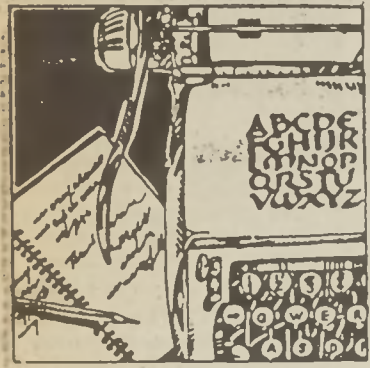


books



and Authors

McPaper's McBook

By Robert Gabordl
Special To The Post

WASHINGTON - Success and accomplishment in the USA are celebrated in the new book, *And Still We Rise: Interviews With 50 Black Role Models*, which is being published in February by USA TODAY Books.

And Still We Rise pulls together conversations with 50 men and women. This diverse group of achievers share their insights and offer examples for the many formulas of success.

Barbara Reynolds, the book's author and editor of USA TODAY's Inquiry Page, says: "We know of no other book like it, written for all the people in the USA."

The interviews were first conducted for USA TODAY's Inquiry and Opinion pages, says Reynolds.

"The role models in this book have most often begun life further back and have expended twice as much energy to go half as far," Reynolds says.

Nancy J. Woodhull, president of Gannett New Media, publisher of USA TODAY Books, says:

"We are proud to offer *And Still We Rise* as a reflection of USA TODAY's commitment to report regardless of gender, age, race or national origin -- on the people who make the USA truly one nation."

Coretta Scott King, wife of the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr., wrote the epilogue. The foreword was written by John C. Quinn, editor of USA TODAY and chief news executive for Gannett Co. Inc.

Writes King: "*And Still We Rise* is not only a celebration of the contributions of Black leaders in all walks of American Life. The Black experience is a vital part of our national heritage, belonging not only to Black people, but to Americans of all races.

HEART OF DARKNESS

(continued from page 10A)

two weeks barracks restriction. Martin made it through one day then split for the PX.

This time his captain put him on four weeks restriction. He soldiered for a week, then got into a hassle with his sergeant. This time his captain recommended Martin be discharged from service. Three days later he was a civilian again.

"My mom and stepdad were really mad this time," Martin said. "I came back to their home and tried to settle in. It didn't pan out. Three weeks later I got into a fight with my stepdad. He threatened to shoot me and I left for good. I went back on the streets."

He was 18 now-and ready for the bigtime. He started using coke. He still wrote poetry on his more lucid days-he'd been writing it since he was 16.

"I stole to support my habit," he said. "That took up most of my time. Money, TVs, radios-anything I could boost. Amazingly, I never got caught by the police. It went on like that for another four years."

He was a better survivor this time. Some weekends he'd pull in \$1,000-but he'd spend it all on coke within a couple of days. In the summer of 1984 he was down to his last fifty cents one day when he had a heart seizure. It scared him so bad he gave away his coke stash and vowed to kick the habit.

"I called my mom to tell her I was leaving New York," Martin said. "When my welfare check came a few days later-I was getting public assistance-I went to the Port Authority Bus Terminal. I closed my eyes, put my finger on a U.S. map-and it was Charlotte."

Martin arrived in Charlotte in July 1985. He stayed clean and began to work on his poetry seriously. He worked odd jobs, and as a cook or stock clerk at times. It has not been easy. But then Robert Martin has never had life easy. He has a goal, now-and a driving vision. He wants to become a serious poet.

He passed the GED test at CPCC a while back, and now has his high school diploma. And he's had a couple of his poems published. Despite still living at the Salvation Army shelter for the homeless, Martin has not given up. He has become a member of the International Black Writers Conference. And during February his poems will be read over WDAV public radio in celebration of Black History Month. He has come a long way from the mean streets of New York.

"I give the credit for my turnaround to Jesus Christ," Martin said. "I took the same footsteps as Saul in the bible. He was a great sinner, too, at first. The Lord is taking me on a journey."

AFRO CENTER CALENDAR

The Afro-American Cultural Center will celebrate Black History Month during February by offering an exciting array of activities. The following events are free to the public:

Wednesday, February 17, at 7:00 p.m. - Shaki Dance Company Performance.


Sunday, February 21, at 2:00-4:00 p.m. - Malcolm X: The Man & His Legacy, a presentation including dialogues and films, Ahmad Daniels, facilitator.

Monday, February 22, at 7:00 p.m. - "Black Inventions", includes a display of black inventions, Rev. W.C. Teague of the Banks Historical Foundation, speaker.

Thursday, February 25, at 7:00 p.m. - "Black Neighborhoods", Dr. G.D. Burke, speaker.

For more information contact: Yvette Alston (704) 374-1565.

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