BUSINESS/REAL ESTATE

This week's financial section produced by P. E. Bethea

Special committee may change state MBE program

A Maryland General Assembly special joint Committee on Federal-State Regulations has concluded its hearings on the state's minority enterprise program and will soon make its report.

The committee, formed to study the financial impact of various state and federal mandates, held its second and final public hearing Nov. 23.

Hearings were held to determine whether the state's 10 percent minority business enterprise program was costing the state additional money and causing the cost of construction go up.

Several building contractors attacked the program, saying it was fraudulent and was causing the cost of construction to rise.

Many minority contractors who have benefited from the program expressed concern that there was a move underfoot to eliminate or cutback on the minority participation program.

Rep. Parren Mitchell, D-7th, has written Gov. Harry Hughes and members of the joint committee, urging that the state's efforts on behalf of minority businesses be strengthened and expanded.

"I am gravely concerned that at the state and federal levels of government, the enemies of minority businesses, seek to nullify the minor gains blacks and other minorities have made in penetrating the closed area of public contracting and purchasing," Mitchell said.

"The unwarranted attacks against Maryland's Department of Transportation's regulations on behalf of minority business," he added, "are typical of, and at the same time, symptomatic of the harsh attitude on the part of those who would stifle, cripple, and deny black entrepreneurship."

The state program requires that all contracts awarded must include 10 percent minority business participation. The city's program, established last year, requires 15 percent in the area of procurement and 25 percent for construction.

Wallace Sifford, a member of the city's law department who spoke at last week's hearing on behalf of City Solicitor Benjamin Brown, stated that, "any action taken that affects the state and federal MBE regulations is bound to impact upon Baltimore city's program."

Sifford pointed out that since December 1979 the city has awarded $469,481,909 in contracts and of that total $63 million has gone to minority businesses.

"From all indications, minority participation on large scale projects would be minimal if not all without governmental regulations," said Sifford. "Special interest programs such as MBE programs have proven to be the most effective way, in the long run to end or to mitigate racial division and to bring about some semblance of racial equality."

The special joint committee is expected to make its report within the next month and that report will include specific recommendations for the program.

Sen. Robert Douglass, D-4th, a minority businessman and one of two black members on the committee stated he was not sure what action the committee would take.

"If they set up a separate program for women I won't fight that. It may be a better program," said Douglass.

Douglass said he did not expect the program to be drastically cut by the committee.

And he added, "I don't see any need for increasing state goals across the board. They haven't met the goal now," he said.

Ryland to build affordable homes

The Ryland Group, Inc., long known for building mid-priced homes in large, metropolitan area suburbs, will soon be manufacturing and marketing homes for sale not to small town and rural home buyers in the mid-Atlantic area.

Ryland Modular Systems, a Group division, has set the first steel on what will be an 87,000 square foot modular housing manufacturing plant in Carroll County, MD.

According to Ryland Group's founder, James T. Ryan, the company believes manufactured housing to be the "one best hope" for keeping the single family home an "affordable dream" for first home buyers and others of modest income, particularly in non-metropolitan areas.

The benefits of modular housing are well known in the building industry. Quality control is good as the factory situation allows for more frequent and closer inspection.

Structural strength is great because the home sections must be built to take travel and handling, and weather damage is minimal to materials and to the home during the building process as the whole operation takes place indoors.

Manufactured housing is also much easier on those with tight mortgage budgets as the time from contracting to move-in can be as little as one month.

The Ryland manufactured home will be, initially, the well-engineered and tested traditional, single family home which the company has built and perfected over the years.

While traditional in style, the manufactured homes will include the latest know-how in energy saving construction techniques and materials and the best tested appliances and other hardware from ongoing Ryland research.

While James P. Ryan, now co-chairman of Ryland's board, is not offering dollar figures on the new homes due to variations in building site and sucontractor fees from town to town, he emphasizes the word, "affordable," and states that, compared to the competition in the new market area, the Ryland home will be extremely attractive in price, appearance, design and space.

Ryland Modular Systems plans to have the manufactured house available for sale in Maryland, Pennsylvania, West Virginia and Virginia in 1982.

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Otis Warren Associates awarded

Deborah Merritt

George Edwards

Mary Warren

Rosalind Ford Robinson

The management of Otis Warren Realtors recently announced that three members of its staff have been honored for selling over one-half million dollars worth of real estate in one month.

The associates, who have provided service to more than 50 people, are Deborah Merritt, George Edwards and Mary Warren.

The real estate firm, one of the top ten real estate companies in Baltimore, also anounced that Rosalind Ford Robinson has joined the company as a full time sales associate.

Mrs. Robinson holds a bachelor of science degree from Morgan State University and formerly taught in the Baltimore city public schools. She will be working out of the company's Gelston Drive office.

Otis Warren Realtors has two locations: 4300 Gelston Drive and 7044 Liberty Road.

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Business Workshops

Are you thinking about going into business, or did you recently start your own business? Chances are you could use some help.

The U.S. Small Business Administration, together with the Service Corps of Retired Executives (SCORE) will conduct a one-day workshop on "How to Start and Manage Your Own Business" from 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Tuesday, Dec. 8.

The workshop will be held at the Towson United Methodist Church, Hampton Lane and Dulaney Valley Road.

This course is designed to assist small business owners in successfully managing and operating their businesses.

Topics will include sources of capital; site selection; marketing and advertising; how to operate to assure profits; taxes; legal and insurance considerations.

The workshop fee is $5. Pre-registration is required. To register or obtain additional information, call the SBA at 962-3233.

SBA and SCORE will conduct a one-day workshop on "Financial Management" from 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Wednesday, Dec. 16.

The workshop will be held at the Towson United Methodist Church.

This course will emphasize the types of records that should be kept— accounts receivable and payables; financial statements, taxes; etc.

Pre-registration is required. To obtain or register for this workshop, call SBA at 962-3233.

ELSIA SAMUELS has been promoted to director of admitting at Sinai Hospital. Associated with the hospital since 1977, Mrs. Samuels formerly worked in the emergency room business office as a clerk and interviewing clerk, and most recently as a supervisor in that area.

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SHOWTIME

I was going to talk with Walter Dallas but...

IDA PETERS

He's directing 'Amen Corner' at Center Stage

He's directing "Amen Corner" at Center Stage

Dear Boss:

You know that Walter Dallas, founder and director of the Proposition Theatre Company of Atlanta has been in Baltimore for sometime as a Director-Fellow at Center Stage for the 1981-82 season.

And for the last three months, have honestly tried to catch up with him. Reason, he's producing James Baldwin's "The Amen Corner" and he has been casting and interviewing local actors for various parts.

And, it's a fact that when Christine Moore's daughter got married in September and we sat at the Arena Players' table and discussed the fact that he was in town, we all got real excited and now Arena Players Vacountess Payne is going to play Sister Douglass and Verna Lee Day, Sister Rice.

And, when The Arena Players played host to Micki Grant when they opened her play, "It's So Nice To Bee Civilized," there was this handsome young man hovering around the background.

Yours truly tried to work around the Arena photographer so didn't snap Dallas' pix.

That's another story. But, ... and you know me...tracked the handsome man to his seat and asked who he was.

He was Walter Dallas. We knew who he was. He didn't know anything about the AFRO. Dragged him back to talk with Micki Grant and he was awed. He had never met her and he told her he had won an award in Atlanta for his production of "Don't Bother Me I Can't Cope".

Last season Walter Dallas won the Best Director and Creative Genius Award from the Atlanta Journal Critics; a Mayoral Proclamation. Additionally, he received the Bronze Jubilee Award for Theatre Excellence in 1978 and 1979.

He studied at Harvard University, Morehouse College, Yale Drams School and the University of Ghana, West Africa.

His direction credits include "The Seagull", "Don't Bother Me I Can't Cope", "For Colored Girls", "The Me Nobody Knows".

He will bring in Frances Foster, who made a hit when she played Grammer, the tippling grandmother in the "The River Niger" a few years back.

Dallas has also cast Bill Cobbs to play Luke, the jazz-musician husband. He last played Baltimore as Milton Edwards in "First Breeze of Summer".

Now Boss! You would not believe what happened to your editor on Tuesday at 11 a.m.

Our assignment Monday night was the Hyatt Hotel to cover the reception for the big wigs attending the Black Legislators Convention with folks here from all over the country.

First off it was raining and at 7 p.m. the temperature dropped and the roads became icy. Before we could go to the Hyatt, picked up Pattie Hodges, the Society Editor, and we went to St. Marks' Church because the pledge line T.N.T. of the Deltas were making a presentation of 2,000 toys. The photographer was at the Hyatt so the picture assignment was mine.

Well, the Hyatt Hotel, all new and shiny is a big joke. The doorman said he didn't park cars, didn't have a place for press cars. Then he let us into a full garage. We drove around and around and finally on the sixth level found a spot.

Coming out we fussed at the attendant and he said they only park cars for big conventions. This reporter wants to know why that attendant didn't think the black folks at this convention weren't big.

Dashed back to the office and home. The next morning, running late called Walter Dallas to tell him we were on the way. At 11:15 a.m., old faithful, reliable auto ran out of gas in the middle of North and Bentalou. It took AAA all of one hour to respond and charged $5. for gas. We now were really depressed.

Driving down Druid Hill Avenue saw smoke coming out the front door of Bethel AME Church and firemen running in the front door with hoses.

Got so excited, grabbed the camera, parked the car in the middle of the street and left the keys in the car and locked the door! Realized too late we had used up all the film. Workmen using a blow torch to peel paint set a fire in the walls of the upper balcony.

You have now heard my sad tale of woe hopefully Walter Dallas torch to peel paint set a fire in the walls of the upper balcony.

You have now heard my sad tale of woe hopefully Walter Dallas torch to peel paint set a fire in the walls of the upper balcony.

You have now heard my sad tale of woe. Hopefully Walter Dallas will forgive. In the meantime, we extend an invitation to him to visit the AFRO Entertainment Office and chat with us.

In town and in residence at Towson State College is Joseph Walker author of "The River Niger". He will visit the AFRO next week a out the play he's producing at Towson. —

There has been a delay in the opening of the Free Spirit Theatre's opening of "Anancy and the Enchanted Prince" at Morgan State's Little Theatre.

Dr. Percy Thomas and Irene Heigh announced this week that the original musical-play has been postponed to Jan. 7, 1982 because of fiscal matters beyond their control.

Give yourself a treat this Sunday and join the Holly Tree which starts at 1 p.m. Sunday at from Hodge House 801 Park Ave. The 1981 Tour is held in conjuction with historic downtown churches. For information 528-55[illegible]

Arena Youtheatre presents 'The Magical Pied Piper'

Carlton Hebron plays the the Mayor of Hamelin.

The Arena Players Youtheatre will present "The Magical Pied Piper", a musical based on the original story of the Pied Piper of Hamelin. The play runs every weekend from Dec. 11-20 at the Arena Playhouse.

Mayor William Donald Schaefer and the Mayor of Hamelin have a common problem. Rats.

The problem is as old as the hills. Throughout history towns and cities have been plagued by rats. Today as much as ever, rats are not only a nuisance, but they can cause serious deathly diseases. Mayors have had various solutions to the problem. In both the children's story of "The Pied Piper of Hamelin", written by Robert Browning in 1888 and the musical version of the story "The Magical Pied Piper" now showing at The Arena Playhouse, the Mayor of Hamelin tried every possible method to get rid of the vermin. Finally he resorted to the charms of a Pied Piper, who led the rats into the sea by blowing on a magical pipe.

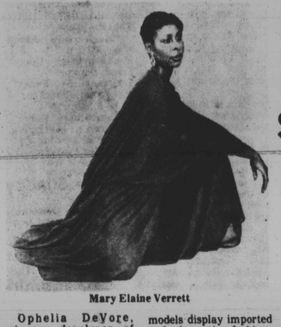
The Mayor of Baltimore has yet to find a magical pipe and piper. Building a subway in a seaport town in a seaport town that has harbored rats for years and with a cutback in the Rat Eradication Program has not helped the problem. Nor, as AFRO Clean Block folks know baiting does not help and in some neighborhoods the rats are walking the street as big as cats. Some of the rats even have voting cards.

The Arena Players Youtheatre is a two-year program in the Performing Arts for approximately 80 inner city youths between the ages of 13 and 20. The program is designed to enrich the cultural experiences of inner city youths. The Youtheatre is funded by the Arena Players, Inc., The Mayor's Advisory Committee on Arts and Culture, The Maryland State Arts Council and the National Endowment for the Arts.

Arena Players is the oldest continuous minority, community-based theatre in the United States. Now in its 20th season, the theatre continues to bring high-quality performances to the Baltimore Community.

A rat (Comasita Martin) listens to the music of the Pied Piper (Darren Page).

Ophelia DeVore and models here Sunday


Mary Elaine Verrett

Ophelia DeVore, pioneer developer of blacks and other minorities in the modeling and communications fields will be in Baltimore on Dec. 6, at the Baltimore Hilton Hotel where she will bring with her, from New York City, a dramatic fashion extravaganza which features 20 top professional female and male models from New York City's Grace Del Marco Model and Talent Agency in a show "Life Styles": Fashion, Beauty and You. The Center for Innovation and Industrial Development under the direction of Dr. Mel Butler is producing.

Mary-Elaine Verrett, commentator extraordinaire, will move the fast-paced production with the excitement of a swirling hurricane as the models display imported and domestic fashions from the salons of the most creative designers, department stores and boutiques. As an added dimension, local models and outstanding personalities will be featured as "Pace Setters", a role which is a proven truism of their works.

Many of the New York models have just returned from doing the fashion sbows in France, Italy and Germany and are now on their way to Japan for two fashion seasons. Also, many of the faces appearing on the stage are looking at you from the TV screens, pages of magazines and newspapers, billboards, posters, and the packages of products. The guests attending the show will have an opportunity to shake hands and get autographs from the celebrity-models, Mary-Elaine, Miss DeVore and all the other talents.

Two of the local models who will appear in the show are Lisa Winder of Baltimore, and Dina Ballard of Washington, D.C.

Lisa Winder is the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Walter Winder and a graduate of Dundalk High School and Patricia Stevens School.

Mary-Elaine Verrett is a native of Kankankee, Ill. a Chicago model and graduate of Chicago's Conservatory of Music majoring in Voice.

"Life Styles" will be presented at the Capitol Hilton, Wednesday, Dec. 9. 6:30 pm in D.C. at 16th and K Sts., NW.

Storytelling, films, lectures

Museum of African Art

"Life...Afterlife: African Funerary Sculpture," an exhibition of more than 100 pieces of terra-cotta, stone, wood, ivory and bronze funerary sculpture from all regions of sub-Saharan Africa, is now at the Smithsonian's National Museum of African Art, through March 1.

The exhibition features carved ancestor figures and memorial statues, which are placed on or near the grave: neckrests, which are buried with the dead along with gifts and other personal belongings; a wooden mask worn by the Ivory Coast's Senufo people at funerals of men's association members; pressed camwood mementos, or "bonogotol," which are presented to mourners at funerals and used as grave gifts by the Kuba people of Zaire, and bronze and ivory objects, the latter carved with intricate designs, by the Benin people of Nigeria. Photographs, maps, diagrams, textiles, utilarian objects and music are used in the exhibition to illustrate how art functions in African funerals and memorials.

Supplementing the exhibition is a rich program of free events, coordinated by the Museum's Education Department, to highlight the theme of "Life...Afterlife."

Films invoke the energetic beauty of the arts that surround African celebrations of the afterlife.

Storytellers re-create the magic of myths that offer eloquent explanations for the cycle of life.

Workshops introduce mourning cloths that are densely printed with symbols of traditional African life.

And, a full range of lectures explores the many ways in which the celebration of the afterlife in Africa is an affirmation of life itself.

The National Museum of African Art is located on Capitol Hill in Washington, D.C., at 318 A St. N.E. Hours are 11 a.m. to 5 pm weekdays and noon to 5 p.m. on weekends.

New Arena Players Board Members

Mrs. Hope Quackenbush

Thomas Jones

Earl Burton

Mrs. Hope Quackenbush, managing director of the Morris A. Mechanic Theatre, Attorney Thomas Jones, and actor-director, Earl Burton have recently joined the Board of Directors of the Arena Players, Inc. Baltimore.

Mrs. Quackenbush has had an illustrious career in the arts. She was one of the founders and the first executive director of the Baltimore City Ballet, and she encouraged the formation of the Baltimore Arts Showcase, Inc.

Earl Burton, who, in addition to his position at the Social Security Department, is a veteran Arena Player. He has directed several plays at Arena and has acted in many Arena productions. His most memorable acting role at the Playhouse was Big Eye Buddy in "Tambourines to Glory".

The third new member is Thomas Jones, who is an Assistant Vice President in the Legal Department of the Continental Telephone Corporation in Washington, DC. Previous to this position, he was the special assistant to the District's Chief Counsel of the Federal Highway Administration. Mr. Jones is also a member of the Federal Communications Bar Association and is on the Advisory Board of the United Negro College Fund.

GIVE To Mrs. Santa Fund

Night Scene Seen

By Bob Matthews

Haven't heard the Fuzzy Kane Trio in many a moon, so was delighted when singer Ruby Glover told me that she and the trio were performing weekends at The Closet.

Since my sister from Detroit was in town, decided to take her and another friend to the set, and was delightfully surprised by the sheer professionalism of the performance.

Fuzzy was playing acoustic piano, along with Monty Poulson, who was on Fender bass this time. He told me it belongs to a relative, and he didn't have his upright bass because it is too large to fit into his compact car.

Drummer was Warren Gantt, who doubles as a top auto salesman, when he isn't involved in the music scene. Together, they provided some of the best sound around — it really swings.

After a few numbers by the trio, they were joined by Ruby, who kept up the pace, demonstrating the growth that has been apparent over the past few years.

Les McCann

Had to make a request at this point, so asked them to do "Bye Bye Blackbird." They did—magnificently, in case you wonder just why I usually request this song, it is because the changes are so very simple, it is easy to get into a improvisational mode.

And improvise Ruby did—beautifully. Then she pulled a bit of a surprise. Knowing her on-stage time was limited, she cut her portion of the program short, and introduced a singerpoet, Natalie Carter.

Now, anyone who knows us, knows we don't exactly share a lot of love of poetry, so we were prepared to scoff at the presentation.

Not so. Natalie proved to be one of the hippest things I have ever heard. She employed body language, jazz knowledge, perfect rhythm with accents and punctuations completely in keeping with the music.

All the while, Fuzzy and company were vamping while Natalie espoused the words of such legendary poets as Langston Hughes, Nikki Giovanni and others.

Chatted with her just a bit following the performance, and discovered she is involved with Center Stage. In fact, she is in the current production of the theatre.

Remember the name, Natalie Carter — you'll hear a lot about her.

We're back—and wish to express our gratitude to the many Night Sceners who extended sympathy to us during our recent tragedy. It was welcomed and made us proud to know that so many of you took the time to drop us a note.

Might add that Ruby and Fuzzy will be at the Closet through Sunday, with a special celebration Sunday, which just happens to be Ruby's birthday.

Happy to report that The Birdcage is alive and well, and doing fine. Dropped in there for the Monday night session and can happily report that it was jumping.

Always a pleasure to add another club to the night scene, for it is really painful when one spot or the other endures difficulties. Might also add, that Chez Ja'nel, Tiger Lil's spot on Orleans St. is once again in the flourishing pink. Goodie!

The Left Bank Jazz Society this week will present Les McCann Ltd., which should be a rousing set, since Les is known for his funky sound and earthy lyrics.

Word reached me that the Park Plaza is featuring the O'Donel Levy group, which makes us happy, since we were hoping he would find reason to remain in town for a while.

The Ritz has another Baltimore group, the Williams Bros., who will be entertaining in the Penthouse Fri. and Sat. nights.

At The Sportsmen's Lounge, Mickey Fields and Andy Ennis will head up the jazz jam Saturday afternoon session, with Bill Harris returning for the weekend night chores.

Bill has really picked up a following in the area, and well he should, since his is one of the fresh new voices. Not that he has not been around a while, but because he is now being showcased in a better manner.