CELEBRITY LOOKOUT

All letters should be addressed to Jason, DAWN Magazine, 628 N. Eutaw St., Baltimore, Md. 21201. All questions are welcome, but while Jason cannot provide individual answers, questions of general interest will be used in this column.

Q. — The John Bubbles who recently died was supposed to be the first to play Sportin' Life in the original 1935 production of "Porgy and Bess" on Broadway. What was his real name, and how old was he?

ALVIN HOLMES
Washington, D.C.

A. — John Bubbles, the dancer, was 84. He was born Feb. 19, 1902 in Louisville, Ky. His real name, John William Sublett. He teamed with Ford Lee Washington as the comedy team, Buck and Bubbles, from 1909-53. He was first Sportin' Life in "Porgy and Bess" in 1935, a role made famous by Baltimore's Avon Long. Cab Calloway and Sammy Davis Jr. added their talents to the same role. He was in the Ziegfeld Follies of 1921; toured Vietnam with Bob Hope; "Carmen Jones" in 1944; "Cabin in the Sky," 1943.

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Q. — What's this I hear about Eddie Murphy opening a club in Atlantic City?

JUNE MATTHEWS
New York, N.Y.

A. — Advance press reports have it that Eddie Murphy is opening a week-end comedy club at Atlantic City's Sands Hotel and Casino. The Eddie Murphy Comedy Club had a private opening on June 27-28 and a private one on July 4-5. The spot will feature emerging acts and established stars wanting to try out new material. Murphy is supposed to drop by unannounced from time to time.

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Q. — Has the talented Etta James ever been nominated for a Grammy, and between what years did she have her hits? Who discovered her?

CHARLEY P. HENDERSON
Compton, Calif.

A. — Etta James Hawkins, 48, has been nominated. She was discovered by songwriters-bandleader Johnny Otis on the West Coast in the 1950's. Johnny liked her style and decided to write a tune for her that was an answer-song to Hank Ballard's hits with the Midnighters like "Work With Me Annie" and "Annie Had A Baby." The song was originally called "Roll With Me Henry." After the song was released on Modern Records, the company changed the title to "The Wallflower" and then again to "Dance With Me Henry." Her famous hits were "Fool That I Am," 1961; "It's Too Soon To Know," 1961.

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Q. — Can you tell me more about the new Stevie Wonder tour for 1986?

JAMIE JONES
Richmond, Va.

A. — Stevie Wonder tuned up in Portland, Ore. in June, 1986 for an 18-week, 65-city computerized, quadraphonic sound extravaganza called "Wonder in Square Circle." He is traveling with a revolving stage, four giant video screens and six keyboards for Wonder to play.

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Q. — Whatever happened to Eva Jéssye, the grand lady of American Music whose chorus, the Eva Jessye Chorus, was the mainstay of most "Porgy and Bess" productions? I heard that she left Kansas where she resided in Pittsburgh as Kansas Ambassador for the Arts.

JANE PETERS
Baltimore, Md.

A. — Eva Jessye, 91, has left Pittsburgh, Kansas where she was Artist in Residence at Pittsburgh State University where she spent seven years. She left many rare items of her famous collection there. She has moved back to the University of Michigan where she also has many of her mementos.

She was choral director of all "Porgy and Bess productions from 1935-1958 and George Gershwin gave her the original score. She also toured the production in Europe for the USO in World War II. Her films include "Hallelujah," 1930; "Porgy and Bess", 1959; "Black Like Me", 1964; "Slaves", 1969; "Cotton Comes To Harlem", 1970.

Eva Jessye is still writing poetry and working on four books. She was head of the Music Department, Morgan State College, 1919-20 and served as Music Editor for the Baltimore Afro-American Newspapers. In May, 1986 she served on a Cleveland workshop with Dr. Nathan Carter of Morgan State University.

She says her greatest wish is to visit Morgan. She plans to give Dr. Carter some of her rare music and historical data so it may be preserved. Her address is Apartment 404, Baker Commons, 106 Packard, Ann Arbor, Mich.

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Q. — The late Adolph Caesar was a young man when he died suddenly in L.A. at age 52 of a heart attack. What were some of his most memorable roles?

ANN JETER
Baltimore, Md.

A. — Adolph Caesar's biggest theatre break was "A Soldier's Play" for which he won an Obie Award and a New York Drama Desk Award in 1982. He was the man you loved to hate, Old Mister in "The Color Purple." He recorded many commercials, the most memorable being for the United Negro College Fund, "A mind is a terrible thing to waste . . . ."

Etta James

Eva Jessye

Just because it holds four doesn't mean you have to take them.