

Black Of Funds Erode Black Communities

O. I. Mani Uhuru Aka (V.W.P.) of the black community of the City is a proud community with a deep sense of reverence in its past and present. And sense of pride and reverence is never more evident than when Robert "Bob" King notified this writer of the condition of the Black community's Memorial Park is located about a quarter of a mile from Woodlawn Road on Tryon Street.

Mr. King, who resides on Bank Drive in Charlotte's University Park community, was disturbed at the conditions of York Memorial, while visiting the resting place of a relative. "Of all the indignities the black community has to put up with, just look at the condition of this place," he pointed out last Wednesday, as we walked the grounds of the park.

Located less than one half mile from the York Road landfill, the entrance to the park is hardly noticeable. On the grounds, the concrete getting use to. The most outstanding scene was an open grave of a man interred just that day by Griers Funeral Home.

filled graves, he replied. "It's a matter of policy, that we never leave the deceased uncovered. There is nothing in writing mind you, but as a matter of policy we put at least six to 18 inches of dirt upon the grave immediately after the burial ceremony."

The caretaker of York Memorial Park, Willie Porter, referred all inquiries about the parks condition to the owners, Paul and Howard Halverstadt, who also operate Sharon Memorial Park, located at the intersection of Sharon Amity and Monroe Roads in east Charlotte.

The Halverstads were very cooperative when reached for comment. Howard Halverstadt appeared when I mentioned any questions you have." At a meeting initiated at the request of the Halverstads, we were told, "No cemetery kept as the owners would like it to be. If you remember correctly, this past winter has been one of the worst we've seen. It's been one heck of a rain season. And this may explain the problem of the graves sinking. The wooden boxes surrounding the caskets tend to rot over a

period of time, and the dirt sinks in to fill the vacated space."

When asked about the casket left uncovered, "the supervisor on duty had another matter to attend to, and we in no way condone such a situation." The Halverstads also concurred that, "Money is the biggest factor in the upkeep of a cemetery, and its our biggest problem. We receive \$90 for a burial at York as compared to \$295 here at Sharon. Also, \$20 of what we take in has to go to the state. So actually, we're only receiving \$70 for a plot at York Memorial." They also stated, "The conditions at York are good, we feel, considering the price. We make no profit from our operation at York, and its upkeep in cost is comparable to that here at Sharon Memorial." "We could charge fancy prices for our plots, but would blacks go to bury their loved ones?"

The Halverstads showed some concern, in explaining "You must make an effort to be fair, because we've heard some things about Beatties Ford Memorial Park also." Finally, when asked what they would consider as a viable mean to upgrade York Memorial which has a list of patrons that reads like a "Who's Who"

of the Black Community, they agreed: "We receive most of our patrons upon referral from the Black funeral homes, mainly the Alexanders, and if we raise our prices, they have told us, they'll take their business to South Carolina if they have to. So in order that Black people will have a place, we'll stay in our price range."

Luther Caldwell, proprietor of Beatties Ford Memorial Park, refused to be quoted, saying he did not want to be embroiled in a controversy with his competitors. According to Mr. Caldwell the \$20 per burial plot that the Halverstads said goes to the state, actually is placed in an escrow account in any local bank. The money in escrow is then invested and the interest returned. This interest is supposed to be used in the continued maintenance of the memorial park. York Memorial has over 10,000 filled burial plots.

In reference to the condition of Beatties Ford Memorial, Mr. Caldwell, again maintaining that he did not want to be embroiled in a slugfest, said, "You may visit the park and see it for yourself, keeping in mind the fact of the past rainy season and the fact that we have only been in business five

The conspicuous dieter is a thing of the past, according to Kit Aldridge, Area Director for Weight Watchers in North Carolina.

"To sit like a martyr with a dab of cottage cheese and a carrot stick in front of you while your friends are enjoying cheeseburgers, macaroni, corn on the cob, and even chocolate, is no longer necessary," said Ms. Aldridge. "By following the now-simplified rules of the new Weight Watchers Eating Plan, you can blend right in with the others at the table. This is true whether you're eating with the family at home or with friends at a restaurant."

The new Weight Watchers Eating Plan, introduced to members on January 3rd, represents a significant change in both the philosophy of weight reduction and weight maintenance and in a greatly expanded list of foods now permitted.

"It opens up a whole new world of interesting meal planning and some really great tasting recipes," Ms. Aldridge said.

"People today are better informed than they were in the early sixties when Weight Watchers was founded. They are more nutrition conscious and Weight Watchers believe

they are now more capable of handling choices."

And so now you can have your macaroni and cheese, or your meat and potatoes, or your corn on the cob. The new Weight Watchers Eating Plan will show you how to still come

out a winner—or a "loser," as people on weight control programs prefer to be known.

The new Program has been streamlined, according to Ms. Aldridge, with eight, instead of fourteen, food categories, and it's been simplified so that

it's easier to learn and to follow.

To help members fully enjoy some of the new choices, Weight Watchers has prepared a series of new recipes.

"Conspicuous Dieter Is A Thing Of The Past"


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It was partially covered with flowers and a plywood board resting on three planks. Around the edges of the park were heaps of old and discarded floral arrangements. In every section of York Memorial Park, we noticed graves that were sunken in, from a depth of six inches to two feet. An uprooted tree had fallen across and completely hidden from view a number of the family markers.

"When I came here to place flowers on my grandmother's grave, and saw these conditions, I began to raise hell with the caretaker," continued Mr. King. "He asked me why I was so upset. 'Is your family buried here?' he said. I told him no, not all of them, and if I can help it not another single one will be," explained Mr. King.

In an effort to establish if any laws were being overlooked in regards to the condition of York Memorial Park, contact was made with the City Municipal Cemetery Department. John Rozzelle explained, "There are certain regulations regarding the care and upkeep of cemeteries and memorial parks, but these deal with facilities that are under the direct supervision of either the federal, state, or local governments." According to Mr. Rozzelle there are hardly any regulations governing the care of privately owned memorial gardens.

When asked if there were any regulations governing un-

Les Dames Club Sponsors "Little Miss Pageant"

The Les Dames Royales Club, Inc. sponsored its first Little Miss Springtime Pageant activity recently.

A mother-daughter get-acquainted luncheon was held at West Charlotte Community Center.

The Little Miss Springtime Pageant is the club's main fund-raising project. Its proceeds will benefit a scholarship fund for a freshman student at Johnson C. Smith University and the Anita Strood Camp Fund. On May 27, 1977 at 8 p.m. in Eastland Mall Auditorium nine charming contestants will be presented escorted by nine handsome little gentlemen. Other pre-pageant activities will include a Skating Party, A Children's Workshop at Spirit Square, a Slumber Party, and a Family Picnic. Follow-up activities will include participation in Johnson C. Smith University's Homecoming Parade.

Contestants in the pageant are Dawn McCree, Wendy Reid, Pamela Diggins, Karen Fernandez, Tonya Staton, Shanna Alexander, Shannon Edwards, and Nicole Bobbitt.

Members of Les Dames Royales Club, Inc. are Gloria Taylor, Verta Witherspoon, Shonetta Reid, Elaine Johnson, Carol Williams, Minnie Means, Doris McGee, Doris Frazier, Sandra Murdock, Phyllis Caldwell, and Beverly Hunter.

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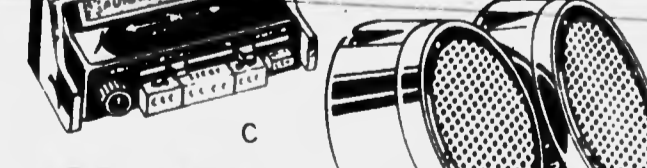
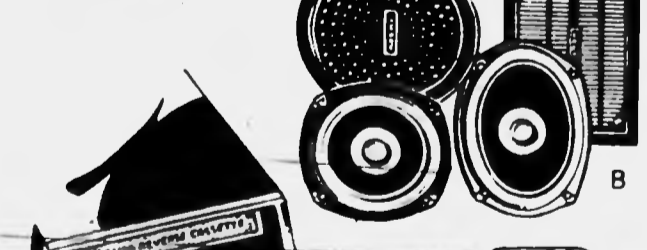
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