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Betty Amison

GRACE COMMUNITY CENTER

“I think I do better work when I do it quietly. I get joy from watching people evolve and accomplish things they didn't think they could accomplish.”

This Strikes Us ...

A Sojourner's Truth Editorial

For a minute or so, we entertained the notion of writing an opinion piece about the recent Rev. Floyd Rose/Carty Finkbeiner dust-up. But as you will see on the next several pages, quite a lot has been written about that already so ... let's go national again.

Illinois Senator Barack Obama just won the South Carolina presidential primary in grand style. It was the first landslide, in fact, of this very young primary season.

Obama won 80 percent of the black vote, even though he was very far behind Senator Hillary Clinton among African-American voters just a few short weeks ago. He won about 24 percent of the white vote even though polls, on the day of the primary, showed that only 10 to 18 percent of the likely white voters would pull the lever next to his name.

In all, his percentage of the vote was more than twice as much as the second-place finisher, Clinton.

In the most amazing turn of events, Obama, and his fellow Democrats, brought to the polls more than 525,000 voters, up from about 290,000 in 2004. And Obama himself piled up more than 290,000 votes and won this very important contest in the state that led the charge to secede from the Union a century and a half ago.

And while Obama seems to have turned conventional wisdom on its ear regarding the difficulty he might have with white voters voting for him once they get behind closed curtains, it appears that his growing support among African-Americans has become a virtual tsunami. For Obama to gain 80 percent of the black vote against two candidates with solid credentials of being friends to the black community is an eye-opening occurrence.

Even now, dozens of black leaders and elected officials around the country are hedging their bets about whom to support, having been convinced that Obama could not win in either the black or the white communities. It appears that many of these officials are out of step with their communities, doesn't it? "This is pride, not prejudice," said one pundit on Saturday night as he watched the numbers roll in for Obama.

The Obama phenomenon is so impressive that even conservative pundits such as Bill Bennett, the self-appointed virtue czar and former Secretary of Education under Reagan, and New York Times columnist David Brooks are waxing poetic and wiping tears away as they talk about how great this is for America.

But if you're looking for sour notes, you don't have to look very far. America's first black president, Bill Clinton, has once again demonstrated that virtually nothing is out of bounds in the pursuit of a political victory. For years the Clintons have been savaged by conservatives in this country for deeds that Clinton supporters have pooh-poohed. Now, former Clintonians who have switched their allegiance to Obama are beginning to understand what all the fuss on the right was about.

Clinton, Bill Clinton, that is, has taken on the role of bad cop in this particular scenario and has stooped to playing the race card. At every turn in South Carolina, the man who has his office in Harlem reminded his audiences that this was a contest between his very experienced wife and a black man. He tried to lower expectations for the Clinton campaign by intimating that it would only be natural for a state, with such a heavily black pool of voters, to carry an African-American candidate to victory. And when the results were in, Clinton, Bill Clinton, that is, compared Obama's victory in South Carolina to Jesse Jackson's victory in that state in 1984 and 1988.

Now, let's face it, Obama, the politician and elected official, has much more in common—in background, in education, in policies—with the Bill Clinton of 1992 (who also happened to win the South Carolina Democratic Party primary) than he does with Jesse Jackson. What he does have in common with Jackson, as Clinton was so eager to point out, is the color of his skin.

We can shrug our shoulders and say, well, that's just Bill being Bill, but where do we draw the line? At this rate, voters in America, even the staunchest of Hillary Clinton supporters, have got to ask the question of just how much more we want to see of Bill. Hillary Clinton supporters might just have to ask the candidate, in fact, what happens if she does indeed win this whole thing? Will she be able to find a closet somewhere in the White House and lock this guy away for a while?

Like, say, for about four years?

Community Calendar

January 25-February 20

Maumee Valley Country Day School: Art Gallery featuring MVDCD dads Wade Harrison and Thanasiu Wolfe

January 28-February 28

20 North Gallery's Black History Month 2008: Aaron Bivins, Wil Clay, Wade Harrison, Ramon Tiggs, Frank Morrison, Alice Grace, Warren Woodberry, Yolanda Woodberry, John Wade III: 419-241-2400

January 31

Workforce Development Forum for Employers at The Source: The Toledo Club; 7:30 to 9 am; Discussion of programs that offer significant benefits to employers such as the Federal Bonding Program: 419-242-9955

February 1

BGSU Black History Month: Ninth annual Black Issues Conference; 7-11 pm; Kreisler Quadrangle

February 2

Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc. 100th Anniversary Celebration: Bowling Green State University; 11:30 am; www.zetaalphaomega.com

Second Annual Shynerra Grant Memorial Cheerleading Competition: Presented by the UT Black Student Union and the Shays for Life Foundation; Health-Education Building at UT; Noon; Kick off of National Dating Violence Prevention Week

BGSU Black History Month: Conference "Black Is; Black Ain't" continues; 10:30 am to 4 pm; 101 Olscamp; Guest speaker Dr. Na'im Akbar, clinical psychologist

University of Toledo Africana Studies Film Festival: Center for Performing Arts Lab Theatre; 10 am to 5 pm

February 3

Annual Super Bowl Pampering Party: Bibleway Church; Big screen TV while manicures, pedicures, hair styling, Mary Kay facials and makeovers in classrooms; Food served; 5:30 pm

Indiana Avenue Baptist: 62 Annual Church Anniversary celebration; "Standing on the Promises of God"; Guests Rev. Johnnie Hobbs and St. John C.O.G.I.C.; 4 pm afternoon worship; 419-246-3850

February 7

BGSU Black History Month: Open forum "Fade to Black"; Exploring relationships between black Americans and Africans; 7 to 9 pm; 308 Bowen-Thompson Student Union

February 9

Gamma Phi Delta Sorority, Inc. 21st Annual Founders' Day Luncheon; 11 am to 2 pm; Pinnacle; Scholarship fundraiser: 734-699-3579 or 734-218-1645

February 9-10

MI-OH Sportfishing Expo; Monroe County Fairgrounds Expo Center; 9 am to 8 pm on Saturday, 9 am to 5 pm on Sunday; Fishing seminars, free CHIP program (Child Identification Program), brand-name fishing products and boats

February 10

Black History Month Mass: Theme—"Roots"; Homilists Deacon Shelby Friend of Holy Spirit Church in Cleveland; St. Martin de Porres; 10:30 am: 419-244-6711 ext. 511 or www.toledodiocese-spl.org

Indiana Avenue Baptist: 62nd Church Anniversary celebration; 4 pm afternoon service; Guests Rev. Willie Perryman and Jerusalem Baptist: 419-246-3850

The Sojourner's Truth

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My View



By Jack Ford
The Truth's Political Columnist

On Thursday last week, Rev. Floyd Rose made a public appearance at Braden United Methodist where he called on black and white Toledoans to vote down the payroll tax levy. The no vote was called for by Rose in response to what he perceives as a continuing pattern of slights and injustices by the Carty Finkbeiner administration. The mayor responded with his own press conference the very next day and brought with him to the podium dozens of folks including several Latinos and African-American leaders to counter the call of Rose. The Blade waded in with several stories of the events and urged voters to ignore the call by

Rose to vote down the tax levy. The legitimacy of Rose's action was questioned by the mayor when he noted that Rose now lives in Valdosta, GA. This was pointedly spoken about by Finkbeiner and in The Blade editorial. In truth, Floyd Rose is no more an "outsider" than say Chuck Earley, a Canadian businessman who once resided in Toledo. Both Earley and Rose are still very much part of the fabric of what Toledo was and still is.

Both men come to town regularly and help on charitable causes. Both are instantly recognized here, so let's drop the "outsider" rap, particularly since we all fell over ourselves recently celebrating the life of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. who was so often, during his lifetime, panned as an outside agitator.

As to The Blade's take on all this, you cannot have your cake and eat it too. The Blade denigrated Michael Ashford's ascension to the City Council presidency as an affirmative action vote not worthy of being respected. But when Carty played a cheesy game to topple Ashford, The Blade stated that while it stank, at least marginally better choice (Mark Sobczak) was elevated.

How is Sobczak better than Mike Ashford? He does not compare in experience. He does not run his own shop as Ashford does at the Wayman Palmer YMCA. And Ashford has more education under his belt.

So how is Sobczak better than Ashford? Well, he is a few shades whiter and The Blade is concerned that Finkbeiner might drop dead and the council president will move up. Sometime ago, Councilwoman Wilma Brown was passed over in favor of continuing Rob Ludeman in that role. Brown was a manager with the Girl Scout Council, a past president of the Toledo Board of Education and a veteran council member. Ludeman sold real estate. No comparison.

This is why some folks are fed up. When you add up the litany of screwovers, including the Perlean Griffin affair, it will explain why some folks are ticked off. And I could go back all the way to the to the despicable treatment of Wayman Palmer who got passed over in favor of an unknown, fair-haired boy, Dave Boston.

The real question is whether the black community will listen to Floyd Rose or to Carty and his minions. We shall see.

A Political Cream Pie in Your Face !!!!

By Lafe Tolliver, Atty Guest Column



Although it is still faint and just barely a murmur, I can begin to hear the sounds of determined and hoodwinked black people starting to shake off decades of a deep political and economic slumber and starting to stretch and yawn and scratch their bellies.

This political and economic coma was of a longstanding epoch. It

started in the early 1960's after the fervid and charismatic leadership of the late J.B. Simmons Jr., a political activist and lawyer, who formed and led the mass movement that was directly responsible for breaking down employment barriers both in Toledo and at the Rossford Ordnance Depot.

As you may have known, J.B. Simmons was Toledo's first black vice mayor who was an astute politico in his day and a mentor to many of the black lawyers who now practice or who were and still are judges on local benches.

"J.B." as he was called, was accused of being a communist since he was so successful in mobilizing black people to vote and to throw off the reins of apathy.

As you also know, To-

ledo was never a hotbed of sustained economic or political fever by its minority citizens. Regrettably, too many were content to have "made it" and thus lost their edge for change or simply allowed the local Democratic Party to insert an iron ring in their collective noses and to direct their voting steps, like a tethered docile elephant, at the whim of the local Democratic fat cat party bosses. That lock step approach appears to be changing ... and none to quick. It appears that the sleepy giant is awakening and it does not like the porridge it has been fed for too many years. A lot of promises that were aborted before they saw the light of day. A lot of tomfoolery by politicians, especially the political quackery

(Continued on Page 12)

Hot Grits and Other Hard Questions

By Dr. Donald L. Perryman Guest Column



In Tyler Perry's *Madea's Family Reunion*, the southern matriarch Madea, the main character, has a niece Lisa who is getting married to one of the most eligible bachelors in Atlanta, Georgia. BUT the problem is that her fiancé was abusing her for the last three months and she can't escape him. Madea advises her niece on revenge for her abuse and eventually the niece throws hot grits over her fiancé while the song *Love and Happiness* by Al Green is played, an obvious reference to the Al Green incident when his former girlfriend intentionally poured hot grits over Green while he was undressed to get in the shower.

The love/hate relationship between the African-American community and Mayor Carty Finkbeiner, alternating between policies and repeated actions which are a slap in the face to the community occasionally punctuated with kind words and symbolic gestures of reconciliation, have reached a toxic stage, according to many.

In the meantime Reverend Floyd Rose of Georgia, but also with Toledo ties, has like Madea, recommended that Toledo's African-American community utilize the hot grits strategy by voting against renewal of the City's 0.75 percent city income tax which provides an estimated \$57 million the loss of will have a profound impact upon police, firefighters, garbage, and other essential city services.

Although the African-American experience in Toledo is not monolithic, the hot grits question confronts the entire community. What do you do when differences between the community and the city government become so glaring that the arguing and bickering become incessant, all efforts at reconciliation fail and the hurt and pain become unbearable?

I think that there are some hard, but foundational, questions that can only be answered

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Special to The Truth



As announced last week in The Sojourner's Truth, the Toledo Community Foundation has approved a grant to the Center of Hope Freedom Schools in the amount of \$42,750.00. These funds will be used to support local Freedom Schools programs.

Rev. D.L. Perryman is the pastor of Center of Hope Baptist Church and Tracee Perryman-Stewart is director of the local Freedom School, now in its second year of operation.

"With these vital funds awarded by the Toledo Community Foundation, our Center of Hope Freedom School will be able to continue its necessary work which is deeply rooted in the education and enrichment of our community's youth," said Perryman-Stewart.

Keith Burwell is president of the Toledo Community Foundation. For more information on the Foundation, visit www.toledocf.org.

For more information on the Center of Hope Freedom School, visit www.centerofhopebaptist.org or contact Perryman-Stewart at tperryman@sbcglobal.net.

The Key To The Massa's House

By Bishop Stephen Ward
Guest Column

On January 21 members of the African-American community gathered at the Kitchen For The Poor in support of a chapter of the SCLC being formed here in Toledo. While that press conference was going on, at another MLK event, the massa issued keys to the city.

When I ponder upon the significance of the keys to the city being issued and to whom they were issued to, I am reminded of Matthew 16:19, "And I will give unto you the keys of the kingdom of heaven; and whatever you declare to be improper and unlawful on earth, must be what is already bound in heaven, and whatever you declare lawful on earth is already permitted in heaven." This is a prophetic metaphor in Toledo when you think about who the keys were issued to, and who attended the mayor's press conference in regard to his reaction over the 3% income tax renewal.

During slavery, house slaves usually lived better than the field slaves. They usually had better food and

were sometimes given the family's cast-off clothing. In some cases the slaves were treated like the slave-owners children. When this happened close bonds of affection and friendship usually developed. Even though it was illegal, some house slaves were educated by the women in the family. Trusted house slaves who had provided good service over a long period of time were sometimes promised their freedom when their master's died. However, there are many cases where this promise was not kept.

In 2008 in this city some of those same principles are being used, a different method, but yet the same results. Positions, keys and glass awards are issued with hopes that a one-sided agenda can be supported and accomplished, however, in close-door private meetings the agenda's soon change. Just look at the "massa" and everything he said he would do for the African-American community if he was elected.

(Continued on Page 12)

A Body Without a Head Is....

A body without a head is without direction.
A body without a head is out of control.
A body without a head is ultimately dead!
The GEM academy, no matter how cute the acronym, would be "a body without a head!"

A school's principal is its spokesperson to the world. The principal is its public relations advocate, its source for direction, its creative energizing force. A well-trained, dedicated principal is the school's leader, its HEAD!

A good principal is the person who arrives with the custodian first thing in the morning to make sure there are no broken pipes, leaks, problems with the lighting, etc. A good principal makes sure there is adequate staffing in all areas for the day's learning experiences. A good principal makes sure the building is ready to receive its precious clients - the students it educates, (not merely houses). This is before any teachers or students arrive.

Teachers, especially those who have not worked closely with a good principal, haven't got a clue as to what the job of school leader/ principal involves.

Within the school it involves being an authority figure to students, teachers and parents. It includes being a counselor, mediator, disciplinarian, negotiator, legal resource, parent and strong shoulder to cry on.

The principal oversees the school's budget, checks supply request, coordinates workshops and makes sure payroll sheets are accurate and on time. If the staff does not get paid you are in trouble. The principal helps new staff members become a meaningful part of that school's family.

Within the school system, the job involves attending meetings at TPS administration building, before, during and after school. It includes negotiating for supplies and for staffing of your building. It would also be wise to confer with other school principals in order to insure your building is not missing the latest equipment and helps.

Community involvement requires the principal serve as an ambassador. You would need to attend PTA meetings, after school programs, athletic competitions, special recognition ceremonies highlighting the accomplishments of

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Rose, Finkbeiner Square Off over \$57 Million

By Fletcher Word
Sojourner's Truth Editor

In this corner ... Rev. Floyd Rose, former Toledo resident and iconic civil rights movement leader who departed for his native land of Valdosta, GA more than a decade ago, but who still remains very much involved in the issues that trouble his adopted home town.

In that corner ... Mayor Carty Finkbeiner, the exuberant leader of an economically

Toledo by holding a rally at Braden United Methodist on the eve of his departure to reconfirm his commitment to opening an office of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference and to urge Toledo's African-American population not to support the □ of one percent tax renewal levy that will be on the primary ballot on March 4.

"I left here in part because

son I left. I was told that things were not better but worse."

As Rose asked his audience not to support the □ renewal levy, he related a number of key concerns for the proposed action, among them: the elimination of the City of Toledo Affirmative Action/Contract Compliance Department, the discrimination and unfair treatment towards minorities that is practiced in city government towards minorities and women, the mayor's refusal to honor his pledge to black ministers to maintain the AA/CC office as a separate and autonomous department, the mayor's proposal to cut funds for the public defender's office, the mayor's attempt to de-fund CareNet, the mayor's support of a plan to shrink the size of City Council, the mayor's reference to former Toledo Fire Chief Mike Bell as "King Kong" in an administrative staff meeting, the imposition of a garbage tax, the appropriation of thousands of dollars for city beautification and the installation of the \$10,000 shower in the mayor's office.

Left unspoken was any reference to the removal of

Councilman Michael Ashford from his post as president of the legislative body even though that action has garnered considerable attention and consternation in the black community in recent weeks.

Rose, in fact, spoke not so much of immediate slights as he did of decades of lack of concern for the well-being of the black community and he reminded his audience of the disappearance of a once-grand business corridor along Dorr Street.

"Then they came along with something called 'urban renewal' which we called 'Negro removal,'" said Rose recapping the list of black-owned businesses that were once to be found along that thoroughfare.

"If you come along and knock me off that seat, that's your fault," Rose said as an



vote it down!

"They are going to trot someone out here who might look like you. They are going to tell you that if you people don't vote for the levy, your people are going to suffer the most ... but our people are already suffering the most."

The □ temporary income tax, which is projected to raise

about \$57 million annually, was first imposed in 1982 and has been renewed ever since. The monies raised by the tax help to fund police and fire. Portions go into both the general fund and the capital improvement budget.

Perlean Griffin also spoke at the rally. The former director, which is projected to raise

(Continued on Page 10)



troubled city, fighting to stabilize a dwindling tax base and always ready and willing to engage in battle to protect his turf.

And last week the battle was joined as Rose ended an extended mid-winter visit to

Carty Finkbeiner was elected mayor," said Rose in the opening of his address to the audience of nearly 200 last Thursday at Braden. "I was devastated. I left here for the same reason I came back. I came back for the same rea-

Some Pete Culp Thoughts on the Rose Rally and the 3/4 Levy

Sojourner's Truth Staff

Bernard "Pete" Culp was one of those African-American leaders present at Mayor Carty Finkbeiner's press conference on Friday on the 22nd Floor of Government Center. Although Culp, member of the Toledo Lucas County Plan Commission, director of planning for the Economic Opportunity Plan Association and president of the Committee of the Whole, did not stand in support of Finkbeiner's appeal to the black community to vote for the 3/4 levy, he did take the microphone to voice his feelings about the various issues raised by the mayor.

Contradicting Finkbeiner, Culp supported Rose's right to speak out on issues but suggested that Rose had not gone quite far enough in targeting only the City of Toledo for social action.

"I want to make it absolutely clear that I don't disagree with anything Floyd Rose said except for the fact that I would like to explore further what our options are if things don't turn around," Culp said after the news conference. "And on the other hand, I am certainly not defending any action that Carty

Finkbeiner takes.

Culp's decision to speak, he said, was an effort to expound on the whole spectrum of issues facing the black community in this area, not all of which are a consequence of the actions taken by the city administration. He mentioned the Toledo Public Schools and The University of Toledo as institutions that are sorely in need of re-orientation with respect to diversity issues.

"What Floyd Rose said was too narrow," said Culp. "The city and area as a whole need to take a long look at how they conduct business."

Culp's primary concern with area institutions is focused on the Lucas County Democratic Party, he said.

During his remarks on Friday, he placed the blame for the recent ouster of Michael Ashford as president of City Council squarely on the shoulders of the party. "We are not getting a rate of return from the Democratic Party," said Culp later.

"I do believe that you can call for new elections for the president of City Council if the Democratic Party doesn't interfere."




example of the treatment the black community has experienced over the years in Toledo. "But if you come along a week later and I'm still on the floor, well ... that's my fault.

"Rosa Parks made a decision and because she refused to move back, we have moved forward," Rose continued. "As long as the train of oppression is rolling over you and you don't make a decision, it will continue to roll over you.

"How do we stop it? We have to interfere with the money. I'm going to ask you - don't vote for the □ levy ...

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Betty Amison: Quietly Helping Others Evolve and Achieve

By Fletcher Word
Sojourner's Truth Editor

"I think I do better work when I do it quietly," says Betty Amison, executive director of Grace Community Center. "I get joy from watching people evolve and accomplish things they didn't think they could accomplish."

Amison has been experiencing that joy, as director of Grace Community, since 1969 – since the inception of the Center. The Center, which for years has been primarily funded by the United Church of Christ Toledo Area congregations, was originally located on the corner of Kenilworth and Fulton Streets. Over time the Center enlarged its financial support base and was incorporated as an independent non-profit organization and became a partner of United Way.

The Center moved into its current site at 406 West Delaware in 1985 and a capital fund drive enabled the organization to pay off its mortgage in 1990.

Quite obviously, Amison and the Center have been a perfect fit. "Grace Community Center was organized around issues that came out of this community and we're always trying to do social issues," says Amison as she recalls some of the concerns the Center has addressed over the years.

In the 1970's, the Center started a school lunch program for students in need and eventually launched a drive to pressure the Toledo Public

tary, and established alternative schools until that population issue was solved.

And Amison is also proud



of the fact that the Center has worked diligently to help preserve the housing stock in the neighborhood.

"I feel moderately satisfied with what we have done, but there is so much more work to be done," she says. "We've preserved the neighborhood, put up new houses, kept the streets cleared, gotten the garbage picked up. The effort we've made at being a part of this community

in a predicament because of welfare," says the Center's director. "It's so difficult to work with young women with

children when the mothers are uneducated and have no jobs. So families are a focus for us. We need to get more of them educated while making sure, at the same time, that the heat is on, that they have food to eat. They have to become more than self-sufficient, they have to be self-actualizing. We have got to give them the self esteem, and enough basic adult education, to get them to the next level."

Amison sums up the immediate, short-term impact of her work as one of being able to solve problems. "I try to break down barriers and make sure that people get services quickly.

The long-term impact of the Center can be assessed by reviewing those matters that Amison and her staff have addressed over the years and, even more so, by a glance at the programming offered at the building on Delaware Street.

The Center offers educational enrichment through after school tutoring, G.E.D. classes, computer classes, a preschool program for ages three to five, male and female responsibility clubs, information and referral services for a variety of social services, a summer day camp, a junior Afro Ball, among others.

As many as 60 kids will pass through the doors of the Center on a school day; as many as 200 youngsters are involved in summer programs on any given day.

For Amison, who has been with the Center since its inception, her lifetime of work

has been more of a calling than a profession. "We didn't call it social work, we called it social action," she recalls of the onset of her involvement in community organizing in those early days of the Great Society's War on Poverty.

"I get joy from watching people evolve and accomplish things they didn't think they could accomplish."

And community organizing was the vehicle through which a youthful Amison found her voice.

Amison, a Scott High School graduate, attended The University of Toledo for special education in learning disabilities and Stautzenberger College and joined the Economic Opportunity Planning Association (E.O.P.A.) as a receptionist – her very first job. She would not remain behind a desk for

long.

"E.O.P.A. gave everyone an opportunity," she says. "They gave me the opportunity to become a community organizer. They gave me the outlet to pursue my passion." "Organizing, making a plan,

putting things together" quickly became Amison's niche – knocking on doors, letting residents know what they can do, taking action against those who perpetrated injustices.

In the mid-60's, Amison was one of the leaders during Toledo's first rent strike. "We picketed his business – shut it down," she recalls with pride of that first successful action against a slum landlord. That led to the forma-

tion of a group called House My People, which is still in existence, Amison tells The Truth.

No absentee community organizer is Amison. She moved into the central city neighborhood she works in over 34 years ago. "The way you do a community," she says, "is to live there."

These days Amison works hard to leverage sometimes inadequate funding into partnerships that will build successful programs for the neighborhood. The Center has contracts with TPS, Lucas County Children's Services and a number of churches.

But it's time for her, she says, to start thinking about transitioning out of her current active leadership role in such a way that the Center will not suffer from such a move.

"I've got about two [more] years of this," says Amison. "But I want to be the kind of person who helps Grace stay here forever but from behind the scenes."



Schools into assuming responsibility for feeding students who could obtain meals from no other source.

The Center tackled the issue of school overcrowding, particularly at Fulton Elemen-

and its folks has been the best."

But Amison has no problem elaborating on the problems that still exist in her central city neighborhood.

"Women and children are

The Board of Community Relations is an independent organization chartered by the City of Toledo. We exist to promote, empower, & support citizens and neighborhoods to create social justice, equal opportunity, & a harmonious environment. We intervene in conflicts & disputes by providing investigations, facilitation, & mediation services.

You Are Invited!!! Come make your voice heard.



Public Focus Group Sessions Regarding Parental Responsibility Please join us at any of the following scheduled focus groups to make your voice heard regarding parental responsibility in the City of Toledo. If you are unable to join one of the following sessions, you may email your comments to bcr1@toledo.oh.gov

January 31 st	February 11 th	February 25 th
6:00—7:30 p.m.	6:00—7:30 p.m.	6:00—7:30 p.m.
Heatherdowns Public Library	Mott Branch Public Library	Lagrange Branch Public Library
1085 Dorr St.	3422 Lagrange St. Toledo, OH 43614	Toledo, OH 43607
March 10 th	March 18 th	March 24 th
6:00—7:30 p.m.	6:00—7:30 p.m.	6:00—7:30 p.m.
South Branch Public Library	Reynolds Corners Public Library	Sanger Branch Public Library
1736 Broadway 4833 Dorr St.	3030 West Central Ave. Toledo, OH 43609	Toledo, OH 43615
Toledo, OH 43606	For More Information, Call the City of Toledo's Board of Community Relations at 419-245-1565.	

16th Annual Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Scholarship Breakfast Honors Legacy

By Nadean Hamilton
Sojourner's Truth Reporter

Hundreds gathered in the Park Inn Hotel on Saturday, Jan. 19, to celebrate the legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. In keeping with this year's theme, "The Dream Keepers," the members of Alpha Xi Lambda Chapter of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc. have dedicated themselves to keeping Dr. King's dream of racial, educational and economic equality alive.

One of the ways in which the organization seeks to accomplish its goal is by awarding academic scholarships to young men in the community who graduate from high school and exhibit academic promise.

This year, four young men, although unable to attend due to time constraints, were awarded academic scholarships including: Allen T. Boyd, a political science major at Xavier University; Devon M.

Langston, biology major at Loyola University; Kwesi C. Kankam, a business major at Lehigh University and Makonnen L. Rice, a pre-med major at Bowling Green State University.

In addition, Councilwoman Wilma Brown was presented with the "Drum Major" award for her tireless years of service to the community. Brown, an ardent supporter of the revitalization of the Dorris Street Corridor, told the audience that they cannot be complacent when it comes to accomplishing their goals.

"I believe if you want something done you cannot wait for someone else to do it," said Brown.

"If you have an idea and you take it to the front door and they won't let you in, go around to the back door go right through the house," said Brown.

Keynote speaker, Pastor

Talmadge J'Von Thomas, challenged the audience to serve as willing role-models for future generations of leaders, noting that we all have a role to play if we are to realize Dr. King's dream.

"If you know like I know, we are not her because we have always been so good, we are not her because we [have] always did everything right, but [we are here] because somebody had the audacity to believe in us," said Thomas.

The MLK Scholarship Breakfast is one of two programs organized annually by the Alpha Xi Lambda Chapter, Inc. to raise money for the organizations scholarship fund.

Sponsors of the event include The University of Toledo Division of Student Affairs, Johnson Controls and Columbia Gas of Ohio.

Owens Community College Helps Students Achieve Academic Dreams With College Goal Sunday Event, Feb. 10

Special to The Truth

Area residents interested in acquiring additional information about financial aid are encouraged to participate in a free workshop where financial aid representatives from colleges and universities throughout Northwest Ohio will provide insight on securing federal and state assistance to any academic institution of higher learning. The program, known as College Goal Sunday, will be held at the Owens Community College Toledo-area and Findlay-area campuses on Sunday, Feb. 10.

Presented by the Ohio Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators (OASFAA), the state-sponsored event will focus on helping students complete their Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) application, as well as answer financial aid specific questions. College Goal Sunday begins at 2 p.m. in the Audio/Visual Classroom Center on the Toledo-area Campus and in the Conference Center on

the Findlay-area Campus. Families will need to register prior to the event by accessing the College Goal Sunday website at www.ohiocollegegoalsunday.org.

"Owens Community College and fellow academic institutions are committed to offering the maximum amount of educational resources for students to fund their college education," said Betsy Johnson, Owens Director of Financial Aid. "One of the biggest roadblocks students encounter when exploring their eligibility for financial aid is the financial aid form itself. College Goal Sunday invites students and their parents to spend an afternoon going through the application process step-by-step with a financial aid representative."

Johnson added, "Students who apply now will have the advantage of being eligible for considerably more financial aid than those who wait until late spring. The money is out there and events such as College Goal Sunday are intended to provide some sense of hope to students who feel

that financial resources are the biggest barrier to a college education."

Owens and other colleges and universities currently participate in several need-based federal and state funded grant programs, work study opportunities, and loans, which all require applicants to file a FAFSA form to determine financial need. Additionally, numerous scholarships are available at the various academic institutions.

Specific programs accessible to students include the Federal Pell Grant, the Ohio College Opportunity Grant, the Federal Stafford Loan, the Federal PLUS Loan and the Federal Work Study, among others.

For more information, contact the College's Office of Financial Aid at (567) 661-7343 or 1-800-GO-OWENS, Ext. 7343, or (567) 429-3540 or 1-800-GO-OWENS, Ext. 3540.

Do you know someone who cares for children in their home whom you think deserves *recognition?*

People who care for children in their homes provide a special kind of guidance and education built on nurturing relationships. If you know someone who provides such an environment, nominate them for the:

BP - A Place of Our Own *Caregiver Recognition Awards*

WGTE Public Media will honor six outstanding in-home care providers at a special luncheon on Saturday, March 15, 2008. You may nominate yourself or someone you know well.

Go to www.wgte.org/awards to download the nomination form or call 419-380-4638 and ask to have a form mailed to you.

The process is simple: just fill out the form and return it to WGTE by Friday, February 15. The Ready to Learn Community Advisory Committee will select the winners, who will be notified by March 1.

Be sure to tune in to "A Place of Our Own," the corresponding television series, weekdays on WGTE TV at 5:30 a.m. and on WGTE Family at 3:00 p.m.



Major funding for "A Place of Our Own" is provided by BP, First 5 California, and the Corporation for Public Broadcasting. "A Place of Our Own" is a production of KCET/Los Angeles.

KOET



wgte
Public Media

The 24th Annual Conference for Aspiring Minority Youth

Sojourner's Truth Staff

The University of Toledo and the Office of EXCELLENCE Programs hosted the 24th Annual Conference for Minority Youth on Saturday, January 26. As usual, the Student Union auditorium was

School graduate, Pittsburgh Steelers wide receiver Nate Washington as an example.

The keynote speaker himself, Byron Pitts, national correspondent for CBS News, provided more than his share

Pitts, a native of Baltimore, MD who earned his undergraduate degree from Ohio Wesleyan University, spoke of faith, humility and inspiration. "Never say you can't, 'cause you can," said Pitts. "Set your mind to do better. Our world is in need of dreamers and hard work is the secret."

Inspiration, Pitts noted, comes in all shapes and forms. In an interview with his mother, who sent all of her children to college, another reporter once asked: "How did a single mother manage to send three kids to college?" "Actually, it was easy," replied Ms. Pitts. "I told them that you will go to college or I will beat you to death."

After the plenary session, the audience was divided into two groups. Albert Earl, Jr., prevention educator on media influences, spoke with the students about the power of advertising on viewers and listeners.

The parents and educators spent several hours with a panel that included Pitts and members of the local media. The panel discussion — which reviewed the media's impact on public opinion — was moderated by Efram Graham of 13ABC Action News.

News, Shenikwa Stratford anchor at NBC 24 News and Fletcher Word of The Truth.

The Office of EXCELLENCE is responsible for the TOLEDO EXCEL program for students in grades nine through 12; Prep Tech for grades six through eight and Upward Bound for grades 10 through 12. David Young is the interim director of the Office of EXCELLENCE.



packed with students and parents eager for a bit of mid-winter inspiration.

There were, in fact, plenty of speakers capable of providing just that.

John Foley, superintendent of Toledo Public Schools, made reference to Vince Young, quarterback of the NFL Tennessee Titans, who has recently returned to the University of Texas in order to complete his degree requirements and to honor his promise to his mother to get his diploma.

Lucas County Commissioner Ben Konop told the youngsters in attendance that the future of the Toledo area community was squarely in their hands. "We need you here; we cannot succeed without you," said Konop.

And from the City of Toledo, Councilman Michael Ashford arrived to present gifts and proclamations for the keynote speaker and Mayor Carleton Finkbeiner exhorted his audience to persevere, using Scott High

of inspiration.

Pitts — raised in poverty by a single mother, illiterate until the age of 12, a stutterer until the age of 20, rejected by The Blade when he applied for a college student summer internship because, as he was told, he could not write well, was not aggressive enough and should consider a different career — has covered any number of significant events over the years including 9/11, the Iraqi War, the war in

"How did a single mother manage to send three kids to college?"

"Actually, it was easy," replied Ms. Pitts. "I told them that you will go to college or I will beat you to death."

Afghanistan, the refugee crisis in Kosovo, the Elian Gonzalez story and the Florida presidential vote recount.

The panel was comprised of Albert Flores, teacher at Libbey High School, Alexis Means of 13ABC Action



Photo Courtesy of Al Smith



*Standing (l. to r.): David Young, Fletcher Word, Albert Flores, Efram Graham
Seated: Alexis Means, Byron Pitts, Shenikwa Stratford*

Photo Courtesy of Al Smith

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★ Leg & Thigh ★

99¢

12 tender strips & 4 biscuits
and choice of any large side order

\$12.99

50 pieces of dark (original or spicy)

only \$35.00



Offer good for Church's Chicken locations at
2124 Franklin Avenue, Toledo and
Byrne & Glendale, Toledo

IMA Installs New Officers

Sojourner's Truth Staff



IMA Officers (seated l. to r.) Pastor William Lucas, Pastor Raymond Bishop, Pastor Cedric Brock, Pastor Otis Gordon, Pastor Leroy Williams

The Interdenominational Ministerial Alliance (IMA) of Toledo and Vicinity held its annual installation service on Sunday, January 27 for its new slate of officers and the group's newly instituted advisory board.

Pastor Cedric Brock remains as president of the IMA while Pastors William Lucas and Donald Perryman will serve as first and second vice presidents, respectively.

Pastor Otis Gordon is the

treasurer, Rev. LeRoy Williams is the executive secretary, Pastor Willie Perryman is the parliamentarian, Pastor James Williams, Jr. is the sergeant of arms and Pastor Shirley Sparks is the chaplain.

The advisory board, which will "keep us with a solid foundation and on track with our mission statement," said Brock just before last Sunday's event. The board members are Pastor James

Willis, Pastor Robert Culp, Bishop Duane Tisdale, Bishop Nelson Clark and Elder Chester Trail.

The IMA plans to implement "partnerships, equitable partnerships—political, medical and economic—that will keep us involved and empowered," said LeRoy Williams. "Economic empowerment and justice are some of the things we will work diligently at, particularly through our economic justice fund."

The IMA will be adopting the Family House as a project as well as other projects that "will increase the wellness of our community including our congregations," added Williams.

The mission statement of the IMA is "to promote unity among Christian denominations through fellowship with one another sharing the love of Jesus Christ through evangelism, education, social political action, economic development and family ties."

Pastor Raymond Bishop of Mt. Pilgrim Baptist presented the sermon for the installation service.



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Tightness or pressure in your chest. Pain may also spread to your shoulders, neck and arms.

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*AZG Research, 2007

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The Community Club's Hiatus

On December 31, 2007, the Community Club held a Bon Voyage New Year's Eve party. The celebration was held to ring in 2008 and to thank members for their support on the last day at the Franklin and Pearl location.

Over the past two years, the Community Club has provided many services for residents of the north end and surrounding Toledo area. Highlights of these projects include:

- Holiday food baskets for families in need at Christmas and Thanksgiving;
- Free weekly hustle dance lessons for fun and exercise;
- Academic tutoring for elementary school students;
- Safe Halloween candy giveaway and Trick-or-Treat bag inspection;
- Black History Month jazz and art fundraiser;
- Informational sessions on heart health;
- Discussion on candidates and issues on ballot in Lucas County;
- WOW (Women on Wednesday) weekly networking and relaxation event.

The Community Club looks forward to seeing its members – over 950 strong – and continuing community service at its new location – details are forthcoming

Rose, Finkbeiner Square Off...

(Continued from Page 5)

-tor of the AA/CC office left her post amid contentiousness last year when the mayor decided to eviscerate the office, eliminate its autonomy and demote the leader from a director to a commissioner. That decision has resulted in Griffin filing discrimination complaints with two government agencies.

Griffin has been named the director of the newly established SCLC Toledo office.

"I no longer work in City Hall," said Griffin, "because I cannot be bought and I cannot be compromised. When decisions are made, we will be a part of the decision-making process. We are over-taxed and under-represented and we are saying to the

mayor, we are saying to City Council, 'your time is running out.'"

Never one to avoid a confrontation, Finkbeiner quickly responded with a press conference the following day. That morning his administration issued a press release touting the 2:00 PM conference as one that would be conducted by the mayor and black leaders. In the event, however, the conference produced the mayor and about three dozen supporters of the levy. Only a handful of the three dozen were African-American and all but one of those were city employees.

"Let me be blunt, pain and suffering is being felt by a lot of Americans in 2008 and it is not unique to the African-

American community in Toledo, Ohio," said Finkbeiner at the onset of his remarks. "Many whites and Hispanics are suffering as well. Neither of the speakers last



night expressed concern for all Toledoans when they urged defeat of the ☐ of one percent payroll tax.

"I don't hire or promote,

fire or demote men and women based upon their race. The ☐ of one percent payroll tax and the school levy are hugely important to the growth and well-being of this

city and they are important to the men, women and children of the African-American community."

Calling Rose's comments irresponsible and uncaring, particularly since he is not a resident of the City of Toledo and would not suffer the consequences of such a defeat of the renewal, Finkbeiner urged "the leadership of the African-American community to underscore the importance of the ☐ of one percent renewal as well as of the school levy."

Rose, in fact, had not made any mention of the school renewal levy, but during the rally, a member of the audience did shout out that the two should be connected.

"We Toledoans do control our future," continued the mayor, "not the residents of other parts of Ohio or of other states and levies are important to all segments of the community."

The Friday press conference contained remarks from a number of supporters - FLOC's Baldemar Velasquez, City Councilwoman Betty Shultz, Board

of Community Relations Director Juanita Greene.

Plan Commission member, Bernard "Pete" Culp, also spoke and defended Rose's actions. "In fairness to Floyd Rose, whether or not he came from another area or not ... the truth doesn't change. I'll defend his against anyone in this room for his right to talk." But Culp contended that Rose had not gone far enough in his singling out the City of Toledo for its discriminatory practices. He noted that the Toledo Public Schools, the University of Toledo and, in particular, the Lucas County Democratic Party "are institutions that should be looked at.

"It's the Democratic Party's fault that Wilma Brown and Michael Ashford are not in leadership positions," said Culp.

Now that Rose has left

brought to Toledo, Griffin was asked the day after the rally?

"Because there was a general feeling - and I have talked to a lot of people - that not enough was being done," said Griffin. "People have been far too silent and we needed a new vehicle with fresh ideas and people to articulate what we are going to do to improve conditions in the black community. We are particularly interested in black businesses and totally revitalizing the African-American community and bring it back to what it once was."

The mayor for his part did not cease his campaign with his Friday press conference. On Saturday morning he called together several influential black ministers for breakfast in an effort to enlist their congregations' support for the levy.



Toledo - at least until the primary - the leadership of the SCLC will carry on the fight to minimize African-American support for the ☐ renewal levy.

Why was the SCLC

And Rose has promised to return to Toledo on the weekend prior to the March 4 primary to help those opposed to the passage of the levy fight the good fight.

Hot Grits...

(Continued from Page 3)

by the community itself, particularly as we often leave our churches on Sunday shouting and dancing, speaking in tongues, and having a spirit-filled time but on Monday it is business as usual and nothing around us has changed.

The first question is: **Do we WANT things to get better?** Do we want what we say we want and do we want what we think we want? Sometimes the communal pain of the African-American community is used to advance individual black folk. Sometimes black pain becomes profitable for others. Extermination from a toxic relationship requires sacrifice, independence, risk, and responsibility and it is easy to become comfortable in messed up relationships. The question is whether the community has the will to take drastic measures or has it become comfortable in its pain and suffering while becoming addicted to political medicine and solutions that comfort us but do not cure us and that take away the pain but not the sickness.

This question is relevant and is bigger than Reverend Rose, the SCLC, or even Martin Luther King, Jr. and the Civil Rights movement itself because no real change or progressive action comes about without the mass grass roots mobilization of ordinary people who want it and have the fearlessness to hold its leadership accountable and their feet to the fire.

The other question that needs to be answered is: **Is it worth the fight?** It is easy to be cynical or even indifferent or ambivalent and "go along to get along" because to do otherwise would be bad

for Toledo, regardless of the African-American community's interests. But before we can talk about rising above our collective differences and talk about what's good for Toledo we must first confront the policies and conditions that make these differences a reality.

Unity cannot be mandated but is a result of struggle. Therefore all fighting is not bad. Healthy fighting is progressive and not divisive and causes us to pay attention to the divisions that exist. In order to resolve problems we have to confront them and fight for our beliefs rather than internalize the hurts that produce dysfunction. I do know that whether you are talking about Martin Luther King,

Jr. and President Lyndon Johnson or Roosevelt and the labor unions, political leaders do not make changes on the basis of moral imperatives. They put forth change in response to public pressure and opinion.

And when there is a mass movement of people willing to stand up and express themselves, nuisances suddenly become inevitabilities and only then can we become a multigenerational, multiracial city of inclusion that has reached a higher level.

So don't throw the grits just yet, but we owe it to ourselves to at least start boiling the water.

Contact Dr. Donald Perryman at dcperryman@centerofhope.org



Janice, Hubert's Daughter



HOSPICE OF NORTHWEST OHIO

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"Hospice of Northwest Ohio turned my doubt into trust."

"I was very protective of my father, especially after his health failed. I wasn't going to allow just anybody to come in to provide care for him.

"Our family didn't have the resources to hire a private nurse. But together, we decided to contact Hospice of Northwest Ohio.

"When Hospice came into our home, I just sat back and checked them out. They always explained to us what they were going to do and how they were going to do it. And the level of care was awesome. Hospice provided nursing care, aides to help in the home, plus all the medications and equipment my dad needed.

"All the services Hospice provided were covered by Medicare.* I don't think a lot of people are aware of the excellent care available. Families in situations like ours need to call Hospice of Northwest Ohio."

To ask for our free DVD, "Hospice Answers," call 419-661-4001. Or for more information, visit hospicenwo.org.

*Hospice care is covered by Medicare, Medicaid and most insurance. No one is turned away due to inability to pay.

Answers for Living the Last Months of Life.™

PollNobma Results For November

By Warren Woodberry
Special to The Truth

In an effort to let them know what you really think, the Northwest Ohio Black Media Association has introduced PollNobma. PollNobma will cover issues that affect how you live and will give notice of how you feel on issues that are of importance to you and your future.

The results of the November PollNobma have revealed that 90 percent of respondents are convinced that the black community has little or no influence at City Hall and even those from Toledo who now live in Lafayette Indiana agree.

Only 10 percent responded that the African-American vote has an influence. With the almost clean sweep of elected African-Americans from power, it is hard to argue with those who feel we have little or no influence at City Hall.

In side notes added to the responses, many expressed that we have been duped again and that our elected black officials failed to understand the game of politics. Once again selected female, Trojan Horse candi-

dates from City Council and Toledo Public Schools were led around the black community by those who were misled into believing their sincerity. Promises made seemed to be promises forgotten once the votes were counted. Will we ever learn?

To the question of will Dorrr Street ever return as an active business district, the overwhelming responses said "NOT IN MY LIFETIME!"

There was a balanced response to the status of police relations, with equal votes for improving and deteriorating. It probably depends on how late you stay out at night.

Ninety percent were against the removal of the principal at Pickett School, with several side notes suggesting another power play against black principals and teachers. When will we ever learn!

Lack of interest, lack of knowledge and school reception were the main cause of why parents were not more involved with the schools in the hood, with lack of interest having the edge with 70

percent.

The Greater Toledo Urban League received 70 percent of the votes for the organization that best represents the interests of the black community followed by women's organizations such as the Links, The Charms and Zeta Phi Beta with black churches in last place among those organizations that received votes. There were no votes for the NAACP or the Black Chamber of Commerce.

Seventy percent said that they received their news from a cross section of media outlets, while 15 percent read only African-American papers. Fifteen percent received their news from TV.

Lack of jobs 50 percent, drugs 25 percent, while lack of education received 15 percent of the votes.

With the exorbitant high prices of salty and sugary food products sold at the carry-outs, it was no surprise that 70 percent of the people wanted a major grocery store in the neighborhood. Next on the list was the desire for a major quality sit down restaurant chain. (Not a McDonalds or Burger

King).

Male responders 45 percent
Female responders 55 percent

Average age males 49 years

Average age women 51 years

Married 95 percent men 70 percent women

Students response 0 percent

Living in Toledo. All but one.

January PollNobma

1. Are our black politicians smarter than a 5th grader?

Definitely Sometimes Not at all Not sure

2. Do banks that hold the most African-American bank accounts serve the community?

Yes No Somewhat Not at all

3. Would you open a business on Dorrr Street?

Yes No Possibly Not in my lifetime

4. Our mayor has been compared to President Bush in tactics and style.

Agree Disagree Not sure

5. Are African-American church leaders courted to control the black community?

Yes No Sometimes Not sure

6. Do we use our vote wisely or do we give it away for promises.

Wisely Unwisely Stupidly Not sure

7. Who would you support for mayor in the next election _____ (Write in name)

8. Do you believe that there is a racist element in city government in politics?

Yes No Somewhat Not sure

9. It is said that the black vote is split so that its full power cannot be utilized?

Agree Disagree Somewhat true Not sure

10. Do you believe that some people keep a mental scorecard of the politicians' promises at election or are promises forgotten and broken with regularity

Most keep mental scorecard Most promises forgotten and broken Not sure

Please type in an X beside your selection when sending results directly to PollNobma@yahoo.com.

All we ask is that you check off the one answer that comes the closest to your personal opinion and then either email your checked off form to pollnobma@yahoo.com or Mail the Truth cutout to: P.O. Box 352675 Toledo, Oh 43635-2675 Results of the poll will be published in The Sojourner's Truth Newspaper.

If you would like to be selected as a member of our select polling group, please make a note of that on your return form.

URBan Radio Broadcasting Promotes Curtis Downey to Market Manager in Toledo

Special to The Truth



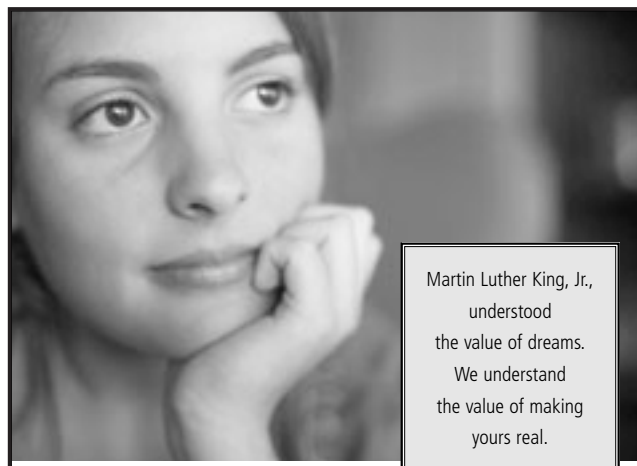
URBan Radio Communications, LLC, ("URBan Radio") has promoted Curtis Downey to Market Manager in Toledo, Ohio.

URBan Radio hired Downey in 2005 as the director of sales for WIMX-FM and WJZE-FM in Toledo. During his tenure with URBan Radio, Downey has been an integral part of increasing revenue for the URBan Radio group in Toledo.

"We're happy to be able to fill the position by promoting directly from within company. Curtis is a well-qualified, seasoned radio professional who has done an excellent job building our assets in Toledo," said Kevin Wagner, president and CEO.

Downey has enjoyed a career in radio sales and management for over 25 years. Prior to joining URBan Radio in 2005, Downey served as the director of sales for Clear Channel Radio in Memphis, TN.

URBan Radio Communications, LLC is the parent company of URBan Radio Broadcasting, LLC, a radio broadcasting company serving selected small and mid-size markets in the Southeastern United States. Founded by Kevin Wagner, a seasoned radio entrepreneur, URBan Radio currently owns and operates in Florence-Muscle Shoals, Alabama; Alexandria, Louisiana; Columbus/Starkville, Mississippi; Meridian, Mississippi; Tupelo, Mississippi and Toledo, Ohio.



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Martin Luther King, Jr., had a dream of well-being for all people. We can help you secure yours.

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Together, we can dream and achieve.

For more information, call 1-800-347-5626 or visit NationalCity.com.

NationalCity.



A Body Without a Head Is....

(Continued from Page 4)

your school, teachers and students. You would also speak before outside groups and agencies as a promoter of your building.

A person cannot be a building "leader"/ principal/administrator and teacher at the same time. There is NO TIME to regularly be in the classroom with their students, to do the things a good teacher does. If the teacher is not teaching, but is playing the role of the building administrator she/he becomes an administrator not a teacher, regardless of the title. Thus, you have gone full circle to having a building principal without the title and probably without the training, knowledge, and dedication to do

the job well.

In Toledo we have two examples of failed attempts at running schools without an actual head, Libbey and Scott. There is lack of purpose and chaos in both of these buildings because no one is in charge! There is no reason to experiment with our really tiny ones who have no one to defend and protect them from the obvious inadequacies of the GEM Academy, other than the members of the Board of Education.

If TPS and TFT truly believe the concepts of the GEM Academy will lead to a successful learning environment try it at Grove-Patterson. When it works there, then transplant it into Pickett. Stop

experimenting with inner-city children to their demise!

In the meantime, give Pickett a strong dedicated HEAD principal - preferably a Strong Black Male, dedicated creative teachers, a viable curriculum which teachers reading, writing, arithmetic and science. Provide enrichment classes and experiences that build self-esteem with a sense of being loved and having great positive expectations. These are the things that will turn Pickett around.

Even Toledo Public Schools would experience true positive improvement with these entities in place.

To members of the Toledo Board of Edu-

cation,

This is a new year. You are a new organization. You have been given the charge to make important decisions on behalf of the

children of Toledo.

Please, be the leadership you have been chosen for and deny this attempt to throw our children into the clutches of a headless

experimental monster.

Avie C. Dixon,
Retired teacher/educator

...Political Cream Pie

(Continued from Page 3)

of Mayor Carty Finkbeiner (the name Finkbeiner in Chinese means: "He who calls black men King Kong").

It appears that the dark, awakening giant is tired of the diet of nonsense and empty peanut shells that purportedly were to pass for sustenance. The political and economic handlers are beginning to feel the rumble of change in the air and that change means that the economic pie, which the predominantly white community has fought tooth and nail to eat all for itself, will be required to be sliced up differently.

Gone are the heady days when the politicians and the money shakers could simply "cough" and the black community would "burp" in harmony. Gone are the good ol' days when politicians could go into any inner city black church on a Sunday and just grin and spout a lot of gibberish; and the grinning pastor and the obedient congregants would swoon in unison since massa was spending a few quality moments with them.

The smell of unity is in

the air and those who have a nose to smell need to breathe in deeply since it is a good smell.

What is still needed is a political cream pie to be made and thrown into the face of the following clowns:

(1) Fran Lawrence and her brazen attempts to run the Toledo schools from her hip pocket who pals around with her staunchest ally WilliAnn Moore leader (?) of the moribund local NAACP chapter.

(2) Any politico who comes to a black church bearing nothing but a Pepsodent grin and with no programs or economic "earmarks" for that church or community. Note: Have the ushers escort that charlatan to the door and toss him or her out.

(3) The Toledo Regional Chamber of Commerce for their ill-advised attempts to engage in tactics of ignorance when it comes to real advocacy on behalf of black contractors and vendors who are attempting to share the loot of fat and lucrative state and city and county contracts.

(4) Local Negroes (you know who you are) who gladly serve as gate blockers and flunkies for majority companies and entities and whose singular purpose in life is to make a buck either selling out or hampering black people and entrepreneurs who are seeking inclusion into contracts or projects financed by your public tax dollars.

(5) Local thugs and punks who prey upon people of color by their vile acts of black on black crime and those who reject education as being a "white thang."

Note: You wanna be tough and a bad ass? Get an education. You wanna throw such a pie? Simple. In your areas of influence and contacts when the above issues show up, you also show up and simply resist and make your presence known and your voice heard. I have stated the following maxim before: During the Great Migration from the South, black people of strength and vision pushed onto Detroit but the weaker and scared ones settled in Toledo. Show me that I was wrong.

...Massa's House

(Continued from Page 4)

We were bamboozled! Nevertheless, there are a still a few in the city who have not learned their lesson. While citizens are suffering the effects of the "massa's" rule, some house negroes insist on supporting the "massa." When will they realize that the Emancipation Proclamation set us free; we are free to vote for what we choose, and vote out who we choose! When will the house negroes realize that compromising on issues, character and integrity get us nowhere? And to continue to do so for a sake of a position, key or glass award?

The reality is that when the "massa" is finished with you he will terminate you from your position, change the locks so the key will no longer open any door and leave you stuck with the glass award that has shattered your ego and integrity and has left you begging for scraps. I guess the O'Jays say it best in their song: "What they do, they smile in your face; ill the time they want to take your place, the back stabbers!"

The mayor said that "voting against the income tax renewal would result in major jobs being cut that are vital to the community." Question - since when is the mayor concerned about the budget or job loss? Since when is he concerned with the residents of Toledo? Must I add this is not an issue of black and white, as the mayor treats everyone like ...

What I am saying is that this same mayor is the one who allegedly assaulted someone physically and verbally at the Erie Street Mar-

ket in 2000. On the Daily Show segment that aired during the 1997-98 season he compared Toledo to Hollywood. In 1998 he was fined \$400 and court costs after pleading guilty to ethics charges, realized a \$10,000 profit from Owens Corning's purchase of his condo, and his failure to publicly report the gain. He plagiarized a single line in his KICK-OFF speech in 1998. He suggested relieving the problem of the noise complaints from the neighbors of Toledo Express Airport by selling homes nearby at low cost to deaf

Not to mention more recently the unethical and unjust firing of two African-American directors in the city, and we cannot forget about the King Kong statement. In addition, he wanted to close all the city pools, he didn't want to replace the retiring fire chief but combined responsibilities with the police chief plus other cuts in the safety budget. He wanted to eliminate affirmative action, charge \$6 per month for trash collection, sell city assets to seed economic development, he spent \$9,996 of city money to complete the installation of shower facilities in the City Government building and the list goes on and on.

We must remember that he is a political weathervane, however he feels at that moment dictates what he says and what he will do. Let's remember during his long career in public service he has been a member of multiple parties. At various times and for various offices he has run as a Republican, a

Democrat and an Independent. Regardless of the party association, Carty has but one goal, and that is his independent agenda. James 1:8, "A double-minded man is unstable in all his ways."

Mayor Finkbeiner suggested that "for a resident of Valdosta Georgia, or any other state to campaign to defeat a school levy or payroll tax in Toledo Ohio is irresponsible and uncaring." The truth of the matter is that for all the injustice that Carty has done in Toledo, it is irresponsible and uncaring for him to be permitted year after year to speak at the MLK event, an event in which we honor a man who stood for justice and equality. Furthermore, if Carty can go to London to misrepresent Toledo for a bogus award to use to push his agenda further, surely the citizens can summon the help of a Valdosta resident or any other person to lead us out of this plantation to freedom.

In closing, we must look at the facts, the facts don't lie. Recently Carty had a fundraiser, this is a sign that a reelection effort is forthcoming. Carty will try to rally another team of black supporters promising them positions if they work his campaign. You know, the house negro vs. field negro story. Nevertheless, as I said months before it was echoed in the press conferences and media over the past few weeks...ENOUGH IS ENOUGH!

You may contact Bishop Stephen Ward at pastormward@yahoo.com

U.G.E. Presents "Saturday Night Live"

A Night of Original, Live, Quality Urban Music

By Michael Hayes
Minister of Culture



from the state of Ohio.

Since our early teens we've planned on moving to New York, making hits, ruling the charts and airwaves and shifting the entire scope of urban music through our work.

After coming back from one of our New York trips a few years ago, my partner and I decided to go ahead and get the necessary pieces to form a music company.

As producers, we have always had dozens and dozens of instrumentals just ready for the right artist so having a stable of our own artists increases our chances of making it in this business because now we can get placements on our own through our tracks OR we can get our artists signed or possibly get investors and go independent.

Hey, when you want something to happen bad enough ... your strategy is open to whatever justifies the means.

So that's us. The Undergodz. Semi-conscious rappers, but producer/songwriters who have done everything from urban, pop, inspirational etc.

So that roster of artists we said we wanted ... well, we got it.

Our biggest advantage right now is that we can blend top notch production with skilled and clever songwriting/arranging that fits the various styles of each act we have on U.G.E.

We pride ourselves on making what we call "real music for real people".

So, you're not gonna hear a lot of songs about spinning rims and drug deals.

That's not us.

No matter which act of

ours it is, you're gonna get some real life stuff.

Even the club joints "We Get Chose" and "Tryna Get Cool" are suited for the everyday club hopper to relate to without being full of silly lies anyone could see through.

I never understood rappers who I KNEW FOR A FACT that they grew up in the burbs on only visited the hood every other weekend, but then they get on track and talk about how many birds they flip and n*ggaz they shot.

WHATEVER!
While U.G.E. is still looking for investors, positioning ourselves for a label deal, etc.... we continue to develop our artists sound and catalog.

So by coming to Saturday Night Live Feb. 2nd Peacock Cafe 9 PM sharp.

You will see Darron Scott, Aye Dee, Onasis, and new recruits Leigh Ashley and another artist we are still thinking of a stage name for.

We need more executives to help with styling, online promotion, general business stuff and all that. But with just me and my partner as co-CEO's, we manage our roster of diverse sounds and they all have what it takes to make it in this industry.

As always you can check us out online www.myspace.com/undergodzent

SPECIAL GUESTS
S.S.T.R.E.S is an underground M.C. born in Toledo but famous in Bowling Green.

One of the few people who can throw a successful concert/party every time and his name rings bells with bar

owners, hip hop fans and just regular club heads.

His sound is unique and his delivery and stage presence is fast becoming legendary.

A longtime friend of mine, we used to freestyle walking around downtown in the dead of winter with our crew... just trying to trick ourselves into believing Toledo was

NYC. He used to work at Showcase Cinemas at the mall when we were in high school, and we'd be right there freestyling in between tearing movie tickets.

I'm happy to give Toledo a chance to see a talent B.G. has celebrated for years. (shouts to Eye Rek Shon, D. Jones, dee jay abyss, Jen-

nifer (a true fan), A B and Ha Steez)

Da Basix... man, where do I begin?

The Undergodz and Da Basix have always had respect for each other.

They specialized in sample based boom bap, which we are still trying to lock down.

(Continued on Page 14)

Minority Development Financing Advisory Board Awards Financial Assistance to Ohio Minority Businesses

Special to The Truth

Lieutenant Governor Lee Fisher last week announced that the Minority Development Financing Advisory Board has awarded a Minority Business Direct Loan and bonding lines to three certified Ohio Minority Business owners. An \$83,600 Minority Business Direct Loan was awarded to Dr. Kettle Joseph Daniels, M.D., located in Toledo (Lucas County); a \$500,000 bonding line was approved for The Cleveland Group Excavating Division, LLC in Bedford (Cuyahoga County); and a \$400,000 bonding line was approved for Bryson/Tucker Electric, LLC in Toledo (Lucas County) through Ohio's Minority Business Bonding Program.

"We are pleased to assist these business owners as they strive for new growth opportunities around the State," said Fisher, who also serves as director of the Ohio Department of Development. "Access to financing and business assistance can make all the difference in helping Ohio's minority-owned companies realize their full potential."

Dr. Kettle Joseph Daniels M.D., in Toledo, was awarded an \$83,600 Minority Business Direct Loan. The office provides outpatient psychiatric and counseling services to adolescent and adult men and women. Services provided include the treatment of major mental illnesses such as schizophrenia, bipolar disorders, and major depression, as well as anxiety disorders and others. Also provided are treatment for eating disorders, chemical dependency, family and work-related issues, and women's health issues. The practice also performs clinical research trials. The project involves the purchase of land and a vacant medical building in Toledo. The loan will enable the company to expand the services of its mental health practice. The loan for Dr. Daniels is contingent upon approval of the State Controlling Board.

The Cleveland Group Excavating Division, LLC, in Bedford, a division of The Cleveland Group of Companies, LLC, was awarded a \$500,000 bonding line through Ohio's Minority Business Bonding Program. The Cleveland Group of Companies, LLC offers construction and real estate development, financial and strategic services through a number of different divisions and subsidiaries. The Excavating Division provides services that include site preparation, grading, drainage, demolition, hauling, roadways, water mains, and sewers. The bonding line will be utilized to increase commercial activities associated with construction and excavating and may help create 75 jobs at the company. The bonding line is contingent upon approval of the State Controlling Board.

Bryson/Tucker Electric, LLC, in Toledo, was awarded a \$400,000 bonding line through Ohio's Minority Business Bonding Program. Established in September 2003, Bryson/Tucker Electric, LLC, has areas of expertise in commercial and light industrial work, wastewater treatment plants, construction and renovations of schools and hospitals, high voltage work, and telecommunications. The company is able to act as a general contractor, as well as a subcontractor. Bryson/Tucker Electric, LLC, currently has eight staff members, including the owners, and the bonding line may help create five jobs at the company over the next three years. The bonding line is contingent upon approval of the State Controlling Board.

The Minority Direct Loan Program provides low interest rate loans for the purchase or improvement of fixed assets to minority-owned businesses certified by the State, the Northern Ohio Minority Business Council, and the South Central Ohio Minority Business Council. The Minority Business Bonding Program provides bonding assistance to minority businesses who otherwise cannot obtain bonding. The goals of the program are to produce long term positive results by assisting minority businesses in eventually obtaining bonding from the private sector; and to provide minority businesses with the best opportunity for obtaining contracts, long-term success and stability.

The **Minority Development Financing Advisory Board** is charged with providing the Director of the Ohio Department of Development with recommendations for assistance through the Minority Business Direct Loan Program and the Minority Business Bonding Program. The Ohio Department of Development's **Division of Minority Business Affairs** works to create a business environment in Ohio that assists in the growth and development of minority-owned firms, which are defined as being at least 51 percent owned and controlled by one of the following ethnicities: African-American, Hispanic, Native American and Asian.

... "Saturday Night Live"

(Continued from Page 13)

We specialized in originally composed full out instrumentation, which they have since added to their arsenal as well.

Production wise, the talents of Lagik and D.J. Ill Sid along with D.J. Mpress have been sought after the area's truest Hip Hop sound. Of

course never wanting to be pigeonholed into the Neo Soul/ Conscious category... they have branched out in recent years.

On stage, the aforementioned rock alongside Swill Gates... a student of the Red Man school of "say some of the roughest one-liners that'll

leave true heads stunned" rhyming... I always feel right at home watching these dudes get down on stage.

Shouts to the whole entire Soul Beat Music Group (Twin, Kool Keith, I see ya'll).

YASU.

Imani Lateef is a very

close friend of mine and a longtime music enthusiast.

He's been involved in Toledo's entertainment scene for years designing logos, flyers, promoting his own successful poetry night among other ventures.

Yasu is Imani's first foray into artist management, and

it couldn't have been a better pick. This is a female singer/songwriter whose voice seems flat out limitless. I've heard some of her material, I've seen her perform live only once. That's all it took. Her roots are in gospel, but her music is anything from soul to R&B to inspirational

and maybe even some funk. Trust me, you will be glad you learned of this new talented artist.

SATURDAY NIGHT LIVE FEB. 2nd Peacock Cafe 9pm

Why Do An Entire Night of Original Music? In other

(Continued on Page 16)

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Intake Specialist

Make a Change for the Better with Legal Aid

Advocates for Basic Legal Equality, Inc. (ABLE), a non-profit law firm that provides free, high quality legal assistance to eligible low-income residents of western Ohio, seeks an Intake Specialist to work with Legal Aid Line, a national model intake and brief service system. Legal Aid Line is the initial telephone point of contact for clients of ABLE and Legal Aid of Western Ohio (LAWO). The position will be based in ABLE's Toledo office. Primary responsibilities of the position include telephone screening of client applications for financial eligibility, and initial determination of the nature of the client's problem for appropriate referral to a Legal Aid Line attorney or other source of assistance.

Applicant must have excellent computer and telephone skills; excellent communication skills and be able to relate to, and work well with, low-income persons who may be experiencing immediate legal, financial or personal stress. Internet and e-mail familiarity, and word processing experience in a Windows-based environment is required. Call Center experience is helpful. Excellent typing skills required. Spanish speaking ability is highly preferred but not required. Compensation is commensurate with experience; excellent benefits package. Send resume electronically as soon as possible, in Microsoft Word format only to:

E-mail: jobs@ablelaw.org

Subject: Intake Specialist Position

Applications will only be accepted by e-mail. Position will remain open until filled. Equal access to ABLE's office is available. Applicants requiring accommodation to participate in the interview/application process should contact the Recruitment Coordinator at the e-mail address listed above. EOE

Manager Glass Studio

Toledo Museum of Art. Will oversee all aspects of state-of-the-art studio glass facility and provide Museum liaison with the local, national and international glass community. Requires BFA with focus on glass (MFA preferred) and a minimum of five years' experience in a glass arts studio, with at least one year of direct supervisory experience. Must be able to operate successfully at both the strategic and functional level within the Museum's administrative structure. Full job description available at www.toledomuseum.org. To apply, e-mail resume with cover letter to jobs@toledomuseum.org or mail to HR, Toledo Museum of Art, PO Box 1013, Toledo, OH 43697. EOE

CLINICAL THERAPIST - JOINT VENTURE PROGRAM

Opportunity is available for experienced Clinical Therapist to work in a Joint Venture Program providing individual, family and group counseling and case management services. Candidate must possess a Master's degree, a minimum of two years experience working with individuals with chemical dependency issues and one of the following Ohio licenses: LSW, LISW, PC, PCC, LCDC III or LICDC.

Send or fax resume with cover letter to:



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

Manager Retail Operations

Toledo Museum of Art, full time. Responsible for all aspects of Museum retail operations, including art gallery sales, museum store, museum cafe and food service; requires hands-on management in all aspects of the operations, and willingness to work evenings and weekends as necessary.

Maintain and increase profitability of operation; develop and grow new avenues of services and merchandise.

Requires bachelor's degree or equivalent, with minimum of five years' experience in retail management, with knowledge of product development process and experience planning in-store promotions and events; some food service management strongly preferred. Must be willing to work collaboratively with all areas of staff. Job description available at www.toledomuseum.org.

To apply, e-mail resume with cover letter to jobs@toledomuseum.org, or mail to: HR, Toledo Museum of Art, PO Box 1013, Toledo, OH 43697. EOE.

Sr. Business Manager for Athletics The University of Toledo

This position is responsible for the budget development and financial reporting for all Athletics accounts; including review and reconciliation of revenue and expenditures. The incumbent works with coaches and administrators on management of current budget and long range planning. Prepares and communicates financial information for department. Other area of responsibility is to oversee and manage HR functions for the department.

A successful applicant will possess a Bachelor's degree. Master's degree in Business is preferred. A minimum of five years financial experience is required. A minimum of two years inter-collegiate Athletic experience including knowledge of NCAA guidelines is required. The candidate will also have strong ability to multi-task, communicate well, and adapt to change. The salary will be commensurate with education and experience within the approved hiring range.

To apply, employees should submit a cover letter (include position title and job #), a resume, as well as the names and contact information for three professional references via email to recruit@utoledo.edu. **Application materials must be received by Friday, February 22, 2008.**

The University of Toledo is an Equal Access, Equal Opportunity, Affirmative Action Employer and Educator.

Receptionist/Intake Specialist

Make a Change for the Better with Legal Aid

Advocates for Basic Legal Equality, Inc. (ABLE), a non-profit law firm that provides free, high quality legal assistance to eligible low-income residents of western Ohio, seeks a full-time Receptionist/Intake Specialist to work with the ABLE Toledo office. Responsibilities include to, and appropriate telephone



Additional responsibilities include working with the Legal Aid Line, a national model intake and brief service system, as needed. Legal Aid Line is the initial telephone point of contact for clients of ABLE and Legal Aid of Western Ohio (LAWO). Intake Specialist responsibilities include telephone screening of client applications for financial eligibility, and initial determination of the nature of the client's problem for appropriate referral to a Legal Aid Line attorney or other source of assistance.

Applicant must possess excellent telephone, secretarial and computer skills, excellent communication skills and be able to relate to, and work well with, the general public, including low-income persons who may be experiencing immediate legal, financial or personal stress. Internet and e-mail familiarity, proficiency with computers and telephone systems and word processing experience in a Windows-based environment is required. Excellent typing skills required. Spanish speaking ability is highly preferred. Compensation is commensurate with experience; excellent benefits package. Send resume electronically as soon as possible, in Microsoft Word format only to:

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...“Saturday Night Live”

(Continued from Page 14)

cities, some larger, some smaller—it's a perfectly normal thing to go to a nightclub or whatever and hear all upcoming talent, all night long.

And guess what? PEOPLE IN OTHER CITIES HAVE A GOOD TIME!

The dance floor is actually packed BEFORE midnight.

The crowd is full of music lovers (instead of peeps wishing they were onstage instead of you) so there's an opportunity to build a real fan base as long as you give folks what they want.

So, if that happens in all these other places... why not Toledo?

But it gets deeper. I've been to raves in this city, I've been to rock shows in this city, and it does happen here.

Make no mistake... Our show on Saturday is NOT A CLUB SHOW.

You know the typical scenario: "local artist says they are performing at such and such club, you go and they do two or three songs and the DJ goes back to playing Lil Wayne and it's a wrap."

That's not gonna happen!

Doors open at 8pm. Ad-

mission is a low – low \$3. SHOW STARTS AT 9PM SHARP!

There will be intermissions. All nite long every act will rotate to keep the music fresh and the show unpredictable. And honestly, we feel we will have something for everyone.

D.J. Mpress is locking down the sound and we have some special industry guests sitting in V.I.P. and the ladies who will be special U.G.E. staff for the night will be helping everything run smoothly.

Big thanks to Bobby Gabriel for making this happen.

U.G.E. fans are all ages and backgrounds and Bobby saw me one night and was like

"When is U.G.E. doing another show, we gotta get y'all in here."

Appreciate the love. Speaking of love.

Rocky Love, Hutch Daddy, Keiser, Brandy of the Hot97/Mix95 family and Charlie Mack, Kaj Boogie and Schyler Meadows of the Juice FM family...

all ya'll know a little about U.G.E. – we'd love to have y'all come out and have a good time with us.

WORD TO THE WISE

Outside of this being a big night for my music, my label

and all that... I have to touch on something else I feel strongly about.

A few weeks ago a lot of ya'll seen me on T.V. after that drunk driving crash on 475.

I wrote about it a few weeks ago. I have to remind folks, YES... this event is at a bar.

YES, it's good to patronize the establishment.

BUT NO – you do NOT have superhuman powers that allow you to defy the laws of physics.

If you drink, you get tipsy.

If you drive while tipsy, you are endangering the lives of many.

After what we've seen so far this year, I MUST URGE EVERYONE TO DRINK RESPONSIBLY.

If you know you plan on getting tore down, don't drive... have your friend drive.... If you can't find a sober person to designated drive, then hell... I don't know.

Come down have a good time and catch a cab.

Hell, if you give me gas money – I'll take ya drunk ass home just to keep you off the streets!

Let's have a good time, and I look forward to seeing you all.

The Rance Allen Group Wins Stellar Award

Special to The Truth

Tyscot Records' The Rance Allen Group won "Quartet Of The Year" two weeks ago at the 23rd Annual Stellar Awards held at the Grand Ole Opry in Nashville, TN. The group was nominated with "7 Sons of Soul," "Mighty Clouds of Joy," "Slim & The Supreme Angeles" and "Pilgrim Jubilee Singers." The award was presented for the *Closest Friend* album (released – June, 2007) yielding the hit single of the same name.

"We are extremely happy about this award," says Rance Allen. This award follows two nominations from the previous album *The Live Experience* released in 2004. They also performed their new single "For Your Feet" to an arousing applause in the middle of the show.

No stranger to winning major awards, in their 30-year career, The Rance Allen Group have been nominated and/or won such as The Grammy, Soul Train, Stellar, BMI and they were inducted into the International Gospel Music Hall of Fame and Museum in November, 1998. In 2005 they were recipients

of the Gospel Music Workshop of America's (GMWA) Gospel Announcers Guild Chairman's Choice Gospel Legends Award.

Other Tyscot artists made major impacts on the Stellar Awards as Bishop Noel Jones presents *City Of Refuge*, who kicked off the show with their thunderous hit "Not About Us" led by sensational singer Jason Magee. The entire auditorium gave them a standing ovation. "They were awesome," said Barbara Wilson, producer of the Stellar Awards. "They were just incredible" said Michael Johnson, director of The Stellar Awards telecast. "I love this song so much – it's my ring tone on my phone" stated recording artist Marvin Sapp backstage at the show. Their number one debut album is on the Tyscot/Alpha Dog label and is in stores now.

Other Tyscot artists such as Damita Haddon (*Deitrick Haddon presents Voices of Unity*), Toledo native Shirley Murdock (*Soulfood*) and Bishop Noel Jones were presenters.

Tyscot Records had a banner 2006-07 with such projects from The Anointed Pace Sis-

ters, Rance Allen Group, Bishop Noel Jones presents *City Of Refuge*, Deitrick Haddon presents *Voices of Unity*, Shirley Murdock, Vashawn Mitchell and more.

Murdock released *Soul Food* in March, 2007 and yielded the hit single and video "I Love Me Better Than That." *The City Of Refuge* debuted at number one on the Billboard Gospel Charts this summer and yielded the hit single and video "Not About Us." The Rance Allen Group's *Closest Friend* was released this summer and the title track is still riding high on radio stations across the nation.

"We are proud of all our artists who received Stellar Award Nominations," says Bryant Scott, president. "We will strive to keep putting out great projects and lifting up the name of Jesus."

The show will air across the nation beginning January 26. Check local listings for each city or visit www.thestellarawards.com

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