

Beginning Feb. 7

AKAs Announce Series Of Reading Programs

With the theme: "Reading: A Right and a Responsibility", the local chapter of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority will begin a series of reading enrichment programs for children living in the northwest area and in the inner city.

The local program is one of the main targets of the national organization which has held three major training workshops for Alpha Kappa Alpha sorors. The workshops were held in Chicago, Atlanta and New York during the spring, summer and fall of 1975. Reading consultants and practitioners in the reading field served as trainers for those sorors who will serve as leaders. Following these workshops, all local chapters were committed to establishing reading programs in their local communities.

As a beginning, sorors in the



Mrs. Wilhelmina White
...Program chairperson

local chapter have held one workshop conducted by Miss LaForrest Williams, reading consultant for the State Department. Other workshops are planned as the program

progresses.

The local reading experience program will be held each Saturday at Gethsemane A.M.E. Zion Church from 10:30 a.m. until 12:30 p.m. beginning Saturday, February 7 and continuing through June 12, 1976. All children in grades four, five and six are eligible to attend. Initial contacts have been made through the local school principals and followup contacts will be made with parents and or guardians. In addition to the reading enrichment program, other phases of the program will include recreational and cultural activities.

Mrs. Wilhelmina White is serving as chairperson of the local program. All sorors in the local chapter will be actively involved at each session. Mrs. Doris R. Asbury is local chapter president.

Taps Provide Wide Spectrum To Pregnant, Unwed Girls

Public and private agencies in Mecklenburg County have joined hands in a successful way to provide a wide spectrum of services that are needed by the County's approximately 600 schoolage, unwed girls who become pregnant each year.

The Teenage Parents Service (TAPS) program, now in the fifth year, is operated by the Department of Social Services in cooperation with the Charlotte-Mecklenburg School System, the County Health Department, the Charlotte Memorial Hospital and an advisory committee composed of private citizens. TAPS is recognized as a remarkable blend of public and private efforts, all directed toward accomplishing a significant community goal.

The need for TAPS became dramatically evident during the late 1960's when a tutoring program was established at the local Florence Crittenton Home for unwed pregnant girls. Word soon spread through the community that a few day students would be accepted in these classes, and the Home was deluged with applications from local girls who had dropped out of school because they were pregnant.

An interagency committee was organized to study the needs of unwed pregnant girls in Mecklenburg County and, based on the findings and

recommendations of this committee, a program was established in 1971 to begin meeting these needs. For a brief period the program was administered by a United Way agency and in 1972 it became a Model Cities agency. Finally, in 1973, it was taken over by the Mecklenburg County Department of Social Services.

TAPS is housed in a 40-year old school building in the inner city. Its educational component is the most visible part of the program and the part you see when you walk through the double doors of the old red brick school building. This is the component that meets those needs which seem to be uppermost in the girls' minds when they first come to TAPS: "What about my education?"

is the question they ask most frequently. TAPS participants attend classes in a bright, cheerful and school-like atmosphere, where you hear school girl chatter mingled with voices of counseling and concern.

Before TAPS was established, most of the girls who became pregnant in Mecklenburg County simply dropped out of school as soon as they began to show, and that was the end of their schooling. Today, 90 percent of the girls who participate in the program return to school and complete their high school

education.

The Charlotte-Mecklenburg School System operates a full-scale school for TAPS participants, with a curriculum that includes all courses required for high school graduation. Once it is determined that a girl is pregnant, she can enroll in TAPS.

Mel Jackson Helps People Satisfy IRS

Accountant, tax specialist Mel Jackson is getting ready to handle about 13,000 tax returns in his annual effort to help people satisfy the Internal Revenue Service.

At rates beginning at \$3, Jackson and his 25 staff people plan to work from 8:30 a.m. to 9 p.m. daily and to 5 p.m. on Saturdays to get tax returns filed. In the off season, Jackson has a staff of four including himself and his wife.

"She's the brain of the operation," said Jackson. He said his wife originally started in the income tax business with her tax lawyer brother in Georgia.

The 69-year-old business-

man said taxes are becoming so complicated that the ordinary man cannot file his own return. He said the reason for this is politics.

In his 25 years of tax experience, Jackson has run into many unusual circumstances. He had a minister for a client once who talked to each member of his congregation and tried to use the same deductions as each member did. Jackson said his return was a mess. The minister became one of his annual clients.

Jackson expects his business to pick up steadily about mid-February when most people will have received their W-2 forms from their employ-

ers. He said business will be steady from then until April 15, the deadline for filing income tax returns.

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MISS VONNIE BRANDON
...Making Wedding Plans

Miss Brandon Sets Wedding

Date For May 29

Mr. and Mrs. Glenn T. Wilson of 2611 Atlanta St., Kannapolis announce the engagement of their daughter, Miss Vonnie Elaine Brandon to Edward Thurlow Cunningham Jr., son of Mrs. Louise and the late Edward Cunningham.

The wedding will take place at the 416 Vickory Drive here at 4 p.m. on May 29, with the Rev. McKissick officiating.

Mecklenburg Jaycees

Will Sponsor

Operation Threshold

On Tuesday, January 27, at 8:35 a.m. til 1 p.m. the Mecklenburg Jaycees will be sponsoring an OPERATION THRESHOLD Campaign at the Downtowner on South McDowell Street. The principal speaker will be Dr. Fred Ewing of the Alcohol Study Center, Chapel Hill, North Carolina.

The cost will be \$4 per person for lunch. All civic and business leaders will be attending. Outside guests are invited. For reservation call Mecklenburg Jaycees at 537-3832.

CMS Students

To Get Two-Day

Vacation

Charlotte-Mecklenburg public school students will get two days vacation Jan. 22-23, but it will be work as usual for teachers.

The two-day vacation, scheduled at the end of the first semester of the 1975-76 school year, is for teacher workdays. Classes will resume on a normal schedule on Monday, Jan. 26, as the second semester begins.

All school system offices will be open as usual during the two days.

Morehead Street

Bridge To Close

To Bus, Trucks

Beginning Tuesday, February 3, the Morehead Street Bridge between College Street and the Brevard Street ramp will be closed to all bus and truck traffic for an undetermined length of time. The bridge has been given a four-ton load limit by State engineers. The decision is a result of a study of several bridges in the state following the collapse of a bridge in Yadkin County in February, 1975.

The bridge will be open to automobile traffic only for five to seven years or more. State transportation officials say it would take at least five years to replace the bridge if money and the design were available.

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MISS EARONITA FULSON
...Wedding Plans Announced

Miss Fulson To Marry Ken Strong

Mr and Mrs. James Harold Fulson of 1701 Irma Street have announced the engagement of their daughter, Earonita to Kenneth Strong, son of Mr. and Mrs. Bobby Kenneth Strong of Charlotte.

The wedding will take place in May

Vasectomy

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