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## LIFESTYLES

Dirty  
Clothes  
Bring Big  
ReturnBy Sheila Hardwell  
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

WAYNESBORO, Miss. — For much of her life, 88-year-old Oseola McCarty lived in obscurity, tucking away money she earned sweating over other people's dirty clothes.

Then came an unselfish act last year that changed her life. The longtime laundress donated \$150,000 to a scholarship fund to help minority students attend the University of Southern Mississippi in Hattiesburg.

Now, the stooped, graying woman — whose arthritic hands are evidence of a life of hard work — is a celebrity.

She has carried the Olympic torch and been interviewed on national television. President Clinton and members of Congress toasted her and Roberta Flack serenaded her. Her story has made headlines as far away as Argentina.

The woman who never made it past the sixth grade even wrote a book, "Oseola McCarty's Simple Wisdom for Rich Living."

The soft-spoken, diminutive McCarty is not overwhelmed by the attention. But she admits that after years of being alone, it feels good to be appreciated.

Before making the contribution, McCarty "didn't think about nothing but working," she said. And the fame? "It's all right. It ain't no bad deal."

No, not too bad for a woman who still has few luxuries and spent most of her life in Forrest County in south-eastern Mississippi.

McCarty has never owned a car, choosing instead to walk a mile when she needs groceries, and uses a tattered Bible wrapped in tape. She also suffered through sweltering

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## Essence chief to deliver message to MOMO

By Jeri Young  
THE CHARLOTTE POST

Susan L. Taylor receives letters from around the country. Young women pouring out their troubles. Young men in states of confusion.

Her monthly "In the Spirit" column, a combination of mother wit and spirituality, has become one of the best read in Essence magazine, a favorite among African American women.

Focusing on inner beauty, Taylor extols the virtues of black women and provides encouragement to Essence's 5.2 million readers.

"We live in a society where there is a very narrow conception of what is beautiful," Taylor said in an interview with New York Newsday. "It is usually pale, blonde and a size 7, which leaves out 95 percent of the women in this country. And black women are usually farthest from that ideal."

Taylor has addressed that issue during her 15 year tenure as editor-in-chief at Essence. African American women can find models in all shapes sizes and colors. And, of course, hair textures.

But it is "In the Spirit" that has given Taylor her voice.

"In the Spirit" is my public diary," she said in a recent interview with The Post. "It is where I worked out all the things I was growing through."

Taylor is now touring the country to tout the reprint of her best selling work, "Lessons in Living," (Anchor Books, 1995, \$19.95) a collection of essays modeled after "In the Spirit."

She lands in Charlotte today as part of her tour. She will sign copies of the book and address Mothers of Murdered Offspring, the three-year-old group founded by Dee Sumpter to support families who have lost loved ones.

Wise, humorous and uplifting, "Lessons in Living," provides a

welcome voice to women and men who do too much.

"In our lives here as African Americans, we have not learned to take time for ourselves," Taylor says. "We have to take time to remind ourselves who we are and whose we are."

In a voice as soothing as her pen, Taylor extols the virtues of taking time out to reflect.

"You don't need a mantra," she said. "You don't need to go to the mountain top. Just close your eyes and be still."

A simple trip to the window or the water shows us the beauty of God, Taylor says. She admits that it is difficult to make time for self.

"We think of time to ourselves as selfish," she said.

"It is absolutely difficult," she added. "We are addicted to speed and to sound. We find it difficult to be alone with ourselves."

Taylor is the first to admit things are not always perfect in her life.

The 49-year-old daughter of Caribbean immigrants, Taylor began her career at Essence as a freelance beauty editor. A single mother from Harlem, without a college education, Taylor rose to the top guided by the sheer force of her personality and drive. "In the Spirit" and "Lessons in Living" have provided Taylor a forum to work through her problems.

But she still occasionally gets the blues.

"I am not really brought down by anything," she said. "Like everyone else, I lose confidence. I lose faith. I simply have learned which passage to go to and which person to talk to."

Taylor's spirituality is the key to her success. It forms the basis for her column.

"I think the religion we practice are the man-made rituals," she said. "It is important. It forms the traditions that we pass along. Spirituality is living the meaning of the ideals of the



Author and Essence editor Susan L. Taylor will be in town today to hype her new book, "Lessons in Living." She will be the keynote speaker at a Government House reception.

religion we practice. Most of the major religions talk about love. We are here to love."

Taylor plans to share her message with MOM-O.

"I don't know how uplifting I can be," she said. "Pain can transform. It is the pinnacle of pain to lose a loved one. It has to be the most painful thing that you can experience."

"It calls us to the larger work we're challenged to do. There's so much more that we can do to hold this nation to a higher moral standard."

Thanksgiving will provide a much-needed break for Taylor. She and her husband plan to spend the holiday with her daughter.

"We're having dinner there,"

she said with a laugh. "I am excited about that."

Barnes and Noble will host a book signing on today at 5:30 p.m. at the Government House, 201 South McDowell St. MOM-O will present an "Evening with Susan L. Taylor" immediately after the book signing. The event will also feature the music of the Rev. John P. Kee. Tickets

## Cookbook offers tips for lowering holiday fat

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Slim down your holiday meal with the following suggestions from Sandra Woodruff, author of "Fat-Free Holiday Recipes" (Avery Publishing, \$13.95).

•Baste your turkey with broth, sherry or white wine instead of fat. During cooking,

cover the turkey with foil to retain moisture. Then uncover the bird during the last 30 minutes so that it turns a beautiful brown.

•When making your gravy, pour the pan juices into a fat separator cup. This device has a spout that goes to the bottom of the cup, allowing you to pour off just the broth while

the fat, which has risen to the top, stays in the cup. If you don't have a separator cup, pour the juices into a bowl, and add a few ice cubes. The fat will then rise to the top and harden, where it can be easily skimmed off.

•Moisten your dressing with broth instead of fat. For added nutrition, try using whole-wheat bread instead of white. Then, instead of using salt for flavor, add lots of celery, onion and other vegetables, as well as herbs and spices.

•Get the fat out of side dishes and casseroles. For example, make your mashed potatoes with butter-flavored sprinkles and skim milk, nonfat yogurt or nonfat sour cream. When making casseroles, use nonfat cheeses, nonfat sour cream and low-fat cream soups. Lighten your salads with nonfat mayonnaise, nonfat sour cream and fat-free salad dressings.

•Modify your holiday dessert recipes. Use evaporated skim milk in pumpkin pies; substitute egg whites for whole eggs; reduce sugar by 25 percent. Choose fruit-based desserts like cobblers and fruit crisps instead of cakes and pastries.

The following recipe for practically fat-free Old-Fashioned Corn Bread Dressing is from "Fat-Free Holiday Recipes" (Avery Publishing, \$13.95). Woodruff suggests baking the corn bread one to three days in advance. Complete the stuffing preparations the day before or the morning of the dinner. Pop the casserole into the oven one hour before serving time. The recipe makes 12 servings.

## Old-Fashioned Corn Bread Dressing

1 cup chopped onion  
1 cup thinly sliced celery (include leaves)  
1 1/2 teaspoons dried sage  
1 teaspoon poultry seasoning  
1/4 teaspoon ground black pepper  
2-3rds cup chicken broth  
2 egg whites, lightly beaten  
For the Corn Bread:  
1 1/2 cups whole-grain cornmeal



2 teaspoons baking powder  
4 egg whites, lightly beaten  
1 1/4 cups nonfat buttermilk  
1 teaspoon butter-flavored extract

To make the corn bread, combine the cornmeal and baking powder in a large bowl. Stir to mix well. Add the remaining corn bread ingredients, stir to mix well.

Coat a 9-inch square pan with cooking spray. Spread batter in pan. Bake in a 400-degree oven for 20 to 25 minutes, or until a toothpick inserted in the center of the bread comes out clean and bread begins to pull slightly

away from sides of the pan. Cool completely.

Remove the corn bread from the pan and crumble into a large bowl. Add the remaining ingredients. Toss to mix well.

Coat a 2-quart casserole dish with nonstick cooking spray. Loosely spoon the stuffing into the dish. Bake uncovered at 325 degrees for 45 minutes to 1 hour, or until heated through and lightly browned on top. Serve hot. Makes 12 servings.

Nutrition facts per 1/2-cup serving: 77 cal., 0.8 g fat, 3.5 g pro., 0 mg chol., 2 g fiber, 107 mg sodium.

