

HAPPY HOLIDAYS

The Minority Voice

What You See Is What You Get, What You Read Is What You Know And Save

Serving Eastern North Carolina Since 1981

December Issue

Free!

A call to arms! We must revive the historical flame to educate our children.

by Vernon Jarrett
special to the Tri-State Defender

We've done it before. Many times over. And history demands that we do it again. Do it today.

The Black church must step in—once more—and lead another "Crusade for Literacy" among African Americans in this new millennium. If that crusade is to succeed it must have the assiduous support of the Black press. That is why this publication, the *Tri-State Defender*, with its historical tradition of leading great social movements, is joining hands with the Black church in another monumental struggle.

At this very moment, all major elementary and high school test results show our Black children lagging behind all other ethnic groups in reading and math. The situation is disquieting and disgusting. The scoring differences are not fractional or anyways slight. Huge marginal differences separate Black averages from White averages.

But low test scores don't tell the whole story. Black high school dropout percentages are among the highest in the land. The combination of low SAT and ACT scores, along with extreme dropout rates, placed in the context of poverty and this country's Black prison population does not auger well for the future of African Americans.

Little wonder that low test scores and dropout rates are also reflected in the disproportionate racial compositions of America's prison systems.

But I've got some good news for you, Brothers and Sisters. There were other moments in America's past when conditions were worse. Like in the 18th and 19th centuries when the majority of the Black population was not just poor but enslaved, and hardly had any reliable supports from the law.

Yes, conditions were not only worse but at times appeared so bad that White sociologists, theologians and prominent educators predicted the extinction of the entire Black population—once Blacks were freed and "on their own."

The racial climate appeared absolutely hopeless until the Black church stepped in. Yes, the Black church, led by two committed, newly-freed Black preachers and seven laymen engineered a gigantic social and spiritual turnaround.

One of the greatest spiritual phenomena of American history occurred when the White religious powers of England and the American colonies "permitted" the acceptance of Black Christians only under the condition that Christianity would not interfere with slavery. That was when the Black crusade also began.

Under the slave system, Blacks were not permitted to run their own churches. Most were forced to attend White churches or hold their own meetings in the presence of white supervisors.

Our ancestors quickly understood this strange kind of integration. The slave owners were afraid that Blacks who had learned to read would teach others. And they were correct. A young slave named Frederick Douglass, who had taught himself to read, turned his church into an underground classroom.

But years before Douglass, two ex-slave ministers named the Reverends Richard Allen and Absalom Jones, made history in April and May, 1787, by creating the Free African Society of Philadelphia. Provisions for the education of young Blacks were

among the listed goals of that society.

One of the most phenomenal stories in American history is how Blacks redirected Christianity to the Sermon on the Mount. Pro-slavery theologians reinvented Christianity and both the Old and New Testaments to make slavery digestible and to encourage loyalty among slaves.

However, the Black church gave Christianity its own definition that led to slave revolts by Black lay ministers of the Gospel, such as Gabriel Prosser of Henrico County, Va., in 1800; Denmark Vesey, who plotted a slave uprising in an African Methodist Episcopal Church in Charleston, S.C., in 1822; and the Rev. Nat Turner of South Hampton County, Va., who led the biggest of all revolts in 1831.

In March, of 1827, Samuel Cornish and John Russworm, two educated, Christian young men, created America's first Black newspaper, *Freedom's Journal*, in New York City. In 1829, David Walker of Boston, a free-born Christian advocate, wrote the strongest broadside available, urging slaves to rise against their masters.

Throughout the North, free Black abolitionists met in Black churches to provide education, reading material, particularly newspapers in a war on illiteracy, slavery and apathy.

It should be noted that Wilberforce University, one of the first Black institutions in America, was founded in 1856, five years before the start of the Civil War, by the African Methodist Episcopal (AME) Church. During and shortly after Reconstruction, the Black churches of many denominations created their own newspapers and founded colleges for the newly freed.

One of the true journalist-heroines of the turn of the 20th century, Ida B. Wells Barnett of Memphis, became famous by her exposure of lynch mobs in her newspaper, *Free Speech*, which was published by a Baptist Church. She first came to Chicago for the Columbian Exposition of 1893 before purchasing the *Chicago Conservator*, the city's first Black newspaper.

The fact to remember during this period of educational disappointment is that Blacks registered their greatest gains against illiteracy, poverty and abject racism during eras of great cooperation between the Black press and the Black church.

The *Tri-State Defender's* current Declaration of War on Illiteracy through a collective strategy and action is in essence a call for a return to the greatness of our historic roots.

While writing this column, I thought of so many of the great men and women that I've had the privilege to interview over the past 50 years. I speak of A. Phillip Randolph, Paul Robeson, Dr. Howard Thurman, Dr. Benjamin E. Mays, Dr. Percy Julian—profoundly educated men who began with so little. They all recalled the early impact of the church in the quest for excellence.

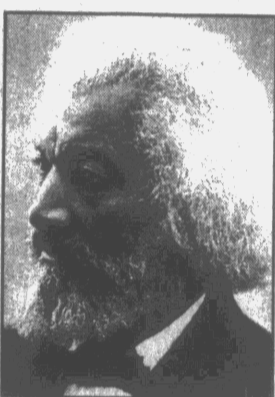
And I wondered if I would be writing this column if Quinn Chapel AME Church in Paris, Tenn., had not had that essay contest when I was in the seventh grade.

For those who ask what I enjoy the most about returning to a Black publication after 30 years elsewhere? This *Tri-State Defender* revived *War on Illiteracy* explains a lot.

(Jarrett is a nationally known award winning journalist, television and radio personality, and a noted Black historian.)



Randolph



Douglass



Wells



Robeson

Sorority book donation made



PICTURED, from left, are Michael Priddy, superintendent of Pitt County Schools; Mavis G. Williams, president, Greenville alumnae chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority; Tina Rorer, media coordinator at Wintgreen Intermediate School; Lillian T. Outterbridge, president, Pitt County Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority; and Patricia M. Clark, principal of Wintgreen Intermediate School

Copies of "From These Roots Crimson and Cream Edition" recently were presented to public libraries in Pitt County municipalities, public schools, East Carolina University and Pitt Community College. The book features chapter activities in the south Atlantic region, which encompasses North Carolina, South Carolina, Virginia and Bermuda. The book was presented by Mavis G. Williams and Lillian T. Outterbridge on behalf of the Delta Sigma Theta Sorority. Mavis Williams is president of the Pitt County alumnae chapter. The sorority is a public service organization founded on the campus of Howard University, Washington, D.C. in 1913.

Happy Kwanzaa

We remember our
Struggle,
Give thanks to our
Investors,
Honor our
Race,
Celebrate our
Heritage.



Top photo: Mayor Priscilla Everette-Oates and colleagues pose in front of the African American Museum (formerly the Old Town Hall). Bottom Photo: Masonic brothers have always given back to the community. Here they stand ready to help those in need.

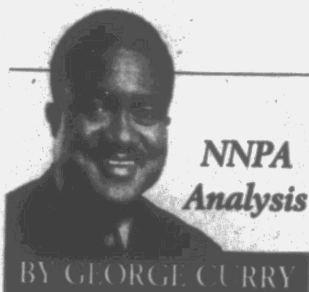
photo by Bro Rouse

Michael Jackson's mess is no thriller

Unlike many of my colleagues, I had planned to abstain from writing about Michael Jackson's latest troubles. I wanted to just say no. And I was doing fine until Jermaine Jackson asserted that his brother was being lynched.

The problem is that when we take cases that have only a tangential relationship to race and characterize them as "racism" or a "lynching," we cheapen the instances where that is actually the case. Getting justice or even media attention in a legitimate discrimination case is hard enough without the distraction of throwing irrelevant analogies into the mix.

We don't like to admit it, but there are some African-Americans who see a conspiracy in everything negative that involves a Black person. I suspect that when it rains, some Black people believe that a White person is disturbing the clouds to make African-Americans wet. It's time to get



**NNPA
Analysis**

BY GEORGE CURRY

a grip. The latest case is the result of the alleged victim of child molestation confiding to a professional counselor who, as required by law, shared that information with law enforcement authorities. A search was made of "Neverland," Jackson's sprawling California estate in Santa Barbara County, and the singer was subsequently charged with multiple counts of lewd and lascivious conduct with a minor, booked and released on a \$3 million bond. Jackson has steadfastly maintained that he's not guilty. This would have been a

major story if such accusations had been filed against Captain Kangaroo. Jackson's race is not the issue. It's even more of a story because a decade ago, Jackson reached an out-of-court settlement to resolve a similar complaint.

Unfortunately for Jackson, these charges came in November, a sweeps period in which many television stations measure their audience. The larger the audience, the more a station or network can charge for commercials. Coverage is also expanded because we live in a world of around-the-clock cable television networks that need stories to fill all that air-time.

The media deserves criticism, but for a different reason.

The name and the photograph of the boy making the allegation against Jackson have been widely circulated in foreign newspapers and on Web sites. An Australian site, news.com.au, has reproduced a picture of Jackson with the boy,

now 14 years old, and disclosed his name. South Africa's Sunday Mail ran the headline, "The boy who outed Jacko." A headline in the Sydney, Australia, Sunday Telegraph read, "Jackson's accuser-Revealed: The boy who brought down superstar Michael Jackson."

While professing not to stoop to such low levels, U.S. newspapers have not used the name of Jackson's accuser. Anyone who saw a British documentary by Martin Bashir on Michael Jackson, the one in which he admits to having slept in the bed with young boys but sees nothing wrong with the practice, can easily identify the boy.

The Los Angeles Times, under the headline "Hard Life for Jackson's Alleged Victim," quotes the boy in the documentary: "There was one night I asked him if I could stay in the bedroom. And he let me stay in the bedroom." Jackson quickly added at the time that he had slept on the floor that night.

The Times further identifies the kid by writing, "The boy had leukemia and received treatment at Childrens Hospital in Los Angeles."

The New York's Daily News struck a self-congratulatory tone: "And the boy—who has not been identified by police, and whose name is being withheld by the Daily News—is caught in a tug-of-war between his estranged parents."

Considering the amount of details the Daily News provided about the boy, they did not need to publish his name in order to identify him.

The paper's story began, "Be careful what you wish for." It continued, "The cancer-stricken boy said to be at the center of the Michael Jackson kiddie sex scandal was introduced to the pop star by a soft-hearted businessman who wanted to make the youth's dream come true...His wish was to meet Adam Sandler, Chris Tucker or Michael Jackson.

The child got his wish—forever

er altering his life and Jackson's."

Syndicated columnist Leonard Pitts Jr. put it best: "He is a 45-year-old man wearing lipstick and eyeliner on a surgically altered face that could give Charles Manson nightmares. He is 10 years removed from a child molestation scandal. His home is a monument to arrested development."

And the boy's parents are not without fault. Michael gave everyone a clue when he named his larger-than-life playground, "Neverland." It should have sent all parents a clear message: Never let your son land in this place.

George E. Curry is editor-in-chief of the NNPA News Service and BlackPressUSA.com. His most recent book is "The Best of Emergent Magazine," an anthology published by Ballantine Books. He can be reached through his Web site, georgecurry.com.

Miami's new police state

Millions of us witnessed—or received a hint of—the Miami spectacle last week at the time of the Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA) meetings and protests. Brought to us by the same people who oversaw electoral fraud in November 2000, this stunning and threatening presence of police was almost unbelievable, particularly in light of the fact that the protests were peaceful.

I flew into Fort Lauderdale and took a very expensive cab ride to Miami. The first thing that struck me was that, when I called my hotel for directions, the tone of the hotel staffer's voice was full of panic. The hotel employee indicated that Biscayne Blvd. and other streets near the hotel had been closed by the police. So the cab driver dropped me off at an exit ramp on Route 95 and I had to walk three-fourths of a mile or so, bags in hand, to get to the hotel. I walked past innumerable police and police vehicles. These police officers looked like they had been plucked from a scene out of a science fiction movie. Armed and armored with helmets and visors, they were everywhere. I



**Special
Commentary**

BY BILL FLETCHER

felt as though I were walking through a city where a military coup d'etat had just taken place.

Streets were blocked off, stores were closed, helicopters were flying overhead, yet demonstrators found ways of converging on the legally permitted rally site. While the march that was held following the initial rally the afternoon of November 20th was peaceful and uneventful, a couple of hundred marchers returning to the rally site approached an artificial wall that had been set up by the police to restrict protesters from getting too close to the meeting site, where the FTAA was being debated. It was at that point that the police marched on these direct action protesters.

I watched as rubber bullets and tear gas were fired at the unarmed protesters. The police converged on the protesters, almost like a scene from the

classic film Potemkin, where Russian troops marched on demonstrators in 1905. While this was taking place, the official news coverage was disparaging the protesters as hooligans, inflaming the environment.

That was Thursday. On Friday, when nothing big and exciting was planned, I witnessed another dramatic show of force by Miami's finest. This time, the provocations by the police were evident for all to see. I witnessed young anti-FTAA activists being pulled over, who were simply walking down the streets or driving. In several cases these individuals were put up against walls, forced to sit down in front of the police and/or arrested outright. Stories continue to circulate about what happened or is alleged to have happened to those arrested.

The anger that I hold due to this display of arrogant intimidation is difficult to communicate. A legal protest had been planned. It was planned by labor unions, community-based organizations, non-governmental organizations, and various other activists. It was planned to demonstrate opposition to a

fundamentally undemocratic trade deal that was being forced down the throats of the people of the Western hemisphere by the Bush administration in its mad quest for better conditions for corporate profitability. Having been excluded from any meaningful participation in the lead up to the FTAA gathering, activists from the entire hemisphere converged on Miami to express their outrage and antipathy toward such an agreement.

As it turned out, the Miami (and Florida) establishment went out of its way to promote an atmosphere of panic and dread within the larger population. For weeks prior to the FTAA meetings and protests, the press had been promoting anticipation of the worst, something akin to the fear that Romans must have felt as Attila the Hun and his hoards approached the gates of their fair city.

Inferences of terrorist threats and mad anarchists were floated in order to color the view of the entire protest. Despite the fact that the labor unions under the leadership of the AFL-CIO, along with other protesters, planned around a

peaceful expression of opinion, the news media turned the whole situation on its head into invasion Miami.

I have seen a possible future for the U.S.A. and it is not a pretty picture. The lords of the White House, along with their various corporate and political allies have decided in no uncertain terms to play upon the post-9/11 fears among the people in order to restrict the ability of the people to express themselves. Moreover, they are carrying out a preemptive political strike against any and all opponents of their corporate-guided globalization. It was not simply a matter of the police presence, however. The pitiful national coverage of the Miami events, as well as the caricaturizing of the protesters by local and national media, presented the demonstrations as more of a circus than an example of growing opposition to President Bush and his determined march toward a world safe for profits for his corporate friends and allies.

Miami was living proof that the USA Patriot Act and the growing repression that we have experienced since 9/11/2001 has very little to do

with any war against terrorism. Rather, the entire scene is as if it were out of a film, scripted to the "t." Play upon fears, encourage passivity in the face of arrogance, distort the news, foment lies and half-truths, this becomes the screenplay for the 21st century entry of the police state into the U.S.A.

Interestingly, it is not just and no longer Black folks who are the sole recipients of the baton and pepper spray in this brave new world. This go round all one has to do is to raise one's hand and say, "...excuse me, but I don't agree..." and, presto, one becomes an enemy of homeland security.

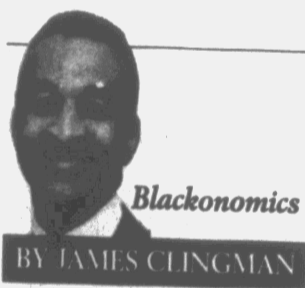
Bill Fletcher Jr. is president of TransAfrica Forum, a Washington, D.C.-based non-profit educational and organizing center formed to raise awareness in the United States about issues facing the nations and peoples of Africa, the Caribbean and Latin America. He also is co-chair of the anti-war coalition, United for Peace and Justice (www.unitedforpeace.org). He can be reached at bfletcher@transafricaforum.org.

The true meaning of Turkeys' Day

By the time you read this article many of you will have eaten enough to feed one of those starving children for a week, and some of you will have gone out and spent your hard-earned money on things you did not need just because the advertisers told you the biggest shopping day of the year is the day after Thanksgiving.

By the time you read this, you will have taken advantage of the big sales and all of the bargains, thus, continuing the trend of enriching others by creating wealth for them, while maintaining the current level of economic enslavement that exists among African-Americans. Oh yeah, and we will inevitably hear the post-Thanksgiving fallout about "Black Friday" and how we should have spent our money at Black-owned businesses and vendor marketplaces.

I have written several articles on this subject and decided to curtail my pre-Thanksgiving pleadings this year. It seems to do no good to suggest that we incorporate a daily, year-round, sustainable economic strategy



Blackonomics

BY JAMES CLINGMAN

rather than get all bent out of shape when Thanksgiving and Christmas roll around. I suppose that's too easy and we definitely like things to be difficult, don't we? For instance, I have pushed and advocated for a mindset, a collective consciousness among Black folks that would create in us a daily "habit" of seeking out Black businesses and mutual support.

If we could ever get to that state of mind we would not have to revisit the annual flawed strategy of waiting for the holidays to react to our economic plight in this country. We would not need Black Out Days and other superfluous efforts that only last for short periods of time and have no sustaining effect on those we are attempt-

ing to hurt. As a matter of fact, we get so hung-up on hurting others and often neglect the fact that we should be helping ourselves.

With all of that said, I am suggesting that we are the real turkeys in the economic scenario of this country. They carve us up and divide us up every year—as a matter of fact, they do it all year long. They stuff us with advertising and marketing campaigns, rub us down with the oil of credit, tie our legs together in order to keep us contained, and then they bake us all day long in their oven malls until we are done, I mean really done. Then they feast on us for the following few weeks or so, as turkey stew, turkey sandwiches, turkey soup, turkey hash, and turkey salad.

They slice us, dice us, fry us, mix us up, and stir us up in an effort to keep that turkey flavor flowing for as long as they can. And we accommodate them by continuing to buy, buy, and buy all year long, all the while neglecting our own economic survival.

Yes, we are indeed their

Thanksgiving turkeys, brothers and sisters. We are also their Christmas presents. When are we going to wake up from our fantasy-land economic delusions? Black people in this country are the economic fodder for everyone else's well-being and prosperity. We complain, march, and come up with strategies and tactics that do no more than make us feel good about getting an apology from those who economically exploit us. Our so-called leaders tell us when to be angry, what to be angry about, and at whom we should be angry. They even tell us when it's time to stop being mad, but they seldom tell us anything we can do to economically empower ourselves to the point where it would no longer matter who calls us a name or fails to give us good service at their restaurant.

What brand of leadership serves its own people up for dinner? I often say that we have enough intellectual capacity to great things for our economic future and that of our children. The message from our "leaders" should be couched in economic freedom, self-reliance,

and empowerment, rather than feed us a steady diet of mere "feel-good," "you can do it," and "you're a winner," speeches and strategies.

They should be teaching us how to move beyond the rhetoric to real action and progress from year to year. They should, in addition to the registering to vote campaigns, teach us what Booker T. Washington taught us: How to register our dollars all year long. They should show us the way to economic freedom; they should lead us there, and they should serve us, as Carter G. Woodson wrote, with their expertise in business, finance, and entrepreneurship.

Every Thanksgiving and Christmas, we are marinated, basted in our own savory juices, and cooked to perfection until the meat just falls off our bones, not unlike the dollars that fall out of our pockets and purses. We traipse to the stores, plop down the green, and return to our abodes to complain about how miserably "they" treat us.

This year, as we move through another holiday sea-

son that used to be a Holy Day season, let's resolve to change the menu and take turkey off the tables of the corporate hordes. And let's stop allowing our people to be consumed and digested, only to be excreted upon when the New Year begins. I apologize for the graphic language, but this is just that serious, brothers and sisters. We're supposed to have the meal, not be the meal. It's called "Turkey Day," not "Turkeys' Day."

James E. Clingman, an adjunct professor at the University of Cincinnati's African-American Studies department, is former editor of the Cincinnati Herald Newspaper and founder of the Greater Cincinnati African American Chamber of Commerce. He hosts the radio program, "Blackonomics," and is the author of the book, "Economic Empowerment or Economic Enslavement—We Have a Choice." He can be reached at (513) 489-4132, or by e-mail at jclingman@blackonomics.com.

TURMOIL IN CINCINNATI, WEEK OF DECEMBER 11-DECEMBER 17, 2003

by MARK MORIAL
The Wilmington Journal
Originally posted 12/15/2003

There is too much crime and too little justice in the lives of black Americans today. But while the problem of crime is widely shared in the United States, the problem of injustice is not." So wrote Christopher E. Stone, director of the Vera Institute for Justice in an essay in the 1996 volume of the National Urban League's The State of Black America. Stone went on to declare, "It is a paradox that black Americans, who suffer from crime disproportionately, have mixed feelings, at best, regarding its support of and confidence in the criminal justice system as it operates today."

The national survey of African Americans the Urban League published in its 2001 edition of The State of Black America quantified that sentiment when it found that 73 percent of those surveyed said that the police were biased against blacks; just 15 percent said they were fair to blacks. That distrust has once again been on dramatic display in a controversial, high profile case during the past two weeks. The cause this time was the caught-on-tape police beating on November 30 in Cincinnati, Ohio of Nathaniel Jones, an unarmed black man. Jones, 41, who weighed 342 pounds, died after a three-minute struggle with six officers—five white, one African-American—in a restaurant parking lot. Jones' death comes two years after Cincinnati was rocked by three days of violent disturbances after a 19-year-old unarmed black man was shot to death while running away from a white police officer. The victim, Timothy Thomas, was the subject of 14 outstanding warrants—12 of which were for minor traffic offenses, and two of which were for running from the police to escape arrest for those violations. Thomas' death made him the fifteenth black man to be killed by Cincinnati police officers under controversial circumstances in recent years, and brought to a boil the simmering distrust many black Cincinnatians had for the police. Despite several substantive reforms of police practices undertaken in that incident's aftermath, and city officials' efforts to redress other grievances many black residents express, it's clear that longstanding distrust has not disappeared. That backdrop is an additional reason why the investigation into Nathaniel Jones' death must proceed with as much public openness as possible. A videotape of the confrontation, recorded by the camera of one of the police cruisers that responded to the scene, shows an officer stepping back from Jones and warning him to "back away," according to local news accounts. Then, in succession, it shows Jones lunging toward the officer, and for the next several minutes officers raining repeated blows to Jones' legs and torso with their nightsticks, spraying him with a chemical irritant and wrestling him into handcuffs and a facedown position in the parking lot.

We'll Miss You Charles Barrett Retires From Fleming Tire Service

Presidents, Soldiers and Lies

DefenseWatch
This article is provided courtesy of DefenseWatch, the official magazine for Soldiers

For The Truth (SFTT), a grass-roots educational organization started by a small group of concerned veterans and citizens to inform the public, the Congress, and the media on the decline in readiness of our armed forces.

Inspired by the outspoken idealism of retired Colonel David Hackworth, SFTT aims to give our service people, veterans, and retirees a clear voice with the media, Congress, the public and their service

By George S. Kulas

When then-President Bill Clinton told the nation, "I want you to listen to me. I'm going to say this again: I did not have sexual relations with that woman, Miss Lewinsky," many of us listened and believed him. Unfortunately, the president of the United States was looking right into our eyes and lying through his teeth.

Many presidents have lied. While some lies have been found out, many more have sailed right over the heads of the American people.



students & parents

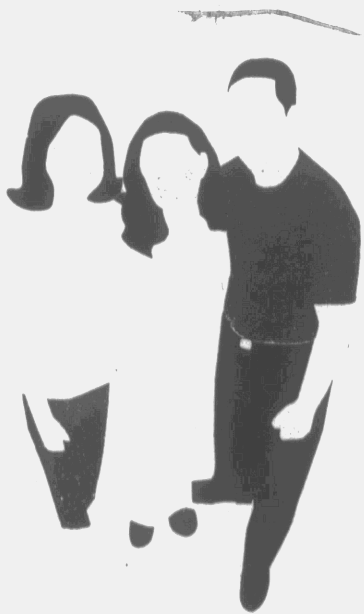
want to learn more about financial aid?

Some companies offer "free" financial aid presentations and then ask you to pay a fee or buy a product. College Foundation of North Carolina provides all the information you need at no cost!

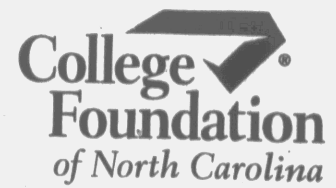
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BACARDI
SILVER

YOUR NIGHT JUST GOT A LITTLE MORE INTERESTING.

Jul 3 - 12, 2003

Local Poet Publishes Book
By Jason Semple

FARM LIFE - The title of Tina Rodgers-James' book of poetry. "Expressions of the Heart," says right up front just what her lines of verse are all about. "Everything I write about is something in life, something that I've gone through," said James. "My poems are real."

Her verse is, indeed, filled with personal emotion that she hopes her readers will connect with at their own personal level. One poem, "I've Learned," recently won an Editor's Choice Award from Poetry.com, and reflects her open-hearted style: The poem appears in her book, "Expressions of the Heart," which she self-published earlier this month. The collection has different chapters with several poems focusing on subjects such as God, self-love, relationships, and marriages.

She brings out the feelings and emotions of her own life experiences, as well as putting herself in others' shoes and writing from an empathetic point of view. "I am not scared to share my feelings because it's just it," said James. "I'm not ashamed of my trials and tribulations because, with the Lord's help, I've risen above them."

She hopes that readers will see a poet that has gone through what 'the reader is going through, and will take away the blessing of courage to overcome any obstacles life has placed in the reader's path.

The Robersonville native credits her family and friends as being inspirations for her work, and says that her sister, Shelia Bowen, has really stood beside her and helped her with her poetry, which she has written since she was a little girl.

James said that she has two more volumes of verse coming out in the next few months, "Expressions of the Heart: Pleasure with Pain" and "Expressions of the Heart: Heaven or Hell."

James holds an associate's degree in social work from Beaufort Community College and is currently working on her bachelor's degree in social work from East Carolina University.



James is the daughter of Johnny and Faye Rodgers of Robersonville and Barbara James of Robersonville.

Review: Expressions of the Heart by Tina Rodgers-James
Submitted by Gary R. Redding



URGENT COMMUNITY MESSAGE

THE FOLLOWING IS THE CONTENT OF A LETTER PLACED ON THE BED OF A YOUNG BLACK PERSON INCARCERATED IN THE CHICAGO CITY JAIL. PLEASE TAKE A MINUTE OF YOUR TIME TO REFLECT UPON THE SEVERITY OF THIS STATEMENT:

THE KU KLUX KLAN WOULD LIKE TO TAKE THIS TIME TO SALUTE AND CONGRATULATE ALL GANG BANGERS, ALCOHOL ABUSERS AND DRUG USERS FOR THE SLAUGHTER OF OVER 4000 BLACK PEOPLE SINCE 1971. YOU ARE DOING A WONDERFUL JOB.

STOP KILLING EACH OTHER FOR NOTHING. THE STREETS ARE STILL NOT YOURS. IT IS OURS. YOU ARE KILLING EACH OTHER FOR OUR PROPERTY. YOU ARE KILLING WHAT COULD BE FUTURE BLACK DOCTORS, LAWYERS, BUSINESS PEOPLE AND ENGINEERS THAT WE WON'T HAVE TO COMPETE WITH. AND THE GOOD THING ABOUT THAT IS THAT YOU ARE KILLING THE YOUTH. SO WE WON'T HAVE TO WORRY ABOUT OUR BOYFRIENDS IN GENERATIONS TO COME. WE WOULD FURTHER LIKE TO THANK ALL THE JUDGES WHO HAVE OVERSENTENCED YOU NIGGERS TO PRISON.

WE ARE STARTING AGAIN. PRETTY SOON, WE WILL BE ABLE TO GO BACK TO RAPING YOUR WOMEN, BECAUSE ALL THE MEN WILL BE GONE.

SO YOU GANG BANGERS, ALCOHOL-DRINKING ABUSERS AND DRUG USERS ARE UP TO YOUR NECKS IN WORK. WE LOVE TO READ ABOUT DRIVE-BY SHOOTINGS. WE LOVE TO HEAR HOW MANY NIGGERS GET KILLED OVER THE WEEKENDS. WE CAN'T TOLERATE THE NIGGERS WITH JUNGLE FEVER (FOR NOW) ... BECAUSE THAT FURTHER BREAKS DOWN THE BLACK RACE.

TO ALL GANG BANGERS, ALCOHOL-DRINKING ABUSERS AND DRUG USERS ACROSS THE WORLD: WE DON'T LOVE YOU NIGGERS, BUT WE CAN APPRECIATE YOU. YOU ARE DOING A WONDERFUL JOB ELIMINATING THE BLACK RACE.

WITHOUT THE MEN, YOUR WOMEN CANNOT REPRODUCE, UNLESS, OF COURSE, WE DO IT FOR THEM. THEN WE WILL HAVE SUCCEEDED IN FULLY ELIMINATING A RACE. THANKS FOR YOUR HELP AND COMMITMENT TO KILLING EACH OTHER OFF.

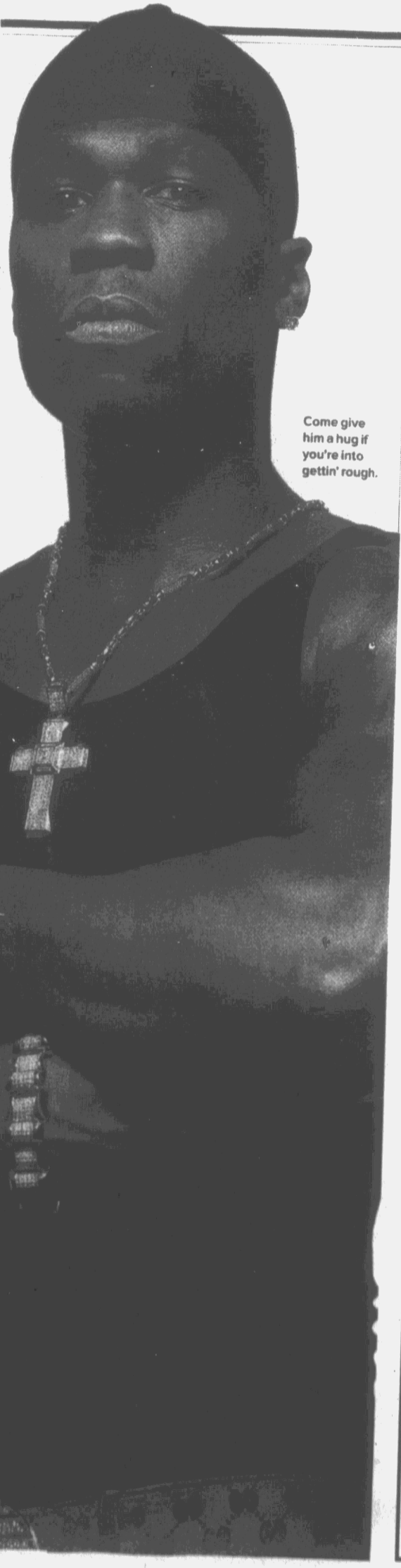
IF MORE OF YOU NIGGER GANG BANGERS, ALCOHOL-DRINKING ABUSERS AND DRUG USERS CANNOT READ THIS LETTER, IT IS O.K. GO PULL A TRIGGER AND KILL A NIGGER.

PEOPLE of the YEAR

50 CENT

DID HE MENTION THAT HE HATES JA RULE?

THE BIGGEST NEW ARTIST OF the year may also be the first pop star whose top five selling points would include the phrase *bullet riddled*. But 50 Cent was not just shot nine times; he lived to note the, er, irony of his assailant being shot and killed a couple of weeks later. Generally, a man who raps about being responsible for a gangland hit is a tough sell to pop radio. But 50 is such a genial thug, he invites you to party like it's your birthday. His music is full of high-life fun and humor, even if he tries to pick up the ladies by boasting about how he's been shot so many times he walks with a limp. 50 got rich and (at press time) didn't even have to cap Ja Rule while trying.



Come give him a hug if you're into gettin' rough.

An Imperfect God: George Washington, His Slaves, and the Creation of America

By Henry Wiencek
Farrar, Straus & Giroux
404 pp., illus.

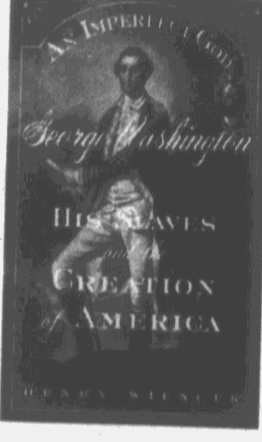
Reviewed by Kam Williams

"His false teeth, celebrated in textbook lore, were yanked from the heads of his slaves and fitted into his dentures. Washington apparently had slaves' teeth transplanted into his own jaw in 1784. The dentist who performed the procedure at Mount Vernon was an itinerant Frenchman who transplanted teeth for many well-to-do clients, including acquaintances of Washington. It has long been known to specialists that some of Washington's false teeth came from the mouths of his slaves, but this inherently invidious tidbit of fact has not been widely circulated, despite enduring public interest in his supposedly wooden dentures, because it is impossible to rationalize it completely."

— Excerpted from Chapter Four

So much revisionist, reverential lore has been spun over the ages about George Washington as an honorable, cherry tree chopper who could "never tell a lie" that the real man behind the myths has been rendered unrecognizable. However, historian Henry Wiencek has belatedly taken an honest look at this country's first president in *An Imperfect God: George Washington, His Slaves, and the Creation of America*.

Washington's treatment of his chattel is certain to make any American's head spin. For this "Father of Our Country" only had children with Black women, which must make all the "Children of Our Country" African American. Although he allegedly couldn't tell a lie, curious George still denied the existence of his children until the day he died. But he did remember them in his will, without acknowledging paternity, and was the only U.S. president, according to the author, ever to free any of his slaves.



We learn that virtually all of General Washington's larger-than-life legend was comprised of fabrications.

For instance, Washington had an affair with a mulatto named Venus, a revelation that puts a whole new spin on the popular catchphrase, "George Washington slept here."

In 1785, that liaison produced a boy named West Ford, who "was set free in the early 1800s; he lived much of his adult life at Mount Vernon; he was given a substantial bequest of land adjacent to Mount Vernon; and he died there in 1863."

West Ford was a lucky one, because his slave-owning father was one of the nastiest bastards around, a greedy creep who frequently broke mothers hearts by raffling off their young children to the highest bidder.

Relying on diaries, journals, letters and other papers from the presidential library, Wiencek establishes that George Washington at every stage of his life, from son of a plantation owner to wealthy heir to general to President back to plantation owner, remained, above all, dedicated to the institution of slavery.

And we see that, "In his struggle to control his slaves, Washington had to resort to violence. He regarded physical punishment as a necessity," even though his chattel were extremely productive.

His own records for one year show that they made 190,000 corn holes and 170,000 tobacco hills, meaning they had planted an average of about a plant per minute during their grueling 12-hour days under the sun.

After the start of the Revolutionary War, Washington refused to allow

Blacks to enlist in the army until it became clear that their assistance was necessary for the colonists to prevail. Recruited with the promise of freedom in return for fighting, the African-American soldiers made up a quarter of his own regiment and as much as three-quarters of others. As soon as the war ended, unfortunately, he went back on his emancipation guarantee, and shipped the duped Black patriots right back into slavery.

Curiously, Benedict Arnold, whose name has become a synonym for traitor, only sided with the British after Washington refused to include African-American minutemen in any plans for freedom. And following the battle of Yorktown, when General Washington discovered some of his own escaped slaves among the prisoners of war, he sent them back to his plantation without a thought about the Founding Fathers' notion about all men being created equal.

As president, he was worse, signing the Fugitive Slave Act in 1793 that allowed the recapture of runaway slaves who had successfully escaped to free territories. Some say this was a personal piece of legislation, because he and his even more racist wife Martha had heightened anxiety since the capital was located in increasingly abolitionist Philadelphia. Apparently, the couple feared that their Blacks might be tempted to disappear.

But George lied about his true motivations in a letter to a secretary, where he admits that, "I wish to have it accomplished under pretext that they may deceive both the slaves and the public."

I'd guess that after reading this damning opus, the average African American is likely to feel as warmly about celebrating George Washington's birthday or driving across the George Washington Bridge or entering a George Washington high school as a Jewish person might feel about having Hitler constantly treated as a national treasure.

Reflections, Expressions, and Reviews



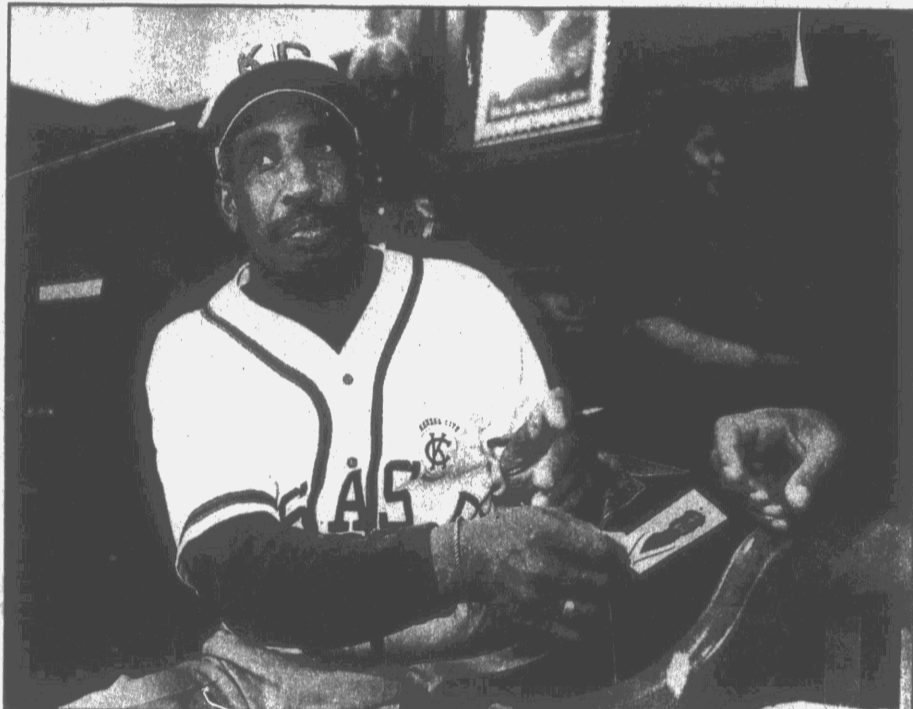
The Tennis Great Who Broke the Grand Slam Color Barrier (Althea Gibson 1927-2003)

Like Jackie Robinson in baseball and tennis player Arthur Ashe, tennis champion Althea Gibson was a trailblazer. Yet her accomplishments were perhaps more impressive because of her singular place as an athlete who was both black and a woman in the 1950s. The oldest of five children, Gibson was born on a cotton farm in South Carolina and raised in New York's Harlem. Bandleader Buddy Walker, who saw her playing paddle tennis on a neighborhood street, was impressed by her strength and style. He arranged for Gibson to take tennis lessons at a local multicultural club. After winning several American Tennis Association titles--the African

American counterpart to the all-white U.S. Lawn Tennis Association--she moved to Wilmington, NC. There, under the tutelage of Dr. Hubert Eaton, Sr. and later under the tutelage of Dr. Robert "Whirlwind" Johnson of Lynchburg, VA, who also mentored Arthur Ashe, "her tennis career took off". Both black physicians bankrolled her career, on the condition that she continues her education.

Later she became the first black woman to compete in what became the U.S. Open, and was also the first black athlete to play at Wimbledon, milestones that pushed her into prominence during the fight for civil rights. In the course of her career, she won five Grand Slam singles titles: the 1956 French Open, the 1957 and 1958 Wimbledon championships, and the 1957 and 1958 U.S. Opens. New York honored her with a ticker-tape parade, and she was inducted into several halls of fame. Gibson retired from amateur tennis at age 31. She recorded an album, *Althea Sings* and appeared in John Ford's 1959 western *The Horse Soldiers*.

After holding several state and local athletic jobs in New Jersey, she was laid off in 1992. In her last years, she lived a nearly solitary existence in dire poverty, and had few visitors. She was twice married and twice divorced, and had no children.



The Associated Press

FORMER NEGRO LEAGUE PLAYER SAM ALLEN signs autographs on Wednesday in Washington. Artifacts from The Negro League Legends Hall of Fame were displayed for press. Groundbreaking for the hall is expected to begin next year.

Negro Leagues to get Hall of Fame

The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Al Burrows wore the same New York Black Yankees jersey he wore 49 years ago — no high-priced throwback needed for this Negro Leagues veteran.

On the table was a weathered glove worn for eight years by Satchel Paige, who eventually traded it to a friend for a pair of knee-high fishing boots.

Recently discovered artifacts nearly a century old were scattered throughout preserved unknowingly for decades in someone's suitcase: box scores, ledgers, photos and letters. They are the remnants of the less organized days of the so-called Colored Leagues, a period that even the old-timers couldn't remember.

Many of those memories will find a permanent home in the new Negro League Legends Hall of Fame, a shrine and museum to be built in Washington. Groundbreaking is scheduled for next year, with opening day set for 2006.

"We need this," said Sam Allen, who played for the Kansas City Monarchs, Raleigh Taggers and Memphis Red Sox in the late 1950s. "I've got grandchildren, and I can sit them down and tell them, but then they want to see the proof. With this museum coming up, they'll be able to come here and see my name and my picture. It's a long time coming."

There already is a Negro Leagues Baseball Museum in Kansas City, Mo., and the history of black baseball is well documented in the Baseball Hall of Fame in Cooperstown, N.Y. The new Hall of Fame will supplement those, focusing more on individual players.

"It gives the average player a chance to be recognized," Allen said. "When you talk about Negro Leagues, black baseball, the first thing is Satchel Paige and Josh Gibson. But you had a lot of other good ball players. The Negro Leagues were loaded."

It was a discovery of some pre-Negro Leagues history that fascinated those gathered at Howard University on Wednesday. Detailed records that once belonged to Rutherford Hayes Jones, who owned a team called the Washington Giants in the early 20th century, had been found in a suitcase and turned over to Dwayne Sims, founder of the new Hall.

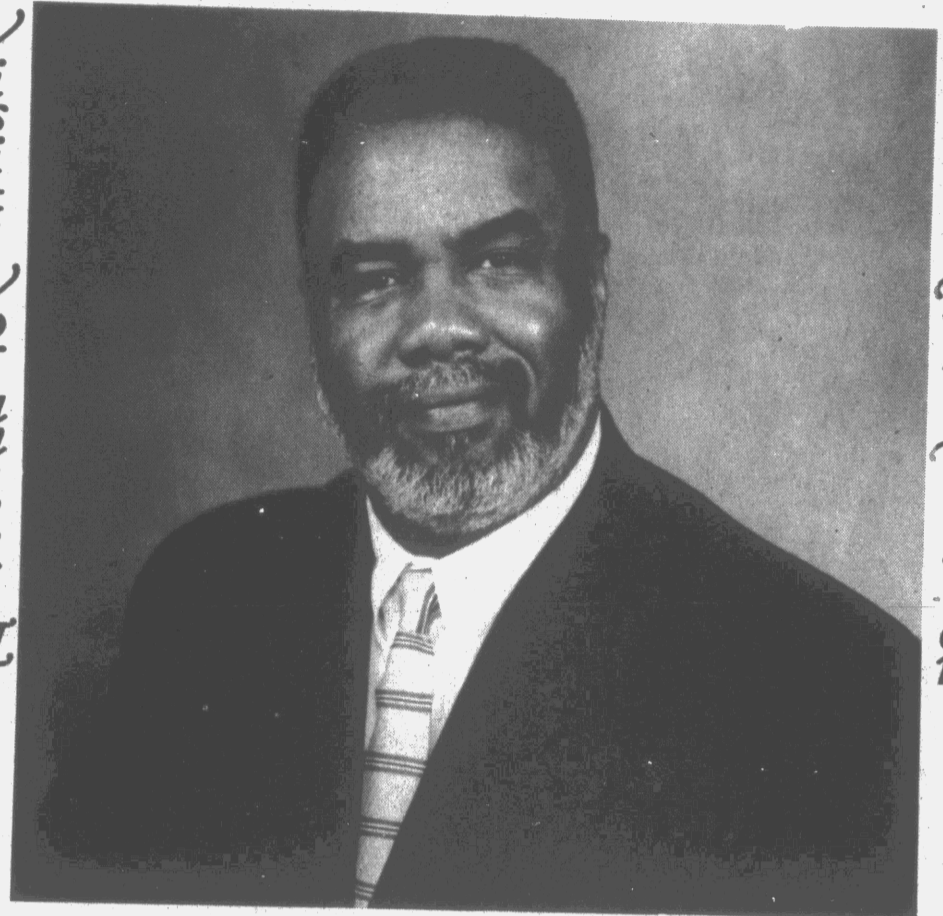
"He kept the box scores, how much he paid the umpires, the players, the receipts, everything," Sims said.

Among the 300-plus items is a 1911 ledger noting \$2 paid to an umpire to work a game, numerous photos of athletes that Sims hopes to identify through research, and well-preserved correspondence from an era when white and black teams routinely played each other.

Cornerstone

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| | 6:00 pm | Healing & Deliverance Serv. (4 th Sundays) |
| | 12:15 pm | Men's Prayer Meeting |
| Wednesdays | 6:30 pm | Youth Night Services (3 rd Mondays) |
| | 12:00 noon | Noon Day Prayer & Praise |
| | 6:30 pm | Bible Study (Youth & Adults) |

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| | | |
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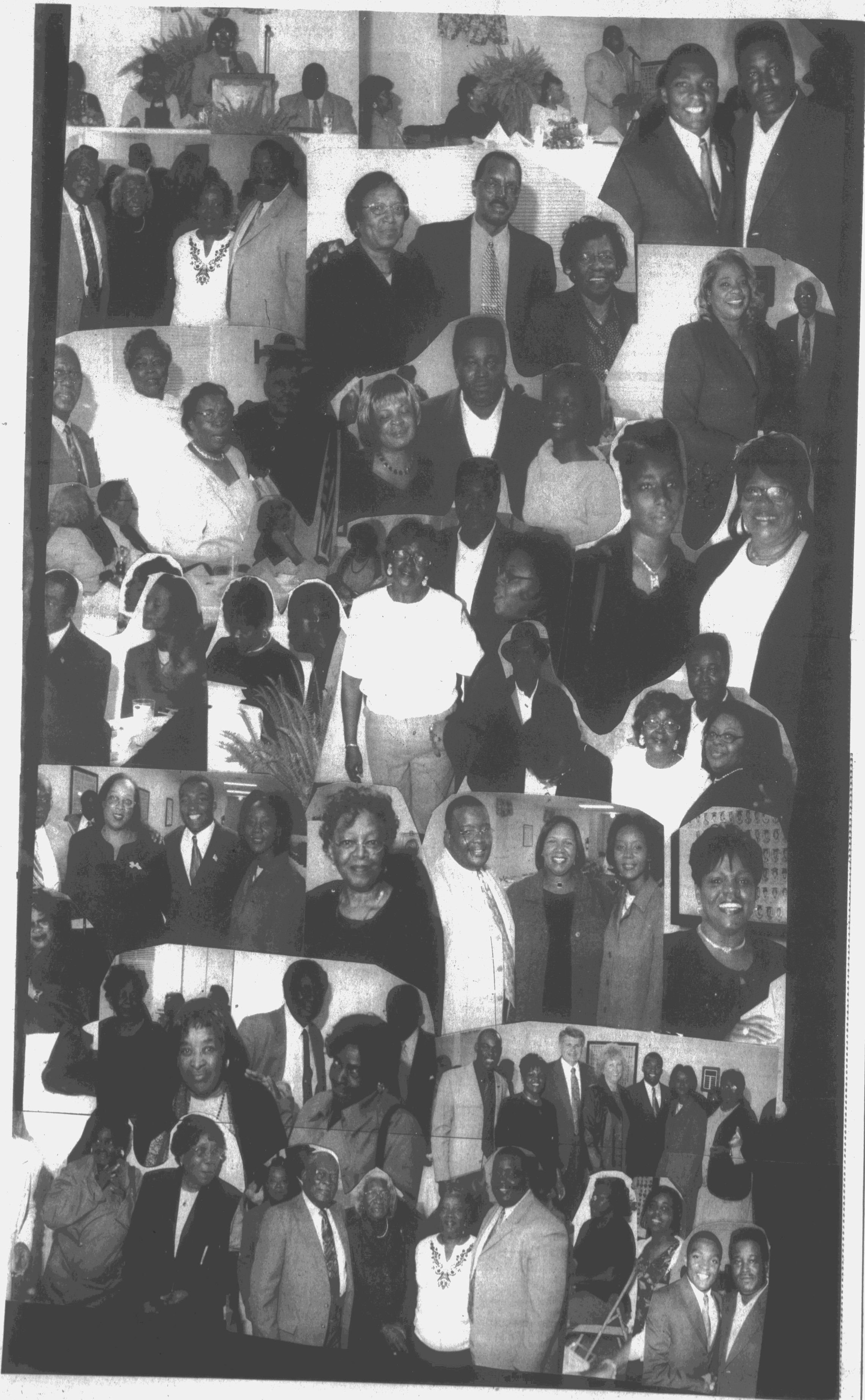


North Carolina's
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Snow Hill Harvest Ball



Little Willie Center Entertaining Our Children In the Community With Rides and Games

Pioneering Hollywood director SPIKE LEE has lashed out at modern urban music, insisting it's "dangerous" for the progress of African-Americans.

The MALCOLM X hero told a gathering of more than 400 students at Rhode Island, America's BROWN UNIVERSITY that current rap music is doing more harm than good for their communities.

He said, I've always felt you can feel the progress of African Americans by listening to their music.

Some of this gangsta rap stuff, its not doing anybody any good. This stuff is really dangerous.

Teenage Pregnancy Drops

NY Post

The U.S. rate of teenage births fell a staggering 31 percent from 1991 to 2002, a new study reveals.

The rate declined from 62 births per 1,000 girls to 43 per 1,000, but the authors of the study, conducted by the Child Trends research center, said that's still too high.

"When we see that 18 percent of 15-year-olds will become mothers before they are out of their teens, it reminds us how far we still have to go," said Angela Romano Papillo, the lead researcher.

The study also contained some startling revelations on regional and racial differences regarding teenage sexuality and motherhood.

New Hampshire had the nation's lowest teen birth rate in 2001, with 21 births per 1,000 girls between ages 15 and 19. The worst was Mississippi, with a teen birth rate more than three times higher, at 67 per 1,000.

Interestingly, of the 11 states with the top teen birth rates, all but New Mexico require that abstinence be stressed in sex education. In all, 22 states have such laws.



Pitt County Schools Receives Smaller Learning Communities Grant

Schools Receives Smaller Learning Communities Grant

Students at five large high schools in the east, including two from Pitt County, will not get lost in the shuffle thanks to a grant from the United States Department of Education. The 2.5 million dollar grant will help create Smaller Learning Communities, SLC, within each school. SLC Grants are awarded to high schools with populations of more than 1,000 students. Dr. Joseph Nelson, Director of Grants and Research for Pitt County Schools, wrote the grant. "We met with focus groups from the five high schools and discussed why some students are getting lost in the shuffle and what to do about it," said Nelson.

According to Nelson, the Smaller Learning Communities program is made up of three structures. The first is the *Freshman Academy*, which will assist ninth grade students in transition and provide a foundation for future success. The second is the *Upper School*, which will consist of adult advocacy groups, academic support, career planning, and post secondary education orientation activities. And the third structure is *Professional Development* with elements supporting student achievement and personal success. All three structures fit the Pitt County Schools' High School Student Assignment Action Plan, an eight point plan focused on producing highly successful students.

According to Dr. Charles Long, 9-12 Director for Pitt County Schools, J.H. Rose and D.H. Conley will partner with East Carolina University for professional development and will implement such programs as *High Schools That Work* and *7 Habits of Highly Successful Teens*, both well developed, research-based initiatives.

The Smaller Learning Communities will essentially provide the nurturing environment students need to get on the right path. Advisory groups made up of teachers will offer much needed social and academic support along the way. "There are some good students out there with potential that needs additional chances to be realized," said Nelson.

The grant funding will be used to support Smaller Learning Communities at the following schools over a three-year period: Bertie High School, D.H. Conley High School, Kinston High School, J.H. Rose High School and West Craven High School. Please don't hesitate to call if you have any questions

students & parents

want to learn more about financial aid?

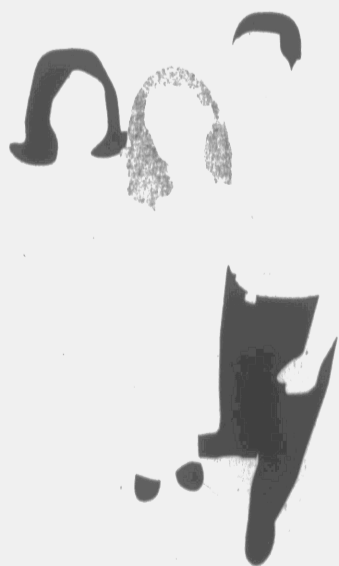
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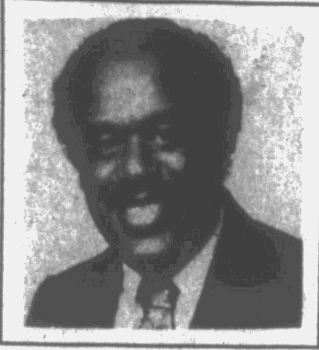
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Spiritual Reflections



Apostle George Hawkins

WHAT GIFT WILL YOU GIVE

Greetings: We are approaching the season for giving, so I must ask you this question what do you plan to give. Many people are out spending money on precious gifts for their loved ones and yet some people will go unnoticed. Why I ask? Is it because we are a selfish people. Have you ever really considered what God did for us or what Jesus did for us? HE LOVED! and HE GAVE! Likewise we must love and give. In the gospel recorded by John (3:16) "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." We have a Christmas season because God so loved us. He put Himself into a virgin's womb, who's name was Mary and became flesh and dwelt among us so that He could redeem us back from the snares

of the devil. Yes, Christmas is a season for giving it is not based on who name you pulled, who you will receive gifts from or Santa Claus. But, it is based on the Scripture that is recorded by Luke 1:28-35, "And the angel came in unto her, and said, Hail, thou that art highly favoured, the Lord is with thee: blessed art thou among women. And when she saw him, she was troubled at his saying, and cast in her mind what manner of salutation this should be. And the angel said unto her, Fear not, Mary; for thou hast found favour with God. And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name JESUS. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: And he shall reign over the house of Jacob forever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end. Then said Mary unto the angel, How shall this be, seeing I know not a man? And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God". The true holiday season that we call Christmas is based on John 3:16. The cause is that God so loved the world, the cost is that He gave His only begotten Son, the condition is that whosoever believeth in Him should not

perish and the consequences is you shall have everlasting life. God did not send His son into the world to condemn the world but that through Him the world might be saved. If we as Christian would take the time and give our love to the sinner man we might could compel them to come to Jesus. Love is not only an act of God, it is God. We must love one another and be faithful to our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. This Christmas let us give the gift of life and that is love. **Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year from the Tabernacle Church Family.** Our gift to you is JESUS. We love you and we ask that you let there be peace in this world and let it begin with you. If you are saved then I ask you to pray for the sinner. If you are unsaved then I ask you to pray this prayer from your heart and mean it: Lord, be merciful unto me a sinner and come into my life and save my soul, you said in your word if I confess with my mouth and believe in my heart that Jesus born of a virgin was crucified died and was buried and on the third day rose from the dead and now sits on the right hand side of the Father making intercession for me, that I shall be save and because I confessed with my mouth and believe in my heart that Jesus suffered, bled and died for me and rose up with all power in His hand that right now where I stand I'm saved, delivered and set free.



U.S. travel industry executives take a ride in a classic 1957 Buick convertible followed by others through Havana, last month. The executives defied a Bush administration's crackdown on American travel to Communist Cuba and visited the island to study its future business potential. The executives visited Havana using a loophole in the 41-year-old trade embargo, they were fully hosted and did not spend a dime. The travel ban prohibits U.S. citizens from spending dollars in Cuba rather than specifically banning visits.

U.S. TRAVEL EXECUTIVES DEFY BAN AND VISIT CUBA

HAVANA (Reuters) - Three dozen U.S. travel industry executives, defying a Bush administration crackdown on American travel to communist Cuba, visited the island on Sunday to explore its business potential. The group, whose industry stands to gain the most from the lifting of a U.S. ban on travel to Cuba currently being debated in the U.S. Congress, was welcomed with a champagne breakfast to the strains of salsa music and a tour of the city's hotels. The one-day visit, which included a stop at Havana's Revolution Square, a ride in vintage American convertibles from the 1950s and meetings with ruling Communist Party leaders, was part of the first U.S.-Cuba travel conference held at the nearby Mexican resort of Cancun. "It has simply been spectacular," said Matt

Con'd - P.45



Most Caribbean prisons, such as the one shown above, in Barbados, are inadequate in that they do not contain facilities to properly house the region's most dangerous criminals.

CARIBBEAN PRISON OFFICIALS IN ST. LUCIA DISCUSS BUILDING A REGIONAL MAXIMUM SECURITY COMPLEX

Pitt County Schools would like to wish everyone a safe, healthy, and joyous holiday season.



REMINDER: Students are to return to school from Winter Break on January 6, 2004 instead of January 7, 2004. This change is a result of the two days missed in September due to Hurricane Isabel. The second make up day will be held on February 17, 2004.

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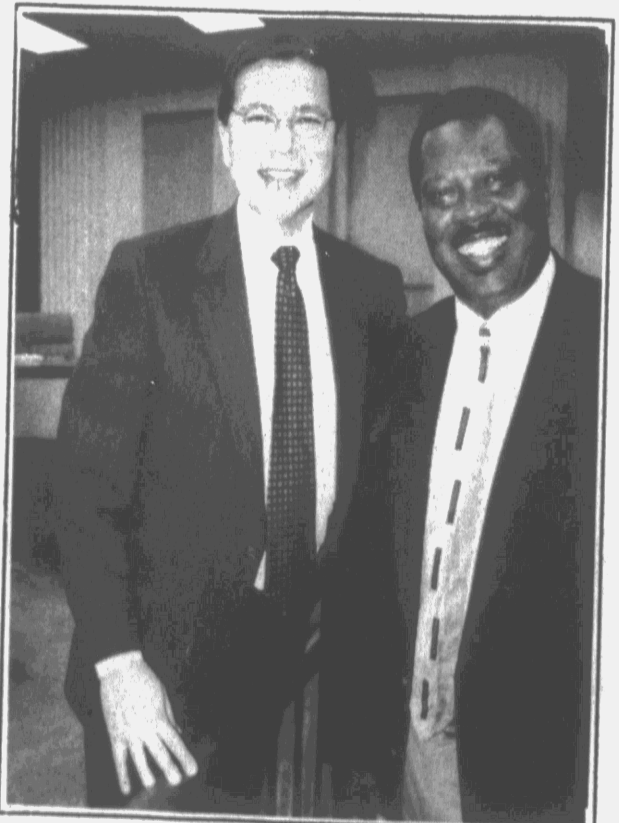
Happy Holidays From Mr Charles Watts and Family

City leaders talk past, future as they make return to office



By T. Scott Batchelor, The Daily Reflector

Greenville's mayor and City Council members thanked supporters and family and turned their attention to the city's future the next two years during the board's swearing-in ceremony Monday. Voters returned the entire board intact on Nov. 4. Mayor Don Parrott, at-large Councilwoman Pat Dunn and District 4's Ray Craft handily defeated challengers. Mildred Council and Rose Glover, representing districts 1 and 2, respectively, ran unopposed, as did Ric Miller in District 3 and Chip Little in District 5. Pitt County Superior Court Judge Russell Duke administered the oath of office to the mayor and council members, who then made their tenures official with the stroke of a pen. "You all have witnessed us signing our life away for the next two years," Parrott quipped to the audience. The council's first action was to re-elect Miller as mayor pro tem, who conducts meetings in the mayor's absence. Parrott touted partnerships between the city and businesses and other entities, such as East Carolina University and Pitt County Memorial Hospital, as key to moving the city forward both during the past two years and in the future. "The vision of what can be done to grow and improve our city is endless," he said. Craft said he felt "seasoned" sitting on the council for a second term "but humbled by the results of the election." He vowed to continue serving a city that he said has served him well since he arrived here in 1978 to attend college. As a council in harmony, "you can see what can be accomplished," Craft said. Little thanked his wife and children for making allowances for him as he carried out the time-consuming duties demanded by public service. "We've got a lot of projects ahead of us," the second-term representative said. Glover was sworn in to a third consecutive term. For the ceremony, she used a thick family Bible that represented "generations and generations" of her ancestors "from slavery up till now," Glover said. Though the board members might disagree on issues, it is important that they are "still hugging and loving each other" when they leave the council chambers, she said. Miller complimented Parrott's "aggressive agenda" that has helped form partnerships that brought projects to the front burner, such as the 10th Street connector. "It's been a wonderful two years," he said. Taking the city to the next level means continuing to grow Greenville while making it a place where people can be their best. "I think we're on the right road to that," the second-term said. The longest-serving veteran on the council, Mildred Council, was sworn to a ninth consecutive term. She restated a commitment to nurturing children and young adults both in her role as councilwoman and in her nonpublic life. She also vowed to "continue to advocate for things that're right." Pat Dunn embarked on her second consecutive term with a focus on maintaining a high quality of life for residents. "Quality of life, preservation of neighborhoods, has to be a high objective for us," Dunn said. In all aspects of governance, participation by residents is critical, she said. The ceremony was attended by state officials, including Sen. Tony Moore, R-Pitt; Rep. Charles Johnson, D-Pitt; and State Board of Transportation member Marvin Blount III of Greenville. U.S. Sen. John Edwards, D-N.C., also sent a representative. In the only other vote taken during the abbreviated meeting, the council voted unanimously to make Dec. 26 an official holiday, in keeping with the state and county governments taking off the day after Christmas. Greenville offices will be closed Dec. 24, 25 and 26.



T. Scott Batchelor can be contacted at sbatchelor@coxnews.com

Thurmond is my father, mixed-race woman says

By MARILYN W. THOMPSON
THE WASHINGTON POST

A 78-year-old retired school teacher whose black mother worked as a maid for the late Sen. Strom Thurmond is breaking her lifetime of silence to announce that she is the daughter of the South Carolina senator, who was once the nation's leading segregationist. Essie Mae Washington-Williams said that Thurmond privately acknowledged her as his daughter and had provided financial support since 1941. Williams described her claims in a telephone interview last week, saying she protected Thurmond because of their mutual "deep respect" and her fears that disclosure

Nevell, said Williams will "go to whatever lengths we must" to prove her story. As a sample of her documents, she provided The Post with a copy of a 1998 Thurmond letter thanking her "for the nice Father's Day note you sent me." She said she did not want to release additional documents at this time.

Thurmond's will

Williams' claim comes as the attorney for the Thurmond estate, J. Mark Taylor, is overseeing settlement of the senator's estate in Columbia. Thurmond bequeathed cash and other items, including clothing and real estate

holdings, to his three surviving children with estranged wife Nancy Moore Thurmond. "We are not seeking to challenge the wishes of the late senator with regard to his estate," said Wheaton, who has been joined by Columbia attorney Glenn Walters in representing Williams. "Let's be emphatically clear: We are not looking for money. We are merely seeking closure by way of the truth for Essie Mae Washington-Williams." Taylor said he has had no contact with Williams. Thurmond's will did not acknowledge Williams or her heirs. Williams has struggled financially over the years, and in 2001, court records show,

she declared personal bankruptcy. The senator's son, Strom Thurmond Jr., did not return a phone call seeking comment. In interviews over the years, Thurmond's sisters and staff have repeatedly said that Williams was only a family friend. Williams said she met with Thurmond and received money at least once a year in sessions arranged by his Senate staff. In recent years, as the senator's health declined, she said, financial assistance was passed through a prearranged conduit, a Thurmond relative in South Carolina. Williams' attorney declined to

specify the amounts of money she received, saying that information would be provided later.

An well-known secret

Williams' account resurrects one of the oldest stories in 20th-century Southern political folklore. Over the years, Thurmond had called the allegation that he fathered a mixed-race child too unseemly to warrant comment. Noted political writer Robert Sherrill described an alleged daughter without providing a name in a 1968 book.

The Post identified Williams by

her maiden name in 1992, in a lengthy account of Williams' relationship with Thurmond. The article reported that "both Thurmond and the supposed daughter have denied that he is her father, and no one has provided evidence that he is."

Recently, Williams said media pressure has intensified, with interview requests from every major television network. She had refused, consistently calling Thurmond a "family friend" who had merely provided her with financial assistance.

"I did not want anybody to know I had an illegitimate father," said Williams, who has four grown children. "My children convinced me to tell the truth. I want to finally answer all of these questions ... that have been following me for 50 or 60 years."



Sen. Thurmond thanked Essie Mae Washington-Williams for a Father's Day note in 1998.

would embarrass her and harm his political career. Thurmond, who died in June at age 100, said late in life through his office that Williams was a friend.

Williams, whose mother worked as a teenage maid in the Thurmond family home, has long been the subject of widespread speculation and for two decades has been pursued by journalists seeking her story.

While Thurmond lived, Williams always denied that she was his daughter.

"I want to bring closure to this," she said. "It is a part of history."

She plans to hold a news conference on Wednesday in Columbia, S.C., at the Adam's Mark hotel. Two blocks south, a Confederate flag decorates a Civil War memorial on the grounds of the state Capitol.

DNA test possible

Williams did not provide definitive proof that she is Thurmond's daughter. Her attorney, Frank Wheaton of Los Angeles, said she is ready to submit to DNA tests if challenged by the Thurmond family.

Williams said she has documents to validate her claim, including cashier's check stubs, mementos from Thurmond and a letter from an intermediary who delivered money from the senator. She declined to name the intermediary, citing privacy concerns.

Wheaton, of the Los Angeles firm of Scolinos, Sheldon and



students & parents

want to learn more about financial aid?

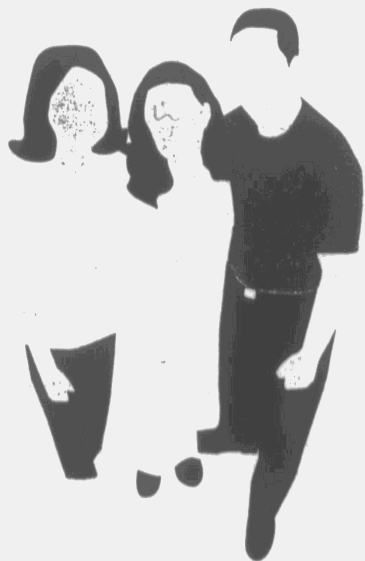
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**PROPOSED
2004-2005 CALENDAR**

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

- August 2—First Day for Staff
- August TBA— System-wide Open House
- August 2-6—Personnel Workdays
- August 9—First Day for Students
- September 6—Labor Day Holiday
- September 20—Parent Conference Day (9-12)
- October 18—Parent Conference Day (K-8)
- November 11—Veteran's Day Holiday
- November 24—Personnel Workday
- November 25, 26—Thanksgiving Holidays
- December 20—January 4, 2005—Winter Break
- January 3, 4—Personnel Workday
- January 17—Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday
- February 17—Parent Conference Day (K-8)
- February 18—Parent Conference Day (9-12)
- March 14—Personnel Workday
- March 25—Personnel Workday
- March 28-April 1—Spring Break
- April 11—Personnel Workday
- May 27—Last Day of School for Students
- May 30-June 3—Personnel Workdays
- June 4—Last Day for Staff

LEGEND

- Holiday
- System Designated Workdays
- School Designated Workdays
- Annual Leave
- First & Last Day of School

MAKE-UP DAYS (IN ORDER)

September 20, 2004, January 4, 2005, February 17, 2005
March 25, 2005, April 11, 2005

JULY 2004

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JUNE 2005

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**People
& Places
In the news**



A kidney for the comeback kid

After going public Nov. 24 with the news that he needs a new kidney, Alonzo Mourning has received dozens of offers from wannabe organ donors. Diagnosed with focal glomerulosclerosis three years ago, the basketball star's condition has worsened where he now faces possible cardiac arrest on court. Some observers criticized the immediate response to his health crisis, as thousands languish on waiting lists for years.

Down, but not out

His battle with multiple sclerosis has not killed him yet, Richard Pryor, 62, wants to tell his fans, which moved him to host his own tribute show, "I Ain't Dead Yet," which aired Nov. 30 on cable network Comedy Central. Chris Rock, Steve Harvey and Whoopi Goldberg led a cast of popular comedians who lined up to bring humor to the program, which also featured unreleased excerpts from Pryor's diary.



**NATIONAL
-NEWS BRIEFS-**

New Medicare bill penalizes poor, say critics

(Bet.com) Those balled-up, knotted handkerchiefs we see so many seniors unravel with their shaking hands at pharmacy counters to pay for their drugs will now have to contain thousands of dollars more.

Says Sen. Richard Durbin (D-Ill.) of passage of the new Medicare bill: "This bill does nothing to reduce drug prices, it leads Medicare down the road to privatization."

Under the new plan, seniors have the option of signing up for Medicare or a for-profit HMO and all the baggage that entails. Seniors who opt for Medicare will be charged a \$250 deductible and 25 percent of drug costs up to \$2,250. After this amount, Medicare will pay nothing until the senior spends an additional \$2,850 out of his own pocket.

Reps. Charles Rangel (D-N.Y.) and Elijah Cummings (D-Md.) both protested what they termed the "\$2,800 donut," or out-of-pocket expenses Medicare users would have to fork over beginning in three years.

"This is projected to earn the pharmaceutical industry \$139 billion over eight years," said Rep. John Dingell, the ranking Democrat on the House Commerce and Energy Committee.

Randal Maxey, president of the National Medical Association, an organization of Black physicians, endorsed the bill "on balance," but acknowledged that the bill "does not address the health care needs of the poorest of the poor... and neither does it speak to the participation of African American and other minority physicians in the new regime of HMOs."

Beginning next year, a drug discount card will be made available to seniors that will reduce drug prescriptions by 15 percent. Seniors earning \$12,123 or less (and couples earning \$16,362 or less) will not be charged monthly premiums or the \$250 deductible.

In 2010, under the new bill, Medicare would have to compete with private companies in six undetermined urban areas to "test whether competition would drive down costs."

And it is here, critics contend, where Medicare will end—and private, market-driven greed will take over.

Sen. Tom Daschle (D-S.D.), the Senate's minority leader, has already introduced legislation to repeal parts of the bill that appear to doom Medicare. An old woman's trembling handkerchief can unravel just so much.



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Mr. Taft poses for our camera along with Mr. Phil Higgs who is the President of the Pitt County of the S.C.L.C. Photos by Bro J. Rouse

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STRANGE THINGS

Last of the romantics

Ray Vogt, 42, of Albany, N.Y., gave his 43-year-old girlfriend a special evening complete with candles, wine and a bubble bath. During the bath, he told her to close her eyes for a surprise. Then, he turned on her blow dryer and tossed it into the tub with her. When the GFI plug in the bathroom shut off the power and she was not electrocuted, Vogt tried to strangle her and hit her over the head with a vase, promising, "It'll only take a minute." She escaped and called police. Vogt pleaded guilty to attempted murder, explaining that he'd acted because he was having an affair with the girlfriend's 15-year-old niece.

Leap of faith

A 32-year-old Austrian extreme-sports enthusiast parachuted from the 35th floor of a skyscraper in Munich, Germany, but his chute failed to open properly. He escaped death, however, when a crane next to the building snared him, leaving him hanging 150 feet off the ground.

Rock me, baby

Police in Hempfield Township, Pa., arrested 44-year-old David Smith for simulating sex with a rock. One witness reported seeing the man lying naked on top of the rock on the Youghiogheny River Trail, thrusting himself against the rock in a lustful manner. He had earlier been seen riding a bike decorated with women's underwear, gloves and rubber straps tied to the frame.

Everlasting love

Police in Prescott, Ariz., arrested Edwin Rowlette, 75, after finding his wife's body packed inside a refrigerator with dry ice. They said Rowlette told them he froze the body six years ago when his wife of many years, Marsha Rowlette, died of natural causes, and he hoped someday to bring her back to life.

The honeymoon is over

Authorities in Lebanon, Ohio, arrested Gregory Hogg, 41, for allegedly dragging his girlfriend from her apartment by her hair and forcing her to marry him. According to prosecutor Rachel Hutzel, Hogg hoped the marriage would prevent Cheryl Skaggs, 43, from testifying against him in a criminal case. Skaggs, who alerted police 10 days after the forced marriage, can testify if she wants to, Hutzel said after adding charges of kidnapping, domestic violence and intimidation of a witness to the original charges.

A month after Anthony Kircus, 30, was arrested for beating up Catherine Alexandrowicz, 47, in their Macomb Township, Mich., apartment, the two were married in Las Vegas. According to authorities, Kircus murdered his new wife on their honeymoon and left her body in a hotel room in Scottsdale, Ariz., then returned to Las Vegas to gamble. Police apprehended him outside a casino as he waited for a valet to bring his rental car.

Foiled again

Police in Syracuse, N.Y., said that Jeremy Lepianka, 22, impersonated a sheriff's deputy for two years, stopping vehicles for traffic violations and lecturing the drivers. Authorities learned of the ruse after Lepianka allegedly stopped a pickup truck that had run a red light, and several people in the truck fled. He called 911 on a cell phone, identified himself as an off-duty deputy and asked for backup. When police arrived, according to Lt. Joe Cecile, "Something just didn't seem quite right about him." He admitted the impersonation after officers questioned him, explaining that he always wanted to be a police officer.

Fowl play

During the dress rehearsal of an Australian production of Johnny Belinda, a chicken appearing in the play to add authenticity to the farm setting collapsed during the opening scene, apparently from stage fright, according to the director. Ron Hamilton of the St. James Players in northern Queensland said the chicken had a piece of string tied to its leg to keep it from straying. When the bird passed out, rather than spoil the drama by having someone walk on and collect it, the stage crew used the string to drag it slowly off-stage.

Conscientious killing

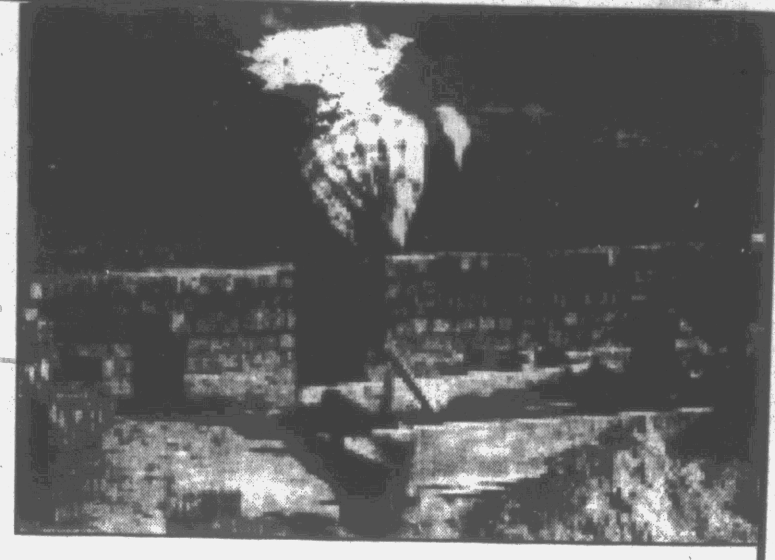
The Defense Department is paying Minnesota-based Alliant, the world's largest ammunitionmaker, \$5 million to develop combat bullets that are lead-free. The goal is a bullet "that can kill you or that you can shoot a target with and that's not an environmental hazard," Army representative Bob DiMichele explained. "We are talking about green ammunition for pistols, rifles and machine guns." Earlier this year, the Air Force awarded a \$25 million contract to Alliant for copper polymer bullets that won't ricochet if fired in an urban area.

Pedal pushers

Houston police accused Guadalupe Camarena of trying to help men look like women by injecting them with what was supposed to be pure silicone but turned out to be brake fluid. "Any type of liquid silicone that could be found at any type of auto-parts or hardware store is what essentially is being injected into these people," Police Capt. Steve Smith said. Camarena reportedly charged between \$200 and \$400 for each procedure, a fraction of the cost of plastic surgery.

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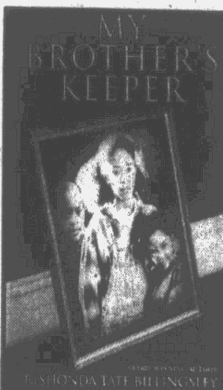
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BOOKSCAPE

by Tim Butler
Entertainment Editor

Things of our youth follow us to adulthood



Real life television journalist ReShonda Tate Billingsley turns her attention to writing a novel. Her debut effort, *My Brother's Keeper*, is a humorous and heart-wrenching look at how deep childhood issues can run. It's about forgiving, forgetting and finding the

strength to move on. At the center of the story is Aja James. Aja hasn't had it easy. She's kept a close watch over her siblings after tragedy robbed them of their parents. With the weight of the world on her shoulders and her best friend, Roxie, by her side, she is ready for a change. And Roxie knows just what to do when she sets Aja up on a date with one of the most sought-after bachelors in town, handsome sports caster Charles Clayton.

Charles is everything Aja has ever dreamed of - warm, sensitive, patient and charming. But is long-lasting love really that easy to find?

Adding to her problems are her siblings, who have not rebounded from the loss of their parents as easily as Aja has.

ReShonda says the book's theme is universal. "...whether it's a mother who neglected her children because she worked too hard, a father who abandons his kids, or even a crazy uncle, family dysfunction can have lasting effects."

ReShonda is a reporter at KRIV-TV in Houston and the 2002 Black Writer's Alliance Gold Pen Award Winner for Best New Author.

Ups and downs of the dating game



She's smart, successful, financially independent and beautiful. She has close friends, great style and a terrific sense of humor. What more could she want? In *Every Friday Night: My Year of Dating Misadventures*, Ritta McLaughlin tells the hilarious and heart-breaking

story of what a take-charge woman does when she has everything, except love.

McLaughlin's vow to go on at least one date a week, every week for a year, sets the stage for an array of colorful characters and disastrous dates that prove that truth, especially on the singles scene, is stranger (and funnier) than fiction.

While men may come and go, the constants in Ritta's life are her friends and family. Her grandmother's down home "mother wit" frames each chapter, paving the way for the lesson she learns from every date.

Along the way, Ritta gets plenty of good advice. Her loyal girlfriends set up her on her dates; her platonic friend Max gives her some insights into the mind of the modern man; and her uncle, three-time-divorced, offers her some hard truths.

In college at Vassar, McLaughlin majored in Public Policy with a concentration in Urban Studies. Currently, she is a vice president at a major Wall Street investment banking firm. She lives in Brooklyn.



Sweet Sixteen . . . Christiana (center) is celebrating in style While Mom Talita (to her left), Brenda (Nana, far left), Grandma Elsie and sister Shika join her for this memorable shot. photo Jim Rouse



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From The Desk Of Mrs Beatrice Maye



Ms. Beatrice May

Every Teen Needs To Know These

1. Don't be a slob. Put Things where they belong.
2. Don't put things off! When you finish it early, you don't have to cram.
3. Don't take yourself so seriously. A sense of humor is one of the best assets you can have.
- 40 Say "No" to drugs, cigarettes, and alcohol. Never be a slave to any chemical.
5. Don't drink and drive or get into a car with anyone who has.
6. Live the Golden Rule - treat others as you want to be treated.
7. Do the best you can. Anything worth doing is worth doing right.
8. Be nice to your enemies. You have to learn to get along with people, even those you don't like.
9. Don't talk back to your parents.

10. Take care of your body. Eat A Healthy diet, get your exercise and sleep, and work at staying healthy.
11. Speak the truth so that others can trust your words.
12. Take time to practice. Anything worth learning takes practice.
13. Don't give up with out trying. You miss every opportunity you never take.
14. Save sex for marriage. It's a mistake to experiment with sex before you are committed.
15. If you choose to have sex, don't have sex without taking precautions.
16. Learn to save your money, or you won't have money when you need it.
17. Pick your friends wisely. You are known by the friends you hang around with.
18. Let me know where you are, so I won't worry. If you change your plans, let me know.
19. Be careful when you drive. A car is a lethal weapon when not used wisely.
20. Do your chores responsibly, on time, and without being asked.
21. Don't have anything to do with hitchhiking. Don't take or give rides to strangers.

22. Take time to know your God. Attend services at your church or temple on a regular basis.
23. Know when to stop pushing when your parents say "No". Ask for what you want. Don't become a nuisance.
24. Limit your time with television.
25. Study hard. Doing well in school and going to college are the best ways to get ahead.
26. Borrow and leand responsibly. Don't borrow without asking and return things promptly.
27. Be confident in who you are. Take pride in what you accomplish and don't put yourself down for mistakes.
28. When you are old enough to vote, vote proudly. Don't be a complainer or needy.
29. Take care of your pet os don't have one.
30. Use the phone responsibly and keep your calls a reasonable length.
31. Learn appropriate table manners and social graces.
32. Don't cheat. Play by the rules or don't play at all.
33. If you want to be successful, look the part. Good grooming and appropriate dress are important.
34. Don't take things that don't belong to you. Stealing is not acceptable. Earn the money to buy the things you want.
35. When you need your parents help, plan for it early. Parents are not last minute servants.
36. Be polite. Being courteous means being concerned about the feelings and sensitivities of others.
37. Be on time for stated curfews and

- call early when there is any problem with meeting your commitments.
38. Don't put down other people. If you must gossip, keep it positive gossip.
39. Don't handle your frustrations or anger with cursing, or swearing, or taking God's name in vain.
40. Listen to or read instructions before you try to do anything.
41. Keep your room neat and orderly.
42. Take care of your possessions. When you lose your own things, don't expect another to be bought for you.
43. Don't litter or abuse Mother Nature. Do your part for the environment. Abide by 45 and 46 if you have a brother or sister.
44. I'd like you two to get along. Stop fighting and work things out by talking.
45. Set a good example for your brother or sister. When you are older, you're expected to be a model.



Regional Appointment

The South Atlantic Regional Director, Yvette G. Robinson, appointed the Immediate Past President of the Greenville NC Alumnae Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. Annette Goldring, North Carolina State Coordinator. On the local level, Annette has served as President, Vice President, Secretary, and Leader of Minerva Circle. During her term as president, the chapter received the Chapter of the Year Award for de-

veloping and implementing the best programs and projects in the South Atlantic Region as well as reactivating the Kappa Sigma Chapter at East Carolina University. On the regional level, Annette served for four years on the Task Force for Protocol and Traditions, traveling across the region facilitating workshops. Some of Annette's professional and community involvement have been President of the Pitt County Saint Augustine's College Alumni Association; Board Member of League of Woman Voters; Past Board Chairperson of West Greenville Community Development; Pitt Community College Business Advisory Commirree Member, United Way of Pitt County Allocations Committee Member, Campaign Loan Executive and Campaign Coordinator for TRW; US Savings Bond Campaign Coordinator for TRW; American Red Cross Blood Drive Campaign Coordinator for TRW; Literacy Volunteer of America Tutor; Saint Peters Catholic Church member and CCD Instructor; and Member of American Business Women of America. Annette is presently employed as Senior Human Resources Representative at TRW Incorporated in Greenville, N.C.

GREENVILLE'S MINORITY VOICE

TIDBITS

BellSouth to abandon pay phone business

The Tennessee Regulatory Authority (TRA) this week received formal notification from BellSouth officials of the company's intent to discontinue its payphone operations in Tennessee.

BellSouth's transition out of the coin-operated telephone business, which will take place across its nine state service region, will result in the removal of approximately 7,000 coin-operated telephones in Tennessee. The company has said that it will exit the market by the end of the first quarter of 2004.

BellSouth officials indicated that it would be selling its payphones to other telecommunications carriers, and that payphone service will be provided by other companies. According to TRA records, 250 companies are authorized to provide pay telephone service in the state.

For a list of payphone operators in Tennessee, visit the Tennessee Regulatory Authority web site at www.state.tn.os/tra.

Weekly effective formula rate of interest

Chapter 464, Public Acts of 1963, the legislation regulating interest rates in Tennessee, requires that the Commissioner of Financial Institutions make an announcement weekly of the formula rate of interest.

Tennessee Department of Financial Institutions Commissioner Kevin P. Lavender announces that the maximum effective formula rate of interest in Tennessee is 8.00 percent per annum.

The rate is based on a ceiling of 4 percent over the weekly average prime loan rate of 4.00 percent as published by the Federal Reserve on Nov. 24, 2003.

Lavender said the rate remains in effect until the average prime loan rate as announced by the Federal Reserve Bank changes.

Business seminars slated at U of M

Two seminars, Essentials of Purchasing and Improving Purchasing Performance are scheduled for the Fogleman Executive Center at the University of Memphis.

The Essentials of Purchasing seminar will be held Feb. 2-3, 8:30 a.m. - 4:30 P.M. Designed for first-time buyers, seasoned professionals and managers, this workshop examines the most effective purchasing techniques and approaches. The two-day seminar addresses a wide range of topics, including the changing role of the purchasing function, concepts of commodity management, purchasing capital equipment, e-commerce, supplier selection, legal aspects of purchasing and the elements of price.

On Feb. 4-5 at the same times as the previous seminar, Improving Purchasing Performance is designed to enable participants to improve their work with, and get results from, others inside and outside of their organization. They will learn how to sell ideas, negotiate long-term and complex agreements and report results in terms that top management understands.

Teenage Pregnancy Drops

NY Post

The U.S. rate of teenage births fell a staggering 31 percent from 1991 to 2002, a new study reveals. The rate declined from 62 births per 1,000 girls to 43 per 1,000, but the authors of the study, conducted by the Child Trends research center, said that's still too high. "When we see that 18 percent of 15-year-olds will become mothers before they are out of their teens, it reminds us how far we still have to go," said Angela Romano Papillo, the lead researcher. The study also contained some startling revelations on regional and racial differences regarding teenage sexuality and motherhood. New Hampshire had the nation's lowest teen birth rate in 2001, with 21 births per 1,000 girls between ages 15 and 19. The worst was Mississippi, with a teen birth rate more than three times higher, at 67 per 1,000. Interestingly, of the 11 states with the top teen birth rates, all but New Mexico require that abstinence be stressed in sex education. In all, 22 states have such laws. Overall, Southern and Southeastern states had the highest teen birth rates, while New England states, except Rhode Island, had five of the six lowest rates. New Jersey and New York also fared well, with 29 and 32 births per 1,000 for the eighth- and ninth-lowest rates in the nation. The futures of the 400,000 teens who had babies in 2002 could well be limited by their premature motherhood, said the authors. Other findings included a marked racial difference as to whether girls and boys were equally likely to have sex early in life. Among teens who had sex before age 15, white girls were just as likely as boys to have sex. But black or Hispanic girls were less than half as likely as black or Hispanic males to do so. Hispanics had the highest teen birth rates, with nearly three times more than the 30 per 1,000 reported for whites.

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- Use no more than three standard-size sets of lights per single extension cord.
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- Before using lights outdoors, check labels to be sure they have been certified for outdoor use.
- Fasten outdoor lights securely to trees, house walls, or other firm supports to protect the lights from wind damage. Use only insulated staples to hold strings in place, not nails or tacks. Or, run strings of lights through hooks (available at hardware stores).
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RANDOM NOTES

by Tim Butler
Entertainment Editor

Vibe Awards show: More of the same

The first annual *Vibe Awards* were televised last Friday in a ceremony that was no better or worse than other similar music award shows. *The Source* magazine pays honor to the same genre of music; which makes one wonder what's the point of this newer awards program.

Of course, the *Vibe* show held a greater level of respectability - but essentially there wasn't much difference between it and the *Source Music Awards* show. As a result, the rap/hip-hop awards field now seems crowded and redundant. However, it is most refreshing that the presenters and performers on the *Vibe* program were better behaved than on the *Source* show. Viewers didn't have to hang their heads in shame after the *Vibe* airing was over - as they did when the *Source Music Awards* came to an embarrassing climax with its "Dirty South" finale.



Jones

Vibe has come a long way since Quincy Jones founded the magazine back in 1993.

Let's hope the second annual show will offer something a little different - but always keep the quality level high.

Here are some thoughts on what was offered:

• If P. Diddy's valet, Bentley, continues to seek the limelight as he's doing, will he then embark on a solo career apart from Puffy? But by then, won't his 15 minutes of fame have only about three or four minutes left before it runs out?



Latifah

• Host Queen Latifah wore one, but do women really look good wearing a man's hat? Answer: No!

• Did male supermodel Tyson forget to button his shirt? Perhaps it was hot in the house. For whatever reason, he looked a bit odd and show-offish with his entire torso exposed at an event that didn't take place on a sandy beach!

• Aren't we sick and tired of Beyonce? Every time you turn around - there she is! I'm sure people on Mars know who this former Destiny's Child member is!! When she finally does fizzle out - and they all do no matter how hot they are at any point in time - she shouldn't get mad...she's had a reign about as long as anyone is entitled to have in the fickle world that is known as music entertainment.

• Puffy looked like he was kind of upset that Beyonce won the Most Stylish award over him. He might not have been, but that's sure the way he looked when the camera focused on him as her name was called.

• When you really get down to it, is Russell Simmons' Phat Farm clothing really any different than, say, Tommy Hilfinger or Ralph Lauren? Answer: No.

• Ruben Studdard is an *American Idol* winner now. You'd think he knows what size suit he wears. The one he had on Friday night was about two sizes too small.

• Why didn't host Queen Latifah change clothes more?

• Though she can't sing, Mary J. Blige has true talent in her area of the music industry and is a definite cut above the rest.

• Didn't Missy Elliott look like a dressed up hobo?

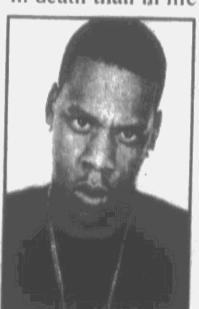
• Looks like the money's in urban clothes. All you need is a few warm-up suits, jerseys, and baggy jeans that look like all the rest...no better or worse...and success is at your hand!

• Only Puffy can turn getting the Maverick Award into a testament of his personal style! Yes, Puffy, we all know you're a pretty stylish guy - you don't have to tell us...learn some humility!

• Who in the world let Margret Cho on the show? And why? Even for a comedian, it was embarrassing seeing her act Black. (I guess that's what she was doing!)

• Lil' Jon and the East Side Boyz: What was in that gas can on stage?

• As Queen Latifah said, Tupac Shakur is indeed one of the hardest working rappers in the business - and never more now in death than in life.



Jay-Z

• Thank you Jay-Z for a thankfully short acceptance speech. But I bet you don't really retire from rapping!

• Alicia Keys helped to demonstrate that women truly shouldn't wear men's hats.

• Why was legendary film producer Robert Evans on the show? He looked most out of place sharing the podium with Snoop Dogg.

• Wasn't that a shameless plug 50 Cent offered for his new shoe line?

• He, too, can't sing, but R. Kelly sure can write a beautiful song. In this case, *Step in the Name of Love*. It's so pretty!

Questions and more questions

Isn't the banter between the morning news shows' anchors simply annoying? It would be better to have an extremely short segment on baby diapers than to hear Charlie Gibson and crew talk about this, that and the other.

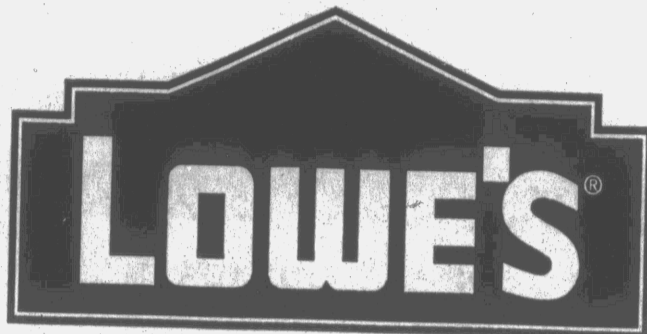
From: Hardee Acres Resident
Attn: "M Voice"
Subject: Hardee Acres rocked again: Apparent murder-suicide leaves two dead in Greenville neighborhood by Amanda Karr "Daily Reflector"

It is good to know that we live in a democratic society where one can state his or her opinion no matter how ludicrous. First, it would have been more efficient to state the title of the article as "A Gloomy night in Hardee Acres Subdivision" that leaves two dead in an apparent murder suicide. Secondly, the article should have elaborated on the tragedy of two young people lives being shortened by an apparent murder suicide. Third, the paper needs to emphasize the positive more. For instance, there are good people living in the Hardee Acres neighborhood that are raising their young people to do the right thing as far as being good American citizens to respect our government and to have good religious beliefs. Fourth, the article was very distasteful and disrespectful in comparing an apparent murder suicide with a drive by shooting. The article did not consider the victims' families for the incident which occurred in August 2003 by bringing up the past while the families are still going through the healing process. Finally, people that do not reside in the neighborhood have done both shootings, which occurred in the Hardee Acres Subdivision.

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