THIS WEEK IN BLACK AMERICA

MILESTONE: Department of Health and Human Services Secretary Dr. Louis K. Sullivan served as the keynote speaker for the groundbreaking of a new health center named in honor of noted Washington, D.C. physician Dr. Edward C. Mazique.

EDUCATION: Nation of Islam Leader Louis Farrikan provoked both anger and praise when he spoke before black students at the University of Maryland in College Park. The controversial leader drew heavy criticism from white and Jewish student groups who branded his recent speeches as racist and anti-semitic.

BUSINESS: The nation's only black owned airline, Golden Pacific is facing bankruptcy. The Arizona based airline has been unable to secure a loan from area banks and it's owner, Philip Aaron, has filed a civil rights complaint with the U.S. Department of Transportation alleging the banks and the Kingman Airport Authority, where the airline is housed, have conspired to close his business.

YOUTH: Malik Smith, the 18 year old son of actress Beverly Todd ("Lean On Me") was bludgeoned to death following a verbal altercation with another man in the small town of West Valley City, Ut. Authorities have arrested John Tavo Leota, also 18, who according to witnesses,became angered when Smith approached his girlfriend for a dance. Leota is being held in the West Valley City jail without bail for second-degree murder.

SPORTS: Los Angeles Lakers center Kareem Abdul-Jabbar was fined $500 and ordered to pay $840 for an incident involving an assault on a fan who filmed the basketball player without permission during a stroll through a shopping mall in Phoenix last April.

LAW: Rape charges will not be filed against Singer Al B. Sure. According to The Los Angeles District Attorney's Office substantial evidence collaborating Monique Edward's story could not be found. Edwards alleged she was gang raped by Sure and two other men. However it was discovered she, had indeed dated Sure prior to the incident which she earlier denied.

POLITICS: Embezzlement charges were dismissed against Former Black Panther Huey P. Newton after he pleaded no contest to one count of misappropriation of funds. Newton, 47, headed a community school project in Oakland, CA. which closed 7 years ago. $300,000 in state and federal grants was awarded to the school project. Newton has had several run-ins with the law dating back to the time he established the Black Panther group in the late 1960's.

INTERNATIONAL: Saying he did not wish his country's heritage to become embroiled in black America's historical disputes, Egypt's Minister of Culture Abdel-Latif Aboul-Ela said ancient Egyptians were neither black or white but simply Egyptian. Aboul-Ela said although Egypt is an African country, it does not belong to Africa at large and is an entity unique unto itself.

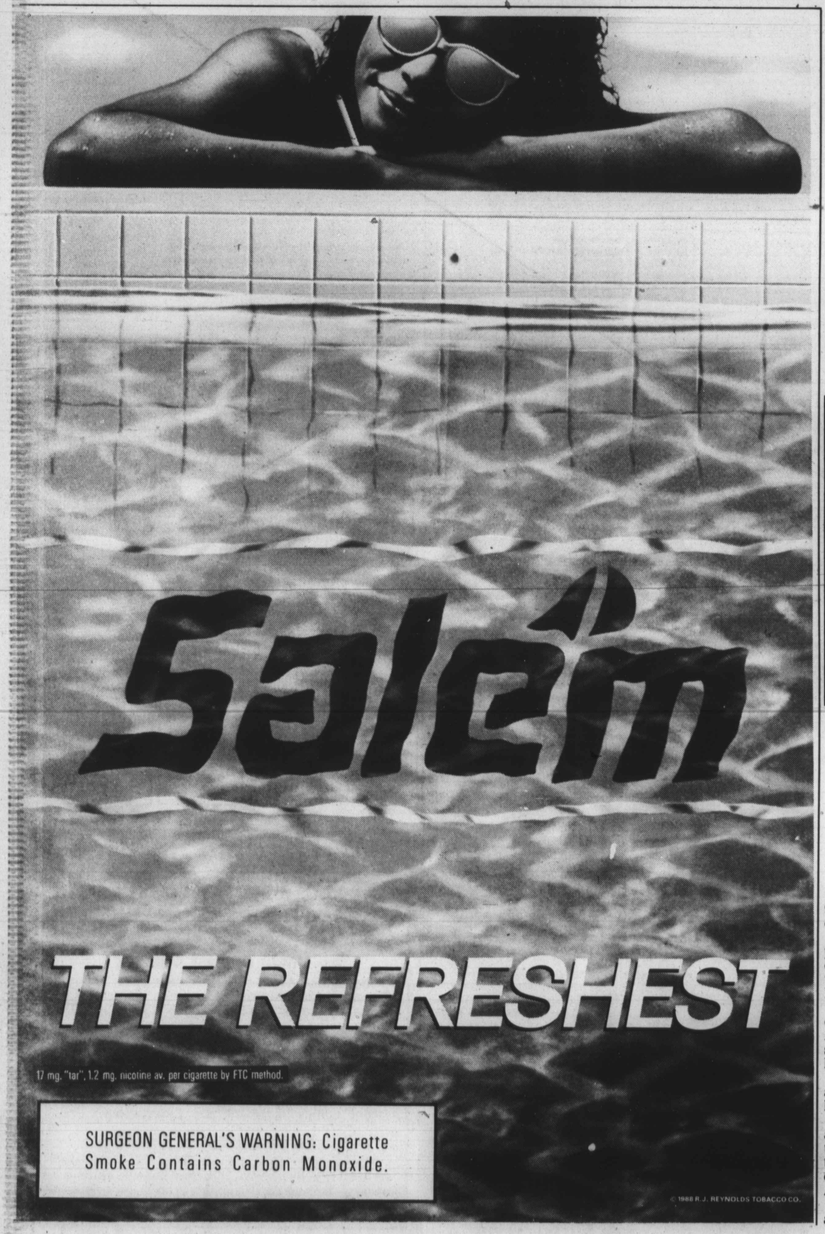
RELIGION: A new Gallup study shows that American blacks are more likely to attend church than whites. According to the report 85 percent of American blacks said they had church affiliations — compared to 69 percent of the whites surveyed.

ART: The Brian Lanker photo exhibition "I Dream A World: Portraits of Black Women Who Changed America" has been extended through April 16 at the District's Cocoran Gallery of Art. The collection will embark on a nationwide tour following its Washington engagement.

THEATRE: Actress Sabrina Le Beauf, who is featured as Sandra on "The Cosby Show", will star in an up-coming production of "As You Like It" at Washington's Shakespeare Theater at The Folger. The production will run May 2 through June 18.

REMEMBRANCES: Thousands marked the fifth anniversary of the death of soul superstar Marvin Gaye in services and activities around the nation. Gaye, who was born in Washington, D.C., would have been 50 years old April 2.

PEACHTREE — In downtown Atlanta, over 40 miles of roads are named "Peachtree," but there are no peach trees in the area. And so, Mayor Andy Young, prepares to plant a peach tree, provided by peach farmer Robert Dickey.



Brutal Norfolk murder

NORFOLK, Va — Norfolk authorities are investigating the deaths of four young men whose bloodied bodies were found stuffed in a car parked in a local neighborhood.

"This was a very brutal scene," Cpl. Bob Haynes, of the Norfolk police, said Friday.

"I've been on the police force nearly 22 years and this is probably the first time we've run across one quite like this," he said of the murders.

Two of the bodies were first discovered Friday by a resident of the Norview East neighborhood around 8:30 a.m., who saw a victim's leg sticking out of a back seat window.

A man's blood-spattered body was discovered in the back seat of the late-model silver Volvo, above another man lying on the floor.

Strong odors and spattered blood led police to open the trunk of the car, which had Delaware plates. The bodies of two more young men were discovered, stuffed on top of each other, police said.

All of the victims were black males who appeared to be in their late teens or early 20s, Hayes said

The bodies had numerous wounds and the men in the back seat appeared to have been stabbed, authorities said. Located near the men were several stuffed teddy bears.

NORFOLK, VA — The car in which the bodies of four men were found. The feet of one of the victims, sticks out of a side window.

Muslims begin Ramadan

Ramadan is the name of the 9th month on the lunar calendar.

All Muslims, of the age of puberty, unless they are sick or on a journey, are obligated to fast the 29 or 30 days of Ramadan.

The name, Ramadan, is derived from "Ramad", an Arabic word which means sc' chedness and excessive heat.

The Ramadan fast serves as a protection against the heat sins and passions.

The month of fasting begins at the s.ghting of the moon on the horizon at sunset. It is anticipated that this year's observance will begin around April 7th.

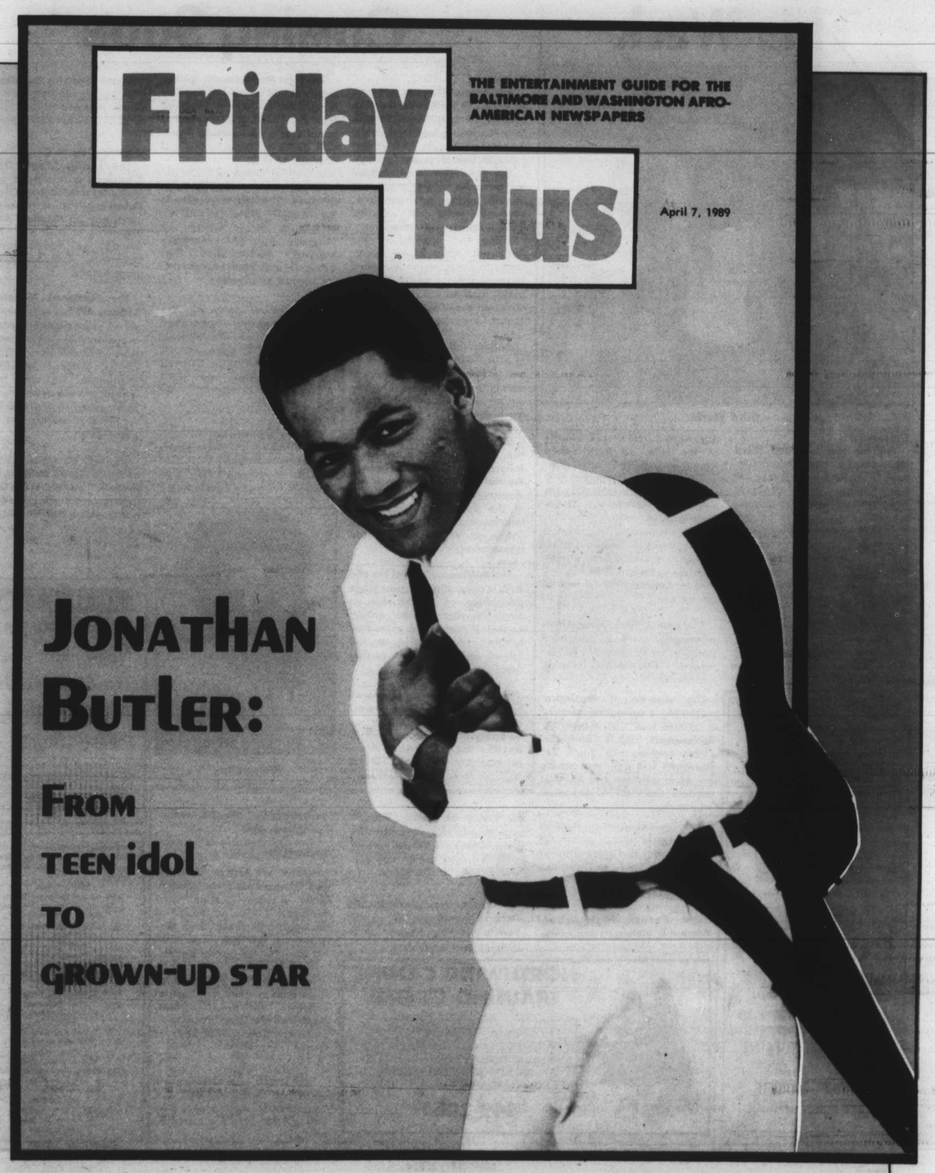
During the fast month, one abstains from food, drink and sex during the daylight hours.

And the night is spent in reading the Qu'ran, making additional prayers and in devotional and meditative exercises.

Ramadan serves also to commemorate the Qu'ran.

The Holy Qu'ran first revealed to Prophet Muhammad during the month of Ramadan.

Qu'ran describes itself as a "guidance and mercy for all of mankind."

The Qu'ran further teaches that fasting is not an institution that began with Muslims; that it was prescribed for the God fearing that came before the advent of Al-Islam.

Whether practiced properly or not, fasting is prescribed in most religions.