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Birney School Life Newsletter, November 1950

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SPECIAL ACTIVITIES

Special activities in Anacostia have afforded the community outlet for its various energies since the beginning. In the earliest years these activities consisted of the annual Good Hope Camp Meeting held in the church and grounds of Allen Chapel at Good Hope, where people came to preach, sing and pray, and ended by feasting on fried chicken, ham, and ice cream. Later on Anacostia folk enjoyed the amusement centers of Eureka and Green Willow Parks, with the Genesta and Capital City orchestras providing the music. Now, as then, wholesome and worthwhile activity has been the keynote of the leisure time of the Anacostia Community.

THE BIRNEY SCHOOL PARENT-TEACHER ASSOCIATION

The Birney School P.T.A. is an organization in which the school and the community work together to secure a better school and a better living for all its members with emphasis on the well being of the child. In order that this organization secure better living for the children and adult members, it must include in its programs ways and means of not only improving school-community problems, but also ways and means to meet the economic and health needs of the children and adults. This is a great challenge indeed! Not only are the parents and their children benefited, but also all adults derive benefits. The stronger your P.T.A., the better your community. How important is it that each parent be an active and enthusiastic member!

The Birney P.T.A. has tried to meet its challenge. Throughout its years of growth and development there have been incidents that bear testimony to the fact that the Birney P.T.A. is a working school-community force. To cite a few instances, let us look back at the rather recent records. A few years back, under the leadership of the president, Lawyer John H. Wilson, the P.T.A. presented a series of mock trials. These trials helped to develop keen civic responsibilities as well as the dignity and rights of individuals. Next we note the outstanding program of parent education during the presidency of the late Miss Emma Smith. In this program Miss Smith presented the new philosophy in our modern education. It was done by contrasting and comparing the old class room procedures, methods, and materials with those of the present day. Coming up to our present records, we find the P.T.A. under the able sponsorship of our principal, Mrs. Alice B. Finlayson, and the hearty cooperation of our president, Mr. Harry Polk, inaugurating an extensive health education program for parents and children. Parents have met once a week for lectures by nurses and doctors or to see sound films, slides or filmstrips which were accompanied by talks or explanations. In each of these meetings there has been a period for questions, comments, or suggestions from the parents.

Under the heading of school-community and economic problems, we can cite the program for securing our new Birney School building, the abolishing of half day classes, the regular protection of a traffic officer at Nichols Avenue and Howard Road, and the opening of a theater in this community. There have been numerous purchases made through the Parent Teachers Association, the money for which was raised by the Mother's Clubs and P.T.A. sponsored programs. They all had far reaching influence of the children and community members. They are

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Pupil's emergency medical treatment.
Pupil's transportation fees to doctors, clinics, etc.
Pupil camp maintenance and pupil's fees.
Fruits, flowers, contributions to sick, distressed, and deceased of community.
Hats and coats for boys and girls.
Victrola, radio combination, record changer, and moving picture projector and screens.
Silent and sound films, slides, and records.

The Birney P.T.A. is meeting its challenge. It is a school-community force. It can do no more than the strength and enthusiasm of its members. Everyone in the community should be a proud owner of a P.T.A. membership card. This card indicates that the holder is an integral part of that dynamic, school-community force striving for a better living.

B. E. White and C. M. Mitchell

Interviews with Mrs. Queen, Mr. Stokes, Mrs. F. G. McLendon, Mrs. H. D. Norville, Mr. J. Wilson.

THE HEALTH PROGRAM AT BIRNEY SCHOOL

Birney School has always made untiring efforts to improve the health of its school community. Under the inspiring leadership of its principal, Mrs. Finlayson, this emphasis on good health has developed into a program by which each parent at Birney is encouraged to correct the health defects of his child before the end of the school year. It has involved arranging for examinations and treatment by physicians and dentists procured by the principal and faculty; it has also involved arranging for health movies, talks to parents by experts in the field, as well as other co-operation with parents, attendance personnel, between parent and nurse, parent and expert, parent and physician, parent and teacher.

At one time the health program was so planned that some half-day teachers took groups of chil-

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Pupil's emergency medical treatment.
Pupil's transportation fees to doctors, clinics, etc.
Pupil camp maintenance and pupil's fees.
Fruits, flowers, contributions to sick, distressed, and deceased of community.
Raincoats for boy patrols.
Victrola, radio combination, record changer, and moving picture projector and screens.
Silent and sound films, slides, and records.

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