

# People: White House now says say cheese — not crabmeat

Compiled by JOHN DONAHUE

The White House now says macaroni and cheese — not crabmeat casserole — is the family's favorite recipe. When people write the White House asking for the Reagans' favorite recipe, they are sent a form letter and a copy of the recipe. Anne Higgins, director of the correspondence office, said the "favorite" recipe she was given by Mrs. Reagan's office early this year was for crabmeat and artichoke casserole. That continued to be the favorite until it was sent, by mistake, to Susan Benjamin of Chicago, along with 8-by-10-inch glossy photos of President and Mrs. Reagan and a form letter concerning the nation's need for volunteers. Benjamin, who had written to ask Reagan not to cut money for special education for handicapped children, said she was "appalled by the insensitivity" that money is being spent on "such expensive replies" while budgets are being cut for the poor. "Why, crabmeat casserole would cost 20 bucks to make, with artichoke and crabmeat at \$15 a pound," Benjamin said. Her complaint, circulated by a Chicago council for handicapped children, got back to the White House. "We are now sending out recipes for macaroni and cheese," Higgins said. "That's his (the president's) favorite." Higgins said Benjamin was mistakenly sent a "Form 11" letter instead of a "Form 111" response.

## Authors pen art

Publishing a literary magazine is not a novel idea, as Janet Byrne soon found out. Byrne, a freelance editor from Hoboken, N.J., decided to take a different approach. She asked such authors as Allen Ginsberg, Kurt Vonnegut Jr., Norman Mailer and Gay Talese to use their pens to draw, rather than write. "What I found was that people need a release from the field in which they have been so schooled to another discipline that they are not as schooled in," Byrne said in an interview. She has recently published a magazine, entitled *Mediums*, that contains the art work of 12 authors. One of her favorite replies to her query to authors came from Joyce Carol Oates, who said: "How lovely, how blissful, to know oneself an absolute amateur at drawing."

## Saved by the belt

Raymond A. Peck Jr., director of the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, was honored on Friday for having been "saved by the belt." Peck, who drew strong criticism earlier this year for abandoning the long-disputed requirement that automobile manufacturers install automatic crash protection, received the American Seat Belt Council's Saved-by-the-Belt award in Washington. The award is given to people who escaped serious injury in a car accident because they wore seat

belts. Peck, his wife and daughter were in a car stopped in traffic last year when another car struck it from the rear. "If my wife and I had not been wearing our seat belts and if Sarah hadn't been in her child restraint, we certainly would have been seriously injured in the crash, perhaps even killed," Peck said in a statement issued by the council. Peck has said that his safety agency plans to spend \$8 million on an educational campaign to achieve more voluntary use of belts.

## Thelma Toole Cloned

The mother of the author of "A Confederacy of Dunces" is joining the Clones. Thelma Toole, mother of the late author John Kennedy Toole, was visited Saturday by the Krewe of Clones and designated "Queen Mother." The krewe, a Contemporary Arts Center group, also named her one of its "Sweet Arts," women the Clones honor for their contributions to the art community in New Orleans. The women get to ride in the Krewe of Clones parade, which will roll on Feb. 6. But the Clones have established a young tradition of visiting the "Sweet Arts" well in advance of the parade to present them with roses and proclamations and a lot of noisy ceremony. On Saturday, Krewe of Clones Captain Denise Vallon led members to Toole's home on Elysian Fields Avenue and to the residences of the other 1982 "Sweet Arts." Artist and singer George Schmidt serenaded the honorees, and



—Staff photo by Eec Crum

## Pete Wolbrette sounds trumpet as George Schmidt presents Krewe of Clones scroll to Toole

Pete Wolbrette blew heralds on his trumpet while standing on the roof of the krewe's custom-designed Bonomolo

Mercedes limousine. In addition to Toole, other 1982 "Sweet Arts" are Rep. Lindy Boggs, Arts Council Execu-

tive Director Marion Andrus McCollam, Sybil Morial, wife of the mayor, and arts patron Marjorie Davis.