Columbia Capers

Children's travel club combines learning experience with fun

By Pinnie L. Ross

It all started this summer when Rutema Blake, playwright of "Some of the Children", and "No More Football For Me," decided she would organize a Traveling Club for small children, Junior and Misses, so that they would be able to learn through actual experience, in addition to reading about travel.

"Young People Traveling Club" the children wear T-shirt of black, white, gold and blue. The colors were worn according to groups. Each group had a special captain.

Early in the morning just before boarding the bus for their well-planned trips, they heard prayers from various community volunteers, including Grace Scott Dixon. Wilde Lake High School English specialist. The children learned what a Christian obligation was and held hands and prayed together.

Mrs. Blake was assisted by Iris Stevenson, Baltimore school teacher.

The group took turns to Washington, D.C., and visited the FBI building, Air and Space Museum and National Geographic.

Another day the group visited the African Embassy, and spent a whole day learning about African history.

"One must learn about himself," said Mrs. Blake.

Another day the children toured the East Wing of National Gallery.

According to Mrs. Blake, each day was a different experience for the eager group.

The club visited the Annapolis State House to learn about government, then to Ured the Naval Academy and ended the day with a boat ride.

The group was told about City Council, its functions, how to become a good citizen and how good citizens support their state. The older group was escted to criminal court, the young group to traffic court.

It was a fantastic experience for the Travel Club.

There are times when we are working and don't have time to take our children on these educational tours. If you are interested call Mrs. Blake at 730-6075.

Mrs. Blake is a veteran when it comes to helping children. Prior to moving to Columbia with her husband Dr. Vincent Blake she would sponsor picnics for 1,000 underprivileged children at Druid Hill Park.

She organized a group in Columbia called Mothers' for Youth whose purpose was to give shoes to underprivileged children by fund raisers such as flea markets, dashion shows and donations.

The playwright is the founder of The Little Tehater movement in Columbia. Its purpose is to help children express themselves in a positive form.

"If we black mothers don't provide for our children, they won't get it. The Little Theater has provided a stage for our children.

"I am not interested in making actresses and actors out of the children, I just want to build confidence in them, help them to become full children," Mrs. Blake said.

Her theater students performed at Morgan te University before an audience of 1,500 students.

She has had students from as far as southwest Washington to participate in the Little Theater Movement workshop.

The students also performed for the Howard County Board of Education in all middle schools in Columbia.

Mrs. Blake is the mother of four children, Sonzi and Simond, both students at McDonough School and Kirk and Kent students at Trinity in Elchester.

Thought for Today

God bless and help our children, for they are our future generation of tomorrow.

1,500 people

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mayor, and it was done thoroughly, with virtually no stone unturned.

Ken Wilson pointed up also the improvements that have been made in the city during Mayor Schaefer's reign, listing such plusses as the development of the Inner Harbor and the restoration of neighborhoods.

When it was Mayor's Schaefer's turn at the podium, he received a standing ovation, which he graciously acknowledged.

After thanking Wilson and all who came for the occasion, he too, pointed up the "Improved Baltimore" and reminded guests of the city's award". He also gave great credit to the employees of the city and the state and to the residents of neighborhoods throughout the city.

He spoke of the many city residents who take an interest in the city, who have pride in it and who contributed in any way, whether employed or not, to the city's improvement or to the improvement of the quality of life for the people of the city.

He spoke fondly of the cultural development and aliveness of the city, with its numerous and varied ethnic festivals flowering each year.

He ended on a note of positiveness by saying that he felt that, while he may have made some mistakes, he has been a pretty good mayor.

With that, he asked all to vote for him.

Wilson gave closing remarks, thanked all who helped to make the occasion a success and the affair ended with Mayor Schaefer greeting his many guests, who lingered for quite a while afterwards, engaging in pleasant conversation.

For the Wilsons, the affair was a smashing political and sound success. They managed to pull together for the occasion an amazingly broad spectrum of Baltimore's leadership. Quite a coup!

—Johnson

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colors.

The train bearer, Lynn Brown, wore white lace eyelet with an apricot underdress.

Rose bear, Nikki William, presented roses to the mothers of the bride and groom and to the groom's aunts who had helped to rear him. She wore a white lace dress.

Ringbearers wer, Shuan Underwood, the groom's cousin from Washington, D.C., and Ernest Johnson, the brides nephew from Oxen Hill, Md. They wore white tuxedos.

The groom was in all white, with tails, and matching accessories.

The best man was Keith Chapman, the groom's brother, of Detroit. Ushers were Tony, Kevin, Steve and Gary Chapman of Detroit, and Jeffrey Peterson of Wahington, D.C. and Karlos Motton of Baltimore all except Mr. Multon all are cousins of the groom.

The best man and ushers wore beige tuxedos, with shirts that were colorcoordinated with the maid-of-honor's and the bridesmaid's dresses.

Organist for the wedding was Louis Kane. Soloists were: Ms. Glynice Coleman who sang "You Needed Me," Ms. Brenda Underwood, who sang, "You Light Up My Life," and Ernest Johnson, III, the bride's brother who sang, "The Lord's Prayer."

Over 175 family members and guests attended the wedding and the reception.

The reception was held at Martin's West - Westminister, Village 190. The color scheme was the same as that of the wedding, with tablecloths of apricot, spice and peach. Each table contained a centerpiece of white carnations sprinkled with the apricot-spice-peach colors and a matching candel.

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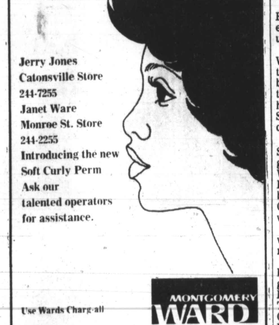
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Arena Players benefit

Lionel Jiggetts

Lionel Jiggetts, keyboard artist and The Infinite Experience are helping the Arena Players with a "Possible Dream" benefit this Friday, Saturday and Sunday at the Arena Playhouse.

This fund raising event, part of the Second Annual Invitational Festival at the Playhouse, features Calvin Brooks, singer; Miss Raitha Harris, Maryland's entry in the Miss Black Universe Pageant; and Maria Broom Brown and her dancers.

The Infinte Experience is composed of Morris Dow, guitar; Richard McCardell, bass and Jerome McCardell, percussion.

The Arena Players' Season 27 opens Sept. 21 with Vinette Carroll and Micki Grant's "Don't Bother Me I Can't Cowe"

Calvin Brooks

Stephanie Mills, GQ, Towson Center

"Somewhere Over The Rainbow" will be at The Towson Center at Towson State University Sat., Sept. 8, when Stephanie Mills appears in concert at 8 p.m.

At age 15, Stephanie originated the role of Dorothy in "The Wiz" on Broadway, staying with the show for four years until it closed recently.

At 22, she has definitely grown up and has developed into a sensual song styiist with a new image. She is an exciting, soulful vocalist with an uncommonly powerful coive (she has never had a voice lesson). Mills capably handles diverse material displaying both soaring, pulsating funk and whispery, intimate soul.

Her new album "Whatcha Gonna Do With My Lovin" shows off the new Ms. Mills who combines in her artistry stunning vocal quality and style with an actresses insight. In concert, she is unbeatable.

She will appear with a 13 piece orchestra and back up singers.

GQ qill be the artists opening the Stephani Mills concert. They last appeared at Painters Mill Music Fair this past June with Pattie LaBelle and received rave reviews before 14,000 people at that engagement. Their Million Hit Single "Disco Nights" will be featured.

Isley's $2 Million Mansion seized by IRS for back taxes

By Ida Peters

"Winner Take All" is the name of Isley Brothers T-Neck Records' new album and hit single being currently distributed by CBS Records and now close to grossing more than $1 million in sales across the country.

With that in mind, the AFRO was disturbed to learn this week that several New York and New Jersey real estate holdings of the Isley Brothers have been seized by the Internal Revenue Service for failure to pay more than $650,000 in back taxes.

The Isley Brothers, Kelly, Rudolph, Ronald, Marvin, Chris and Ernie. They are being sued and not coming to the Civic Center Sunday as erroneously reported in Tuesday's AFRO.

Included is a $2 million dollar mansion owned by Ronald Isley in Alpine, N.J. Tax liens were placed on an unfinished home in Cresskill, N.J. and a health spa and restaurant in Westchester County, N.Y. Ronald is alleged to owe $58,000 in 1978 property taxes on the 10-bedroom home.

According to reports published in Variety, the entertainment bible, back income taxes owned by the family combo's members are: Marvin Isley, $150, 258; Ernest Isley, $150,264; Kelly Isley, $123,377; Ronald and Margaret Isley, $113,994; and Rudolph and Elaine Isley, $122,478.

The Isley Brothers are made up of two generations of brothers who have a unique history and an extensive career in pop music.

Kelly, Rudolph and Ronald, the three original Isley Brothers began their career in 1969. During their early years of performing, first on several small record labels and then on Motown, they were one of the most popular R&B groups around. They still are and their last five albums have sold more than a million copies each.

They are not currently touring - but will, later this year.

Their many early hits included "Shout" and "Twist and Shout".

A few years ago, Kelly, Rudolph and Ronald Isley decided to make a few changes and formed their own record company, T Neck Records.

Night Scene Seen

By Bob Matthews

Tropical Storm David effectively washed out our tour of night clubs for this week.

However, AFRO photographer Mark Gail, taking a leaf from the postoffice motto, snapped pictures of two of the city's barmaids, and brought back a report on one of the clubs.

BLACK VELVET CO.

Actually, the complete name of the club is Tee and Julia's Black Velvet Co., which is in the 1200 block N. Washington St. Coincidently, the owners of the club are Tee and Julia Hamilton.

According to Mark, the club has an upstairs room, which on Monday nights, features live jazz. And, on the jukebox in this room, is a collection of jazz classic, mixed in with current hits.

Motto of the club is "The place where old and new friends meet," and indications are that this is indeed a friendly bar where even on a night that a tropical storm raged, people were comfortably enjoying an evening out.

In fact, Mark spokes so favorably about the club, that we'll have to pay an immediate visit.

Have talked to a great many bar owners over the past few months, and the current disco craze seems to be the primary concern of most. Have been repeatedly asked my assessment of the disco scene, and how the future looks.

Well, a cursory look at history shows that music for dancing is always in the forefront, and disco is no exception. People love to dance, and will cling to anything that gives them a chance.

But, there are modifications. During the 1920s, history tells us that The Charleston, and dances of this type were popular. It went with the music of the era, and remained in vogue until replaced by the Lindy Hop around 1930.

Now bear in mind that the Charleston, Black Bottom, Snake Hips and othe dances of the 20s were all done without partners touching. Squares during this period were doing the waltz, two-step and fox trot — where partners held hands.

Robin Jordan
Black Velvet

The Lindy Hop ushered in an entire new dance era which gravitated into the jitterbug as the swing era arrived comple with big bands, huge ballrooms and juke boxes, or nickleodeons as they were called.

Along came World War II and with it a federal tax on live entertainment with taxes on all facets of the industry, including ballrooms and dance halls.

Club owners began to book trios and quartets instead of big bands. This slowly led to a musical movement call behop which gradually took over the jazz music scene.

The era of music to listen to had arrived. The biggest complaint against behop was that it was extremely difficult to dance to, and so public dancing went into a bit of a decline.

In the 1950s, so - called "race" music acquired the title of rhytm and blues, featuring a strong beat and dancing was once more in vogue.

From r and b, evolved rock and roll, which by the early 60s had become acid rock, and once again, dancing went into a decline.

Music by the likes of Jimi Hendrix and the rest ushered in the concert scene where music was once again played for listening.

The meld of r and b and rock became disco music, and when Van McCoy came along witht the dance called "The Hustle," truse disco came into its own.

It is at its highest peak at this point in time, but erosion is beginning to set in. We feel that two things are responsible.

In the first instance, most disco music is played at peak volume, along with strobe lights which pulse to the beat. While this may be perfectly enjoyable, it definitely rules out conversation.

Secondly, over 90 percent of disco music is played at the same tempo, with the same beat. This has a tendency to be so repetitious, that it becomes just a bit much.

During the swing era for example, the jittering music was interspersed with slow tunes and ballads for change of pace. This is what is missing on the disco scene, and is the part that will be modified.

Music making a strong comeback are the ballads, especially vocals. The new wave of jazz has combined the best of both worlds, so that couples are finding communication with jazz as a backdrop.

So, the coexistence holds sway, with disco showing just a wee bit of a decline. Rather than an every night proposition, disco will become gradually a music for less than fulltime occupation.

The advent of disco has spawned a new type of club, however, where no liquor license is needed. We'll get into that in another column.

MOSTLY FOR MUSIC

The Left Bank Jazz Society will present the Don Patterson quartet with Bootsby Barnes on tenor sax. Don, of course, is an organist, who has played the Baltimore - Washington area many times.

We always remember him for the long-sustained notes he employs, while vamping with his other hand.

Shirley Goode
Buckeys

In a word, the man swings.

At The Bandstand in Fells Pt., Marshall Hawkins, bass.

If the name of Kevin and Keith are not overly familiar to you, they are both members of the Blackbyrds, and have played together for quite some time.

At The SPortmen's Lounge, Arnold Sterling will lead a group at the Saturday afternoon jazz jam, while Gaynelle Ciburn heads up the weekend evening sets.