

LIFESTYLES

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Sunday Fund Raiser: Not Just A Walk In The Park

By Cassandra Lawton
Post Staff Writer

Rita Arundell says the senior citizens of today aren't like the senior citizens of yesterday. She says not only are they living longer, they are living more active lives.

Several dozen seniors will put on their walking shoes Sunday, May 3 to prove it. They'll be in Marshall Park at 2 p.m. to take part in a fund-raising effort called Sunday for Seniors.

It's sponsored by Charlotte-Mecklenburg Senior Centers Inc., the private non-profit agency that runs the city's three centers.

Based at the Thora W. McElroy Senior Center, at 426 N. Tryon St. in Hall House, Arundell has been executive director of the agency since 1984. She helped organize the Sunday walk.

"We encourage seniors to stay well, to exercise and eat well," Arundell said. "We want to show that seniors are active. Years ago, I think you had a vision of people sitting in rocking chairs. Older people are more active now." Arundell hopes to get at least 500 people participating Sunday. She said several church and community groups will have teams in the walk. Some corporations have been asked to pledge money and her goal is to get at least \$10,000 collected.

Even though the centers get money from the City of Charlotte, Mecklenburg County, the United Way and the state, there are fund drives sponsored by Senior Centers Inc. twice a year.

"Programs are expensive and



Senior citizens take part in the fitness craze by working out at the Friendship Community Center located on Beatties Ford Road.

we're trying to show that we can pull our own weight," Arundell said.

Money from the walk will be used to buy equipment and fund programs at the centers.

There are classes each quarter in areas ranging from oil painting to sewing to ballroom dancing. Members of Senior Centers Inc. pay a fee once per year and can take many classes free or at a low cost. So can some non-members, Arundell said.

But sometimes keeping costs low for seniors means the agency has to put out more of its money to pay instructors, rent space for classes and provide equipment for the agency.

Still, Arundell said her main concern is keeping seniors as active as they want to be.

At every center, the exercise classes always have the most students.

"The seniors we deal with are between the ages of 60 and 82," she said. "We have five or six fitness classes and that's the most popular thing we do."

Arundell said a computer might be the first purchase made with money raised at the Sunday walk, but not for the computer classes offered. It's needed to help store information about agency programs and the growing number of people involved in them.

The agency also offers health

screenings, information about housing, medicare and medicaid, an employment service that includes on-the-job training, as well as lectures and travolouges.

Recently, after a five week training session at Presbyterian Hospital, 11 seniors got part-time jobs making beds and helping to care for patients.

Arundell hopes the Sunday walk, which is co-sponsored by the Charlotte Parks and Recreation Department and Gaskin Eye Clinic, will become the third annual fund-raiser for Senior Centers Inc.

Participants will start at the fountain in Marshall Park and choose a one, two or three mile

route. The one-mile route goes up Second Street, over to Brevard and back to McDowell. The two-mile route stretches to Fourth and Tryon Streets. The three-mile route takes walkers to Fourth Ward Park and back.

Senior Centers Inc. began oper-

ating its newest center in April, at Friendship Missionary Baptist Church on Beatties Ford Road. There is another center at the Albemarle Road Recreation Center, 5027 N. Idlewild Road. McElroy was the city's first senior center.



Johnny Meeks does knee-pulls in a recent session.



Dr. Dorothy I. Height (center), Bill Cosby (right), and Mayor Tom Bradley (left) hosted a press conference at Los Angeles City Hall to announce plans for the 1987 Black Family Reunion Celebration.

NCNW's Plan To Benefit Black Families

The Black Family Reunion Celebration, a successful event that drew over 200,000 people to the National Mall in Washington, DC, last September, will be expanded into a multi-city national program this year, it was announced by Dorothy I. Height, president of the National Council of Negro Women.

The Black Family Reunion Celebration was created by the National Negro Council of Negro Women last year for a three-fold purpose: to build upon the traditional, historical and cultural strengths of the black family; to facilitate self-help solutions to the issues of teen pregnancy, drug abuse, unemployment, education and health as they impact the black family; and lastly, to create an umbrella by which government, public and private institutions, corporations, community-based organizations and the media could work together on family-oriented issues.

In addition to the second national event set for Washington, DC, on September 11-13, Black Family Reunion Celebrations will be held in Atlanta on June 18, Los Angeles on July 25, and Detroit on August 22. The summer-long activities will be kicked off by a national ra-

diothon on Mother's Day (May 10) over most black radio stations, produced by the Sheridan Broadcasting Network. Gala benefit concerts are also planned in conjunction with the Los Angeles and Washington dates.

In common with last year's event, the four-city family festival will feature a multitude of program activities free of charge and open to the entire community. Among the participants last year in various speeches, workshops and exhibitions were Coretta Scott King, the Rev. Jesse Jackson, Alex Haley, Lerone Bennett, Dick Gregory, Arthur Ashe, Rep. Walter Fauntroy, the Marsalis Family, among many others. Free concerts were given by the O'Jays and Lou Rawls. Free dental and medical checks, storytelling, consumer product sampling, rap and theatre group performances, workshops on traditional family crafts and octogenarian secrets of longevity, and resource development counseling on a number of issues were among the most popular activities.

The response of families of all compositions and from all walks of life to the first Black Family Re-

African Connection In Charlotte

Africa conjures up every kind of image in the minds of most people—famine, AIDS, slavery, wild animals, "jungle," South Africa, poverty, "native" dancers and drummers, and mud huts. Unfortunately, there is very little media coverage about all of the new hotels, office buildings, medical discoveries and university course offerings which also occur daily on this great continent.

Sherry A. Suttles, co-author with her sister of "Fielding's Africa: South of the Sahara," has recently launched African Connection in Charlotte as a means to help dispel some of the myths and misinformation concerning the homeland and some 30 million black Americans. Through spon-

sored and referral tours, a newsletter, and cultural programs, African Connection aims to educate and inform people about the changing dynamics of the 50+ countries that comprise a continent which is second largest to Asia in land mass and third largest to Asia and Europe in population.

In 1987 four exciting trips are scheduled as follows: The Gambia in July for their first annual ROOTS festival, Kenya in Octo-

ber for a safari venture, Zambia/Zimbabwe in October to experience safari, ancient ruins, and Victoria Falls, and Togo for a December Holiday Vacation.

There is a savings plan available for those who want to begin planning for a future trip and fund raising ideas and assistance is also a service. Also, as a means to enlighten prospective travelers as well as to entertain those who may never actually visit, African Connection sponsors fashion shows, dinner programs, musical productions, and the like.

Africa is a fun place to visit!—discos, casinos, golf, tennis, swim-

See African on Page 9A



DELTA'S PLAN WOMEN'S CONFERENCE IN CARIBBEAN - Dr. Bette Dickerson, research and development analyst of Delta Sigma Theta Research and Educational Foundation; Mrs. Lynnette Taylor, vice chair, "Woman to Woman: Single Parenting from A Global Perspective," a conference sponsored by Delta

and its foundation in Nassau this summer; Dr. Marcella Peterson, Delta executive director; and Ella McNair, Delta program director, plan Nassau meeting. All are Delta national office staff in Washington, DC, except Mrs. Taylor, a Delta volunteer, of Alexandria, VA. The group met at Delta national headquarters.

Delta's Meet On Single Parenting

Washington, DC - "Woman to Woman: Single Parenting from a Global Perspective," an international women's conference sponsored by Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc., will be held June 22-29 in Nassau, Bahamas, Delta National President Hortense G. Canady, of Lansing, MI, announced recently.

The conference will be held in

the Ambassador Beach and Nassau Beach Hotels, she said, and some 400 conferees are expected to attend. It will be co-sponsored by the Delta Educational and Research Foundation, Geraldine P. Woods, of Los Angeles, president.

The conference, said Lynnette Taylor, chair, Delta's National Program Planning and Implementation Committee, grew out of

Delta's longtime concern for black mothers in this country. She is conference vice chair along with Dr. Bernadine Denning of Detroit, chair of Delta's Social Action Commission.

In 1984, Mrs. Canady issued a call to Delta chapters and others for Summit II: In Support of Black

See Delta on Page 9A