

# National NEWS

## Holiday Celebrates African-American Culture

SEATTLE (AP) — Fourteen-year-old Jayson Bridges searched his African cookbook this month to select a recipe for the dish he will make when his family feasts on the sixth night of Kwanzaa.

Sweet-potato pie will be his contribution when the Bridges sit down to eat and exchange handmade gifts, dressed in vibrant yellow and red outfits made from kente cloth, the royal fabric of Ghana.

Each night of the seven-day festival, Pamela Lewis-Bridges asks her four children about the seven principles of Kwanzaa.

Her 12-year-old daughter Jasmine cites "imani," faith — that she will do well in school and one day achieve her goal of attending Spelman, a historically black college in Atlanta.

Last year Jayson worked on "ujima," responsibility, taking care of the younger children while his mother makes dinner and helping out with household chores.

The Bridges are among 18 million people around the world who celebrate Kwanzaa, which begins the day after Christmas and runs through Jan. 1.

## Vereen Performs for First Time Since Accident

PASADENA, CALIF. (AP) — Entertainer Ben Vereen took the stage for the first time since being struck by a car last summer, narrating "Twas the Night Before Christmas" at a benefit for Somalia's starving children.

Vereen, 46, was greeted with a standing ovation at Friday night's benefit show at the Civic Auditorium.

The actor and dancer, looking fit, used colorful accents and asides to enliven his rendition of the classic yuletide tale. He repeated the performance Saturday night.

The shows raised money for Somali children through the U.S. Committee for UNICEF. Other celebrities who performed included Michael McDonald, Melissa Manchester, Barry Manilow, Peabo Bryson, Valeria Harper and Patti Austin.

Vereen was struck by a small truck on June 9 as he was walking along Pacific Coast Highway near his Malibu home. Vereen suffered head and internal injuries and a broken leg in the pre-dawn accident.

## Woman Hopes To Get Gifts To Somalis

NATCHEZ, MISS. (AP) — Frances Hines is a stubborn woman. But she is all heart.

The Natchez factory worker says she wants more than anything right now to send Christmas greetings to the people of Somalia, especially to the children.

"I really would like to send them a Christmas wreath or a huge Santa Claus — something they could put right in the middle of a village somewhere for everyone to see," she said. "What I'd really like is to send a teddy bear for every Somali child to have to hug."

The U.S. soldiers have their own mission, she said. She has hers. "They are helping to provide something for the body. I want to send them something for the heart."

## Blues Musician Albert King Dead

MEMPHIS, TENN. (AP) — Blues musician Albert King, who recorded "Crosscut Saw" and was a primary influence on rock 'n' roll guitar playing, died Monday after suffering a heart attack. He was 69.

King died about 5 p.m. at Eastwood Medical Center after falling into a coma following the heart attack, said Barbara Warner, a nursing supervisor.

Funeral arrangements were incomplete pending the arrival of King's wife from St. Louis.

A native of Indianola, Miss., King began his career playing drums with Jimmy Reed. He recorded in St. Louis and Cincinnati in the 1950s and 1960s, but his career didn't take off until he signed to Stax Records in Memphis in the 1966.

Backed by Booker T & The MGs, King made songs like "Laundromat Blues" and "Born Under a Bad Sign" into blues standards.

Eric Clapton paid tribute to King on the Cream song "Strange Brew," where he purposely copied note for note King's solo in another song, "Personal Manager." After young guitarists like Clapton made the blues fashionable, King found success with albums such as 1968's "Live Wire/Blues Power," recorded at the Fillmore West in San Francisco.

## Brown Already Has Plans For Daughters

ATLANTA (AP) — Rhythm and blues star Bobby Brown already knows how he'll handle the teen-age years of the daughter he and wife Whitney Houston are expecting this spring.

"Ah man! If (boys) call, I might let my girls talk to them on the phone," he said with a laugh. "But knowing me and the way I was, I probably won't let them in the door." Brown is getting ready for a 50-city tour that he promises will be even more graphic than the 1989 concert that got him arrested in Columbus, Ga., for simulating sexual acts on stage. But despite the explicit shows, he spent part of a break from rehearsal in his Atlanta studio insisting he's now a family man.

## Blount For Head Job

"Let's put it like this," he responded. "I am very afraid of snakes, but if someone said I would have to pick up one to get this job, I would do it in a minute."

Timmy Newsome, the former running back for the Dallas Cowboys who played with Blount at WSSU, also supports him.

"From my viewpoint, it would be a tragedy if they don't hire Kermit," Newsome said. "Not only has he paid his dues in the coaching game, but he has that confidence and leadership quality that a good coach needs."

Newsome said that Bill Hayes, the former WSSU football coach who recruited both him and Blount, had confidence in Blount to call his own plays on

the field.

"The reason we went undefeated one season was mainly because of Kermit," he said. "Look, if they want a winning football team, put Kermit in charge of that program and that's what they'll get."

Fred Burke, chairman of the selection committee and the vice chancellor for business affairs at WSSU, said that Sheppard was "unofficially" interviewed by the committee on Tuesday.

"That doesn't mean he has his foot in the door more than anyone else," Burke said. "He just happened to be in town and we asked him to come talk with us."

He said that the campaign on behalf of Blount would have little

# Griggs Gets Vote Of Confidence from page A1

month employment. Mar.- Sept. 1, 1992, she took financial records, including receipts, from the office and did not return them. During the same time period, he said his signature was forged at least four times, as were the signatures of board members.

Two signatures are required to cash the organization's checks. Griggs and three board members are authorized to sign checks.

Griggs said he sometimes signed blank checks when they were accompanied by a check requisition stating how the money would be spent.

"I trusted her (Wilson) to use checks signed by me and board members as they were intended," he said.

According to police records, Jimmie Lee Ingram Wilson has been convicted of trafficking heroin several times, beginning in 1971 and as late as 1985. In 1974 she pleaded guilty to voluntary manslaughter and was given a four-year sentence. She was pregnant at the time.

Jimmie Lee Wilson could not be reached for comment.

Board member D. Smith said the \$30,000 figure was based on speculation.

"I question the motive of whoever gave that figure out," Smith said.

"When this kind of judgement happens to an African-American, it does a lot of damage. Because once an air of suspicion is shed, it gets attached to all of us. And it happens

over and over again. I'm hoping that whoever did that is washing their mouth out with soap."

Smith said Saturday's vote of confidence was intended to send the message that Griggs will remain as director for the Citizens Coalition. She said it was regrettable that Wilson's records weren't checked, but also defended the hiring of people with a police record.

"Khalid's program was all about giving people a new start in life," Smith said. "Sometimes that's the only chance people get, is from organizations like the coalition."

Crocker put the experience in a positive light.

"The board and Khalid have learned a lot through this. We want to get our internal systems in order

and go on with the work. We believe our mission is vital and the key to that mission is Khalid. We are a one-man organization, if you really look hard at it."

Board member Paula McCoy said, "If Khalid is guilty of anything, it's not paying close attention to the administration of the funds."

McCoy said the board has asked Griggs to submit management and financial reports in a more timely fashion, communicate better with funding organizations, and hire an outside accountant to keep the books.

The coalition's primary funding source is the Kate B. Reynolds Poor and Needy Trust, administered by the Winston-Salem Foundation.

# Happy Hills Convenience Store from page A1

and run by neighborhood residents, that will recirculate any profits earned throughout the community for use in scholarships for its youth and for beautification and revitalization projects in the neighborhood. All profits will stay within the community.

The store also was established to provide training opportunities for residents of the community. They are invited to work for valuable training in the retail business in areas of sales and management.

Scott Fletcher, the 22-year-old manager of the store, says he's excited, because the store will offer training opportunities.

"They can come here and get training that they may not have been offered elsewhere," Fletcher says. "And then when they go out to try to find some jobs, they'll have some references."

Fletcher also says the success of the store's opening provides a positive example to the Happy Hill community.

"The expectations of this area by outsiders tend to be low," Fletcher says. "And because of that, I think their (residents') self-expectations have been lowered. If nothing else, we're here to show them that we can do this. For years, they've always told us we couldn't do it. And here we are, showing them that we can."

The dream of the Happy Hill Garden Mart began October 1991 with Maggie Edwards and Yvonne Jefferson, who wanted to clean up the corner of Liberia and Free Streets.

"The store was already open and was run by somebody else," she says, "but it was drug-infested. Dealers hung out on property, there were cars always on the street, and it was just a hassle coming to your own home."

"Their biggest seller was beer and wine, and they sold cooked food



Angela White (left), assistant manager of the Happy Hill Garden Mart, gives one of the first customers her change, as Manager Scott Fletcher looks on.

that was old," Edwards says. "It was a filthy and dark place."

Edwards says she looked at the store and knew something had to be done.

Edwards and Jefferson made a plea to the community and asked for their support in addressing the need. Then they took their concerns to city officials.

She says, fortunately, the local branch of the United Way and the Winston-Salem Foundation supported their ideas and came forward with a \$30,000 grant. The money was used to buy the building, which was for sale due to a previous foreclosure lien, at a public auction.

Edwards says she and Jefferson represented a board of community residents at the auction.

"The United Way wrote the

check right then and there," Edwards says. "They bought it and turned it over to the Housing Authority for ownership. And then the Housing Authority turned it over to the residents-to-manage-and-run-the-store."

Once the store becomes self-sufficient, legal ownership will be turned over to the resident advisory board.

But the \$30,000 grant money didn't go far. It was used just to purchase the building.

Clifton Graves, assistant executive director of the Housing Authority of Winston-Salem, says after the purchase, there were still hurdles to cross.

"The building needed major rehabilitation and construction to get store ready," Graves says. "The

Housing Authority footed the bill for renovations."

He says the store needed serious repairs, including a new roof, and other major internal and external work.

Graves says there was an additional \$75,000 grant from the Winston-Salem Foundation to help with technical assistance and start-up costs for the store, including inventory, stocking, equipment, and training.

Graves says the store is well on its way to achieving its goals.

"The fact that we've gotten this far is an achievement in itself," he says. "The residents should be proud. But now the real hard work begins — running a business. That's where real experience and real training will come."

## On The Avant Garde

lights are more beautiful, Daddy."

On our way back home, I suggested that we have a contest to see how many homes had the colored lights and how many had the white lights. I was winning, and boy, was I glad.

But as we drove around the neighborhood counting the white-light houses, colored-light houses, I

had a feeling that my son was on to something — I just wasn't sure what it was. All I knew is that I wanted the white lights to win.

When I got behind in the count, I took a little detour into the rich folks neighborhood just to make sure that I would find some more white light houses. Yes, white lights everywhere! I won. When we

returned home to see our beautiful fifty-foot white-light Christmas tree, hanging beautifully from the housetop. I was hoping that he would agree that white lights were better. But he held his ground.

Then, on the way home the other night, I took a wrong turn, and suddenly we found ourselves lost, somewhere out in the rural parts of North Carolina. As I struggled to find the way back, my wife and I noticed how so many of the homes were so well decorated, with so many lights.

I casually remarked to my wife that it seemed that "most of the people out here are using colored lights." Only now and then did we see white lights. We started to notice that the smaller the house, the more likely it was that the people would use the colored lights."

We began to wonder if it was true and why? As we wandered around trying to find our way back home, it became clearer to us what our twelve-year-old had been trying to say.

The people who were using the colored lights were those of us who were still holding on to something of the old, perhaps something that a lot of us who now live in the white-light houses had long since forgot-

ten — perhaps not.

Perhaps it was the innocence about the true meaning of Christmas time and what it really means to gather together as a family and to give each other gifts.

My wife said that those little houses — the ones with all of the colored lights, the ones without the cleverly designed sculptures — made her feel like the people inside were the ones who really had the warmest Christmas.

Their decorations may have looked to some like they were cheap and commercial on the outside, but on the inside, these were the people for whom Christmas was the least commercial. For them, it had the greatest meaning on the inside.

They were the people who would have the warmest Christmas celebration of them all. "Forget what others may think," we envisioned them saying. "Christmas time is for colored lights."

As we headed home, my wife looked at me and smiled, "Well, honey, we may have white lights on the outside, but our Christmas tree has colored lights on the inside."

White on the outside, colored on the inside. Merry Christmas, and may God bless you and keep you strong.

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influence on who the committee will finally select. "Whenever positions like this open up, there's always campaigns. All of us have gotten calls."

Besides Burke, the search committee includes Al Roseboro, the university's athletic director, Dr. Gerald McCants and Walter Marshall. McCants was out of town when the committee met with Sheppard.

Sheppard, who is currently unemployed, last worked for Williams College where he coached football and track. He said he left because "there was nothing else left for me to do there."

Sheppard, who is from Williamston, N.C., said he is friends with Richardson, but heard

about the opening through players who he once coached.

He said he felt the interview with the search committee went well.

Linwood Jeralds, who graduated in 1975 from the WSSU, also placed his name on the advertisement.

"Kermit is a real competitor and a very straight up person. And he's extremely self-motivated," Jeralds said.

Until recently, Jeralds was an assistant coach under Hayes at A&T University. During his tenure at A&T, he had several opportunities to compete against teams Blount has coached.

Blount, Jeralds said, has not lost any of that competitive spirit.