Blood Drive Scheduled for MLK Jr. Day

The Northwest North Carolina Chapter of the American Red Cross is sponsoring a blood drive Monday, Jan. 18, from 1 to 6 p.m. at the Triad Blood Center, 650 Coliseum Dr.

WJMH radio 102 JAMZ and the Winston-Salem Chronicle are co-sponsoring the blood drive on the day Dr. Martin Luther King's birthday is celebrated.

"It is vital that people from all races donate blood," said Melinda Beauchamp, director of Blood Services. "Different protein combinations common to each race are crucial to patients in need of multiple blood transfusions. For example, the chances of finding the right blood for a sickle cell patient are increased when the donor is of the same race."

The American Red Cross said the need for African-Americans to donate blood has never been greater. Your donation helps African-Americans with sickle cell or any other major blood disease, such as leukemia or cancer.

When you ask the medical history nurse to indicate your race on your registration form, you help the American Red Cross identify blood which can be used for African-Americans with blood diseases.

The American Red Cross offers these important facts:

• One in every 400 African-American babies is born with sickle cell disease. These patients require transfusions of blood similar to their own.

• The chances of finding the right blood for a sickle cell patient is increased when the donor is of the same race.

• Red cell membranes are made of protein. Blood from different races has different combinations of proteins.

• Blood transfusions are the only therapy to reduce the possibility of strokes, which are common in sickle cell patients.

Ernest Pitt, publisher of the Chronicle, said he urges the black community to donate blood.

"I think it's important that the African-American community support this blood drive," Pitt said. "It's something we all can do, and it doesn't cost any money. But it is of utmost importance to persons who now need blood and may need it in the future."

Special food and prizes will be given to donors. Donors are encouraged to make an appointment to donate blood by calling 724-0511 between the hours of 9 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday through Friday.

To donate blood, a person must be 17 years old or older, weigh at least 110 pounds, and be healthy. The entire blood donation process takes about one hour.The NWNC Chapter serves Forsyth, Davie, Yadkin and Stokes Counties.

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Artists Perform at MLK Celebration

Members of the North Carolina Black Repertory company and several other local artists will perform for the eighth annual Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Birthday Celebration. The evening will be filled with entertainment for the entire family, especially the children. The event is free and all are encouraged to attend the festive occasion.

This traditional Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Birthday Celebration will take place on Dr. King's actual birthday, Jan. 15, at 7 p.m. in the Arts Council Theatre, 610 Coliseum Dr.

Those attending will be treated to a variety of entertainment, such as music, dance, poetry and dramatic presentations.

Among the veterans performing will be the sensational Rev. John Heath, who will also serve as master of ceremonies. He has performed in several hit musicals including the holiday musical, "Celebrations: An African Odyssey," for the North Carolina Black Repertory Theatre Company and will be a featured vocalist. Another cast members from the holiday musical is Randy Johnson, who will also entice the audience with his illuminating vocal talents. Other NCBRC members vocal treats will be given by Sharon Frazier, a very talented and inspiring singer, Sabrina Roddy, Tonya Turner, and Tamatra Ellis, whose pieces will simply captivate the audience. Vocal treats will also be performed by community talents, Cassandra McCloud and Sophia Robinson.

The birthday celebration is also pleased to announce the performance of Rev. John Heath's Church Choir and David Allen's Choir. Both performances should move the audience as we pay tribute to the celebration of freedom and spirit.

Martron Gales, a featured dancer in the NCBRC holiday musical and member, will showcase his mesmerizing dancing talents. The program is also presenting the dancing talent of Demareo Little.

No MLK Birthday Celebration would be fitting without dramatic presentations. The Rev. John Heath will recite excerpts of Dr. King's famous "I Have a Dream" speech, and poetic presentations by Bill Jackson, Joel McIver, William McIver, and Bryan Lambacker. Susan Stewart will also perform a dramatic reading. Each presentation promises to take you on a different artistic journey.

Given the diversified talent assembled for the MLK Birthday Celebration, the evening should prove exciting and a wonderful way to pay tribute to the advances of the civil and human rights struggle.

Sears Pledges Grant To UNCF

The United Negro College Fund (UNCF) recently announced that the Sears-Roebuck Foundation pledged $1 million in support of Campaign 2000: An Investment in America's Future, UNCF's most ambitious capital drive in its 48-year history. This $250 million nationwide capital drive is designed to help produce the intellectual capital America will need in the 21st century. The campaign was officially launched in 1990 and is scheduled to run for three years.

"Sears, Roebuck and Company has been a powerful supporter of the United Negro College Fund for more than 30 years," said William H. Gray III, vice president and CEO of UNCF. "We value Sears' investment in the future of America's minority citizens through Campaign 2000 — citizens who will contribute significantly to our nation's changing economy."

UNCF's 41 historically black colleges already produce a quarter of all black bachelor of arts degrees in physics and chemistry, a fifth of all those in mathematics, and over 17 percent of those in biology.

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