

Close-Up

Checker: Still shakin' and twistin'

By ROBIN BARKSDALE
Chronicle Staff Writer

No matter how much things change, they somehow remain the same.

He ignited audiences in the '50s and '60s, took an extended hiatus from the recording business and watched as music took on new forms.

Things -- and music -- changed, but they appeared the same as they were more than a decade ago when the legendary Chubby Checker, "Mr. Twist," captured the hearts, souls and memories of his Streetscene audience from the very start last weekend and never let go.

The massive crowd, assembled at Stage 1 to hear the man responsible for one of the most popular dance crazes of all time, cheered, swayed and reminisced as Checker worked his musical magic.

Though his audience appeal is probably among the best, Checker's anxious fans needed little prodding and carried their excitement to an even higher level as he sang "Good Golly Miss Molly."

Die-hard rock fans and even new-wave punk

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-- Chubby Checker

rockers sang along with Checker on "Don't Step on My Blue Suede Shoes." Young and old alike danced unashamedly in the aisles as Checker performed his trademark song, "Let's Do the Twist."

During his performance of "The Twist," Checker invited members of the audience onto the stage and gave them an opportunity to "shake, baby, shake." Given their moment in the spotlight, the invitees drew loud applause from the crowd and from Checker, who at age 44 still owns the bragging rights to the purest and most exciting "Twist."

On stage Checker has fun and encourages his audience to follow suit. He is an old buddy to some and a newfound friend to others.

For the finale of his hour-long, fast-paced performance, Checker dug deep and gave his audience one last opportunity to "Do the Twist," thanked the crowd and was gone.

A high-energy performance such as he gives is no doubt draining, but Checker still made himself available to the crowd of fans that lined up backstage outside his bus, hoping to catch a glimpse of the legendary performer. He patiently accommodated the autograph-seekers and gave a smile and a kind word to each of them as they went on their way, proudly waving the signature they will likely treasure for years.

He enjoys making his fans happy, he said, and he does it all for them.

Watching Chubby Checker, the legend, in action is thrilling. Talking with Chubby Checker, the per-

son, is quieter but equally as thrilling.

"I sing for the people," Checker said during a break in his performances as he relaxed in his bus, which looked more like the home of a "regular" person than a "star."

"All of my performances and all of my songs are for the people," he said. "I want them to enjoy themselves, and I sing for them, all of them."

Checker began singing for others in the mid-1950s with his impressions of other singers. His "stage" was a poultry market in South Philadelphia, and his "audience" was the customers who ventured in to purchase goods.

Checker also performed with "The Quantrells" on Philadelphia's street corners. Soon after, his

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Legendary singer Chubby Checker ignited audiences at last weekend's Carolina Streetscene with his performances of "The Twist" (photos by James Parker).

Crowning Performance



About Town

Annual family awareness conference to focus on economics

By ROBIN BARKSDALE
Chronicle Staff Writer

All eyes will be turned to the black family next Saturday when the Fourth Annual Family Awareness Task Force Conference gets under way at the Winston Lake Family YMCA.

This year's conference, scheduled to run from 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., will focus on "The Family and the Changing Economy."

Topics addressed will include "Investment Clubs," "Teen Budgeting," "The Dislocated Worker," "Banking on Our Future" and "Managing on a Fixed Income."

The conference's keynote speaker will be Les Brown of Detroit, a management consultant.

Brown, who will speak at 9:30 a.m., specializes in motivational techniques with an emphasis on a spiritual basis for positive thinking.

The Rev. John Mendez, pastor of Emmanuel Baptist Church, will discuss "The Church's Role in Economic Development," at the program's luncheon.

Registration will be held from 8:30 to 9:30 a.m., and workshops are scheduled during the morning and afternoon. Lunch is free to all registrants; free babysitting is available. ...

Mr. and Mrs. Gregory West became the proud parents of a



Members of the Family Awareness Task Force have been hard at work preparing for the group's annual conference on families, which will be held next Saturday at the Winston Lake Family YMCA (photo by James Parker).

10-pound, 5½-ounce son, Phillip Jamaal, at 7:31 a.m. on May 25.

Phillip is the grandson of Mr. and Mrs. Roland J. Ingram, Mr. and Mrs. Percell West Sr. and the Rev. and Mrs. James Davis.

The United States Achievement Academy has announced that Penny L. Hill has been named a Collegiate Academic All-American.

The academy has established the Academic All-American Collegiate Award Program in order to offer recognition to superior

students who excel in the academic disciplines.

The Academic All-American Collegiate scholars must earn a 3.30 or better grade-point average. Only scholars selected by a school official or other qualified sponsor are accepted.

These scholars are also eligible for other awards given by the academy.

Miss Hill is a 1986 graduate of Bennett College and was nominated for the national award by Dr. Chelsea Tipton, dean of Bennett College. Her name will appear in the Academic All-American Collegiate Directory,



Phillip J. West

published nationally.

Miss Hill is the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Charlie E. Hill of Winston-Salem.

She will attend graduate school at Ohio State University this fall.

The Winston-Salem Theater Alliance opens its 1986-87 season of five plays with an area premiere, "A Life in the Theatre" by Pulitzer Prize-winning playwright David Mamet.

The group will open the season with a cast of two men performing Sept. 19, 21 and 27, and a cast of two women Sept. 20, 26 and 28.

Performances are scheduled at Please see page A11

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

THURSDAY, SEPT. 11

• Van Deren Coke, director of photography at the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, will give a lecture on photography titled "Form, Freud and Feeling" at 7:30 p.m. at Winston Square. For more information call 722-0340.

FRIDAY, SEPT. 12

• There will be a fund-raising event for child abuse prevention at the Kroger's on Robinhood Road from mid-morning to 6:30 p.m. All proceeds will be donated to Stop Child Abuse Now, or SCAN, which works with families at risk or involved in child abuse and neglect. For more information call 748-9028.

SATURDAY, SEPT. 13

• The Family Residents Council of Regency Knollwood Hall is having a yard sale and auction in the park area at 5755 Shattalon Drive beginning at 10 a.m. The proceeds will go the van fund. For more information call 767-2306.

• Children's entertainer Ella Jenkins will perform in concert at 11 a.m. and 2 p.m. at Reynolds Auditorium. Tickets are \$4 in advance and \$5 at the door. They are available at the Arts Council, Gilmore's Funeral Home, the Record Boutique and Reznick's in Thruway Shopping Center. For more information call 788-3861.

SUNDAY, SEPT. 14

• The mentally disabled adults of the Winston-Salem Enrichment Center will hold an open house from 1 to 5 p.m. at the craft shop, 3780 Bethania Station Road. There will be craft demonstrations, a craft sale, auction and refreshments.

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