Disabled protest state neglect

By Aziza Browne

They call themselves, "Marylanders with Disabilities and their presence was unmistakable as they arrived in a parade of wheelchairs at the State Office Building, 301 W. Preston St.

It all happened, Wednesday to launch what they called a campaign to improve the State attended care program.

Although their numbers were small, 10-12 wheelchair bound demonstrators, the group was able to attract a sizable crowd of on-lookers for the noon-time rally, who paused long enough to sign petitions and listen to speeches by members of the group.

The rally, organized by residents of the Franklin Center, 410 W. Franklin St., was held to call attention to problems in the attendant care program. This includes charges by disabled clients that attendants hired by the state to provide them with personal care such as bathing, dressing and preparing meals, have been neglecting and abusing them.

"We were getting complaints from tenants that some have been robbed by attendants.

"Others have been physically and sexually abused or left unattended in bed for days because an attendant failed to report to work, said Mike Bardoff, a tenant organizer from Baltimore Neighborhoods hired to work with the Franklin Center tenants.

William Fills, a Franklin Center resident, feels that much could be done to strengthen and improve the attendant care program if more funds were allocated to provide attendants with a decent wage and attract better quality workers to the program. Attendants currently earn $10-$25 per day for as much as 24 hours of duty.

Handicapped citizens gather to protest their plight for greater independence at the state office building in Baltimore.

"The attendants who provide this help are overworked and badly underpaid, receiving barely minimum wage and have no benefits. This makes it hard to attract and keep the best workers. As a result, the clients suffer," Fills noted.

Representatives from the Governor's staff met with the group on Tuesday prior to the rally, but offered little hope that anything could be done about their demands at this time.

"I'm not proud of the personal care program, nor am I comfortable with it. Given what we pay, many of the people working are not the most desirable," Nelson Sabatini, Deputy Secretary for Health Care Policy, Finance and Regulation, admitted.

But the problem lies, according to Sabatini, in the restrictions on spending imposed by the state's affordability cap which limits the amount of money available to the attendant care program and other such community-based, long-term care programs.

Wednesday's rally was not the first time public attention has been focused on the attendant care program. Two years ago, published reports chronicled a history of abuse and neglect of disabled residents at the Franklin Center.

According to Franklin Center resident and rally organizer, Walter Horton, few improvements were made.

This time, however, Franklin Center residents are determined to take their campaign for "independent living with dignity" to the public.

They say more rallies are planned and they are forming a coalition with other organizations concerned with issues affecting the disabled to carry the message all the way to the state capitol if necessary.

Community Calendar

The Cloisters Children's Museum

Mary Carter Smith, the "Griot," African storyteller, of Baltimore, celebrates Go Global at the Cloisters Children's Museum with a performance of authentic African tales and songs on Thursday, July 27 at 10:30 a.m. This delightful entertainer will be a treat for the entire family. The Museum is located at 10440 Falls Rd in Brooklandville. Call 823-2551.

Dance and Fashion Show

The Baltimore Chapter of the North Carolina Central University Alumni Association is sponsoring a "Summer Breeze," an annual scholarship dance and fashion show. The dance, fashion show will be held on August 18 from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. at Middle Branch Park and Yacht Club, 3301 Waterview Ave. Call 466-0207 or 466-5570.

Carnival Time

Everybody loves a carnival! Visit the Big Glen Burnie Carnival, July 28 through August 5 (except Sunday). Enjoy the thrills of more than 30 exciting rides, plus great food and a huge variety of games and prizes. Located just off Ritchie Highway in the heart of old Glen Burnie, the carnival runs from 7 p.m. to midnight. Admission is free. Call 269-1014 or 263-0608.

National Night out in Baltimore

Baltimore residents are being invited to join citizens across the country in supporting a nationwide crime prevention project called, "National Night Out," August 8, from 8 to 10 p.m. The project is being sponsored by the National Town Watch Association and co-sponsored locally by Baltimore Area Police Departments.

This special "Night Out" is a national crime prevention demonstration during which residents are asked to turn on out-door lights and spend the evening outside. Businesses and public establishments are also asked to show their support by lighting up their buildings from 8 to 10. Call 396-2441.

3 local winners in ACT-SO

By Elner W. Prater

The 12th annual Afro - American Cultural, Technological, and Scientific Olympics was held July 7-10, in Detroit Mich., as part of the National Convention of the NAACP.

Over 594 cities participated in this year's finals which involved over 1,500 youths in grades nine through twelve who exemplified excellene in 22 academic and cultural areas.

Nine of the contestants were from Baltimore. The excited contestants and their chaperones, ACT-SO committee members left Baltimore on Friday by bus.

The chaperones were Ms. Lily Brown, Ms. Elner Prater, and Mrs. Delmetia Reid. Mrs. Dolores Pierre, ACT-SO local chairperson, met the group in Detroit.

Sharing the bus from Baltimore were contestants and chaperones from Montgomery County and Washington, D.C.

Competitions were scheduled by the national ACT-SO director, Mrs. Barbara Coggins-McNeal, at various times throughout several days.

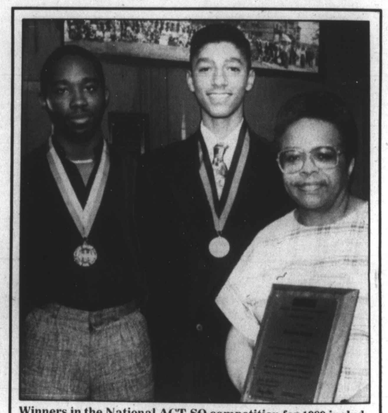
Each contestant was assigned a number on the day of registration and could perform only as his/her number was called.

Of the nine local participants: Roger Cunningham, dance; Leonard Evans, painting; Ureka Gordon, original poetry; Russell Harris, drawing;

Camara Kambon, original composition; Larry Murrill, computer science; Shawn Peterson, instrumental classical music; Sharon Thomas, original essay, and Kimberly Warden, oratorical presentation - three have returned as national winners.

They are Leonard, 18, Baltimore School of the Arts; Larry, 17, a Poly graduate and an M.I.T. freshman; and Shawn, 14, Friends School.

Further information about ACT-SO may be obtaincd by calling the Baltimore NAACP office.



Winners in the National ACT-SO competition for 1989 included, Leonard Evans, III (L) Shawn Peterson. They are accompanied by Dolores Pierre, Chairperson of the ACT-SO program.

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IF YOU ASK ME

By Bettye Moss

Orchirds to Eddie

Smile orchids to 52-year-old **Edward (Eddie) Vincent Woods.** He's the 32-year police veteran who was installed as Baltimore City's police commission this week.

Some 1,000 persons attended the impressive appointment ceremony in the James Weldon Johnson Auditorium at Coppin State College on Monday afternoon.

There were many tear jerkers-most moving for us when the new police chief introduced his wife of 29 years-**Alice Whye Woods,** and called her "my best friend, my confidante, the mother of our two daughters..my lovely wife.." And, then he turned in the direction of his mother, **Mrs. Inez Woods,** "without whom this day would not have been possible. Thank you, mom."

The hushed audience listened intently as he shared his dreams and plans, ("I know now what Martin Luther King Jr. meant when he said. 'I've been to the mountain top...my appointment is a significant achievement I did not think possible in 1957," (when he joined the force as a rookie, and now presides over a police force of 3,500 employees).

His pledges

There was applause, and even some "amens" as he thanked **Mayor Kurt L. Schmoke** for appointing him, praised his "esteemed predecessors" —**Edward Tilghman, Bishop Robinson, Frank Battaglio, Donald Pomerleau,** all of whom were present, save Robinson.

And thunderous applause and standing ovation for Mayor Schmoke, who was making his first public appearance since he was rushed to a hospital on Friday, and released in good health on Sunday.

The same enthusiastic reaction greeted the new commissioner's pledge, "I shall be a commissioner of all Baltimoreans, regardless of race, color and ethnic origin... and those under my command will exercise their duty in a fair manner..."

He outlined his priorities...the need for drug-related educational and community activities to fight the problem ("we can not arrest our way out of this problem"), and promised to be "a field commissioner who will visit every neighborhood and learn first hand..I will be a good listener..."

He emphasized this great concern for courtesy of staff and his commitment to making Baltimore a "safe and happier place for all segments of the community..we must work harmoniously..."

More orchirds

More orchids to these program participants—former police major, **McNeal Brockington** who gave the oath commentary, ("this is a proud moment for me.."), after which **Circuit Court Judge Kenneth L. Johnson** administered the oath with **Circuit Court Clerk Saundra Banks** witnessing.

The bible was presented by Rev. Arthur Reynolds, pastor of Grace Presbyterian Church, where the Woods family attends and the new commissioner is an elder.

More orchids to the Morgan State University Choir directed by **Dr. Nathan Carter,** Thrilling-the "If I Can Help Somebody" solo by **Janice Jackson,** and the very appropriate, "All In the Same Boat" by the choir. ("You've gotta help me...I've gotta help you...").

More tears

Another tear jerker, the two-minute invocation by the **Rt. Rev. John Ricard,** Catholic Auxiliary Bishop of Baltimore.

Excerpts: "We are assembled today to pray for our city that it may enjoy your constant protection and shelter. We pray also for our new commissioner who today will assume awesome responsibilities for the public safety of the citizens of Baltimore city.

"From this day forward may you be in front of him, that you may guide him, beside him that you may love him, behind him that you may protect him and above him that you may bless him..may he be as wise as Solomon as faithful as David, as strong as Sampson, as visionary as Moses..."

The audience responded with "amens".

Well -wishers

After the 73-minute ceremony, Commissioner Woods, his wife and daughters greeted guests for an hour in the Coppin Center.

There, the new chief hugged well-wishes-posed for photos with many of them. Punch and coffee and cakes were served and the police orchestra, Sounds of An Era, played background music.

Orchids to Mrs. Woods. She was gracious and a picture in a becoming two-piece white silk suit. She wore a white orchid. Many know her as the retire teacher who operates a beauty salon in northwest Baltimore.

* * *

In the crowd, a cross-section of city and state civic and political leaders, as well as family and friends, classmates from his days at Douglass High, Community College of Baltimore and Coppin, where he earned a bachelor's and master's degree in criminal justice.

* * *

Cuff note: The Woods family has much to celebrate. Daughter, Lynette, 17, is a June grad from Western High, who leave shortly for Va. State College.

Daughter, Edra, 23, a Towson State grad now employed by a Baltimore area bank, weds James Parker, son of **Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Parker,** (Ella), of Annapolis next month at Grace Church.

SIGNING IN—Police Commissioner Edward V. Woods signs in, as his wife (L) looks on. Chief Clerk Sandra Banks is at center. The installation was held at Coppin State College this week.

More orchids

More orchids to the city's five police officers recently promoted by Commissioner Woods. They attended Monday's ceremony, were seated with other support staff.

They are:

Deputy Commissioner Joseph W. Dixon, in charge of personnel, fiscal, internal investigation, education and training divisions.

Colonel Joseph S. Johnson, new Criminal Investigation Division commander.

Marcellus Boles promoted to rank of lieutenant colonel in the patrol division.

Linda J. Flood promoted to major, is Southwestern District commander.

William B. Smith, promoted to major, is director, personnel division.

* * *

Cuff notes: Faces in the crowd:- U.S.

Congressman Kwesi Mfume, former Congressman **Parren J. Mitchell, Comptroller Louis Goldstein, former Mayor Clarence Du Burns,** City Council president **Mary Pat Clark, Federal Judge John Hargrove,** who said of the new chief, "He's a tremendous person," and Md. HUD **Chief St. George Cross,** who called the event, "proud African-Americans making history in Baltimore."

Coppin State President **Calvin Burnett's** wife, **Greta** hosted in his absence, was receiving congrats from many who were on their first visit to the campus located on W. North Ave.

More cuff: Parking in the area was at a premium. Many visitors had to park on nearby Douglass High campus-at Warwick and Gwynns Falls and walk the four blocks to the Coppin auditorium. They were directed by uniform officers on foot, horseback and in patrol cars.

Sojourner-Douglass College graduates its largest class

Sojourner - Douglass College held it's ninth commencement exercise July 9, at the Dunbar Community School Auditorium. The class of 47 graduates is the largest in Sojourner-Douglass College's brief history.

The college graduated eight students in it's first year, one less than Harvard graduated in it's first year.

Keynote speaker Randall Robinson, executive director of TransAfrica, urged Sojourner - Douglass College's graduates to involve themselves in the mainstream of America's life.

He said "Unless we are sitting at the table, our interest go unprotected." The college awarded Randall Robinson the Doctor of Humane Letters Honorary Degree.

The college also awarded honorary doctoral degrees to Dr. Niara Sudarkasa, president of Lincoln University in Pennsylvania, and Dr. Benjamin Carson, Director of Pediatric Neurosurgery at Johns Hopkins Hospital.

Other platform guests included The Honorable Parren J. Mitchell (Congressman retired); Congressman Kwiesi Mfume; Delegate Hattie Harrison, member of the Maryland House of Delegates; Judge Robert B. Bell, Court of Special Appeals; and Rev. Marcus Woods, Sr., pastor of Providence Baptist Church.

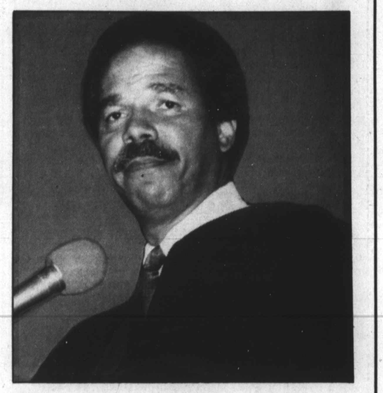
The valedictorian was James F. Wiley, the second male valedictorian in the college's history. The salutatorian was Gloria Smith-Dorsey. The senior class theme was "Strength Through Unity."

Dr. Charles W. Simmons, president of the college reflected on the mission of the college by speaking on it's commitment to quality education by saying "The highest order of skills developed through education are problem-solving skills. Sojourner - Douglass College has created a model which fosters problem posing and problem-solving by linking theory with practice."

Photos by Ricardo Gray

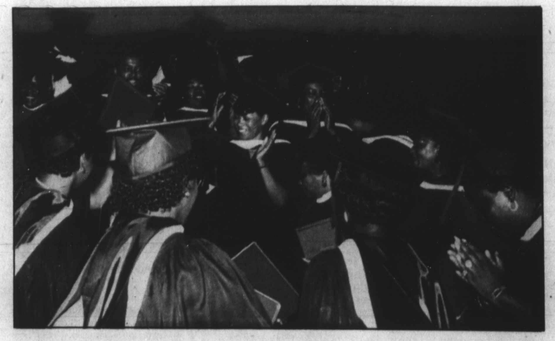
Dr. Niara Sudarkasa, president of Lincoln University of Pennsylvania awarded Doctor of Humane Letters degree.

Dr. Benjamin Solomon Carson, of the Department of Pediatric Neurosurgery at Johns Hopkins Hospital, Baltimore. Doctor of Humane Letters degree.



Randall Robinson, Executive Director of TransAfrica, recipient of Juris Doctor Degree from Harvard University, guest speaker at the commencement exercises.

Pictured during commencement activities are, L to R: Ex-Cong. Parren J. Mitchell, member of college Board of Trustees; Dr. Andrew Jones, Vice President of the college; Dr. Charles Simmons, college president, Dr. Niara Sudarkasa, Randall Robinson and Dr. Benjamin Carson.



The happy faces are graphic proof of the joy and excitement the graduating class of Sojourner-Douglass College exhibited at these ninth commencement exercises.