

Diabetic Black Woman

Story Of Patsy Hunter

Second in a series

The story of Patsy Hunter—the diabetic black woman who has successfully given birth to two children with the help of new methods of diabetes control—continued from last week's article...

When Patsy became pregnant the first time about five years ago, a hospital was so concerned for her health that Patsy was advised to have an abortion. She didn't, but suffered a typical diabetic miscarriage a few weeks later.

Then in 1979, when Patsy again became pregnant, she was invited to join a new research program at the Diabetes in Pregnancy Center at Northwestern Memorial Hospital in Chicago. The program was to change her life.

Patsy and Ronald Hunter are now delighted parents of Ronnie Jr., who is just three, and baby Megan—both healthy, thriving children.

The contrast in her three pregnancies provides a striking example of the progress made in helping diabetic women, just within the last five years.

When Patsy entered the special program for her second pregnancy it wasn't without some complications for her, primarily because the meters for precise self-testing of blood sugar were not yet available and Patsy had not been in good control beforehand. Patsy was only able to do urine tests at home.

Patsy had episodes of hypoglycemia (very low blood sugar), which caused her to actually pass out. Several times her husband rushed her to the emergency room in the middle of the night. She developed bleeding in the back of her eyes, also a complication among non-pregnant dia-

betics who are not in good control.

Patsy was in the hospital for several periods to stabilize her erratic blood sugar levels. Before these new programs were available, diabetic women often spent several months in the hospital in order to attempt to sustain their pregnancies and birth.

Ronnie Jr. was born three weeks early, through induced labor because he was growing so big.

He was a healthy eight pounds at birth. The Hunters were ecstatic and very lucky.

The third pregnancy was easy, by comparison. Patsy had her blood sugar under control before she became pregnant, a situation highly recommended by medical experts in this field.

During this pregnancy, Patsy had an Ames meter at home for testing blood sugar. She monitored her self four times a day and learned to adjust exercise and insulin dosage—all under the supervision of the Northwestern medical staff. She was able to keep her blood sugar close to normal most of the time.

Baby Megan was born weighing about five pounds and was quite healthy, except for a quickly controlled breathing problem probably unrelated to the diabetes. Megan is now eight months old and thriving.

During this pregnancy Patsy had no eye problems and no passing out. She did spend two periods of time in the hospital for observation, as was required by the Northwestern program. According to Richard Phelps, M.D., the length of these stays is being reduced as women

become capable of taking charge of their diabetes.

These new programs in other hospitals across the country require varying degrees of hospitalization. Shorter stays mean lower costs, of course. Some women haven't been in the hospital at all—except to deliver their healthy babies.

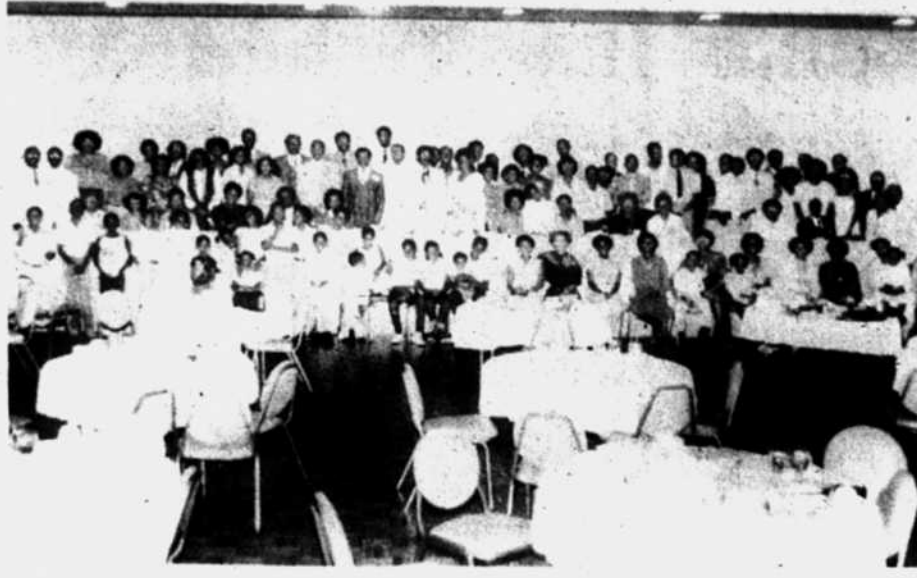
At the Perinatal Center, Sutter Memorial Hospital, Sacramento, California, fewer overweight babies have been born since diabetic patients have been testing their blood with Ames Meters.

A recent student of New York's Cornell University Hospital involved 52 women who tested their blood with Ames meters four times a day throughout their pregnancies and kept their blood sugars controlled. All had healthy babies.

Although researchers are pleased with the reduced pregnancy difficulties among diabetics who self-test, they are not yet satisfied. Babies of diabetics are still more likely to have birth defects than those of the normal population. This is probably because malfunctions occur early in pregnancy, during the first six to eight weeks. That's when many women don't know they are pregnant and may not be paying careful attention to blood sugar levels.

The five pilot programs funded by the National Institute of Health are therefore, enrolling women in the program before they become pregnant. Pediatric endocrinologist James Mills, who heads the NIH program, has high praise for the women involved. He says it is a heavy and demanding program, but the women are highly motivated and concerned with giving birth to healthy babies.

If the project turns out the way Dr. Mills and other researchers hope, it will prove that the use of self-testing to keep blood sugar in tight control, before as well as during pregnancy, can make the chances of having normal babies among diabetic women of all races as good as among the rest of the population.



members of the Brown-Hood family recently converged in Charlotte to have a glorious time. (Photo: Jim Black Photographers)

Brown-Hood Family Reunion Was Chapter 3 Of Delight

By Teresa Simmons Post Managing Editor
This year's Brown-Hood family reunion held in Charlotte was a chapter three of delight.

Headquartered at the Quality Inn on South McDowell Street members first converged at the host reunion chairperson's home, Dr. R. B. Phifer.

And what a delight family members had when they were introduced to fried fish cooked in a black pot. There were also hot dogs and baked beans.

Saturday, September 4, was the first day for the reunion of members from Cincinnati, Atlanta, Minnesota, California and Bronx, N.Y.

A dinner was held at Greenville Memorial AME Zion Church, Rev. A.C. Hunnicutt, pastor. And later on that night at the Quality Inn two dances were held; one for adults and the other for the younger people.

On Sunday family members worshipped at the Greater Bethel AME Church. Later a planning session for future reunions was held as well as activities for the children. A banquet-dinner was held at 6 p.m. where awards were made to family graduates, young married couples, new babies and to members who had made outstanding contributions and achievements.

The youngest member

of the Brown-Hood family is Jerome M. Stuart of Charlotte. He about three weeks old and is the son of Mr. and Mrs. Jerome Stuart.

Two keys to the city were presented to the two oldest members of the family; Rosie Hood of Cincinnati (Hood side) and Lizzie Worthy of Atlanta, Ga. (Brown side).

Eddie Knox, mayor of Charlotte, also made a proclamation in recognition of the family. More than 250 gathered for the banquet. There was more than fun, members also learned of their heritage; and the names of family members extending back as far as four generations were shared. The tree presentation was given by Rev. Levi Brown Jr. of Greater Bethel AME Church.

Monday was Labor Day and for those who didn't have to get back on the road for home a tour of the city was in store. Discovery Place; Outlet Square and shopping; playing in the park; Martin L. King's statue; and the new Airport were some of the visiting points and activities.

Saturday and Monday Johnnie Mae Maxwell and her family cooked the meals. Desserts were prepared by the local family women.

The children's committee chairpersons were

Vickie Phifer and Shirley Kennedy; the food committee was headed by Viola Kennedy and Della A. Curry and Annie Brown.

The T-Shirt Committee was spearheaded by Cozella Brown and Gail Brown. William Brown and Erwin Brown Sr., and Gary Kennedy took over the beverage committee. Dr. R.

B. Phifer was the host reunion chairperson and Cozella Brown was the host reunion co-chairperson.

The display of talent was in abundance during the reunion.

Stevensons Host Third

Tillman Family Reunion

The Third Tillman Family Reunion was held recently in Charlotte at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Stevenson on Hidden Valley Road.

The following individuals participated: Doris Gatewood and her family from Winston-Salem; Edna Gatewood, Norma Gatewood and son and Wanda Pearl and Walter Tillman, Brenda and Raymond Burch and a host of other friends and relatives.

About 50 enjoyed fish fried in the black pot, hot dogs, hamburgers grilled, potato salad and beverages.

Everyone enjoyed the activities planned, such as horseshoes, volleyball and playing cards.

The oldest member present was Walter Tillman of Wadesboro. The youngest member present was Dario Tillman.

Charlotteans of the Tillman family include Mae Burch, Ernestine and Cathey Tillman, Mable Burch, Patrice and Tammy Stevenson, A.D. Tillman and Linda Tillman, Christine Tillman, Marion Gatewood was also present to enjoy the festivities and union. Many members of the Tillman family either live in Charlotte or Wadesboro. Samuel Stevenson and Robert Stevenson were also

present. This reunion was organized by Helen Stevenson and Edna Gatewood. Events started about 11 in the morning and continued on into the night.

Everyone had a wonderful time. There is another reunion planned for next year at the home of Ernestine Tillman. There is even a trip to Disney World in the planning for next year's Tillman reunion.



Demetrius Carr, former sales agent for John Hancock Insurance Company was recently promoted to sales manager. Carr is originally from Cleveland, Ohio but he now resides at 6724 Somersworth Dr. in Charlotte. He has been with John Hancock for two years.

Mail your social news to: Editor, The Charlotte Post, P.O. Box 30144, Charlotte, N.C. 28230.

Irwin Avenue Students

Making Television Show

Third through fifth grade students in Irwin Avenue Open Elementary School's special education classes aren't sitting around passively glued to the "boob tube"; they're making a television show themselves.

The students at Irwin filmed the first episode of their version of the famous television series "You Were There" on location this past weekend at Cane Creek Park in Waxhaw.

The filming took place in conjunction with the third annual reenactment of the Civil War battle of Cane Creek. Students were divided into teams of reporters to view and videotape

scenes of authentic camp life, interview the soldiers and tape the battle. Eventually following post production work at the school, the show will be broadcast on the school's closed circuit television system.

WSOC-TV's "Kid's World" will tape the final student project on October as a feature for a future program. Call Mike Alvarez at 334-5339 for more details.

Other news from Irwin Avenue Open Elementary:

-K-3 students will view the traveling puppet show "Where the Wild Things Are" from the Children's Theatre of Charlotte on October 1 at 9:30 a.m.

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