

## Life Begins At 62½

by George B. Russ

Cora Mae was angry enough to wring Emma Lou's neck for treating Miss Madie so mean. Truly, her neighbor was nobody's angel, but she was a straight forward, outspoken old lady who minded her own business. And that was more than she could say for herself or most of the women living her at Bayborough Terrace. Miss Madie deserved better than being cuffed about by her highbrow sister-in-law.

"You can spend the night with me, Miss Madie. I don't sprinkle my sheets before I iron them, but my beds are clean."

Beggars can't be choosy, Cora Mae. I' appreciate your invite. I won't be no bother. Have you heard when Mister Ben will be buried?"

Cora Mae came from behind the storm-door and stood on the awningless stoop, "home, I haven't heard a thing. I have been so tore-up over the way your sister-in-law is treating you, I haven't thought much about Mistah Ben come on over here. Have you had anything to eat?"

Miss Madie was reluctant to cross the token divider between apartments 2-A, and 2-B, but she made the journey with less effort than she suspected.

Cora Mae was one of those sweep in the middle of the floor housekeepers, however, for the most part, her place was fairly well-kept.

"I saw you take-off with Jeff Boykins." Cora Mae said in an effort to cheer Miss Madie up, and, at the same time, find out where she had been.

"Jeff Boykins, ain't what th' cats dragged in, if you ask me. And to tell th' truth 'n devil, you ain't never seed ah-body with eyes as close to their nose as Jeff's who has all their buttons. I'm silly in many respects 'n you could



**CONTRACT NEGOTIATIONS**—Representatives of minority firms and the U.S. Department of Labor go over the Department's future purchasing and contracting plans. Shown are, from left: William G. Rundle, small business specialist for the Labor Department; Luis A. Cardona of Unidos Management Associates, Inc., Washington, D.C.; Reginal W. Harvey of Plato Systems, Inc., Silver Spring, Md.; and Daniel Murphy, another Labor Department small business specialist.

call me crazy Hattie, where men are concerned, but, take it up one side 'n down th' t'other, I'm nobody's fool 'n from now on Mister Boykins won't be scratching in my 'tater-hill. I'll keep company with ah-monkey-pap before I'll pass th' time of day with th' likes of him."

Cora Mae zoomed out of the room, she had too much respect for Miss Madie to laugh in her face.

Miss Madie dropped down on a nearby chair, thinking to herself that Cora Mae was a little teteched in the head herself, "hightailing it ou-ah-her like-ah-abt out of hell, leaves nothing to th' 'magnition, Miss Madie mused as she sat watching a border of dust and lint under the green vinyl leather "pull-out."

There was no doubt about it, she was like-ah-fish out of water without Mister Ben. The memory of scrubbing him with water and soap, drying him off with a sort, fluffy towel fragrant with lavender sachet, then dusting him with Johnson Baby Powder, was poor-fare for an old lady to lull herself to sleep each night but her days would be awfully bleak with "Gabby-Hayes." Mister Ben had nice hair, and, strangely as it might seem, he had few gray hairs. Her own tresses grew an inch a year, Mister Ben's hair sprouted an inch a week. He enjoyed having her comb his hair. Although she used a medicated, moisturizing hair-dressing on his soft, unruly darkbrown hair, he would coax her into putting sugar in his hair so could listen to the popping sound of the sugar between her thumb nails. At some time in the "ole rep-pro-bates" life he had had lice in his scalp. She couldn't imagine a person being homesick for the sound of cracking lice, but the world is full of strange people and one shouldn't be shocked to hear of any one being oppressed by strange desires, strange capers, strange actions, strange notions, so, she just never gave much thought to the whyfores.

Her friend had not been such a good-egg, on the other hand, he wasn't such a bad-egg once you close your 'eyes against the glare of his imperfections, his lust for women. If it were a sin for a man to just after women, Ben Pratt was a goner, his sould would burn eternally in the pits of hell. "Supper is ready!" Cora Mae chirped as she re-entered the room.

Miss Madie jumped, "Cora Mae! you oughtah knock 'fore you bust in on an old lady's day dreaming." Miss Madie stood up, "I'm hungry and sacred 'n need of-ah-bath."

"Come on 'n eat, we can talk awhile before you take a bath."

"Honey, I've had as much talk as I can stand for one day."

"Okay-dokay! we can talk when you're good and ready."

"Talk about what?" Miss Madie yawned boldly.

"Did you ever find your bank books?"

"What bank books?"

"Okay-dokay-you play hard to get the books can just stay put." Cora Mae teased.

"Cora Mae! you're full-ah-stuff!" Miss Madie squalled with joy.

## Blacks Far Behind In Government Jobs

**NEW YORK**—As of Dec. 1, 1973, there were only 239 blacks holding top level positions in the executive branch of the federal government out of more than 11,000 such positions. In other words, blacks hold a little more than 2 per cent of these prime jobs. This information compiled by Black Enterprise magazine, can be found in its January issue which deals with politics.

Black Enterprise Magazine contends that a major reason for the government's failure to employ more blacks in high level positions is the lack of pressure from outside sources to do so. After World War II, Blacks in increasing numbers gained well paying, but low level, civil service jobs in the federal government; and now, non-whites constitute 25 per cent of all the federal bureaucracy. But, as the Black Enterprise list indicates, at the top level, or "super grades," Blacks hold little more than 2 per cent of these positions.

hands and feet increase the possibility of shock." If such a mishap occurs, shut the current off immediately and remove the victim from the contact using a stick or gloves, but not barehanded. Call an ambulance or doctor and administer artificial respiration until help arrives.

## We want your opinion about taxes.

Nobody likes to pay taxes, but taxes are necessary to support government services. The question is: What kind of tax do you think is the fairest to all the people of the State?

Lately, a great deal of concern has been shown by many taxpayers. Should we revise and update our 36-year old individual income tax rate structure? Should the food tax, which now costs the typical family of four \$61.00 per year, be repealed? What taxes are fair and equitable?

We'd like for you to answer the six questions shown below. We'll pass your opinions on to the members of our General Assembly. With your help, we can formulate the best tax system possible for all North Carolinians. Thank you.

- In North Carolina, the man with a family of four and a \$7,000 annual income currently pays about 4% of his net income (after deductions and exemptions) in income tax. A man with the same size family and a \$15,000 income pays a higher percentage, about 7%. In the same situation, a man with a \$100,000 income also pays the same 7% rate. Do you feel this arrangement is fair? Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_
- Do you believe that individuals with higher income should pay higher tax rates than individuals with low incomes? Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_
- Do you believe that the sales tax should apply to food purchases? Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_
- How do you rate the following taxes, fair or unfair?
 

	Fair	Unfair		Fair	Unfair
Cigarette Tax	___	___	Liquor Tax	___	___
Corporation Income Tax	___	___	Property Tax	___	___
Food Tax	___	___	Sales Tax	___	___
Gasoline Tax	___	___	Soft Drink Tax	___	___
Individual Income Tax	___	___			
- Which of the following measures would be most desirable? Choose one:
  - Repeal the sales tax on food.
  - Increase income tax rates on high income.
  - Both A. and B.
  - Reduce state income tax on any business an amount equal to the property tax it paid a county or city on its inventory.
  - Reduce tax rate on the first \$2,000 of taxable income by 1%.
  - Both D. and E.
  - None of the above changes would be desirable.
- Do you believe that tax reform is desirable in North Carolina at this time? Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_

Name and Address (Optional) \_\_\_\_\_

Please mail to: **NORTH CAROLINIANS FOR TAX REFORM**  
P.O. Box 19243  
Raleigh, North Carolina 27609

We would appreciate any additional comments you may have. Feel free to use a separate sheet of paper. Thank you.

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**R for your child's safety**

Do your children have adequate protection from the danger of electrical shock that can lurk right in your own home?

"Most households have electrical deathtraps into which small children can stumble in the twinkling of an eye," says Dr. Albert H. Domm, child safety specialist and medical director of the Prudential Insurance Company.

He urges all parents to inspect their homes for electrical danger spots and take prompt corrective action if any exist.

Dr. Domm suggests the following safeguards: (1) Keep all electric outlets covered when not in use. Curious children can stick conductive objects into uncovered sockets. (2) Be sure you have no worn extension cords. (3) Place all electrical machinery and appliances out of the reach of toddlers. (4) Light switches, electrical appliances, or outlets should not be within reach of the bathtub.

"The bathtub requires special attention from parents since many electrical accidents take place there," he said. "Wet

**Kick the habit.**

Bad habits are as easy to get into as they are hard to get out of. Like calling directory assistance when you don't absolutely have to. You try it once or twice. And before you know it you're hooked.

After a while you don't think twice about picking up the phone and asking us to find phone numbers that, three times out of four, you could find yourself. In the phone book.

And people are abusing directory assistance now like never before. (One customer called us 1,460 times in one month alone!)

The trouble is, calling directory assistance needlessly ends up costing you money. Because phone information isn't free.

The extra operators we need to service your extra calls cost us money. A cost that shows up on your phone bill. As part of the monthly service charge. Last year millions of consumer dollars were wasted on unnecessary information requests.

And all of those dollars came out of your pocket. If that doesn't make you mad enough to cut it out altogether, isn't it enough to make you cut it down?

**GTE GENERAL TELEPHONE**



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