, **Mrs. Muriel Fitzgerald;** and the director, **Miss Jewel C. Churn.**

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Scallions to those adults in the audience who kept chatting while these young people were singing.

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Cuff note: Douglass High School choir presents The Messiah this Sunday at 4 in the school auditorium.

Plenty of sunshine in the voices of these young women we met at the Bragg dinner, WJZ-TV employees — **Karen Brown,** financial accountant; **Toni Robinson,** producer, and **Valerie Bacote,** a production assistant.

And there, with music in her voice, lovely **Jovita Montgomery,** the addiction research center employee.

—

More smile orchids to the 4 Morgan State University students who entertained at the Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity Founders' Day Sunday at the Forum. What delightful voices they have, and now moving their "Greatest Love of All," and "The Lord Be Praised."

They are: **Elizabeth Norman, Charneta Edwards, Jiywanita Turner** and Craig Johnson, plus **John Stanley,** who was at the piano.

And, orchids to these usually pleasant ladies met at the Alpha events, **Mrs. Shirley A. Hux,** the retired Ft. Howard employee; and **Mrs. Annette Huff,** the retired teacher, and wife of **Nathaniel Huff,** the Md. State Teachers' Association exec. and secretary of the Alpha chapter.

Happy mothers

The distinguished speaker at the founders' day celebration sponsored by Delta Lambda Chapter of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity on Sunday at the Forum was **Jesse Joseph Harris.**

He is the Social Work Consultant to the Army Surgeon General and Chief, Social Work Services, Walter Reed Army Medical Center.

And, he is 53, a native Baltimorean. (He grew up in the 1600 block E. Biddle St., is a graduate of Dunbar High, Morgan State U., 1958; holds master's degrees from both Howard and the U. of Md., where he also earned his doctorate.

And, he is an Alpha man.

Proudest person in the Sunday audience was his 83-year-old mother, **Mrs. Louise M. Harris.** Years ago, she was a sales lady at the Charm Centre the black-owned dress salon on Pennsylvania Ave. and later at Franklin-Simon in Mondawmin.

Her husband, Rev. Jesse Joseph Harris, was assistant minister of Memorial Baptist Church and owner of a corner grocery. He died in 1955.

Inspiring

In an inspiring speech, entitled,, "The African-American Male; Alpha Phi Alpha's Challenge," Col. Harris urged his listeners to reach back into their communities and use their talents and resources to salvage young people

Nice gesture: The speaker recalled the people who helped him when he began his Army career 28 years ago — "my father who instilled values I hold dear," and other role models like the corner grocer, Morgan U. English prof., **Walter Fisher** and Morgan U. psychology chair, **Dr. Roger K. Williams"** who played a major role in shaping my professional nature . . .

Speaker's other kin in the audience-his wife, **Mrs. Ruth Cipriani Harris** vocational rehab counselor with the Md. State Department of Education; and their daughter, **Bonita Harris, administrative assistant at the National Association of Social Work in D.C.**

Other Harris offspring, daughter, Gwyennette Maupin, Youngstown, Ohio nurse; and son, David, director of a micro computer lab in Riverside, Calif.

Martin K. Austin, Jr., and **Joseph B. Bracy** chaired the founders' day event. Charles R. Salter is president.

Cuff note: Hope Alpha men will make copies of the Harris speech and share it with the general public. It was terrific — with plenty of good advice.

Remember

Remember the family of **Dr. Maurice D. Doles.** He was the pioneer dentist who practiced in our city and near his home in Glen Burnie for 56 years. (Remember when his office at Dolphin and Pennsylvania Ave.?)

Dr. Doles died Nov. 20. He was 90. Funeral services were Nov. 25 at Enon Baptist Church, where he was trustee for many years. Dr. Doles helped establish the dental clinic at Provident Hospital and was former president of the Maryland Dental Association, served as vice president of Frontiers International and belonged to Alpha Phi Alpha and Chi Delta Mu Fraternities, and was an NAACP life member and a founder of the Furnace Branch Civic Association.

Survivors: — His wife, **Waltye Anderson Doles;** and

(Continued on Page B8)

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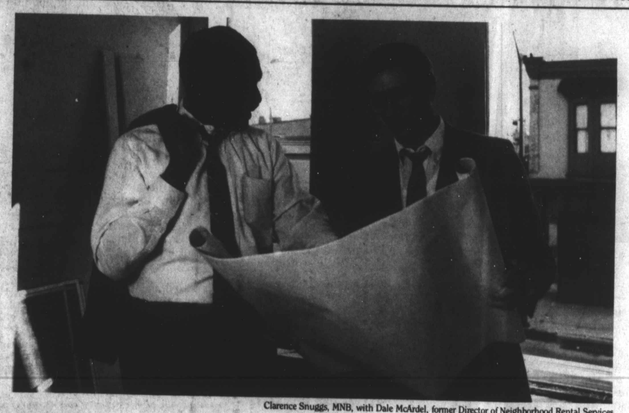

Clarence Snuggs, MNB, with Dale McArdel, former Director of Neighborhood Rental Services.

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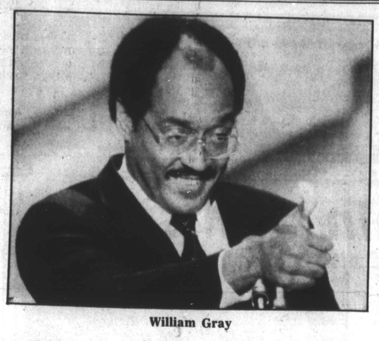


William Gray

Cong. William Gray is named fourth highest leader in the House

WASHINGTON — Rep. Bill Gray of Philadelphia, a black minister - turned - politician, trounced two other key Democrats Monday to capture the fourth highest leadership spot in the House of Representatives.

The top Democratic and Republican leaders were re-elected without opposition to direct the chamber's work in the 101st Congress, which starts Jan. 3.

Gray, who is stepping down after two terms at the helm of the influential House Budget Committee, trounced Reps. Mary Rose Oakar, D.-Ohio, and Mike Synar, D.-Okla., in a three-way race to become chairman of the House Democratic Caucus.

The 47 - year - old Gray, who is beginning his sixth term, won the post on the first ballot, capturing 146 votes. Oakar had 80 votes and Synar won 33.

The caucus coordinates activities and issues for the party's 260 members and four delegates. Although the post means little outside Washington, it offers a high-visibility podium within the party and can serve as a stepping stone toward more senior leadership positions.

House Speaker Jim Wright of Texas, Democratic leader Tom Foley of Washington and assistant leader Tony Coelho of California were unopposed for their posts.

Republican leader Bob Michel of Illinois, who has served in the House for 32 years, was elected to a fifth term as leader of the 175 Republicans, the minority party in the House.

Rep. Dick Cheney, R.-Wyo, was unopposed in his bid to become Michel's deputy, replacing Rep. Trent Lott, R.-Miss., who won a Senate seat.

Rep. Jerry Lewis, R.-Calif., won a 85-82 victory over Rep. Lynn Martin, R.-Ill., as chairman of the House Republican Conference, the third-highest job in the House GOP leadership.

Michel, in his acceptance speech, referred to the ethics of House members and called for reforms, including a bipartisan task force to draft new ethics standards. His remarks criticized the current House tenor without specifically pointing to the investigation of Speaker Wright.

Wright is under investigation by the House ethics committee for an unusual book royalty arrangement and actions undertaken for wealthy constituents.

Michel said sternly, "I believe we must more clearly define our ethics rules, and then we have to enforce them. The record of enforcement in this House is a national disgrace."

For his part, Wright did not mention his troubles, but signaled he did not plan to hold the position for the decade that his predecessor, Tip O'Neill of Massachusetts, was speaker.

Wright's agenda ranged from a clean air bill to trying "to clean up" American business practices such as mergers and leveraged buyouts that are concentrating the nation's wealth in fewer hands and burdening corporations with unprecedented debt. Other items included election reform legislation, a uniform poll closing law and energy security.

The public speaks out on housing woes

By Alisa Samuels
AFRO Staff Writer

Oct. 27, 1988 is not a historical day for most of the world, but in Baltimore it's the day that got the ball rolling.

That day, the first of six public housing forums was held at the St. Michael and All Angels Church on St. Paul and 20th Streets where the city asked residents to "speak your mind" on Baltimore's housing.

And speak their minds, the citizens did.

"We asked people to come out and tell us what is it that is troubling you in your neighborhoods," said Vera P. Hall, Fifth District. She is chairperson of the Council's housing committee.

A forum was held in each of the six councilmanic districts.

At a press conference-breakfast Dec. 5 at the Rivoli Building on East Fayette Street, Hall and Council women Mary Pat Clarke and Iris G. Reeves, agreed the public made useful suggestions to help rid the city of dilapidated and unkempt houses and to pass better housing legislations.

The major recommendation was for the formation of an enforcement measure that would force citizens to abide city housing codes.

Earlier this year, Hall introduced Bill 305, a unique bill that would issue parking ticket-like citations to tenants and or home owners who fail to keep their areas clean, safe and decent. The bill intends to do what the residents asked for: provide enforcement.

"We were on target," Hall said about Bill 305's intentions.

The piece of legislation, which would enable housing inspection officers to issue a $25 fine to violators for each housing code violation, is scheduled to be voted upon in the City Council in a few weeks.

"This fine says, 'okay, if you don't want to do it (take corrective action), we'll take $25 and then if you don't like that, you come to court'," said Council President Clarke during the breakfast.

Other recommendations included, creating citizen control groups to inspect neighborhoods for trash, a stricter Housing Court and eradicating vacant houses in neighborhoods.

A rather drastic recommendation was to post photos of housing code violators around the city.

Hall called that suggestion a "negative incentive" to get people to obey the law.

Michael V. Seipp, deputy commissioner of the housing department, said there are 5400 vacant properties in the city, which often lead to blight and debris for neighborhoods.

The housing committee with Seipp's assistance discovered unoccupied houses was a major problem for the city.

With vacant houses, the city can tell the owner to "fix it up, tear it down or here we come," said Clarke.

"But what about that unoccupied house which does not yet qualify as a vacant house, because it looks like every other house on the block, except for one problem — nobody lives there anymore?," added Clarke

Unoccupied houses pose fire, break-in and neighborhood-deterioration threats to row house neighborhoods Clarke said.

Currently, Baltimore is without a law that addresses unoccupied housing, but Hall and Councilman Joseph T. "Jody" Landers over the summer introduced Bill 157 that would make it unlawful for a building to remain unoccupied for more than 180 days, unless the owner has a permit.

Seipp said an informal survey was conducted, tallying a list of 121 unoccupied houses in the city.

"The results were fairly interesting and varied, which makes it much more difficult to legislate around the issue," Seipp said.

The survey, which began in July and ended the first of this month, concluded for example, 10 homes were involved in state litigation, for one reason or another, such as, the death of the homeowner, 12 owners opted to keep properties unoccupied and seven homes were under active rehabilitation.

Baltimore does not have a law that mandates a homeowner keep his home occupied.

The study also revealed many of the owners were small landlords who needed financial assistance to make repairs.

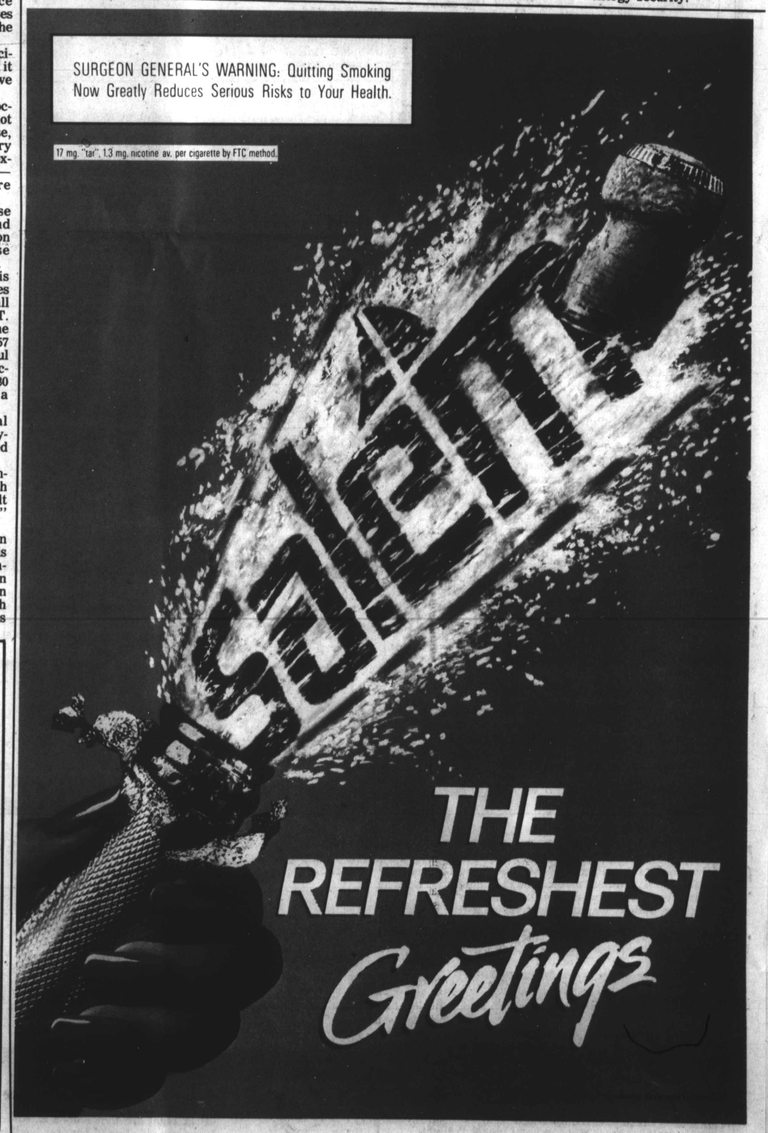
Thirty-one of the homes became reoccupied and moved off the list said the deputy housing commissioner.

Seipp came to this conclusion for fighting Baltimore's housing problems: "We need big programs from federal or state governments. The city can't do it alone."

How crucial is vacant housing to Baltimore?

"One vacant property out in Forest Park, Calloway-Garrison or Windsor Mills could stop homeowners from wanting to purchase and live in that community," Seipp said.

Hall, members of the Citizens Planning and Housing Association and Housing and Community Development will review the public's suggestions.

"Nothing is definite and nothing is final," said Hall.

National Security Adviser, Lt. Gen. Colin Powell was named by President Reagan to one of the Army's top military commands and promoted to four-star general. If confirmed by the U.S. Senate, Powell, 51, would take over command of the U.S. Forces Command — overseeing over one million active and reserve Army troops in the continental U.S. and Alaska next Spring.