



# Happy Mothers Day



## Mother credits determination

"If you can't teach me, don't criticize me," Sonya Carson recalled telling her two sons, world renowned engineer, when she realized they were ashamed of her.

"My boys were ashamed of me - yes, they were," Sonya Carson admitted in an interview with this Sunday's Parade magazine. "They would say, 'Mom, why can't you speak in such-and-such a way?' I would say to them, 'Teach me.'" That simple rule, she believes, helped her sons to grow up into adults who would always recognize their duty to people less fortunate than they.

Unable to attend school because of health problems, Sonya was married at 13 to an older man and had two sons in quick succession. When her husband, who was already married with another family, deserted her, she was forced to raise her sons alone in desperate poverty.

Realizing that the violence of the streets could easily ensnare her sons, she made it her job to insure that would not happen. She made her boys come home and do homework, and she limited them to just two television programs a week. The rest of their spare time, she decreed, would be spent reading.

"Both of my boys could read much better than I could," Sonya said. "So I had them read me my favorite book - the book of Proverbs. Then I asked them to explain to me what they had read."

While her sons were getting their college degrees - Curtis at the University of Michigan, where Ben also earned his M.D. after an undergraduate degree from Yale, all on scholarships - she went back to earn her GED certificate.

"I would write papers and ask them to correct me,"



Family circle: Sonya Carson, seated, with (rear, l-r) her grandson Murray, 13; daughter-in-law Candy and son Benjamin; son Curtis, grandson Rhoeyce, 10, and daughter-in-law Janice; and (her grandchildren Erin, 14, Ben Jr., 11, and Carl, 10.

she recalled. "They would say, 'Mother, this is wrong,' and change this and that. They helped me a lot." With her new education, Sonya was able to leave a string of menial jobs and become an interior decorator.

Asked if she had any advice for other single mothers, Sonya said, "Don't shower your babies with 'toos.' Don't always tell them, 'You're cute for words, you're too pretty.' Instead you should keep telling them,

"Whatever you are, be your best." That's what a child needs to learn."

Today, Ben Carson is the director of pediatric neurosurgery at Johns Hopkins Hospital, where he developed the standard technique for separating Siamese twins. His older brother, Curtis, who holds a bachelor's degree in engineering and a master's in business, is a business manager for Allied Signal Corporation. They are both married and have given Sonya five grandchildren.

## Event to benefit women

Habitat for Humanity will hold a financial "barn raising" for its Womenbuild project from 5:30 to 7:30 PM, Thursday, at Northwest Natural Gas, 220 N.W. Second Ave.

Womenbuild is the nonprofit agency's first attempt in Portland to build a house with an all-women crew. It will be built on a vacant lot at 3430 N. Commercial Ave., and will be occupied by Nicole Williams, a first-time home owner and social worker, and her daughter Adrianna.

Construction is scheduled to begin in late May or early June, according to Habitat associate direc-

tor Doreen Roozee.

The estimated cost of construction is \$45,000 to \$50,000.

The fund-raiser will provide various opportunities to donate money to Womenbuild. People can "buy" pieces of the house at various prices (a can of nails for \$10, a wall for \$150 or a bathtub for \$200), or "buy" the equivalent of a volunteer.

Organizations can commit to supplying a work crew for a week under supervision. The Piedmont Neighborhood Association, Women in Construction, and the Trade Women's Network have made such commitments.

## Targeting Home-Based Business 'Mompreneurs'

There is a new group of small business owners springing up across America called 'Mompreneurs.' Mompreneurs - nearly 10 million of them - are women with children who have embraced the concept of being their own boss.

They are jumping into the small business ring, so they can spend more time with their kids while setting up home-based business.

According to work-at-home experts, Ellen H. Parlapiano and Patricia Cobe, authors of

Mompreneurs, A Mother's Practical Step-by-Step Guide to Work-at-Home Success, this new breed of business owners is powerful and growing.

"Today's mompreneurs want more control of their time and more flexibility to be with their kids. Home-based businesses help many women achieve this," said Ellen Parlapiano.

The AT&T Resources for New Business Program includes the following components for its members:

- \*A starter kit with information to help get a small business off the ground and running

- \*A free consultation with an industry expert

- \*Access to a 24-hour Fax-on-Demand service with articles ranging from marketing and navigating the Internet to telephone techniques and advertising.

- \*Access to the program web site, which offers online sessions with industry experts and a wealth of small business background data.

- \*A quarterly resource guide containing additional information on how to manage and grow a start-up business

- \*A dedicated resource center that can be accessed through a toll-free number

- \*Discounts on products and services, including equipment, software and payroll services from industry leaders.

Author Ellen Parlapiano feels strongly that 'mompreneurs' need to rely on the best resources available.

## Reflections Book Store Honors Women

The public is invited to attend a special book signing honoring African-American mothers featured in a newly released book, "Letters To Our Daughters: Mothers' Words of Love" by Kristine Van Raden & Molly Davis.

Our signing will feature letter

writers from the Pacific Northwest of African descent. The signing is from 11:30 AM to 1:00 PM on Friday, May 9.

What unites these writings is that regardless of the mother's and daughter's life circumstances, education, beliefs, economic status, or age,

each mother rejoices in her daughter's uniqueness and desires for her a future filled with hope, strength, and happiness.

The Pacific Northwest is unique because all three African-American women, Karla Richardson, Geneva Jones, and Thressa W. Matthews featured in the book are from Oregon.

**Happy Mother's Day**  
 Frieda Murray  
 Iva Collins  
*From All Your Loving Family*

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Happy Mothers Day  
 Santina Washington  
 Love, Dad

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