

BEHIND THE SCENES

with Lisa Collins



Houston Green Appolonia Prince

Is Al Green Coming Back? Al Green's latest LP "I Get Joy", teaming Green with Al B. Sure on one cut, has drawn a great deal of speculation as to whether or not Green is reentering the secular music arena. Many feel that Green longs to be back in the limelight. Something Green knows all too well. "I know that there are so many people just dying to have me say I'm singing my pop music again...I missed the limelight, but I won't give them the satisfaction and they are freaking out. This album is an extension from gospel to love and happiness to contemporary gospel and I'm going on up. I'm made spiritual and I'm made physical and I'm a fisher of men. I've been ministering twelve years now and it's time to take it up to a higher elevation. People may not understand and say 'oh, he ain't no Christian',--did you see his video. People on there dancing, but see my ideal is not to satisfy the appetite of the person who's already saved. I'm reaching out."

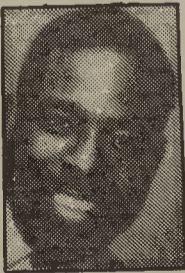
Whitney Houston Touring With Bebe & Cece? Well, not officially, but if you catch Bebe & Cece, you're likely to luck up as many Los Angeles fans recently did to a real treat as Whitney Houston has been accompanying the popular duo on many of their concert stops. The stops are not publicized. In fact, Houston won't talk about appearing with the duo. But more often than not, it seems, she is there performing back-up on some arrangements while sharing lead vocals with Bebe & Cece on others. Houston struck up a friendship with the duo some two years ago, and been hopping onstage with them ever since. Enjoying the show on opening night in Los Angeles were Melba Moore, Ronald Winans, actress Beverly Todd, members of the Whispers, Klymaxx, and actress Tisha Campbell, who most recently starred in "Rooftops" and is presently in the process of negotiating her own recording contract. Campbell, who sued School Daze co-star and director Spike Lee last year in a contractual dispute over the film's music soundtrack, says she is taking a year and a half to focus in on recording and "become an all-round artist". As to the suit against Lee, she says that it has been long-since resolved.

Bidding War For Deniece Williams: If you want to weigh the impact the success of Bebe & Cece in the record industry, just look at the way at least three major record companies--MCA, Columbia, and Motown are bidding for distribution of Deniece Williams latest gospel LP. Seems they feel some of the music has a great deal of crossover potential. **In other recording news, the soundtrack for "Batman--The Movie" offers nine original songs by Prince--one featuring a duet with Sheena Easton.** The first Prince single is due to be released this week. The album will be released by Warner Bros. Records in the third week of June, along with a limited edition Prince/Batman CD in a small black tin box with a Batman logo on top.

Short Takes: Old stereotypes die hard as proven at the Cannes Film Festival where one film title--**How To Make Love To A Negro Without Getting Tired**--created quite a stir...Harlem Suite, the Los Angeles stage musical starring Melba Moore and Maurice Hines was prematurely shut down when producers failed to pay the performers...**O.J. Simpson pleaded no contest** to misdemeanor wife battering charges. Simpson is expected to receive a fine and probation...**Appolonia has nabbed a starring role** in a four-hour mini-series based on Joan Collins' *Prime Time* novel. Collins will star in the story about five actresses pitted against each other for a role in a Hollywood miniseries...**Next week: find out what's next for actor Phillip Michael Thomas now that Miami Vice has taken its final bow.**

Internat'l Black Writers To Convene In Charlotte

The Charlotte Chapter is the host for the 19th annual International Black Writers conference to be held at the Adams Mark Hotel June 9-11.



Brown

This is the first year the national group will convene outside Chicago, where the conference has been traditionally held.

The three-day conference will include exhibits, readings and recitals, and workshops.

A highlight of the weekend will be the Alice Browning Awards Banquet on Saturday night at 8 p.m.

Craig Madans, candidate for mayor of Charlotte, will serve as master of ceremonies at the banquet. The keynote speaker will be Les Brown, writer, motivator and former Ohio legislator.

The Alice Browning Awards Banquet honors writers who

have made substantial contributions to literature. The award is named for Alice C. Browning who founded the IBWC 19 years ago.

Dr. C. Eric Lincoln who heads the Religious Department at Duke University will receive the Alice Browning Award for his book *The Avenue, Clayton City*.

Past recipients of the award are Alex Haley, Margaret Walker and Robert Parker.

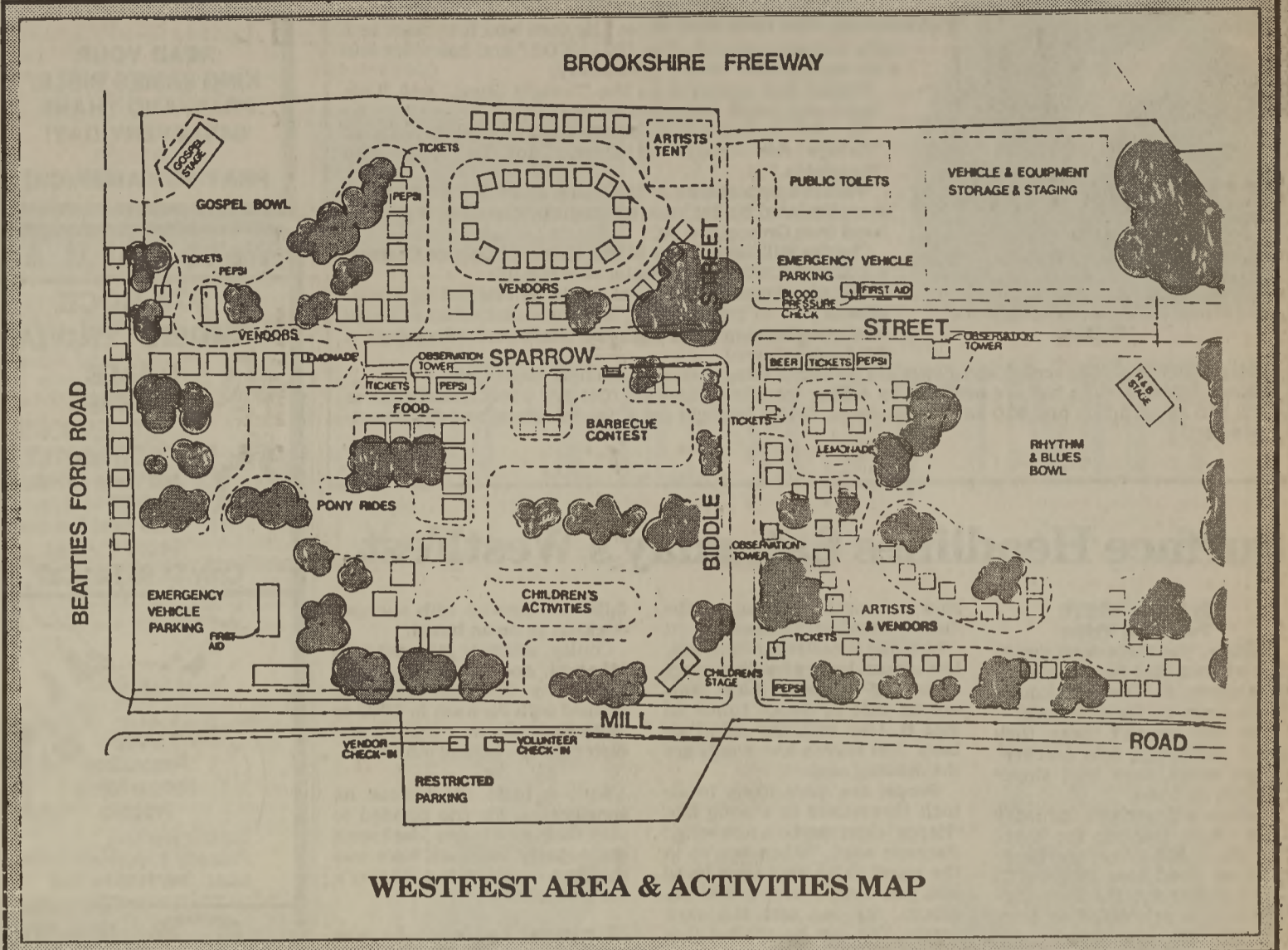
The banquet is open to the public. Tickets are \$25.

The IBWC will end its conference with a songwriters luncheon to be held 11:30 a.m. Sunday.

John Kee, who is noted for his music, arrangements and international choir, will serve as master of ceremonies. Special guest will be Dominique Patterson, Miss Black Teenage World.

Tickets for the luncheon are \$15.

For more information on any IBWC activity, please call C. Maria Macon, 343-9745, or Frankie Johnson, 367-2971 between 9 a.m. - 5 p.m.



More Folks, Food And Fun At Fourth Annual Westside Festival

By JALYNE STRONG
Post Editor

The fourth annual WestFest celebration will be held this weekend, Friday, June 2 with the first Ms. WestFest Pageant and Coronation Ball and Saturday, June 3 with the all-day westside street festival.

WestFest debuted in the summer of 1986 and has grown over the years, drawing crowds of over 30,000 people to the westside communities of the Beatties Ford Road area.

The year's celebration is expected to be the largest to date, says Kelly Alexander, a board member of WestFest, Inc., the organization that sponsors the festival. Alexander said he expects up to 50,000 people to join in the festivities this weekend.

"Weather reports for the weekend are good and vibrations from the people are good," Alexander related.

With the addition of the first Ms. WestFest Pageant, the WestFest celebration has expanded from a previous one-day event to two days of activities.

Ms. WestFest Pageant

The Ms. WestFest Pageant begins at 7:30 p.m. at the Charlotte Convention Center on Friday. Seventeen women of the Charlotte community will be presented in this pageant in segments of swimwear, talent and evening wear competitions.

The winner of Ms. WestFest contest will receive a \$1500 cash prize.

National recording artists Sweet Obsession will headline the entertainment for the pageant. Also featured will be local singer Gregory Gee, a recent winner in the Budweiser Showdown, and Scenic Dancers from We Jam Productions. Music for dancing will be provided by Music By Magic.

WestFest Road Race

Saturday's WestFest street festival begins with the WestFest/Gatorade Road Race at 9:30 a.m. This 3.1 mile race (course certified by The Athletic Congress) starts at the corner of French Ave. and Beatties Ford Rd. Cash awards will be presented to the first, second and third place overall winners with \$150 for first place male and female, \$100 for second place male and female, and \$50 for third place male and female.

There are 11 age categories for the race from 14 and under to 60 and over. The first four to place in each age category will win trophies. All road race participants will receive tee shirts. The day of the race, the entry fee will be \$7, preregistration will be held from 7:30 - 9 a.m.

WestFest Street Festival

The WestFest street festival will be going on in the area of Beatties Ford Rd. and Mill St. near the campus of Johnson C. Smith University.

This year's celebration boasts more than 20 food vendors and over 15 specialty and or business vendors.

Many games and activities will be available for children and adults. Many adults may find the newly added dunking booth a major attraction. WestFest is still seeking volunteers to be dunked. But insiders have said that Sam Young, President of WestFest, Inc. will be on the dunking seat between 12 - 1 p.m.

Barbecue Contest

Another major attraction of the annual WestFest festivals is the Barbecue Contest. This Saturday, the fires of the BBQ pits will be lit at 10:30 a.m., all meats must be cooked on site, and judging will be



Sweet Obsession



Surface

gin at 3 p.m. Sponsored by Coors, the contest will yield winners cash prizes and ribbons: first place, \$500, blue ribbon; second place, \$350, black ribbon; and third place, \$200, green ribbon. There is a \$10 entry fee the day of the festival.

Entertainment

There will be six main stages and four gospel stages during the festival. The national recording group Surface will headline the entertainment for WestFest, leading a lineup of such groups as Sweet Success, Cannonball Express, Pizazz, Johnny Holloway and others.

Performers on the gospel stages will include the Combination Choir, Metrolina Gospel Singers, Christ Community Singers, The Mighty Clouds of McCullough and more.

WestFest festivities will continue until 8 p.m.

Sponsors

The festival has attracted several sponsors this year, too numerous to list. But top sponsors of the event include Pepsi Cola, Bealer Wholesalers, Soft Sheen, Gatorade, The Charlotte Post, WJZY - 46, WPEG Power 98, NCNB, Coors, The Drug Education Center, The Afro-American Cultural Center, Duke Power and others.

The success of WestFest has been phenomenal, according to Alexander. "The concept is unique and it has attracted a lot of positive attention."

"It is the only community-wide event that comes out of the black experience, out of the black community, promoted by black people."

Aside from the Ms. WestFest Pageant and the WestFest street festival, WestFest Inc., also sponsors the annual Martin Luther King Day parade. The organization is also planning to add another blues-related event for an upcoming project.

WESTFEST '89