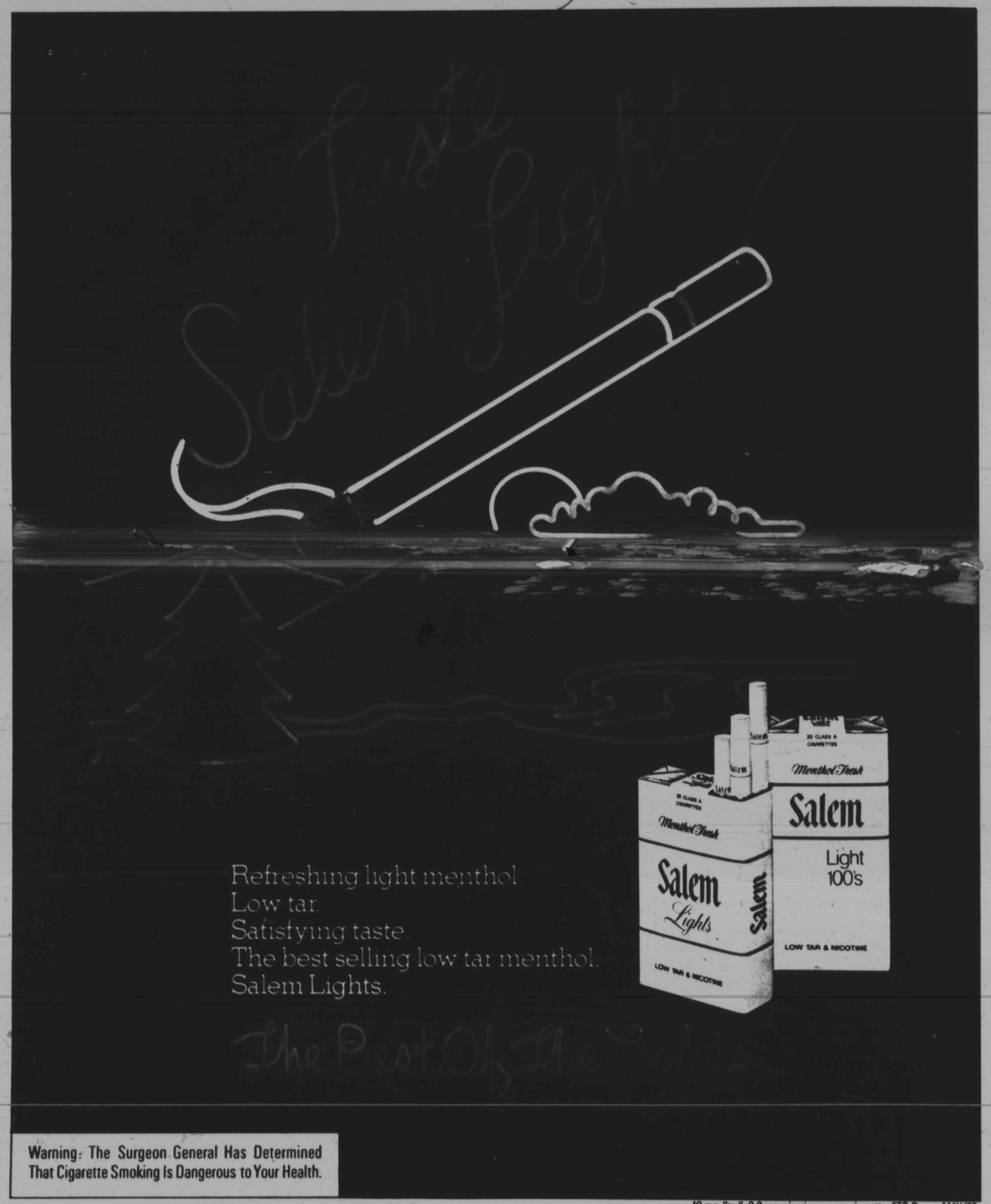

KELLEE PATTERSON:

Beauty Plus Brains

Remember the Miss America Pageant of 1972? Miss Indiana of that year was Kellee Patterson, but that's not the whole story. Her beauty is obvious, but her devotion to mankind and indefatigable efforts in this direction, elevate her to a special status.

By Lee J. Ivory

Kellee and Santa, who in reality is LA city councilman Maurice Willis.

With such a sincere and dedicated commitment to community-oriented functions, it is almost a mystery when singer-actress Kellee Patterson finds time to work her show business magic.

In a relatively-short period of time this year, the sultry and vivacious native of Gary, Ind. was honored by Goodwill Industries for her role as award chairperson for that organization's annual Youth Day activities, performed benefit concerts and made ap- [illegible] Arthritis Telethon, the San Francisco Urban League, the Leukemia Radiothon, and the American Heart Association's "Hearts and Shamrocks Dinner."

In addition to serving as official starter for the annual Watts Jr. Olympics, Kellee made numerous appearances at local junior and senior high schools in Southern California, and sang at the spectacular luncheon held in honor of Los Angeles' "Great Ninth District" Councilman Gilbert William Lindsay.

"Kellee left Councilmen Lindsay's luncheon and was chauffeured to Los Angeles International Airport for a World Airways inaugural flight to Hawaii—without even a toothbrush," said the entertainer's harried publicist, Paulette Cohn. "Kellee has a heart as big as a Mack truck and she is loved and respected by a lot of people because she is genuinely concerned about things that happen in the world today."

Generally, for a man, it is difficult to imagine that such an outwardly beautiful woman can have a brain to go along with the machinery that propels such a magnificent body. But macho men who have bothered to listen to five minutes of Kellee's conversation have come away awed by her vast intelligence and her understanding of the things that are going on around her.

"Kellee is not star-struck," said one of her chief admirers, who realizes that he is standing in one of the longest lines known to man. "She is an unaffected, down-to-earth lady who captivates anyone who is within earshot of her sensuous voice."

And though she has been described as "vibrant, saucy, lush and sensuous," none of these words begin to encompass all of the things this talented performer really is.

The former Shadybrook Records (they went bankrupt last year) star attracted a lot of attention with her chart-busting "If It Don't Fit, Don't Force It," which earned her a gold record in New Zealand, and her last album for the now-defunct label, "All the Things You Are," proved that music trade publications were correct in including her in their year-end polls in the Top New Female Vocalist category.

But Kellee Patterson has become accustomed to "firsts." She is the first black recording artist photographed for the now-famous Pro-Arts poster—which has become a hot underground product; the first black Miss Indiana (1972) to represent her state in the Miss America pageant; and the first woman to participate in the National Black Political Convention.

In fact, part of Kellee Patterson's meteoric rise is due to another "first." After her first appearance on "The Tonight Show," host Johnny Carson asked her to open for him at the Sahara Hotel in Las Vegas.

Kellee opened her act with the Stevie Wonder song, "Another Star," which was termed "prophetic" by a reviewer from Daily Variety. She has been opening for Carson since—with her last stint in Atlantic City in mid-March when Carson played a two-nighter at Resorts International Hotel.

And though she is always seen helping others in the community, Kellee has managed to fulfill engagements in top concert halls and rooms from the Hawaiian Hilton Hotel to the Dorothy Chamdler Pavilion in Los Angeles (where she now makes her home) to studios in New York where she finished her last recordings.

Television has also claimed a large portion of her time. In addition to numerous appearances on the Carson late-night

Belting out a song in Kellee in a glamorous pose.

showcase, Kellee has been viewed on "Crosswirs," "Streets of San Francisco," "Emergency," "Soul Train," and "The Dukes of Hazzard." Kellee also was featured in her own 30-minute special, "Starbound," and starred in the British Broadcasting Company's movie-of-the-week "Demolition Man."

Kellee, the third of six children born to Archie and Helen Patterson, considers herself to be a combination of her "dreamer" father and "realist" mother. "I combine a little bit of the best of both of them," Kellee said. "I allow myself to dream, but I work hard to make sure my dreams become a reality."

The Patterson family is very close. Her parents treated each

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