



Bonnie Deshong

## The Mond Squad

Three audible personalities join their voices on V103

By LaWanda Bryant  
Photos by Alyce Henson

Horns are blaring, cigarettes are flaming, cellular phones are dialing and traffic hasn't moved an inch in the past five minutes. You flip the dial and hear the seductive voice of John Mond, who leads the Mond Squad at V103 (WVAZ-FM radio) in the afternoons, and all is calm within.

V103 is an African American radio station located in the River City Building at 800 South Wells. The station specializes in playing today's R&B hits and yesterday's R&B dusties. What you will not hear is rap and excessive talk. The three afternoon personalities, John Mond, Bonnie Deshong and George Willborn, do just enough commentary to keep their listeners interested without alienating and frustrating them to the point of no return (to the station that is).

Upon arrival at the station, I was greeted by Arthur

Porter, the afternoon producer for the Mond Squad. Fifteen minutes later, a light-skinned, brown-eyed woman with shoulder-length braids, dressed in a black knit sweater and snug black jeans, came into his office and introduced herself as Bonnie Deshong, actress and radio personality.

Deshong is from Champaign, Illinois, and got her chance to attend college through the high school organization Project Upward Bound. She attended Eureka College in Eureka, IL, and later transferred to Illinois State University in Normal, Illinois, where she received her bachelor's degree in Secondary Theater Education. Deshong explained that her family advised her to become a teacher because they felt theater wasn't the proper career to pursue, but that did not kill her desire for acting. She expanded on what continued to fuel her fire.

"I was always a fool. I was always a nut. I was always acting when I was coming up and not realizing it. I think what really got me going was the Project Upward Bound. There was a teacher there named Lynn Thickett [now the host of "Where In the World Is Carmen Santiago?"]. She was my theater teacher one year, and we did a play titled 'The Day of Absence,' and that was the first play I ever really got involved in and just loved it," said Deshong. Although Deshong has not talked to her since high school, Thickett has always been a part of her life. She followed Thickett's theater footsteps by performing in "Godspell," playing the same part.