

B SECTION

STYLE

Juiced juice?

Caffeine-laced orange juice proves "fool's gold" in recent consumer testing. For more, see page 2B.



Toys for Tots

A Charlotte chiropractor is offering the gift of good health to those who give to the needy this holiday season.

Dr. Larissa DiBella of Chiropractic Health and Accident Center of Charlotte is collecting toys for the Toys for Tots. People who make donations are eligible for a free initial consultation, examination and up to two x-rays. Collection ends Dec. 20 and appointments will be scheduled Dec. 15-20.

Toys for Tots provides toys for needy children during the holiday season.

For more information, call 391-1000.

"Between Us" columnist to speak

Psychologist Gwendolyn Goldsby Grant will highlight the Women's Commission Virtue Open House Dec. 13.

Grant is best known for her monthly Essence magazine column, "Between Us" in which she offers advice on relationships and health. Grant is also the best selling author of "The Best Kind of Loving," a guide for women. Grant's lecture begins at 2 p.m. and will be held at the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Government Center, 600 E. Fourth St. For ticket information, call 568-9760.

Opportunities to serve

Several local organizations will hold events to provide help for those in need.

Metrolina Black Automotive Employees will hold a Hunger Party Dec. 18 at the Excelsior Club, 921 Beatties Ford Road. Admission is \$5 or five canned goods or toys.

Items collected during the party will be used to help make Christmas better for 200 local families. For more information call 334-5709.

The Youth and College Division of the North Carolina NAACP, The Renaissance Place Restaurant and Friends for All Seasons are soliciting items for a community Christmas party at Little Rock AME Zion Church, 401 N. McDowell St. Dec. 20. For more information call 531-8838 or 358-1980.

The event is co-sponsored by The Post.

One Hundred Black Men of Greater Charlotte will hold its annual Toy Book and Blanket Drive, Dec. 20 at First United Presbyterian Church, corner of Seventh and College streets. Music will be provided by Michael Porter, the West Charlotte Gospel Choir and Aisiahn Bryant of Shiloh Institutional Baptist Church.

Collected items will be distributed by Charlotte Youth Connection, an organization sponsored by 100 Black Men, to local organizations. For more information call 375-7300.

Wanted: CHA alumni

The Charlotte Housing Authority Scholarship Association is searching for past alumni for a reunion celebration. For more information, call 547-9886.

Today

See AROUND CHARLOTTE page 3B

Now that's real soul food



PHOTOS/SUE ANN JOHNSON

For five years, Hidden Valley's Georgia Horton has grown collard greens in her front yard. The stalks, which are organically grown, are a popular topic of conversation in the neighborhood.

By Jeri Young
THE CHARLOTTE POST

People have a hard time figuring out what the dark green plants that line Georgia Horton's driveway are.

Tall and elegant with thick stalks and huge leaves that billow in the breeze like Monday's wash, they look familiar, but surely are not what they seem to be.

Horton, or "Miss Georgia" as the neighborhood children call her, takes it all in stride and with more than a little humor. "They're collard greens," she says with a chuckle. "Plain old collard greens. But they are right nice to look at, I think."

Horton, 62, has been growing her edible garden for five years. It was practical, she says.

Flower seeds got too expensive.

"I had to rethink what I planted," she said, gesturing toward a particularly tall plant. "I pay 65 cents to a dollar for

enough seeds to do all this. Plus you can eat them. You can't eat flowers."

Growing collards in the front yard is also practical. For some reason, birds are more likely to eat the plants when Horton put them in a backyard garden. When she planted in the front yard, the birds ate only the bugs on the plants.

So Horton moved her whole vegetable garden to the front and planted it in beds she once used for roses, marigolds and mums.

The result is organic history. Her yard in Hidden Valley has been picked several times as local yard of the week and is a hot topic of conversation.

Most of the 500 plants will eventually end up in the pots of elderly people Horton knows. She gives them, cooked or raw, to those in need or who can't grow their own. Her charitable work has paid off. In November, the Charlotte Organizing Project recognized

her as one its citizens of the year.

Miss Georgia has also become resident expert on the growing of greens. Ask her anything.

The best way to grow them is organically. To avoid insects, wash the leaves off with a water hose. To make the plants grow taller and still have tender leaves, break off the leaves that grow near the bottom.

"Of course, the best time to eat them is after the first frost," she says. "You can eat them before, but they're kind of stringy and tough. They taste like collards but they have a little tough taste, I call it. After the first frost, they turn a pretty dark green color. They really taste like collards. They won't be stringy and they'll be just as tender."

The best way to cook them? "With a little salt pork and a little sugar," Horton says. "May not be real good for you, but you let them steam down and

See GREENS page 2B



Greens are taste of home

By Jeri Young
THE CHARLOTTE POST

There's something special about collard greens. The smell of fresh collards simmering in a big stew pot on the stove, seasoned with pepper, onions and a tiny bit of smoked turkey is the smell of winter in just about every African American home - particularly mine.

My sister and I didn't like turnips, creasy or the dreaded "poke salad" which grew unchecked in our backyard. They were all too bitter and worse if turnip greens were cooked, so were the extra bitter turnips themselves. No matter how much sugar you put on, they all tasted the same - yucky.

Collards were another story. Served up piping hot with pot liquor and cornbread, with flecks of red pepper, they were the stuff of dreams. Add a little red pepper sauce or vinegar and you have a meal.

Of course, greens in my house are common. Though I'm not a very good cook, I do often serve greens.

I have cooking potential, though. I remember what food should taste like from childhood. And I can pick, at a taste, exactly what spice needs to be added to make a dish sing. I just choose not to do it too often.

The problem is I don't have the patience to do a whole meal from start to finish. And, of course, there's my phobia - I can't stand to touch raw meat, which eliminates quite a few dishes.

The one thing I don't mind making, is collard greens. Now, before you get all excited, I have to be honest. I don't cook fresh greens. It's not that I can't, but something about laboring for hours over a sink full of greens just doesn't appeal to me. I don't relish picking worms, either.

So, I cheat. I use frozen or canned greens and season them up to make them taste almost like fresh. I know it's wrong, but I like greens, so I have to make allowances.

I soak them for a while in warm water, rinse them in cold water and soak again in warm water seasoned with fresh herbs. Soaking and rinsing kills the taste of commercial preservation and brings the greens almost back to their farm fresh origins.

But enough waxing poetic about the wonder of collards. Here's one of my favorite recipes, a variation on a recipe created by singer Melba Moore that appeared in an old edition of The Black Family Dinner Quilt Cookbook (Fireside, \$12, 1993).

Try it. It will definitely bring back memories of childhood.

Melba's Collard Greens and Turkey Wings

- 3 pounds collard greens
- About 2 cups water
- 1 medium onion, chopped
- 1 pound smoked turkey wings
- To taste - sugar, pepper, garlic powder, salt

Soak and wash greens. If fresh, remove all grit and hard stems. Place in small bunches roll together and cut crosswise in wide strips. Place greens, water, onion and turkey wings in large pan. Season with sugar, pepper, garlic and salt. Cook until greens are soft and tender.

6 servings

Nutrition - 170 calories/fat 6 grams/Carbohydrates 7 grams/Cholesterol 60 milligrams/Sodium 855 milligrams.

Maya delights; Dickey proves disappointing

By Jeri Young
THE CHARLOTTE POST

Even the Stars Look Lonesome
Maya Angelou
Random House
1997
\$18

Can Maya Angelou do any wrong?

Best selling author of "I know Why the Caged Bird Sings," and my personal favorite, "Singin' and Swingin' and Gettin' Merry Like Christmas," Angelou has for

years captured the essence of African America in thought-provoking prose and scintillating sonnets.

Most of Angelou's extensive works have revolved around her life. And what a life she's had. A mother by age 17, Angelou has been in various incarnations, a "madam," famed dancer on the European stage, singer, poet, playwright, sought-after speaker and President Clinton's favorite poet. Currently, Angelou is Reynold's Professor at Wake Forest University and teaches courses on black liberation and

literature.

In "Even the Stars Look Lonesome," Angelou borrows a page from Ralph Waldo Emerson, turning her lyrical pen to essays on myriad topics from the meaning of home, to her "sister-friend" Oprah Winfrey, to the peculiarities of African American speech.

Each is intimate. Most are satisfying.

The only disappointment was the piece on Winfrey. As close as the two are, the essay should have felt more intimate.

I was also unsure about the meaning of the essay on Supreme

Court Justice Clarence Thomas.

Angelou, who supported Thomas' nomination, gives at best a cursory explanation of why she was one of the few prominent blacks who came out in support of the embattled Thomas at the height of the Anita Hill scandal. Even after reading the essay, I didn't get it.

Despite its shortcomings, Angelou once again satisfies, creating a work worth reading.

Sister Sister
Eric Jerome Dickey
Signet
1997

\$5.99 (paperback)

When Eric Jerome Dickey's much ballyhooed "Sister Sister" was first released, it was an instant success.

Hailed as the "new male Terry McMillan," Dickey rode the popular fiction wave almost to the top. I didn't get a copy, so I was left out of the hoopla.

Now that I have one, I find I didn't miss much.

Choppy, stereotypical with female characters that are as limp as wet noodles, I found

See COVER page 3B