

90th birthday party for McKnight

SPECIAL TO THE CHRONICLE

On Sunday, Sept. 28, family and friends of James L. McKnight met at the Hawthorne Inn and Conference Center to celebrate his 90th birthday. The evening showcased the endearment and love of his wife, Margiesteene McKnight, and daughter, Sharron "Bunny" McKnight Clipper.

The celebration began that morning at a worship service at John Wesley A.M. E. Zion church, where the pastor is Rev. Gloria L. Thomas and the First Man is James M. Thomas.

Russell Harper served as master of ceremonies. Brenda Nance blessed attendees with two songs – "The Lord's Prayer" and "Great Is Thy Faithfulness." Ricky McKinney rendered music and sang throughout the program. The highlight of the evening was a poem written for and about Mr. McKnight. Entitled "Her Man," the poem was written and recited by Beverly McFadden, who played the bongos during her performance.

Capturing the moment and telling the story of "Sunday Supper," a tradi-



James L. McKnight

tion of families coming together for special events – was photographer Ralph Meadows. Attendees enjoyed barbecue ribs, grilled and fried chicken and an assortment of vegetables, along with tea and dessert.

Photos by Kevin Walker

Chris Mecca secures his footwear for Walk a Mile in Her Shoes, which had hundreds of participants trekking through downtown on Saturday.

Below: Silhouettes erected in Merschel Plaza represent domestic violence victims.



Power in Heel'ing

CHRONICLE STAFF REPORT

Family Services' sixth annual "Walk a Mile in Her Shoes" event was held Saturday, Oct. 11 in Merschel Plaza to raise awareness of domestic violence.

Hundreds took part in the program, which began with remarks by survivors and others. By noon, the crowd hit the streets, walking the streets of downtown with signs and banners; some even chanted. Most of the male walkers wore women's shoes – hence the event's title.

October is National Domestic Violence Awareness Month. Family Services runs a domestic violence shelter for women and children.

"Since opening its doors, thousands of victims and their children



have accessed services. Domestic violence continues to be a serious problem that impacts the entire community resulting in lost productivity, a wide range of physical and mental health issues, and deaths. Today, the Safe Relationships Division (of Family Services) focuses on creating 'a community in which all families and individuals are free from the threat of family violence and sexual assault,'" said Joetta Shepherd, director of the Safe Relationships Division, which includes Domestic Violence Services, Sexual Assault Response, Child Maltreatment and Relationship Intervention for Abusers programs and a Domestic Violence Crisis Line (336-723-8125) and Sexual Assault Crisis Line (336-722-4457).



Future Endeavors' Founder Andre Russell poses with Terrance McNeil Jr.

Market

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recruited him at that event.

"It's going pretty good for a first day," he said. "This is the kind of place I like to do business."

The funeral home run by Jerry C. Gilmore III and his family is one of the few black-owned businesses that has survived on Liberty Street.

"When we moved to this corner, (Highway) 52 was clay," he said.

Gilmore's Funeral Home is adjacent to the market. Mr. Gilmore hopes its presence portends that Liberty Street's comeback is afoot. City leaders share that hope. They say they have long supported the street's rebirth with funds and resources.

Mayor Pro Tempore Vivian Burke held a copy of Liberty Street Corridor feasibility study done in 1996 as she made her remarks. Burke, the long-time Northeast Ward City Council member, represents one part of Liberty Street; East Ward Council member Derwin Montgomery represents the other. Montgomery said patience and perseverance must be employed in Liberty's reemergence.

"It won't happen overnight, as much as we would like to wave that magic wand," he said.

When it happens, Andre Russell plans to have a new crop of entrepreneurs ready to take full-advantage. His Future Endeavors L.L.C. (www.bandtwogether.com), a youth consulting agency, is a market vendor, but with a twist. He has recruited 10 teenagers to sell socks, beauty products and other items. They keep 25 percent of the profits.

"They will eventually become their own bosses," said Russell, a New Jersey native who is applying the business



Terrance and Tayola McNeil sit at her table.



Mercedes Miller and Jerry Gilmore III speak.

skills he learned on the streets to help keep kids on the straight and narrow.

The market's first day was a bit nostalgic for Tarreyton Carson, who was selling some of the colorful, lush products from his Zael's Florist.

His first foray into the flower business was at Jan's Florist, one of Liberty Street's many long ago perished black businesses. The building that once housed the shop stood just over Carson's shoulder as he worked the market crowd. It was a full-circle moment for Carson, who opened his shop on Dominion Street earlier this year.

"This is kind of where

I got my start because (Jan's) inspired me," he said.

The Liberty Street Market, 1591 N. Liberty St., has a number of special programs upcoming. On Saturday, Nov. 1, the Busta Brown Fall Music Festival will take place. The market will open on Sunday on Nov. 2 and Dec. 7 to host "Citywide Community Yard Sale" events. Ribbers from throughout the area will take part on Rib Fest on Liberty on Saturday, Nov. 15 and Sunday, Nov. 16. To rent space at the market, call Terrance McNeil at 336-793-3441 or email lsvm@earthlink.net.

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