

## Ask Yolonda

### Welfare cheater may go to jail

By YOLONDA GAYLES  
Syndicated Columnist

**Dear Yolonda:** A friend and neighbor is receiving government supplement for her apartment (Section 8), but she's ineligible. We live in the same building. My rent is \$380 a month; she's only paying \$40. When she first moved in the building, she was eligible because she was on public aid, but now she's working every day. In fact, she seems to have a nice job. I see her leaving the house every day very neatly dressed.

Although I'm not a squealer, I feel a little uneasy about her and our friendship. You might say that I'm jealous. I resent the fact that I have to struggle to make ends meet to have a place to stay, but she's able to live so cheaply. I'm sure that she's spending her money on those new clothes.

Isn't she breaking the law?

K.F., in LaPorte

**Dear K.F.:** Yes, she is breaking the law. In fact, if she's caught, she'll have to repay every cent of the benefits she received, and perhaps she'll still be subjected to prosecution. I'm sure she's aware of this.

What should you do? You might remind your friend that you and others have noticed her leaving home every day, evidently going to work. Someone is bound to call this information in.

A word to the wise should be sufficient.

#### The Origin of Pierced Ears

**Dear Yolonda:** A few words about a trend that was started by black Africans and now seems to be part of the American custom. The trend I'm referring to is men wearing earrings. The current style is to wear one earring, but a man wearing an earring in both ears is acceptable and doesn't delete from one's masculinity.

A little history: In 1975, when I visited Tan- Please see page B9

## Broadway Is My Beat

### Pryor: In too deep in 'Jo Jo Dancer'

Observations in-covering the Night Beat:

Reports leaking from **Richard Pryor's** "Jo Jo Dancer: Your Life Is Calling" set say he's acting as if he's gotten in over his head on the autobiographical-style production in which he not only stars, but which he co-wrote and in which he makes his debut as a producer and director. The story of a failed comedian who fights his way back from failed marriages, drugs and a near-fatal accident is only a few weeks into shooting. So there's still plenty of time for things to get better -- or worse....

**James Earl Jones** took the role of a nasty cop in "The Atlanta Child Murders" because he hopes to help other children avoid a similar gruesome fate.

"Many viewers won't like my character, but I wanted to participate in this mini-series because it's inspiring and important," says the 53-year-old actor.

The five-hour mini-series is based on the baffling murders of 28 black youths in the Georgia capital. The drama is climaxed by the 1982 conviction of music promoter and free-lance photographer

Wayne Williams for two of the slayings.

"There's a sense of emergency in retelling something that has caused so much confusion," Jones explains. "The story should be told while it still creates curiosity and concern. Every city has its reality, and this story should awaken a realistic concern about children in a big city."

"I hope it did. Children are so vulnerable and so precious...."

Actor **Adolph Caesar** can't quite understand the complaints of his "Soldier's Please see page B9



#### Reigning Beauty

Miss Winston-Salem State University 1984 Dana Caulder will join other campus queens from black colleges all across the country in *Ebony's* annual salute to Black College Queens. A native of Lumberton, Caulder is a business major, member of the ROTC, served as Miss Junior Class in 1983-84 and looks forward to a career in the United States Army after she graduates (photo by James R. Barker)



The DeBarge family, all 10 of them, started singing together as soon as they could talk and haven't stopped yet.

## Up Close

### DeBarge: A family destined for musical success

DeBarge burst on to the musical scene last year and struck gold with their second Motown album, "All This Love." With two smash singles, "I Like It" and the title tune from the LP, DeBarge -- El, Randy, Mark, James and Bunny -- established themselves as hitmakers. The third LP, aptly titled "In A Special Way," displays a new dimension for the popular quintet and just might be the charm for the family act from Grand Rapids, Mich., who grew up singing and dancing before they could talk.

The album was completely written by the group and was produced by 22-year-old El DeBarge, who readily admits it wasn't easy.

"It was a lot harder than I thought it would be," says El, who occasionally got a little help from brother Bobby, who is not a member of DeBarge. "I had to learn to be strict and stern. The family had to learn to look at me as El the producer, not El the brother. If I made a decision, it was made on the basis of what was best for the album and my brothers and sister had to learn not to take it personal. But if I had to do it all over again, I would. We all pulled together and it was a labor of love."

And pull together they did. El literally challenged his family to write the best music possible, and they each rose to the occasion.

But this won't come as a surprise to the fans and critics alike who have been watching the rise of this talented family. Music is in their blood. As Bunny once said, "If your last name was DeBarge in Grand Rapids, you had to be into some type of music."

Ten kids under one roof means the house was never quiet, but ten kids singing as soon as they could talk, playing the nearest instrument that was put in their hands and making up little songs to see who could outdo whom, can mean only one thing -- constant noise. But the noise was channeled into a creative vein by loving parents Please see page B8

## Musical Notes

### Morris Day gets award for 'Purple Rain' debut

Morris Day has been named the 1985 recipient of the prestigious Clarence Muse Award by the Black Film-makers Hall of Fame. The award, created to recognize the contributions of young black artists to the world of cinema, was presented to the musician and star of the hit motion picture "Purple Rain" at the 12th Annual Oscar Mischeaux Ceremony held recently in Oakland, Calif. Past recipients of the award have included such luminaries as Debbie Allen, Kevin Hooks, Ren Woods, Jennifer Holliday and Shari Belafonte-Harper.

Morris Day recently signed a multi-picture agreement with 20th Century-Fox in the wake of his enormously successful movie debut. The young actor/musician was showered with movie offers prior to reaching that agreement and is currently making film and recording arrangements that will result in a flurry of activity, details of which will be announced in the near future.

The Clarence Muse Award is named after the actor whose career spanned more than 50 years and who appeared in the second talking feature to be filmed at a "talkies" inception during the late 1920s, "Hearts of Dixie." His last feature film appearance was in the Francis Ford Coppola production "The Black Stallion."

Muse was also a prominent lawyer and songwriter, but he is best remembered for the encouragement and friendship

he gave to aspiring young entertainers. Muse took special pride in helping to found and served as a charter member of the Screen Actors Guild and was also a respected member of ASCAP for over a quarter of a century....

After 15 years of production *Soul Train* has new syndicators, Tribune Entertainment. And changes are in store for the black-orientated American Bandstand. A new format change, more video clips and increasing the number of pop and crossover artists are just a few of the changes.

The show will also be moving to a new channel and new time slots....

*Billboard* magazine calls him "perhaps the preeminent singer in black music today." In the Los Angeles *Times*, Robert Hilburn praises his "elegant, bright and sensual music."

The *he* they are referring to is **Luther Vandross**, a multi-platinum, singer-songwriter-producer whose fourth Epic album "The Night I Fell In Love," was scheduled to be released on March 14.

The new album is preceded by a single, "Til My Baby Comes Home." An added highlight to the song, written by Vandross and Marcus Miller, is an organ solo by Billy Preston.

This summer Vandross will embark on a national tour.