



G. Asenath Andrews
Principal, Detroit's Catherine Ferguson Academy

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“We work hard to build their self-esteem. These kids have amazing brains, something they don’t know. I will tell them, ‘Did you know you were smart? Did you know you were amazing?’ Sometimes what I hear back is ‘Oh, you mean me?’ I want them to know how far they can fly.”

This Strikes Us ...

So why don't the Republicans show up?

"Every one of these candidates I've talked to is sincerely committed to offering real choices to African-American and Hispanic voters, and in my opinion have records that will appeal to many of these voters," said former Republican National Committee Chairman Ken Mehlman last week.

We know, of course, that the Republican Party wants that African-American vote. In 2004, President Bush received only 11 percent of the black vote and only nine percent in 2000.

So we know the GOP wants to improve on that figure. How do we know that? Because folks like Mehlman are always telling us so. Mehlman's candidates want to "offer" real choices. All African-Americans should feel enthused about being so desired.

Even one of The Truth's own columnists spends some time this week warning us of Democratic duplicity and advising us not to follow the primrose path of Democratic loyalty.

So why don't the Republicans show up?

In the black community, the subject of African-American blind loyalty to the Democratic Party has been the subject of some concern over the last few decades. Voices, reasonable voices, caution that the Dems take the black community for granted, that African-Americans would be far better off if they could demonstrate that their votes were not quite so automatic.

Given the desire of GOP candidates to garner more of the black vote and the underlying feeling in the black community that the time is ripe for holding the two major political parties more accountable, one would think that Republican candidates for president would be all up in the faces of black voters.

Not so fast, my friend.

In mid-July, the NAACP held a candidates' forum during the annual convention in Detroit and, of the nine presidential candidates, only Congressman Tom Tancredo of Colorado bothered to attend. The rest had scheduling conflicts, even Rudy Giuliani - America's mayor - who was too busy that day attending fundraisers in faraway Birmingham and West Bloomfield to stop by the Detroit convention of the nation's oldest civil rights organization for an hour.

Tancredo ("Should we wait a bit longer and see if the other guys will show up?") he joked with the audience, who spoke on a stage filled with nine podiums - eight of them empty - addressed the crowd on his specialty, illegal immigration, and was very warmly received by the audience, not so much because of his message as for being polite enough to accept the invitation.

Was this an isolated incident?

Not at all. This week Tavis Smiley has scheduled, well in advance in case anyone was wondering, a Republican candidates' forum at Morgan State University in Baltimore which will air on PBS. Giuliani, Senator John McCain (Ariz.), former Massachusetts Governor Mitt Romney and former Senator Fred Thompson (Tenn.) have all cited scheduling conflicts. All of the Democratic candidates appeared at a similar event in June, by the way, just as they all appeared in Detroit in July.

Giuliani, Romney and McCain have, in the recent past, skipped such forums offered by the National Urban League and the National Association of Latino Elected and Appointed Officials.

So why don't the Republicans show up?

Even Mr. Republican himself, Newt Gingrich, the man who engineered the GOP congressional takeover of 1994, has expressed his dismay at the disdain his fellow party members have demonstrated for black voters.

Gingrich, who may yet announce his own candidacy, said last week: "For Republicans to consistently refuse to engage in front of an African-American or Latino audience is an enormous error."

Let's hope Gingrich jumps in this thing soon so he can keep poor Tom Tancredo company on those big empty stages.

So many African-Americans are trying to be as even-handed as possible. The NAACP is avowedly non-partisan. But the Republicans are not making it any easier. Gentlemen, you have to at least ask for the black vote. You ask for everybody else's vote.

This past weekend, the leading Republicans were on Mackinac Island in Michigan. Michigan has not voted Republican since the 1988 election. And there aren't more than a handful of voters on Mackinac or in the Upper Peninsula. Yet, these guys who so want the black vote can't make it to Baltimore later in the week?

All those folks who decry such black loyalty to the Democrats may be right. Republican ideals of individual achievement may well be more suited to improve the condition of the African-American community. That's a debate for a later time.

But you gotta ask. You gotta show up.

The Sojourner's Truth

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Community Calendar

*September 29

Monroe Street Neighborhood Center; Parents Week Neighborhood Fair; 10 am to noon; Food, cooking, dancing, sewing; 419-473-1167

Connecting Point's Dream Ride: Motorcycle Poker Run to benefit kids and their dreams; 10 am; Toledo Harley Davidson on Central; Registration at 10 am; First bike out at noon led by Mike Bell; Parking lot party, 3 to 7 pm; 419-243-6326

Daughters of Isis: Commandress Ball; 6 to 10 pm; Park Inn: 419-382-7283

*September 30

A Wine Event: Wine sampling session for wine makers; 4 to 7 pm; Bring a bottle of home-made wine for tasting; 419-241-2632

Transportation Ministry of United Missionary Baptist Church: "Male Voices" spiritual musical; 4 pm

*October 1

Look Good ... Feel Better: Program to help women with appearance-related side effects of cancer treatment; St. Vincent Mercy Medical Center; Sponsored by American Cancer Society; Noon: 419-782-6866 or 888-227-6446

*October 5

Amazon Lodge No. 4 Fish Fry: 11 am to 5 pm: 419-531-7079

*October 6

Calvary Baptist Women's Ministry: Caregiver Workshop; Noon to 1:30 pm: 419-865-0019

The African American Women's Cancer Support Group: "8th Annual Cancer Awareness Workshop;" Southern Missionary Baptist Church; 10 am; Free and open to the public; Facts and stats, healthcare information, support groups, Q & A: 419-535-3126 or 419-480-0122

*October 7

52nd Annual Women's Day Program: St Mark MBC; Morning speaker - Sis. Tammy Freeman of Columbus; Evening speaker - Sis. Willie Mae Ellis: 419-241-1726

*October 11

Fatherhood Parenting Program: Sponsored by Operation Re-Seed Christian Ministries; Applications accepted now; Eight-week program meets weekly for 90 minutes; Addresses real-life issues such as child rearing, values and beliefs, role of fathers, marriage, wellness violence and substance abuse: 419-297-3530

*October 12-14

Scott High School 30th Year Reunion: Call 419-244-3677 or email scotthighschool30years@yahoo.com to register

*October 13

Calvary Baptist Women's Ministry: Caregiver Workshop; Noon to 1:30 pm: 419-865-0019

Planned Parenthood of NW Ohio: Eerieeee Street Ball: Erie Street Market; 8 pm to 1 am; Wear a costume, have a ball; Starring Symphony Alexander, Coti Collins, Desiree, Michelle Dupree, KiArra Cartier Fontaine, Rhoda Horse and more; For ticket information call 419-255-1115

*October 14

St. Paul Missionary Baptist Church: Annual women's Day; "A Service Filled Journey;" Morning worship at 10:45 am; Afternoon program at 4 pm

*October 19

Amazon Lodge No. 4 Fish Fry: 11 am to 5 pm: 419-531-7079

The Sojourner's Truth

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Even Baby Huey Gets It Right In The End

By Jan Scotland
Guest Columnist



When I was a kid one of the most frustrating cartoons to watch was Baby Huey, which first aired in 1951. It featured a gigantic baby duck that seemed blind to the evil intent of foxes and wolves trying to kill him.

Throughout each episode, Huey was hit on the head with an iron pipe, smashed with a bolder or placed in a scalding hot tub by villains. The duck was so strong that the iron bars simply bent around his head, the boulders crack and crumble into dust. And the scalding water feels like a soothing bath that he thoroughly enjoys.

It is not until the end of the cartoon that it dawns on Huey that the villain is actually out

to kill him. With his signature line "Hey!! I think you're trying to hurt me." He proceeds to pummel the villain and bounce them from the scene.

In a roundabout fashion the Jena 6 injustice in Louisiana has brought this cartoon to mind. This case reeks of injustice and over kill. These young men are not totally innocent but to be tried as adults for aggravated second-degree battery and conspiracy to commit aggravated second-degree battery is ridiculous. Add to this the district attorney's designating the sneakers worn by the assailants as deadly weapons and you have the basis for claims of racism and the justified outcry of the black community.

The LaSalle Parish School Board showed no sensitivity when referring to the white students hanging a noose on a tree as a prank and the superintendent lost credibility by commenting "Adolescents play pranks. I don't think it was a threat against anybody."

They continued to mishandle the situation in a fashion that pleaded for additional incidents. In this environment the worst elements

tend to gain leadership and spark violence on both sides.

That being said, justice still needs to come to this little town. And the proper punishment must be applied to all of the defendants in the events of Jena Louisiana.

Now what does this have to do with baby Huey? Well this is just the latest in a series of incidents where the so-called friends of the black community (Democrats) have been at the center of injustices to our community. Like Baby Huey we think they are our friends while they continue to crash iron pipes over our heads.

District Attorney of Louisiana's 28th Judicial District J. Reed Walters who insisted on charging these youth as adults is a Democrat. That's right, a Democrat! No one in the media has mentioned it but had it been a Republican it would be repeated every broadcast. This is the same Democrat who thinks a black youth's sneakers are as deadly as a gun or knife.

The controlling memberships of the LaSalle Parish School Board are Democrats. Yes, the same board that overturned the high school

principal's recommendation of expulsion for the students who hung nooses from the tree and wrote the act off as a childhood prank.

These are our friends cracking boulders over our heads and preparing scalding water for our baths.

These are the same people who created a welfare system whose rules contributed to the destruction of our families and dependence on hand outs. These are the same friends who had us fight for affirmative action programs that were already diluted to the point on ineffectiveness. These are the same people that control our inner city education systems that are failing our children in record numbers. These are the same people who are attaching our religious faith by outlawing its presence in all walks of life.

Yeah they appear to be our friends as they slap us on the back while leading us to our own demise. Like Baby Huey we continue to "Oh-Dee -Doe" while they sneak up on us.

Before Hurricane Katrina, Democratic New Orleans Mayor Ray Nagin presided over an impoverished section of the city that somehow never got the benefit of the millions of dollars sent to firm up the levies.

Democratic Louisiana Governor Kathleen Blanco showed no real concern for

how the people of that district were living until they could be used as a political ploy against President Bush.

State and city evacuation efforts were unorganized at best and the initial response from the state and city governments were a joke.

But they received very little of our blame.

In the infamous alleged 2000 presidential election fraud in Florida. The Democratically controlled Miami-Dade County decided that their constituents were suddenly too stupid to cast votes or find voting locations. This was despite the fact that Democratic officials presided over that county for decades and controlled the locations, methods and procedures used.

In the 2004 presidential election national democrat officials and lawyers rushes into Ohio to peruse alleged election violations but left with their tails between their legs when they found the main county in question was completely under the control of whom? Democrats.

Local black Democratic politicians are quietly pissed off with recently elected Governor Ted Strickland. Seems after all there efforts to get him elected, he has snubbed their request for key appointments.

But we go on believing in our friends, the Democrats. Not only that but we are will-

ing to condemn Republicans for even the smallest involvement in these issues without mentioning the Democrats who are primarily at fault.

Now I am not saying that all Democrats are our enemy. All I am saying that we have to become astute enough to research and vote for those Democrats that are really looking out for our best interest. Just as we need to research and vote for Republicans that are committed to doing the right thing.

Like the story about the baby bird that fell out of the nest who was crying because he was freezing to death. A crow came along and felt sorry for him turned and dropped a heaping hot plop of cow manure right onto the bird. The bird was nice and warm now but did not like the smell so he started to cry again. A coyote heard him came along. He and picked the bird up out the manure, brushed him off till he felt better then dropped him down his throat and ate him.

The moral of the story is not everybody who looks like he is hurting you is your enemy. And not every one who seems to be helping is your friend. And like Baby Huey, every once in a while we better wake up and rid ourselves of those who are doing us harm.

Contact Jan Scotland at jan@thetruthtoledo.com

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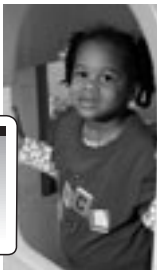
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After Jena, Take A Bus To TPS

By Warren Woodberry
Guest Columnist

Congratulations to those who rode the bus to Jena, LA. I am sure that it had an effect in highlighting the cause of the Jena 6. It has also made me very aware of the value of and the role that buses have had in our black struggle.

Bus: A road vehicle designed to carry numerous passengers in addition to the driver and sometimes a conductor. The name is a neologic version of the Latin omnibus, which means "for everyone." I would add that it seems to be for *everything*. Blaise Pascal invented the first public bus-horse-drawn, regular route, schedule, and fare system. The Omnibus was a public vehicle first used in Paris in 1662 and put on the road by Blaise Pascal. He wanted to produce a public vehicle as an alternative to the existing coaches and carts. Unfortunately, it was not well received as it only lasted a year or so. The idea was revived in 1819 by Monsieur Jacques La Fitte.

"History- The omnibus, the first organized public transit system, may have originated in Nantes, France in 1826, when Stanislas Baudry, a retired army officer who had built public baths (run from the surplus heat from his flour mill) on the city's edge, set up a short stage line between the center of town and his baths. The service started on the Place du Commerce, outside the hat shop of M. Omnes, who displayed the motto Omnes Omnibus ("Omnes for all") on his shop front. When Baudry discovered that passengers were just as interested in getting off at intermediate points as in patronizing his baths, he shifted the stage line's focus. I will bet you dollars to donuts that the white, segregated South did not realize that a weapon to fight segregation and racial injustice would be a bus system born in France.

February 11, 1953, Baton Rouge LA Bus Boycott. "Before Dr. King had a dream, before Rosa kept her seat and before Montgomery took a stand, Baton Rouge played its part," said Marc Sternberg, organizer of events marking the 50th anniversary of the Baton Rouge bus boycott. "This was the first black bus boycott in America well before King or Rosa Parks."

Dec 1, 1955 Rosa Parks, a black seamstress, was arrested for refusing to obey a Montgomery bus driver's order to give her seat up for a boarding white passenger as required by city ordinance. Working closely with a long-active African-American leadership in Montgomery, Atlanta-born Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. emerged as the president of the Montgomery Improvement Association (MIA) which organized the boycott.

May 28, 1956, Tallahassee Bus Boycott. Two fares on a city bus bought cultural upheaval as about 50 years ago, two college students refused to sit in the back of a Tallahassee bus.

Feb. 16, 1996. Black men converge on Washington DC, many by bus for a rally. Black men converging on the nation's capital for Monday's Million Man March described it as "a unifying, uplifting event that transcends its controversial originator, Nation of Islam leader Louis Farrakhan."

(Continued on Page 13)

Susan Taylor Shares Her Spirit With Hundreds During Author! Author! Program

By Geneva J. Chapman,
Sojourner's Truth Reporter

They gathered at dusk as the cool air of an early fall cautioned them to drape shawls around their shoulders and change from summer sandals to autumn pumps.

But these descendants of the great Queen Nzingha defied climatological warnings and regally descended into the Stranahan's Great Hall Friday, September 21, 2007, in open-toed stilettos and late summer frocks or festively-printed tops and cool capris with a shawl, perhaps, draped over one shoulder, lightly touching each step of the stairway down into the hall as it flowed behind like a gentle breeze.

These were the ESSENCE women, come to pay home to their spiritual and cultural leader, Susan L. Taylor.

"An Evening with Susan L. Taylor," editorial director of the perennial women's magazine, part of the Authors! Authors! series sponsored by The Toledo Blade and the Toledo-Lucas County Public Library, was not an intimate dinner for two but a queenly feast hosted by a royal personage who held court with the over 500 women and men, as well as adolescent girls, who paid her tribute for having provided them with spiritual nourishment over the years.

Taylor served a full menu of epicurean delights for the soul of woman (and man) that was perfect fare for that time just before the fall equinox when summer is ending and autumnal splendor is about to emerge in its colorful array of leaves.

Her "food for the soul" was light enough for the warm day ending, yet hearty enough for the cool evening



beginning. Gliding across the floor like a gazelle in her stilettos, shawl draped gracefully across one arm, her trademark braids hanging down past her shoulders, giving her the image of Nefretitti in profile, Taylor arrived at 7:07 pm to applause.

Smiling, she acknowledged the warm reception, which was extended to a standing ovation after a welcome by Ron Royhab, vice president-executive editor of The Blade, and an introduction by Rhonda Sewell, media director for the Toledo-Lucas County Public Library.

"I want to thank Rhonda Sewell for an extraordinary day and I also want to thank Laneta Goings," gushed Taylor, effusive in her praise of her Toledo hosts. "They brought young women from the Stewart Academy – fifth graders. What powerful questions!" Taylor also met with members of the local chapter of the Delta Sigma Theta Sorority for leadership training just prior to her appearance at the Stranahan.

Quickly putting everyone at ease, Taylor asked people to fill up the seats, saying she was tired of giving speeches and hearing them. Speaking intimately to the hundreds who came out to hear her, she said, "I just want to say a couple of things that will give us peace." Drawing from her vast pool of spiritual strength and energy, Taylor laid out a meal that left everyone satiated. "It's so good see so many women here," she said. "We take the drama – the challenges so seriously. It's not that they're not serious, but we give our power to the problems."

Taylor cautioned those who concentrate on what's wrong with the world and other people that they are just reflecting their own consciousness. "They say black women are evil," she said, addressing an overused stereotype. "We're not evil, we're tired. We deserve a rest and a celebration."

Taylor wisely observed that all too often, women get caught up in what they're

intimate conversation with a few hundred of her following.

"What ever you love doing is what you're created to do and the Holy Spirit would not have given you the desire without giving you the talent and the energy to do it," she said. "No one is more responsible for your health and happiness than you. There's no way you can be happy when you're not taking care of yourself." Taylor cautioned her readers and listeners to rely on their spiritual resources to get them through hard times and difficulties. "I'm talking about walk on water faith," she said. "God's got your back. Give it to God. That doesn't mean you lay in your bed every day. He gives you the ability to do it."

The self-made woman, who grew up Catholic in Harlem and later went to divinity school to study the Bible, shared wisdom gleaned from her years of study and life experience. "You can earn Ph.D.'s and never learn how to create happiness, peace, and joy," she said. "Change our mind about your ability. Change your mind about your responsibility. Change your mind about what the Holy Spirit has for you."

To prove her point that taking care of your spirituality pays off in health and happiness, Taylor used herself as an example. "This is what 61 looks like!" she said to resounding applause.

A fourth-generation entrepreneur, Taylor was the founder of her own company, Nequai Cosmetics, before becoming ESSENCE's fashion and beauty editor and, in 1981, its editor-in-chief. She is the author of two books: *In the Spirit: The Inspirational Writing of Susan L. Taylor and Lessons in Living and Confirmation: The Spiritual Wisdom That Has Shaped Our Lives*.

In 1999, Taylor became the first African-American woman to receive the Henry Johnson Fisher Award from the Magazine Publishers of America, the magazine industry's highest honor.

In 2002, Taylor was inducted into the American Society of Magazine Editors' Hall of Fame, which celebrates the career-long records of excellence, creativity and impact of a select group of highly influential magazine journalists.

Taylor recently launched "Essence Cares," a mentoring campaign to increase high school graduation rates among African-American youth. Her third

book, *All About Love*, a collection of her favorite "In The Spirit" columns from the magazine, will be published soon.

Love was the focus of her last words of advice as she ended the feast. Just as with any good meal, Taylor saved

the 'sweet' course for last. "Be the love you're looking for," she advised. "Love is a magnet that people can't resist. It also brings the crazies. Not every person deserves a front row seat in your life."

Taylor then cautioned her mostly female audience to

look inside others for love rather than measuring perspective mates by the amount of education they have, their appearance or their bank accounts.

"Learn to love goodness," she said. "The gift is on the inside. The gift is on the inside. It's not the bows and ribbons on the package." Lastly, Taylor urged everyone attending the September 21 event to mentor youth. Then she had the audience repeat the last verse of "Lift Every Voice and Sing" (the National Black Anthem) by James Weldon Johnson.

"God of our weary years, God of our silent tears, Thou Who hast brought us thus far on the way; Thou Who hast by Thy might, led us into the light, Keep us forever in the path, we pray. Lest our feet stray from the places, our God, where we met Thee. Lest our hearts, drunk with the wine of the world, we forget Thee. Shadowed beneath Thy hand, may we forever stand, True to our God, true to our native land."



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G. Asenath Andrews: Proving Daily That Teachers Can Change the World

By Alan Abrams
Sojourner's Truth Reporter

Talk about contradictions: while Detroit's public schools took hit after hit in the local and even national media during 2004, one alternative school in the district that offers both middle school and high school courses became one of only eight schools nationally to be named a Breakthrough High School by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation and the National Association of Secondary School Principals.

How did that happen? The success of the Catherine Ferguson Academy (like *The Sojourner's Truth*, named after a famous former slave) is closely linked to the determination and drive for success of its principal, G. Asenath Andrews.

Most, but not all, of the students at the Academy are pregnant or are single mothers. It is that factor that convinced The Links, Inc. to bring Andrews to Toledo on Thursday, Sept. 27 to be the annual speaker at their Polly Fox Academy luncheon at Gladioux Meadows on Heatherdowns.

The Catherine Ferguson Academy is one of only four accredited schools in the US

schools by next summer and consistently is cutting jobs. Yet despite the school



for pregnant and parenting teens and their children. The Academy has a 90 percent graduation rate and 100 percent college acceptance rate (at two and four-year colleges) for students who earn their diplomas—most are accepted with financial aid packages. Facts like these make the Academy stand out in the struggling Detroit public school system that has announced the closure of 53

system's deficit, each year the Academy obtains about double the funding per student of the average Detroit public school.

What does it take to become a Breakthrough School? Andrews explains that a school must have more than 50 percent students of color and the same percentage who qualify for free and reduced meal prices, and have a 90 percent or better rate of gradu-

ation and college acceptance.

We've already established that the Academy had no problem with the graduation and college acceptance rates. As far as the other requirements, when the Academy won the honor, its enrollment was 94 percent African-American and five percent Latina. And more than 90 percent were eligible for free or reduced lunches.

The Academy accommodates as many as 400 students and 200 babies. But at least 15 percent of the students are neither pregnant nor mothers. Andrews explained that girls without babies must write a letter stating why they want to attend the school and then behave once they are accepted.

Enrollment is first come, first served. There is no academic requirement; most of the girls are in the process of dropping out when they enter. As many as 20 percent drop out each year. The 90 percent graduation rate is based upon students who make it to their senior year.

The school is also Detroit's only site for the Early Head Start program, which focuses upon children

under the age of four. One of the programs concentrates on making sure that the babies are talked and read to so that they have high word-recognition skills. After the babies reach the age of four, they go to a nearby nursery to be with children of their own age.

Did we mention the Academy's small farm? Yes, right in the heart of Detroit's inner city and in one of its poorest neighborhoods is a red barn built by the students. It flanks a farm that is home to several goats, a huge sheep, rabbits, a pony, two horses, a beehive, ducks and at least a dozen hens and roosters.

The result is a working goat milk, egg and honey farm as well as a fruit and vegetable garden with one plot for each student in the program. The farm and orchard teach the teen moms and their children about the cycle of life, taking care of animals and growing their own food.

Remember what we said earlier about Catherine Ferguson having much in common with Sojourner Truth? The school started in the basement of a Salvation Army building with a couple

of desks and a playpen. Andrews says that when it moved to its present site on Detroit's Selden Avenue, "We had an election to determine the name of the school. Each homeroom nominated a candidate, so we had a 12-person election campaign as if all the candidates were living. Sojourner Truth was my candidate, but lost the election. That's too bad, because I really liked the sound of Truth High School," says Andrews.

As founding principal of the Academy, Andrews is familiar with all of the disturbing statistics on teen pregnancies. The Washington, D.C.-based National Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy estimates that only a third of teenage mothers eventually complete high school and 1.5 percent will receive a college degree by her 30th birthday. The group also says that nearly 80 percent of teenage mothers eventually receive government-subsidized child support within five years of giving birth.

Andrews is out to change the status quo and one way is

(Continued on Page 6)

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Free the Jena Six: A Journey into the Heart of a New Civil Rights Movement

By Annette Wright
Special to The Sojourner's Truth

It's 9:36 p.m. on the evening of September 18 and Raven and I are packed two hours early for our midnight departure from Detroit to Toledo and then onto Jena, Louisiana.

Jena Louisiana...never even heard of the place prior to several months ago, when Reverend Al Sharpton, whose syndicated radio program, "Keeping it Real" received a call from a listener who turned out to be the mother of Mychal Bell. It was a plea for help. Immediately drawn into the conversation, my heart sank as I listened to this mother describe the unbelievable situation involving her then 16-year-old son and some friends at their school in Jena, Louisiana. Well, by now, most people know about the "Jena Six."

What stuck out most in my mind were the words "white tree," "nooses," and

cannot understand or simply refuse to understand why black people, even in 2007, are deeply hurt by these types of hateful words.

This isn't the first time that I've allowed my daughter, Raven, who is now 17 and a senior in high school, to participate in non-violent rallies or protests. We marched on the steps of the United States Supreme Court a few years ago in support of affirmative action and she thoroughly enjoyed the experience. But, that was Washington, DC. Not Jena, Louisiana.

Like a lot of blacks, our family made the exodus from the South (Demopolis, Alabama) to Ohio and some onto Michigan and Canada back in the 30's, 40's and 50's. They were seeking a better shot at the "American Dream." I, like my seven siblings, was born in Toledo. As a young girl, I knew about Dr. Martin L. King, and Rosa Parks. At Washington Elementary school we had a good number of black teach-

cocted the grand notion that my two younger sisters and I would benefit from spending a summer in Demopolis, Alabama. The year was 1968.

We stayed in Demopolis with my great-grandmother, affectionately called Ma'Dea, and my great-uncle Reuben. Talk about night and day! Ma'Dea's house consisted of three rooms. There was an outhouse, a well from which we had to draw water, hogs to slop and a horse that was so old that he could have benefited from having a horse to ride himself. A vegetable and fruit truck would come once a week, as well as a dairy truck.

The nearest neighbor to Ma'Dea's little shot-gun house was a lady named Ms. Lizzie, Uncle Reuben's sweetheart. During one of Ms. Lizzie's visits she asked that she be able to take us to the store. My first thought was; "there's a store around here?" A real store? But of course, I didn't dare say that aloud. (Some of you know what I'm talking about). The store was about two miles or so away. After going to the store with Ms. Lizzie on several occasions, I memorized the route and convinced my Uncle Reuben of that fact, pleading with him to allow me and my sisters to go to the store on our own.

So off we went, me and my two sisters, Mary and Cynthia, 8, 7, and 6 years of age respectively. The trek to the store and back took a little less than an hour. We left that morning about 10 a.m. or so. And with our little pennies and nickels in hand, we took off running for the little country store, candy calling our names.

We arrived in record time and purchased the candy and chewing tobacco for Uncle

Reuben. We devoured the candy and now loaded with sugar, we ran and played on the way back to Ma'Dea's. It was a particularly beautiful day, I'll never forget how the bright blue sky and red dirt contrasted so brilliantly.

We were a little less than a mile from home, when seemingly out of nowhere, a pickup truck appeared. It was traveling at a high rate of speed straight for me and my sisters. We were terrified. My

the same size, however, with me being the eldest I knew it was my responsibility to try and protect them.

The truck, driven by a white man with a young boy on the passenger side, continued to speed toward us so many times that I just knew he was going to hit us. My sisters were having a fit, nearly scared to death. I, too, while terribly frightened, refused to scream or cry. I was trying to see their faces. I

laughter and the "nigga's" until the truck was out of sight. I am not pacified by the reality that it could have been worse. What happened to us that day was totally inhumane and represents the height of ignorance and fear. We prepared to die in our 6, 7 and 8 year old minds - because we thought we were dead.

That was 1967 in Demopolis, Alabama. This is 2007. Forty years have past and sure enough, here I am, with my daughter in tow, headed to Mississippi and Louisiana basically because some idiots decided to hang nooses from a "white tree" at a public school in Jena, Louisiana.

It was a long, tough uncomfortable journey to say the least. Although I'm not very big or tall, I simply could not get comfortable enough to rest on the bus. So many times, I was tempted to lie down in the aisle but decided not to, since people were constantly getting up to go to the restroom. (Never sit by the restroom on a bus!) Like any mom would do I did all



first thought was perhaps this was the vegetable or dairy truck man. I soon realized that it was not. I grabbed my sisters and we stooped down in a huddle and I tried to put my arms around them, drawing them as close to me as possible. We were pretty much

guess that's why the man suddenly began to drive in circles around us. So fast and furiously that all of that pretty red dirt covered us from head to toe. Dirt was in our hair and in our eyes. We were coughing and choking. It was horrible. Of course we heard the



"colored." Like most blacks in America, I have a particular sensitivity to words such as these. I find it profoundly saddening that some people

ers and they taught us about our history as a people. However, my mother obviously did not think that to be enough as she somehow con-

G. Asenath Andrews

(Continued from Page 5)

through the high caliber of the teachers on her staff. "We have an exceptional staff consisting of two nurses, actually 1.4 social workers; a fulltime psychologist, a counselor, 11 regular education teachers and two special ed teachers. Right now, we have 310 girls and 140 babies," says Andrews, who herself teaches art.

"Our teacher-to-student ratio of 18 to one compares with a 35 to one ratio in the school system. The difference results in our providing personal attention to each student," explains Andrews.

"This is not a short-term program," she adds. "We work hard to build their self-

esteem. These kids have amazing brains, something they don't know. I will tell them, 'Did you know you were smart? Did you know you were amazing? I want to tell you how amazing you are.' Sometimes what I hear back is 'Oh, you mean me?' I want them to know how far they can fly."

Andrews enjoys her work.

"I have a great job and this is a great place to work. I get lots of notes and cards from my former students. There is nothing like being a teacher. I don't do it for the money, and I don't do it for the recognition. Teachers change the world," she says.

Born in Detroit, she is the

oldest daughter of Magdalene and John Andrews. She has four brothers and two sisters, all living in Detroit. Andrews remains very close to her family. "We all still have dinner together," she says.

Andrews earned her undergraduate degree from Olivet College in Olivet, Michigan and her master's from Detroit's Wayne State University. A Fulbright Scholar, she studied for her doctorate at the University of Michigan. Before coming to the Catherine Ferguson Academy in 1985, Andrews taught in the Detroit public schools.

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Additional information can be found at www.wgte.org/family. Be sure to tune in to "A Place of Our Own," the corresponding television series, weekdays on WGTE TV at 5:30 a.m. to get more great ideas!



The Sojourner's Truth Business

Business Section • Business Section • Business Section • Business Section • Business Section • Business Section

Business Ownership: The Last Frontier,

We Need to Be Fit! You Cannot Operate a Business If You're Dead, Sick or Tired!

By Vince Davis
Guest Columnist

could think of. Some of our high blood pressure is envi-

ronmental (things we deal with) and some of it is genetic (our ancestors passed it on)



Several weeks ago, Toledo Blade reported that 55 percent of African-Americans in the country have high blood pressure compared to 30 percent for whites. More than half of us are walking, talking time bombs. We have more pressure than most groups. Life is tough and "it is tougher if you're black."

High blood pressure leads to just about every other form of non-reversible means of death that you

The other part of it is life style. We are drinking, smoking and eating ourselves to death. Apparently we aren't expected to live that long anyway so we "go out with gusto." Perhaps we have just stopped trying.

To move to the next level we need to change. We can't own a business if we are too sick, hung over, fat and tired

to go to the office everyday!

We are inviting you to be part of The Challenge. We are going to change! I am personally going to lose more weight and make healthier choices about what I eat, drink, and do everyday! So far we have got Omega Psi Phi, The AKA's, The Delta's, The Negro Business and Professional Women Clubs, Inc, of Toledo, The Toledo Realist Group, The Black Nurses of Toledo and representatives from Dana and

Owens Corning involved. The SNMA sent over a representative. They are minority medical students. Dr. Godfrey and his wife are involved so is my dear friend, Pat Hogue.

Our first Community Health and Wellness Challenge will be held at Cordellia Martin Health Center 430 Division on December 1, 2007 from 10:00 AM until 2:00 PM. We will focus on weight loss, testing, diet, exercise through education and fun challenges. We

will test for all the things that are killing us – such as diabetes, prostate cancer, cholesterol, blood pressure. The weight-loss challenge can be against another fraternity, sorority or organization or personal in nature. You can go on line and take the weight loss challenge with Dr. Ian Smith. Go to www.50millionpoundsfortheStateFarm.com, Dr. Ian Smith 50 million-pound challenge.

Below is alarming data from Dr Ian Smith about the rate at which we are killing ourselves. We let others kill

us with their fatty food, alcoholic beverages and daily dose of insurmountable pressure. We can not dictate how others might disrespect us. However we can choose how we will react to it. If we trip over it our pressure goes up and worse yet a violent act produces jail. Keep our cool and we keep our health!

As Americans continue to gain weight at a rapid rate, many are going from being overweight to becoming obese. High blood pres-

(Continued on Page 9)

'Financial Football' On Its Way to Ohio High Schools

Money Management Video Game Is a Training Tool for Teens on Financial Literacy, Says Treasurer Cordray

Special to The Truth

Ohio Treasurer Richard Cordray teamed with Cleveland Browns quarterbacks Derek Anderson and Brady Quinn this week to roll out a

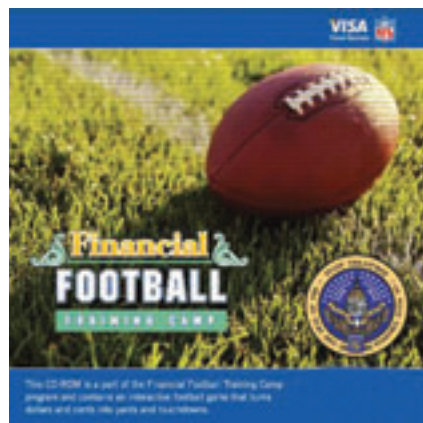
personal finance knowledge to the test by pairing the structure and rules of the NFL with financial education questions of varying difficulty. To score points, a player needs to correctly answer

91 percent of consumers surveyed believe all high school students should take a financial education class before graduating. "We are working hard to make sure all Ohio high school students have access to as many home and classroom resources as possible to help put them on a path to financial freedom and success," said Treasurer Cordray.

Since 2005, "Financial

we are proud to be assisting Treasurer Cordray in his efforts to strengthen financial education efforts throughout Ohio," said Jason Alderman, director, Visa USA.

"Financial Football" is part of Practical Money Skills for Life (www.practicalmoneyskills.com), a free, award-winning, teacher-tested and approved financial education program that is available in English, Spanish and Chinese. The program contains three comprehensive sections, complete with money management resources and lesson plans tailored for use at home, in the classroom or at work. It also contains an array of tips to help prepare for life changing financial events, from planning for a baby to saving for college and retirement, as well as a number of other budget calculators and interactive games. Visa also runs What's My Score (www.whatsmyscore.org), a leading higher education consumer awareness program. The website guides college students through the ABC's of a FICO credit score, from factors that can lower a score to ways on improving it, at no charge.



Richard Cordray

financial education game plan for Ohio high schools.

Schools throughout the state will receive "Financial Football" - an interactive money management video game with an NFL theme - as a way for students to be trained in personal finance.

"Financial Football" is the centerpiece of a national education drive led by Visa with the NFL and PLAYERS INC. The game puts students' per-

sonal finance knowledge to the test by pairing the structure and rules of the NFL with financial education questions of varying difficulty. To score points, a player needs to correctly answer

91 percent of consumers surveyed believe all high school students should take a financial education class before graduating. "We are working hard to make sure all Ohio high school students have access to as many home and classroom resources as possible to help put them on a path to financial freedom and success," said Treasurer Cordray.

Since 2005, "Financial

Football" has been downloaded and played over 100,000 times. It is available to classrooms in West Virginia and Indiana, with additional states distributing it this fall. The game can also be played for free online at www.practicalmoneyskills.com/football or www.ohiotreasurer.gov.

"For over a decade Visa has been committed to promoting financial literacy and

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LGB Is Making Strides in the Area of Minority Workforce Participation

By Fletcher Word
Sojourner's Truth Editor

Lathrop/Gant/Barton Malow (LGB), the joint venture formed to serve as the construction management team for the Toledo Public Schools' rebuilding projects, has been able to accomplish internally what has thus far eluded all the best efforts of local public construction efforts – bring to their workforce an impressive number of minority participants.

"It's always a challenge to engage minorities in construction, whether on the construction/supply side or on the labor/workforce side," says Roosevelt Gant – the G in the LGB.

And noting the fact that TPS has fallen short of its stated goals with respect to minority participation, LGB itself has met the challenge of the minority participation in workforce, says Gant. LGB's minority employees have fluctuated between 30 and 35 percent in a total workforce that has averaged about 35 employees over the past several years. Women have com-

to the financial end of the project – billing and dealing with the costs associated with the project and Coleena Ali is a contract manager who facilitates all matters that are involved with the billing end.

Still, while the construction management team has achieved significant minority participation, there is no escaping the fact that compliance with the TPS goals has fallen far short of expectations.

"It's obvious to everyone that the project is not at the level of the goals set," says Gant. Those goals were 20 percent for minority contract/supply and 25 percent for workforce participation. Success is always hard to measure, but the latest estimate places the total for suppliers/contractors at well under 10 percent. It is also apparent that the workforce goal – a good deal harder to measure – has not exceeded 10 percent either.

"The goals have not been met and it would be difficult given the unions and the makeup of their workforces," says Gant. "My field labor,



Back Row (l. to r.): Louis Stone, Don Hill, Lupe Love, Robert Davis, Kimakus Johnson
Seated: Coleena Ali and Jeannene Hill

"Minority contractors need to increase capacity by being willing to work together," -Roosevelt Gant.

prised about 30 percent of the LGB team.

"Both of these numbers exceed the inclusion plan goals of TPS," says Gant. "And we have minorities and women in significant positions."

Those significant positions include that of field superintendent. "They are basically responsible for running the job on site," says Gant. "They are providing oversight and coordination between all of the contractors. They make sure schedules are correct and coordinate the meetings in the field. They are our link to the contractors."

For LGB, those links include Robert Davis and Brad Johnson, both African-American.

In addition, LGB has three project engineers – Don Hill, LeShay Hadley and Kimakus Johnson – who are minorities. Project engineers deal with the document control issues of the project – the flow of paperwork on jobs assigned.

Guadelupe Love is a project accountant, assigned

for example, comes from the building trades and I'm going to those unions. We need to start at the union level to make a difference.

"On the contract/supply side of the equation, there is

always a discussion about whether there is a quality pool of minority contractors," says Gant. "With each major

efforts to form a joint venture with Lathrop and Barton Malow to put together their construction management team, he addresses the advantages of such mergers – either long term or for specific projects such as the school building program.

It would benefit small minority contractors to emulate the LGB model and increase their ability to bid on larger projects than, individually, they have the capacity to handle at the moment.

"Minority contractors need to increase capacity by being willing to work together," says Gant.

"Is it a level playing field? No. But there are certain things we can control."

TOLEDO ECONOMY IS A SOURCE OF POSITIVE NEWS

According to recent numbers Toledo's economy is strong and getting stronger. The U.S. Commerce Department recently released data, according to which the personal income in the Metro Toledo area recorded a 4.4% increase in 2006 over 2005. Furthermore, among Ohio's six biggest cities, only Dayton and Cleveland recorded bigger percentage gains than Toledo. Ken Mayland of ClearView Economics LLC explains that part of it is the ongoing expansion of the economy. "The unemployment rate has come down. Labor markets have tightened. With that, there have been faster wage gains", said Mayland.

Meanwhile, a recent survey conducted by Manpower shows that the Toledo area is looking positively for job seekers. Metro Toledo ranks among the best cities in the state in terms of projected hiring for the last quarter of this year. 37% of local businesses expect to add workers by the end of the year. That is better than 33% compared to the same period a year ago.

Overall the economy in Northwest Ohio is trending upward. The combined capital investment figures in Toledo and Wood County alone in 2006 was \$807,200,000 with 1,750 jobs created and job retained at 2,931.



Roosevelt Gant



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Thinking About Going Back to College? Make a Plan First

By Bill Harris
Guest Columnist



You're in your 40s, 50s or beyond and you've either always dreamed of going back to school or realized you need a degree or extra preparation to get to the next level of your career. The mid-career college plan should be very different than the one you and your parents had in place when you were 18 – and that's probably a good thing.

A July/August 2006 story in *AARP Magazine* by noted workplace and career expert Rosabeth Moss Kanter pointed out that retirement-phobic mid- or late-career types may retreat to college

campuses instead of the golf course to prepare for the next phase of their life. Why? They want to train for completely new careers in all-new professional fields or public service. According to the piece, "Traditional volunteering is not what leading-edge boomers have in mind. They want to be leaders and to help improve the world." Education will be a part of that movement.

The back-to-school movement for older Americans is an interesting one, but it goes beyond purely financial considerations. It makes sense to discuss your ideas with a tax professional and a financial planner before you make a move:

Do you really need the degree? Depending on the field, many employers will look at an experienced worker and take their particular work and life accomplishments into consideration when hiring. An MBA or other advanced degree may be personally fulfilling, but you have to consider whether your future plans really require it and whether the de-

gree will pay for itself in the end in salary, opportunity or both.

Are you planning to attend school while working or will you take time off? Going for an aggressive degree program while working full-time can be financially, mentally and physically draining. Obviously, if you plan to take a sabbatical and go to school full-time, that's a more complex set of financial issues you need to consider well in advance, and you should get help planning for it. Beyond finance, you need to be prepared for the demands of school on your time with family, friends and your personal relaxation. Time is an opportunity cost you can't get back.

Check your qualifications for federal and state tax credits. Both the federal Hope Credit and the Lifetime Learning Credit are among options you may consider to help cushion the tuition blow if you qualify—discuss these credits and other ways to afford college with your tax expert as well as your planner.

How prepared are you to take on debt? It would be wonderful to pay cash for a college degree, and with time and planning you might be able to do it. But if you need to take out debt to pay for your coursework, make sure your credit cards and other debt are paid off first. You'll put yourself in the best position to afford any student debt you take on.

Will your company pay? Take advantage of every educational break you can take before you leave your company. If they require you to stay a certain amount of time after attaining your degree, work that into your plan.

How's your retirement and health plan? It might seem like a good idea to raid the retirement plan or milk the home equity to go back to school, but you need to research whether that makes sense for you. Despite your current energy and determination, no one has a guarantee of perfect health through the last half or third of their lives. Also, you need to plan to keep funding retirement if you're still working and managing your retirement plan if you're heading back to school.

Consider a functional degree. All sorts of colleges—even the nation's most prestigious schools—are considering abbreviated graduate and post-graduate programs that give students exactly the amount of education to upgrade their skills and head back into the workforce. If a one-year program will do, why pay for two or three?

Are your school choices friendly to older students? It's your money. Make sure you're attending an institution that considers its older students a valuable addition to its campus and makes you welcome.

This column is produced by the Financial Planning Association, the membership organization for the financial planning community, and is provided by Bill Harris, Financial Advisor and a local member of the FPA. Bill Harris is a financial advisor with Informative Financial Services of Toledo, Ohio. Securities and advisory services offered through Mutual Service Corporation, member NASD/SIPC. Informative Financial Services is not affiliated with Mutual Service Corporation. For seminars and speaking engagements, Bill can be reached at 419-885-8384.

Business Ownership: The Last Frontier,

(Continued from Page 7)

sure, diabetes, cancer, and a shorter life expectancy are all health risks associated with obesity. While we are generally aware of these terms and illnesses, many of us don't consider them as serious as we should. While many of us think losing weight is about vanity, for the severely overweight and obese, it can become a matter of life and death.

"What's the average amount of time you are going to live?" That's something called life expectancy, and it's a number that scientists figure based on all kinds of complicated methods that would bore you to tears if we explained it. But take a look at what the numbers look like:

ters wander the streets living under bridges and eat out of garbage cans at die at a rate of death quicker than the death of dogs and nobody really cares?

We are the bottom line in everyone's profit margin. We drink the liquor and smoke the cigarettes that feed the people who make, sell and package such products. America does not say a word because we populate the hospitals that fuel the medical and drug industry. We keep the legal system flowing with our insanity. The prisons that they have built just for us provide the revenue stream that feeds entire communities.

We need to get fit, healthy and law abiding.

LIFE EXPECTANCY (in years)

- *White Female-78.0
- *Black Female-76.1
- *White Male-75.3
- *Black Male-69.0

Data taken from US Life Tables, 2003, National Vital Statistics Reports Vol. 54N. 14

The numbers speak for themselves. There is a tremendous gap between African-American men and everyone else. Too many of us are dying too young and we don't have to.

There are many reasons for the gap, but the major reason is our higher rate of heart disease, diabetes, and stroke. We can begin to close the gap and improve not just the length of our lives but the quality of them as well. It's up to us to start making the changes through better food choices, more exercise, and getting the necessary screening tests such as breast mammograms for women and prostate exams for men. Remember, part of **THE CHALLENGE** is your commitment to bettering not just yourself, but the entire community.

People who do not stand for something fall for anything! We do not need to put up with it we can fight back. Is it any wonder that demented brothers and sis-

We need doctors, nurses, and medical personal to help with the Health Fairs. We need sponsors, vendors and volunteers. We need "you" to take The Challenge. Get involved and be part of the Challenge. Pick up a challenge kit at my office or at the office of any participating State Farm Agent.

To get involved with the Community Health and Wellness Challenges over the next 12 months contact Sam Baldwin at The Area Office on Aging sbaldwin@areaofficconing.com, Prescilla Hutchens of The Negro Business and Professional Women prescilladesigns@sbcglobal.net or me at 712 Sherman St Toledo Ohio 43608 vince.davis.bunl@statefarm.com or at 419-244-2904

Stop by and get a free challenge kit

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Big Brothers Big Sisters Honor Their Own

Sojourner's Truth Staff

"Don't tell a kid you're going to do something and then don't do it," advised U.S. Army Reserve Major Reginald Truss as he accepted a heroes' welcome during the Big Brothers Big

Awards ceremony on September 18 at 20 North Gallery.

Truss, who started serving as a big brother to Redus Thomas and Derek Myers from the time the two youngsters were eight years old, told the packed audience

only appropriate that he give of his time as an adult. "Not every kid is getting the opportunities that I had - that's why I want to give back," said the major who has served a tour of duty in Afghanistan.

"Reggie always told me 'you can do anything you put your mind to,'" said Thomas, a sergeant in the U.S. Army who is now an army recruiter in Highland, IN. Thomas has been nominated for the Army's Bronze Medal with Valor for his actions under fire in Iraq when he saved two fellow soldiers by pulling them to safety after a roadside bomb destroyed their Humvee.

Thomas, as he noted, did not come from an at-risk environment, just an all-female one. "I want to thank my

mom for putting me into this program," said Thomas. "She can see the difference it made in my life."

Myers, on the other hand, believed that he was indeed at risk - at risk of ending up incarcerated, he said - before Truss entered his life. "He's still dear to my heart, I love him."

Truss has also been nominated for a Bronze Medal for his service in Afghanistan.

"We are on a mission to provide quality relationships between children and mentors," said 2007 Mentor Awards committee member Danielle Dressel, widow of slain Toledo Police Department Detective Keith Dressel. "Reggie and Redus are two amazing citizens who are products of this amazing program. There are two things we can do to help - become a mentor today or make a donation to the organization to help our children grow."

The Big Brothers Big Sisters of Northwestern Ohio began serving the Toledo area community in 1937.

"We are still going strong because we do make a difference in children's lives," said Executive Director Barbie

Harrison. "But there are 150 kids who need someone to

Big Brothers Big Sisters of Northwestern Ohio - to ei-



Derek Myers, Major Reginald Truss, Sgt. Redus Thomas

Sisters of Northwestern Ohio's annual Mentor Awards ceremony, that, knowing the advantages he had growing up, it was



help make that difference in a child's life."

ther serve as a mentor or to make a donation - call 419-243-4600.



Free the Jena Six: A Journey...

(Continued from Page 6)

that I could make sure that Raven was comfortable, which means, my legs were nearly dead from her laying on them during the 2,200 mile round trip journey.

Our bus was a delightful mixture of people from Detroit, Toledo and Akron. There was one little baby on board, whom I officially designated as the princess of our group. Our ages ranged from 70ish to 12 months. We had the greatest two drivers anyone could hope for. And our trip director, while overall loveable, was indeed a trip. At times, we felt like children under her watchful eye. Thank goodness, we all were so filled with the excitement and energy of our mission that we humorously dismissed her over the top directives.

In the darkest of hours, which seemed to encompass much of our journey, I could see every single star in the sky. I'm sure I'm not the only person who looks up to find the North Star even today. I easily wondered deeply into the minds of my ancestors who must have been somewhere on this same soil, years ago, looking for the same North Star. But they were not looking just to wonder, as I was, they were looking to try and get the hell up out of hell. My eyes filled with tears.

We finally, finally - dear God, thank You!, finally made it to Vicksburg, Mississippi, where we would be staying in our hotel for all of seven hours. I knew I would spend six of those hours in the shower. Raven and I had a pretty nice suite, so there

were two bathrooms. I stood in the shower until I nearly fell asleep standing up.

At 2 a.m. my cell phone alarm went off. The lack of sleep during the past 18 hours or so plus three hours of sleep turned me into a zombie. We dressed and packed in 20 minutes, I didn't care what I looked like. Not so, said my beloved teenager, she wanted her hair done and everything had to match,

Raven and Annette Wright



even though we were supposed to wear all black. I immediately went into my "I love my child" mantra.

The front desk lobby area wasn't even open. The rest of our group, one by one, sleep-walked to the front of the hotel, as instructed by our trip director, and found a place to sit or lay on the ground. Seemingly, our bus drivers had overslept. I lay in the dew-covered grass and waited while Raven complained constantly that she was going back to the hotel room. Too late, I had already slid our key under the glass of the lobby window.

About 3 a.m. we were all back on the bus. Although exhausted, it quickly dawned

on us that we were only about an hour or so from our destination. Our itinerary indicated that we would stop first in Alexandria, Louisiana and then take another bus from there into Jena.

But before we knew it, there it was, a tiny little sign that read "Jena Corporation Limit."

"Hey everybody, we're here," I shouted. "We're in Jena!" We all cheered and a

renewed burst of energy filled the entire bus. "Free the Jena Six, free the Jena Six, free the Jena Six!" was shouted as we all filed out of the bus.

It was still a bit dark when we arrived. I looked at Raven and said, "well we're here." She replied, "free the Jena Six!" I couldn't contain my smile and said, "that's right baby," and shouted with her "free the Jena Six!"

Ed. Note: This is part one of a two-part series on the Jena Six March on September 20. Part two will be presented in next week's issue. For the article in its entirety, please go to our website at www.thetruthtoledo.com.



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Saturday, September 29, 2007

1:00 to 4:00 PM

Imperial Lanes

On the Edge of the Dream: The Lima Branch of the NAACP Achieves Its First Milestone

By Vickie Shurelds
Sojourner's Truth Reporter

It was a disappointment and an embarrassment. How could it happen? Unbelievable!

The Lima branch of the NAACP lost its charter. The Lima area was no longer listed among the strengths of the nation's oldest and strongest defense in the fight against inequality; no longer in a position to be an advocate for justice. A shame.

Then the torch was taken up again by seasoned street soldiers. Those are individuals who have stood in the "colored only" lines, and at the voting polls: Alberta Shurelds, Daisie Gibson, Helen Roberts. Names long associated with completion ... getting the job done. Accidental heroes.

Working hand in hand with the Ohio Conference of NAACP's president, Sybil Edwards McNabb, and District 1 coordinator WilliAnn Moore, the fight began to return to the status of a unit in good standing began. And after months of hoop-jumping, dotting of "i"s and crossing of "t"s, on Saturday, September 15, at the Ohio NAACP Conference held in Columbus, it became official. The Lima Branch of the NAACP serving Allen, Putnam, and Hancock Counties has been re-instated and is once again considered a vital unit in the NAACP's quest for equality.

There were accolades given. Moore praised the unit for its unyielding spirit and determination to meet criteria demanded before the return of the charter could even

be considered. Equal praise was delivered for the outreach toward the people of Putnam and Hancock Counties who were without a voice at the state level, because there was no local unit to carry their needs forward. The challenge of getting over 50 members signed and in place before the conference was easily met with the help of Kim Field, general manager of Clear Channel stations in Lima, Findlay and Tiffin, Ohio. Public service announcements were created and run on all Clear Channel Stations, and on Lima's local CBS, NBC and FOX affiliate stations.

The activation was the first major hurdle. Now comes the intensive training that is part of a nationwide organization. Each member who wants to be considered for a position on the executive board, or as an officer, must attend special training. That training must be complete before an election can be held to put the officers and executive board in place.

This is a critical piece of the puzzle, to keep all members on the 'same page' as the national organization, allowing the unit to function like a well oiled machine. "Our training will be conducted by either Sybil Edwards-McNabb or WilliAnn Moore," says Alberta Shurelds. "The date, time and place are yet to be determined, but it will be soon, and it's important to note, that once the date is set, that will automatically become the date for the close of the slate of candidates for the election."

The call for membership

for the local unit also netted a surprising number of calls for assistance. It seems there are many people in the area who are hoping the NAACP can provide support for them in issues of discriminatory practices. So far, the names and concerns of those phone calls have been brought to the attention of the Ohio Civil Rights Commission due to the NAACP's non-active status. A partnership of sorts has been garnered allowing the local unit a direct line to the power of the Civil Rights Commission. That partnership was echoed during the state NAACP conference with an official "Memorandum of Understanding" between the CRC and the state office. This "understanding" strengthens the power of the NAACP, because the group now has access to powerful allies such as investigators and lawyers and the CRC has subpoena power as well.

This strong partnership will make a level playing field of justifiable work and living conditions in Ohio a truly possible reality.

One of the phone calls left for the NAACP said, "Give it up, the NAACP is dead; no one is listening, you're just wasting your time." He should read The Sojourner's Truth so he could be on top of current issues that are facing people of color and how they are being handled on a day to day basis by the local units of the NAACP.

Moore stated: "There may be some dysfunction at the national level. There are issues certainly with the president's position, and their executive boards - but that's

never been the true power of the organization. The power has always been in the hands of the local units. They are the ones in the trenches making things happen - and keeping it real on day to day issues in their own communities. It's one of the NAACP's most familiar slogans: "Don't talk about it; **BE** about it".

Positions are being filled on the committees for the Lima Branch and, as the organization moves forward, the members are hoping some of those positions will be filled by representatives from all the minority groups in the tri-county area. There is an open invitation for people of every race to join the NAACP and become a Freedom Fighter for every American. In particular, the unit is reaching out to those in the Asian, Latin-American, Native American, Muslim and island cultures.

Because of the late date for the training and upcoming elections, there will more than likely not be a Freedom Fund banquet this year. The unit may be planning a celebratory luncheon for the presentation of their charter and the first fund-raiser for the newly designated group.

The membership drive is on-going. Meetings for the



WilliAnn Moore

unit are held at noon on the third Saturday of each month at the Bradfield Community Center in Lima. The meetings are, however, only open to members. If you are not a member, you are still welcome to attend a meeting, however, at the end of the meeting you should simply purchase your membership so you can help with the process. Should you join? Ask yourself this question:

"Where would you be without the NAACP?"

Congratulations are in order for the Lima Branch of the NAACP, and for its "accidental heroes:" Alberta Shurelds, Daisie Gibson and Helen Roberts. Street soldiers all.

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Album Review

Kanye West - Graduation

By Michael Hayes
Minister of Culture

I'm still unsure about what exactly Kanye West does.

I can't really call him a producer because I'm not sure how often he constructs the entire track. You know Jon Brion was the one playing the instruments on *Late Registration*, John Legend handled the keys on most of his production work for *Roc A Fella*.

That's when I was starting to think Kanyezy was more of an ill drum programmer than anything.

Now on this album, Timbaland is credited with helping out on drum programming on more than a few joints while T.I.'s former hit man D.J. Toomp shows up for a few tracks. But all of them say "Produced by Kanye West."

Who knows, I'll find out one day how it all went down.

But you know what, it may not matter.

I relate to Kanye so much it's hard to listen to him sometime and I know my partner Adonis feel the same way. For us, it was his work as a producer that made him a household name. But I still feel like he bit a lot of his style from Just Blaze or Bink.

Listen to that Brown Sugar soundtrack, Kanye handled a lot of that production by himself. Then the more he worked on *Roc A Fella* projects the more he started to make beats more similar to *Just Blaze* (always my favorite of the two).

But the booth was calling and this is a dude with a lot to say

He did what he had to do to become one of the game's top producers and with these last two albums he's been aiming to dispel the label he used to have.

You know, producer-turned-rapper... people hate.

But he kept improving those punch lines to the point where now you expect bizarre and clever things to come out of Mr. West's grill.

And *Graduation* fulfills all of those wishes.

Even the line where he says "I'm like the new Malcolm, buy any jeans nec-

essary." That's damn blasphemous, but damn... it's memorable and clever. And hip-hop needs this.

See, where 50 Cent looks at music as what he can get from it.

Kanye looks at what he can offer.

Still an ego-maniac, but he at least makes it a top priority to push the boundaries of the listeners' expectations.

And he says he's not political, but he does approach subjects in his rhymes that make you think. Every single is a hit, but they all sound completely different from one another.

"Stronger," "Can't Tell Me Nothing" and "Good Life" are all amazing songs.

All inspiring, all honest, all really great musical mas-



terpieces that just happen to be hot enough to ride that line where 106 & Park meets the Hot 100.

"Drunk And Hot Girls" (you KNOW how them drunk and hot girls get down!) that song is perfect.

And then comes another perfect song that hits another topic, another sound, another approach. "Flashing Lights" is even more perfect when you add in Dwele. An ode to exotic dancers, anyone who really knows Dwele's music can appreciate how two dudes dubbed as conscious artists can handle such a subject.

Dwele may be neo soul, but his lyrics are always full of pimp tales.

The break out favorites are "Barry Bonds" and "Everything I Am."

These are two songs that will be remembered for years to come.

The way Yeezy and

Weezy ride that beat, and the rhymes they drop ... that song could be a classic honestly. I mean really, when is the last time our music produced a classic?

"Everything I Am" is classic material.

Kanye West has delivered an album that may be a classic.

It will go down in history as the first time a semi-conscious rapper moved a million in a week. It will go down in history as the only democratic process our country can rely on crowning a new king as Kanye West beat out 50 Cent in the sales war.

It will go down in history as another installment in the whole "College Dropout" line up

(I think his next one is gonna be called "good ass job").

Nonetheless, this album is nothing short of amazing.

Go and buy it, buy one for someone you love.

Kanye pushed the limit, brought some intellect, but still relates to the common folks, and still kept it interesting the whole way through.

In the end, I don't care that much about how much he produces.

This album is exactly what hip-hop needs.

Oh yeah, "Stronger" replaced "Crank Dat" as the number one song in the country.

Now if we can just get these junior high kids to stop "supaman that hoe" (and if you see on youtube.com, they got spiderman that hoe and Crank Dat Lion King/Crank Dat Barney - LOL).

But, the little kids need to have someone new to vibe with.

Graduation is a fine moment for us all.

True grade = A

Album Review

50 Cent - Curtis

By Michael Hayes
Minister of Culture

Humble pie. That's what you're supposed to eat when you shoot a mouth off about something and the whole world can see how wrong you were.

Case in point - 50 Cent waged this battle against Kanye to see who would have the biggest first week sales. After all the back and forth, ya boy 5-0 upped the ante by promising to end his own career if indeed the record buying public bought more of Kanye's third album *Graduation* than they did of his own third album, *Curtis*.

The inflated ego of Curtis Jackson is now the stuff of legend.

He has made a career of being the three ring circus of hip-hop.

Amazing and tantalizing success, a never-ending string of beefs and the high wire act of telling street tales while his credibility is constantly slipping away.

For the casual hip-hop fan, you just know the music and the headlines.

But for those of us who deal with this on deeper level, the love for 50 Cent started to dissipate years ago. The whole Supreme Team, Alpo story. Infamous Queens drug dealers and the story of the REAL 50 CENT. See, unlike Junior Mafia - ya boy Curtis Jackson didn't have that permission to use the moniker of REAL STREET VET... he just took the name. Yeah, that whole story gets deep and twisted.

And that's some underground head type of stuff.

But let's stay on the surface. G Unit has been in trouble for years.

Same old story. Just like Luda with DTP, Nelly with Derty Ent, Eminem with Shady Ent, and many others.

Hot rapper goes global, moves millions upon millions of units, becomes a household name and now he has a label.

The crew he signs to his label capitalizes off the buzz and starts to move units, but before long the steam starts to run out and the brand suffers because no one can match the numbers of the marquee artist. And then the marquee artist's sales start to drop.

The only thing that can save a situation like this is to undergo somewhat of a make-over.

Luda did it, DTP isn't as hot as it could be, but he's still on top.

G Unit has moved about 30 million worldwide and 50 himself accounts for at least two thirds of that. It could've been a lovely situation.

Even the new holy trinity was a hot concept.

Dre's Aftermath signs Eminem, Eminem goes multi. Eminem gets a label of his own and his Shady artists hover around platinum. Eminem and Dre jointly sign 50 Cent and Shady/Aftermath split the effort of putting out his first album. 50 Cent blows up and his success gives birth to G Unit records which once again releases consistently platinum or better projects. Jimmy Iovine and Interscope hadn't seen a dynasty like this since the days of Death Row. However, it would all come crashing down.

50 Cent lost that beef with Game, I don't care who says what.

50 Cent lost that beef with Jada & Fat Joe, I don't care who says what.

Now... I will say that he won the recent beef with Cam/Dipset - however.

After spending three years spitting on everyone in the industry, he alienated him-

self. And that's just what this album sounds like, someone closed off.

While Kanye West pushed boundaries and switched up his style, 50 Cent thinks very little of his listeners... because he barely pushed himself.

This album is full of material that is proof he hasn't grown at all.

He thinks he's just giving us more of what we want.

Yeah right.

Ayo - I actually seen dude on an interview talking about how he doesn't really think about making music from a musical perspective ... it's all business to him.

Which is cool. But I just don't see this album going above two or three million.

His core audience... honestly has always been white suburban kids who wanna feel tough. His whole persona fits nicely into that caricature of what the un-initiated person would think a rapper would be like. No matter what you think about 50 the commodity, one thing has to be in line if you plan on waging a sales war with Kanye West - the music has got to be fire!!

Well. This music on *Curtis* is not.

I mean damn, "Amusement Park" was wack.

"Straight To The Bank" was worse (why did he even include them on the album? remember when Usher came out with "Pop Yo Collar" and it didn't pop... you never even heard it again).

"I Get Money" is slick, no doubt. It would've been hot if this is where *Curtis* started. The East Coast heads are loving this joint and the video helps a lot.

"Ayo Technology" ... honestly, I just feel like that

(Continued on Page 16)

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After Jena, Take A Bus To TPS

(Continued from Page 3)



Warren Woodberry

Oct 25, 1997. Women's March draws hundreds of thousand in a mile-long crowd in Philly. African-American women flocked to Philadelphia in buses, cars, trains and by plane by the thousands. Passionate calls and speeches were made calling for changes in the way that women were treated and also calling for more unity and fairness in all women's issues.

September 02, 2005.

Buses this time play a devastating role. The reasons for the death of so many Blacks in New Orleans before Katrina fully struck was partially due to the failure to

utilize the more than 364 NORTA buses and the hundreds of school buses that eventually became flooded and useless. Instead the people were herded into the Super Dome and we all know what happened after that.

Back in the day, the bus was the vehicle of choice to escape poverty in the south and was the main source of transportation for black entertainers and athletes traveling through the south as it provided both transport and sleeping accommodations to people such as the Harlem Globetrotters, BB. King and others since they could not find hotels that would allow them to stay there due to segregation.

An unwanted pregnancy would possibly be put on the bus to go north to live with Aunt Mattie and it was also a soldier's choice for returning home after the war. Freedom riders were quite often pulled off of buses and assaulted or worse. I almost took one home after going broke with Jim Lang in Vegas, but we pawned our watches

for gas and barely made it home to Toledo in the 60s.

And forever, South Africa's buses were segregated. Black buses, known as "green" buses because they had a green marker on the front windshield, stopped at black bus stops and white buses at white ones. And when a black person was pulled off of a bus for any reason, he was subject to beatings or loss of a job for failure to go to work.

Yes the bus has played a pivotal role in black protest, but I am hopeful that one day we could take a bus ride to TPS for answers to questions about our urban schools? The Jena 6 African-American boys desperately deserve our immediate attention, but here in Toledo there are hundreds of young black, white and Latino youth at similar risk of injustice as they are part of a questionable school system that can be the cause of them also being incarcerated for life if we don't get on the bus or off the bus and do something.

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PT-Bilingual Senior Broker -\$8.56/\$8.82 (post probationary). 20 hours/52 weeks/year. This position will provide case management to low to moderate income Spanish speaking senior adults. Qualifications: High School Diploma or GED required, at least one year of experience with the senior population, and proficient computer skills (Microsoft Word). Must be able to speak and translate Spanish fluently.

Intake/Outreach Specialist (temporary) - \$11.48/\$11.83 (post probationary), 40 hours/week; Winter Program (October-March). Perform Home Energy Assistance interviewing activities, verify applicant information and collect program data. Qualifications: High School Diploma or GED required, at least one year experience working with low-income elderly and/or minority residents.

Bus Driver-\$9.36/\$9.64 (post probationary). 32 hours/week; 35 weeks/year. Responsible for transporting 3-5 year olds from their homes to centers throughout Lucas County.

Qualifications: High School Diploma or GED required, good driving record with two (2) years of on-the-job driving experience (i.e. company car or van, courier/delivery driver, cab driver, chauffeur, etc.), and experience working with children and people of all ages. Must possess a valid Commercial Driver License with Passenger and School Bus Endorsements and must have auto and liability insurance.

Sub Bus Driver-\$8.78/\$9.05 (post probationary), On-Call, As Needed.

Application Deadline: Thursday, October 4, 2007. Apply at EOPA/Toledo-Lucas County Head Start; 525 Hamilton Street, #202. Must have access to an automobile and possess/show a valid Driver's License with proof of auto liability insurance. NO RESUMES ACCEPTED WITHOUT AN APPLICATION. NO PHONE CALLS PLEASE.

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CLINICAL THERAPIST - HOME-BASED/CHILDREN

Clinical Therapist needed to provide in-home short-term therapy to children and families. Qualified candidates must have strong clinical skills including the ability to make clinical decisions and assessments along with knowledge of therapeutic principles and practices and strong group process skills. LSW or LPC required. Masters degree and independent license strongly preferred. Send or fax resume to:



Human Resources - CT-HB
1425 Starr Avenue
Toledo, OH 43605
Fax 419.936.7574
Email: HR@UNISONBHG.ORG
EOE

MIGRANT FARMWORKER ATTORNEY Make a difference in the lives of others

Advocates for Basic Legal Equality, Inc. (ABLE), a non-profit law firm that provides free legal assistance to low-income migrant farmworkers throughout Ohio, seeks an energetic, bright, and hard working attorney to work with its Migrant Farmworker Program. The position is based in Toledo. Excellent legal and communication skills; ability to relate well with low-income clients; computer proficiency; and strong commitment to legal services to the poor are required. **Must be able to communicate fluently in Spanish.** Membership in Ohio Bar or ability to be admitted by motion or examination required. Previous experience in poverty law, provision of legal services to migrant farmworkers, and work with community groups is preferred. Salary is based on relevant legal experience. Excellent benefits including loan repayment assistance and language compensation. Send resume electronically as soon as possible, in Microsoft Word format only, to:

jobs@ablelaw.org

Subj: Migrant Farmworker Attorney



Applications will only be accepted by e-mail. Equal access to ABLE's office is available. Applicants requiring accommodation to the interview/application process should contact the Recruitment Coordinator at the address listed above. Equal Employment Opportunity.

OFFICE SPACE

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DIRECTOR, INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

This full-time position is responsible for overall planning, organization and management of all Information Technology functions at the agency. This includes forecasting of technology needs, budgeting for technology and configuration/operation of all personal computers, computer networks, telephone systems, voice mail systems, paging systems. Position is also responsible for all software applications and licenses.

Desired candidate will possess a Bachelor's degree in Information Technology, at least five years progressively responsible experience as a Network Administrator with three of those at the management level and be a Microsoft Certified Professional (MCP). Microsoft Certified Systems Engineer (MCSE) Preferred. Experience in a health care or health care related not for profit agency preferred. Must be able to work a flexible schedule that may include evenings, weekends and holidays.

Send resume and salary requirements to:



Human Resources - DIT
1425 Starr Avenue
Toledo, OH 43605
Fax 419.936.7574
Email: HR@UNISONBHG.ORG
EOE

CAD/PROPERTY MANAGEMENT COORDINATOR

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AA/EOE

REGISTERED NURSE

Full-time opportunity is available for experienced nurse to perform duties such as health assessments, medication education and direct service to clients in clinic and in the community.

Work schedule for this position involves a four day work week, may include evening hours and may require travel to various sites. Qualified candidates must possess RN license. Psychiatric nursing experience required, minimum of three years nursing experience preferred. Send or fax resume to:



Human Resources - RN
1425 Starr Avenue
Toledo, OH 43605
Fax 419.936.7574
Email: HR@UNISONBHG.ORG
EOE

Pastor and First Lady Culp's
50th
Anniversary



Album Review
50 Cent - Curtis

(Continued from Page 12)

song would be hot if Justin and Timbo had kept that for themselves. Makes me wanna hear more of them together, 50 is just in the way. See, that's the thing about 5-0 ... his level of talent is just not on par.

R h y m e schemes, word play, metaphor — those things are lost on most hip-hop these days ... but it would help this dude out a lot if he were a rhyme animal like Lloyd Banks or had the charisma people see in Young Buck.

But 50's rhymes are elementary most of the time and on this third album, while he just runs through all of his familiar sounds and concepts ... it's just really pathetic.

"Follow My Lead" is unexpected, but decent. Fidy rhyming alongside Robin Thicke... ain't that just the type of thing he used to get on Ja Rule for??

"I'll Still Kill" featuring Akon is not hot at all, nearly threatening to ruin Akon's string of hot cameos. "Movin On Up" is good for

the first verse, but then his rhyme scheme gets basic.

"Come & Go" is supposed to be his 'I run through groupies' anthem but it's wack.

The beat, the rhymes — all of it.

"My Gun Go Off" and "Touch The Sky" are among the best joints.

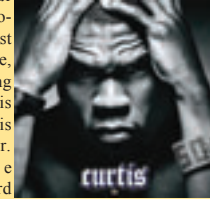
And even though he throws darts at a few rappers and even seems to son on B.I.G., "Fully Loaded Clip" is one of those songs where his gangsta, his swag, and his rhymes all come together for the type of song we expect from 2007 50 Cent.

The joint with Mary J tho, "All Of Me" — that's a hot one.

But yo, I love hearing some East Coast drums and kicks ... but its hard to stay interested hearing 50 Cent go down that same old path with the same old rhymes.

There's just not enough good material here.

The true grade for Curtis is D+



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Thurgood Marshall Law Association

The Thurgood Marshall Law Association is an organization of attorneys whose primary objectives are to:

- Educate and enhance the African-American community's access to the legal system;
- Increase the presence of African-American attorneys and law students in the City of Toledo; and
- Provide support, assistance, and advocacy to African-American Attorneys.

In our organizational efforts we especially salute the Honorable Supreme Court Justice Thurgood Marshall and continually strive toward the perfection and impact he exhibited in his legal career.

For more information about the Thurgood Marshall Law Association, contact any of our members.

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