



When the Charlotte chapter of the National Council of Negro Women, Inc., celebrated Mary McLeod Bethune Day last week, part of the festivities included the presentation of Community Service Awards. Among the award recipients were (front row, l. to r.) Paula Emerson, Public Affairs Officer at the Charlotte Post Office; Cornelia Belton, educator; Ione Jones, educator; Alice Kee, church and community leader; Elaine Nichols, who received the award for Dr. Bertha

Maxwell, Director of Afro-American Studies, UNC-C; Virginia Wood, president, Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority; Lavenia Young, educator and church leader. NCNW officers and program committee members included (back row, l. to r.) Sarah Stroud, program committee chairman; Irene Hunt, treasurer; Gertrude Pearson, program committee; June Davenport, president; Rev. Minnie Conner, chaplain; and Mary Harris, 1st vice president.

Mary McCleod Bethune Day Celebrated At First Baptist-West

Coinciding with International Women's Week and the U. S. Postal Service's issuance of the Mary McLeod Bethune commemorative stamp, the National Council of Negro Women, Inc., Charlotte chapter, celebrated Mary McLeod Bethune Day on Saturday, March 9, at First Baptist Church-West.

One of the highlights of the event was the presentation of Community Service Awards to "women from all walks of life for their outstanding community service," related NCNW

president, June Davenport. According to Davenport, this will become a yearly event.

Award recipients included Cornelia Belton, Elaine Brown, Charlie L. Butler, Kathleen Crosby, Deane Crowell, Barbara Davis, Dr. Mildred Baxter Davis, Theresa Elder, Paula Emerson, Carrie Graves, Eileen Hanson, Adelaide Hunt, Ione Jones, Alice Kee, Phyllis Lynch, Dr. Bertha Maxwell, Lucille McNeel, Vivian Nivens, Jane Reid, Sarah Stevenson, Ella Talley, Vi-

vian Williams, Virginia Wood and Lavenia Young.

Program moderator was Allean Conner, while scripture and prayer were led by the Rev. Minnie Conner. Irene Hunt presented a biographical sketch of Dr. Mary McLeod Bethune and Gertrude Pearson read the Mayor's proclamation. Paula Emerson, Postal Public Affairs Officer, presented the commemorative stamp.

Others involved in the program included: Sarah Stroud (welcome); Ophelia Gray, president emerita (NCNW review); Dr. Roy Anderson (music); June Davenport, president (community service recognitions); Mary Harris (reading); and Rev. Tutt (benediction).

The following were on the reception committee: Bleeker Mayfield, Ruby Brown, Connie Cunningham, Ophelia Gray, Allean Conner, Ella Yarborough, Mary Harris, Geraldine Taylor, Mary Vaughn, and June Davenport.

Other NCNW members present included: Mattie Burke, Mamie Henderson, Mary Wall, Frances Frye, Marilyn McClain, Thelma Featherston, Lucinda Satterwhite, Emma Crawford, Carrie Gilmore, Lillie Irwin, Lucille Sewell, and Bessie Cowan.

Street People

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income areas. Those who abstain from drink and drugs wander the streets until night. Now that the weather is kinder, they can find many places to sleep. Some do fine, others not so well. "Some of them live by the railroad tracks down by N. Graham St.," informs the street philosopher. "The area is dirty and disgusting. They actually live like a pack of dogs."

"I try to talk to some of them," he says. "I tell them, 'You don't have to go through this.' Yet he knows they will have many excuses for their behavior. Many are hanging on to yesterday. Others, particularly young black men, think someone owes them something." Mental illness is evident in others.

Just like any sub-group of people, those who inhabit the streets have varied personalities. There are mean ones. "They steal to support themselves. They don't hesitate to knock someone in the head and rob them," describes the philosopher. "Others don't bother anyone," he adds. There is a mixture of races among these people. "I'd say," claims the philosopher, "that blacks outnumber whites three to one."

Their backgrounds are as varied as their personalities. Many are from out of town. They stop in Charlotte on their way somewhere else. Some are native Charlotteans and have family that lives in town. Often their families try to get them to come home. They don't go.

Another young man wants to tell his story. Isaac Link is from Lincoln, North Carolina and has been in Charlotte about two months. "I've always been a working man and a honest man," he says. Link assures that he's trying to get his life together. The time he spends among the street people shows him many things.

"I'm not here to judge anyone," he claims. "But this is life they choose. After you are awoken at the shelters, you have all day to look for work. There are plenty of jobs but they're not looking for them. They've gotten into the habit of asking someone for something. Then, they complain about what they get."

"There's confusion at the soup lines. Fifty percent come there drunk or high and start fights. They go into the library drunk. It's dangerous out here. I've seen a white boy almost get beat to death in the Salvation Army shelter. The truth is, it is not peaches and ice cream."

"They are not helping themselves. They don't mind spending a few days in Detox to get off the streets. If they lose their jobs they always know that they have the shelters to fall back on."

"You can't help a person who won't help himself," Link mentions. Like many of the persons who live on the streets, Link admits his life has had a few hard knocks. "I'd get jobs and couldn't hold them," he reflects. "But I want to do and I want to become."

Around 12:30 p.m., approximately 30 to 40 of the homeless are sitting on the front steps of buildings that are located near the Salvation Army. For the most part they are quietly waiting. A young black man with a woman stands by the gates of the Salvation Army and soon signal that the doors are opening. Immediately, the throng of waiting people file into the building. Many were earlier at

the breakfast program at First United Methodist. They are now going to have lunch.

The philosopher is eager to tell more about the lives of the street people. "There isn't as many here today as there are when it's cold. Then you would see women and children, entire families. Also it's the first of the month and many have money from government checks," he points out.

"The difference between street people and the rest of the world is late night and day. When I first entered this world it was pure culture shock," he describes.



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