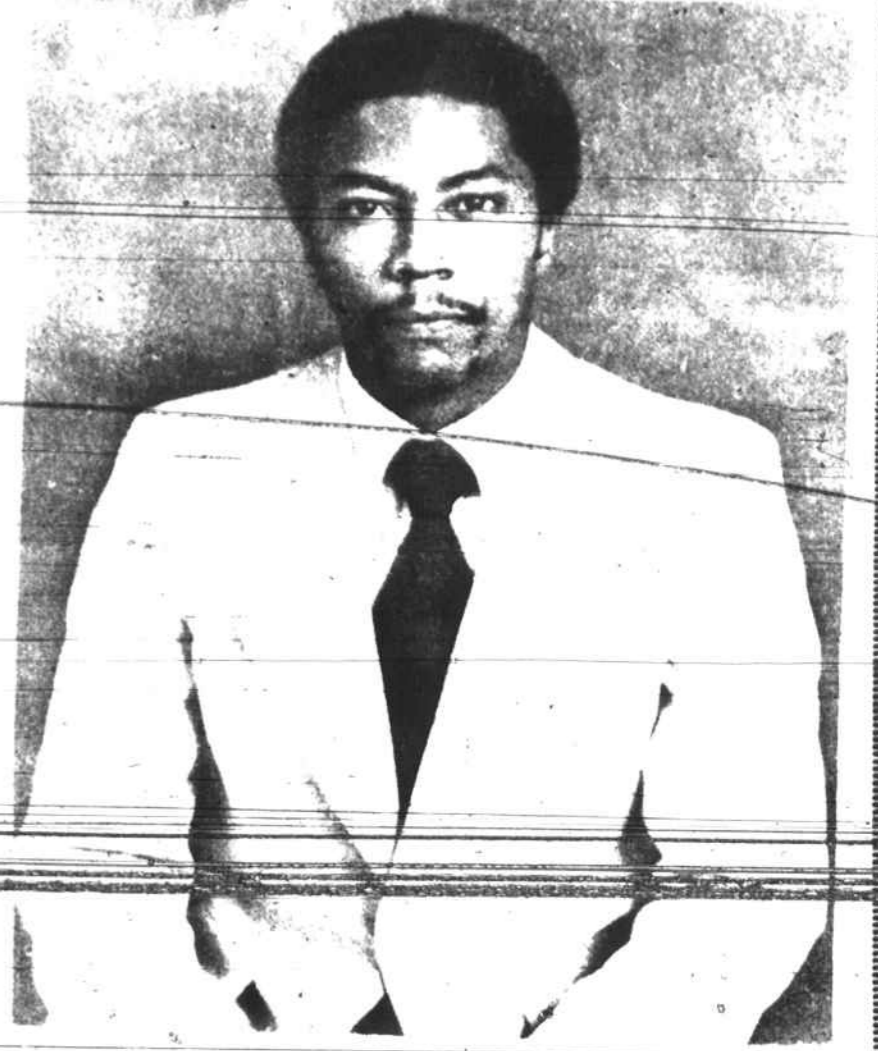


Chronicle Profile

Professional Remembers His Roots



Les Venable

About a year ago, Les Venable inherited his grandmother's house on Watkins Street, and things haven't been the same since.

"I was revolutionary in college," Les recalls. "But now I believe in working within the system for change."

He decided that Watkins Street needed a lot of changing. The average resident was around 50 years of age, unemployed or underemployed, and paying a-

bout \$60.00 a month rent on a house that an absentee landlord had not bothered to keep in good repair.

So, Les Venable organized the Watkins Street Neighborhood Group, utilizing skills in community organization that he had learned as a political science major at Morgan State University.

"It's a waste of time and effort to learn skills and never use them," he commented.

Since the founding of

the organization, Watkins Street has been designated a community development area, and Les Venable has hopes of using Section 8 and CD money to buy the houses and resell them to the tenants with low-interest loans, which would also cover the rehabilitation of the house.

He has made progress but he is not satisfied. "The city is totally unresponsive until you knock them in the head

with something," he fumed. "I've got on Gary Brown's nerves. They're totally upset with me, but they still won't do anything."

"We've been trying to get our street fixed for a year," he went on.

"They keep saying 'We're Doing It in Winston,' and things like that, but here we are right in the downtown area and we can't even get our street paved."

Asked if he has political ambitions--for example, if he contemplates running for alderman, he replies. "Sure. Why not? I think someone needs to run against her (Ernestine Wilson) just to show what a bad job she's doing."

Venable's interest in the community extends to his choice of a career. He works for Executive Realty Company.

"I wanted to get into real estate for basically

two reasons," he explains. "First of all there was no viable black company competing in the real estate market, and secondly--"

"He pauses. "Now this may be kind of subtle," he warns. "You see, real estate was perpetuating the housing patterns in an area. They are chiefly responsible for re-enforcing or breaking down the existing housing patterns. And I want to be a part of that process."



Staff Photos by Bratcher

WSSU day care youngsters have a lot of fun with puzzles, word games, and other entertaining activities, which are also teaching them valuable skills, such as reading readiness. Instructor Rhonda Isaiah leads the class in a recitation designed to teach them vocabulary.

WSSU Offers Learning, Day Care

By Sharyn Bratcher
Staff Writer

Montrice Brown attends classes at Winston-Salem State University, where she puts puzzles together, plays with blocks, and colors pictures. She can't read or write, but nobody minds that. Miss Brown is four years old.

The University day care center has 60 pupils ages 3 to 5. Some children come from the community at large, some are the offspring of WSSU faculty and staff members.

"We have an active curriculum," Dr. Tobias explained. "We are concerned with reading readiness, math readiness, sensory-motor perception..." Children become familiar with the alphabet in several ways: by handling large, 3-dimensional letters, by seeing words in games and puzzles, and by exposure to books and magazines.

Mrs. Maurice Jackson is director of psychology, and art, works with the youngsters on special projects.

The hallway of the Child Care Center is decorated with lifesize murals of nursery rhymes: Goldilocks and the 3 Bears, Jack clinging to the beanstalk, evidence of a project of a previous semester.

The center contains 3 classes of children grouped according to age. In keeping with the open classroom format, the rooms are filled with interesting and colorful items to entertain the child while he learns. There are building blocks, puzzles, magazines, an aquarium, bright bulletin boards, and even a piano.

In the "Fives" room instructor Isaiah leads the group in a recitation: "What is this?" "A HAND!" They roar.

After the lesson is over, the children go off one by

one to take up any activity they wish. play with the wooden blocks in the front of the class, while others take up books or puzzles.

The center charges a flat fee of \$18 per week, and they have an "open door policy" for all children.

But the waiting list is quite long, warns Mrs. Jackson, indicating a thick stack of applications.

"Most parents apply when their child is about 18 months old," she says. "And then by the time he's 3, there is an opening. The center has been in

operation since October of 1974.

Ball Planned For Sickle Cell

"Together in Unity," a social club composed of members of a Masonic order, will sponsor a Dance for Sickle Cell, Saturday, October 21, 1978 at the Benton Convention Center.

This is the club's fourth year of operation, and their aim is to provide free services where needed in their community. Such services consist of donations to churches in the area, Boys Club, and the Crisis Control programs.

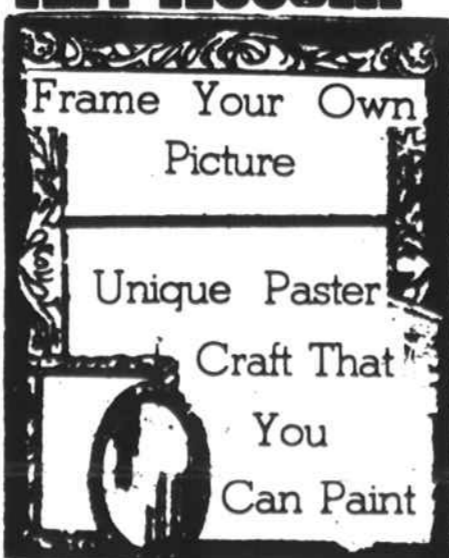
John Hart is president of the organization. Alfred Adams serves as vice-president and treasurer, and Clifton Hines is secretary.

Sickle cell is a non-contagious, inherited blood defect. Sickle cell anemia is a tragic burden for millions of black people. Funds are needed for free testing, education, and counseling.

Donations may be made through one of the co-chairmen for the Ball. They are: Junius Rogers, 814 Woodcote Street; 788-6538; and Albert Wardlow, 1541 Attucks Street, 722-8964 or 761-0278.



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