

# GRAPEVINE

DEPARTMENT OF SPECIAL STUDENT SERVICES  
UNIVERSITY OF ROCHESTER

WEEK ENDING: JANUARY 26, 1979  
VOLUME VI, NUMBER 16

## BSU elects new officers

On Saturday, January 20, 1979, the Black Students Union held its annual elections for officers to the Executive Board. The officers elected by the 51 members present are as follows:

President.....	Laverne Woods
Vice President.....	Chico Gibbons
Business Manager.....	Leslie Thomas
Secretary.....	Brenda Hawkins
Social and Cultural Committee Chairperson.....	Darryl Turner
Publicity Chairperson.....	Angela Norris
Educational and Political Committee Chairperson....	Valentino Parker

The elections came in the wake of an apparent upsurge of interest in the continuing existence of the B.S.U. This interest was sparked by a group of students who called a meeting last Thursday night to discuss the feelings of the black students on this campus with regard to their social, educational and emotional survival at this university. The group, which calls itself Concerned Black Students (C.B.S.), stressed the fact that it did not want to be thought of as an elite group but that it was only a representative of the whole black population, which it considers to be part of C.B.S. The group expressed the hope that all black students shared its concern for our collective survival at the University of Rochester, and stated that our first priority in solving our problems should be to unify the black population and to support its leaders.

The group has called another meeting for Friday, January 26 at 7 p.m. in Hollister Lounge. Everyone who is truly concerned about the continued existence of the black population on this campus is urged to attend.

Deborah Chambers of Marine Midland Bank in New York will be in the Department of Special Student Services office on Thursday, February 1 to speak with students interested in a career in banking. If interested call Barbara Harris Smith at x2864 to make an appointment.

Any student interested in receiving information about careers with Procter and Gamble, please leave your name and address with Barbara Harris Smith in Lattimore 107 or call x2864.

# Memories of Chinese New Year

We used to live near Chinatown, New York City, before we moved to the suburbs. Growing up in Chinatown, I was very susceptible to the culture and language. This may explain why I remember so vividly the details of our last New Year spent in our own apartment.

I had awakened to the delicious aromas permeating through my blanket to my olfactory glands. Images of the sumptuous banquet last night propelled me out of my bed as I remembered that today was the New Year. Hurriedly donning my new clothes, I rushed out to wish my mother "gung hei fat choy" or "Happy New Year." I grinned at her as she responded with the familiar red packets of "lucky money," a tangerine and a piece of candy. These packets of money were to be used for buying food later on. The tangerine signified good fortune and the candy harbored a sweet life.

As I helped my mother prepare the vegetarian meal, I watched her go through her ritual of arranging the table for the offerings to the gods. On the table were many dishes filled with carefully selected items to ensure propitious tidings. There were the dishes of deep fried fish, whole steamed chicken, pastries and cakes, fresh fruits, Chinese bacon, shrimp-flavored chips and rice noodles. Mentally I went over why she had selected some of these dishes: the fish was synonymous with the hope for surplus, the whole chicken conveyed good fortune, the fruits were the essence of the good life, the noodles denoted a long life and somewhat a delicacy, the Chinese bacon represented a comfortable life.

As the whole family awakened, each of us went through a ritual in our offerings to the gods. We took the incense and prayed to the gods, then waited till everyone had a chance to make their offerings. My mother then took the three cups of wine and poured it out to the gods. Refilling the cups, she prayed to the gods again. Set on the table were also three pairs of red chopsticks and three glasses filled with rice. My conjecture of the use of the number three would be for the three gods of luck, happiness, and longevity, as well as being an auspicious number.

In the afternoon, we went to Chinatown to "yum cha" which is equivalent to "drink tea" but in Chinese it means to go to a restaurant to eat. Later on, we lighted firecrackers and watched the dragon dances. Along the way, we encountered many friends and relatives as everyone had come out to watch the parade.

After the parade, we went to see a Chinese movie, as everyone in my family loved the movies. When it ended, we returned home to finish the rest of the feast and watched the darkened skies above for the fireworks.

# Blacks and the job market

This is the second half of an article by William A. Johnson, Jr., Executive Director of the Urban League of Rochester, which appeared in the November, 1978 issue of "About...time" magazine.

"We must see to it that our black youth are properly educated at the primary and secondary levels..."

This statement sets forth a simple obligation that we adults have to our youth. If their futures are to be promising, if they are going to be able to confront employers with job-ready skills, their parents, older siblings and friends have two major tasks. First, to counsel them to take the necessary courses and to provide them with the positive environment and incentives to pursue their studies. The value of education must be instilled early in their lives and constantly reinforced. Disincentives and negative influences must be swiftly eliminated.

After taking all of the steps to create a receptive learning environment within our youths' minds, an additional element must be pursued. Aggressive advocacy must be engaged in to insure that the schools educate our children satisfactorily. In almost all urban areas in this country, the public schools are becoming the major learning sources for blacks. Whites are quickly forsaking them for private and suburban schools.

The pattern which has been observed in cities like Washington, Cleveland, Newark, New York, Chicago and Los Angeles, is now observable in Rochester. Blacks and Hispanics account for nearly 60% of the school enrollment, while being less than 30% of the city's population. As in other cities, when the complexion of the school enrollment darkens the quality of instruction diminishes.

...In a recent report released by the Statewide Youth Advocacy Project entitled "Failing Students, Failing Schools," it was pointed out that between 42% and 49% of all minority students entering the 9th grade in Rochester leave school before graduating. Any thoughtful citizen cannot help but become alarmed at this statistic, because it affects the lives of real people.

If the President and Congress of the United States can be petitioned and lobbied to address the problem of black teenage youth unemployment, which is estimated to be as high as 64% in some cities, then the citizens of Rochester can be petitioned to confront a school district that unexplicably fails to account for nearly half of its eligible high school graduates. Black parents cannot afford the luxury of not demanding an answer to and a resolution of a problem which has such dramatic and adverse effects on their youth. The luxury of apathy is not only unaffordable in this situation, but fatal in terms of human lives.

...Affirmative action is a question that will be around for a while, and its solution lies not only through the various legal recourses which are being pursued currently. The future and long range solution lies in black hands. It means starting today, directing our young teenagers into broader and more productive educational pursuits. It means challenging the current educational systems at all levels to insure that they service our youths satisfactorily.

Above all, it means recognizing that, according to the current rules this society plays by, a good education is the key to unlimited opportunities, which can be utilized even in an environment of racism. We cannot afford to let these opportunities pass us by.

The Asian American Association and SAB are sponsoring a dance to celebrate Chinese New Year on Saturday, January 27 at 9:30 p.m. in Danforth, featuring Forty-second Street Band. Food and drink will be provided. Admission is \$1.50; dressy attire requested.

The Chinese Student Association is sponsoring a pot luck luncheon on Sunday, January 28 in GLC 300 basement recreation room at 12:30 p.m. A prize will be awarded for the best dish. If you plan to attend, contact Anthony at 244-1768. Also on Sunday, the movie "Red Flower Tian-Shan" will be shown in Lattimore 201 at 8 p.m. The movie concerns the struggle of a female commune leader against traditional sexist attitudes toward women. Dubbed in English. Admission for members is 50¢, non-members \$1.00.

The Association for Black Drama and the Arts  
presents

## River Niger

Directed by Chitunda Mugabe

February 1, 2, and 3  
7:15 p.m.  
Todd Union Theater

Admission:  
Students with I.D. \$1.00  
General \$2.00