



Jerry Jones

CEO WOODLANDS CONSULTING GROUP

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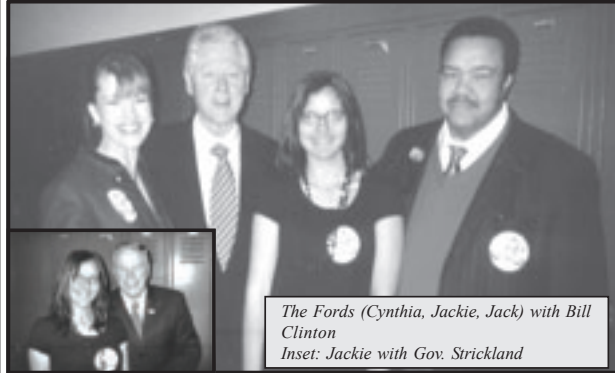
“I’m a person, because of networking and relationships, who has become a deal maker, someone who a person can come to and get things done. We stay with a client and consult on many aspects of their business to carry it through to fruition.”

My View

By Jack Ford
The Truth's Political Columnist

The Bill Clinton visit to Toledo was a typical political event but it did serve to energize a lot of Hillary supporters in northwest Ohio.

Bill Clinton is "The Natural" of the baby boomer generation just as Ronald Reagan was of his 25 years ago. My family had a chance to briefly exchange greeting with the former president and have pictures taken together.



As we wrap up Black History Month 2008, it seems fitting for me to remark on my experiences in making modest history as an elected official.

My election as the first black Ohio House of Representatives caucus leader in state history was significant. That breakthrough shocked the state capitol newsmen and the political insiders statewide. Being elected as the first black House minority leader was much more significant than becoming Toledo's first black mayor.

But the mayoralty carried much more power. So we were able to start a whole lot of new things such as Jay Black becoming the first black chief of staff. We started The University of Toledo's Center for Capacity Building. We started CareNet for under and uninsured Lucas County citizens.

We hired Jim Gant to be the first African-American to handle labor negotiations and brought in folks like Marci Cannon, Yulanda McCarty-Harris, Alan Bannister, Robert Gilchrist, Adia Boston and so many, many other minorities.

But the most important aspect of my election was that it happened. No one can ever say that a black man cannot get elected in Toledo because it happened in 2001. Who will be the next black mayor of Toledo?

Polls show that State Fire Marshall Mike Bell, former chief of the Toledo Fire Department, rates very high as a potential candidate. But he will probably have to face a veteran pol like Keith Wilkowski if both decide to run in 2009.

Wilkowski will be a formidable opponent and likely will have the tacit support of The Blade. But if Bell jumps in with no reservations, he could win. But he cannot half step his way to the 22nd Floor.

There are other names which quickly come to mind as potential mayoral candidates – Doni Miller, Paul Hubbard, Yolanda Jackson, for example. There are others less well known but who could do a great job at the helm of the city. Frankly, it is a demanding job but not impossible to master.

I am glad I picked Jim Jackson and David Ball to renovate the Steam Plant. It is going to happen and both will become very wealthy from this venture. Good for them and good for Toledo.

When I see former students or recruits that I had a role in shaping, I feel pretty good in observing their success – Pete Gerken, Tina Skeldon Wozniak, Kevin Boyce (Columbus City Council), Teresa Fedor are among the many on the list. Most of them would have made it anyway but I helped a little with a couple of them.

So that is the legacy of being the first black mayor – who did you bring along with you?

Vote on March 4 and remember the school levy issue – #7.

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

February 21

Urban League Thursdays: Hosted by Greater Toledo Urban League Young Professionals and 5/3 Minority Leadership Council; Networking Forum; 5/3 Center at One Seagate; 5:30 to 7:30 pm: 419-297-3664

Black History Month Celebration: Flower Hospital; 10:30 am to 1:30 pm; Catered by *We Are Ribs*; Entertainment by The Juice DJ One Time: 419-469-3716

February 22

"Rock Away from Teen Domestic Violence Prevention Dance:" Start HS DECA Marketing Club Chapter; 7:30 to 10:30 pm; In memory of Shynerra Grant; Proceeds go to Shaysforlife Foundation and TPS renewal levy: 419-671-3072

February 23

Black History Month at the Toledo Lucas County Public Library: Rudy Barker, renowned living history performer brings King's words to life; Noon to 4 pm; Downtown branch, McMaster Center; Documentary film; Historical photo exhibit: 419-259-5381

"Agape Heritage Gala – An Evening of Jazz:" Erie Street Market; Sponsored by Mt. Zion Church; Affinity Band, Sean Turner, Brooke Campbell; Ballroom dancing and food stations; 7 pm: 419-246-1850

"The Journey:" From Slavery to the Present; Presented by the Board of Christian Education of United Missionary Baptist; 5 pm

February 24

Interdenominational Ministerial Alliance Black History Month Service: Grace Temple C.O.G.I.C.; Guest preacher Pastor Donald Perryman of Center of Hope; 5 pm

Catholic Diocese Celebration of Black History: An evening with the Toledo Symphony and with the Toledo Interfaith Mass Choir; Three Kings – Martin Luther King, Jr., Art Tatum and Duke Ellington; 5 pm; St. Martin de Porres: 419-244-6711 ext. 511 or www.toledodiocese-spl.org

Indiana Avenue Baptist: 62nd Church Anniversary celebration; 4 pm afternoon service; Guests Rev. Theodis Horton and Shiloh Baptist: 419-246-3850

Sista's With a Vision Monthly Meeting: Faith-based group of talented women; 6 pm: 419-936-8989

Annual Black History Program: Southern Missionary Baptist; "Honoring Our Heritage;" 4:30 pm; Guest speaker Jim Lucas; Black History Dinner at 2 pm

Golden Rule Lodge # 129 100th Anniversary; Program, social hour and dinner; 4 pm: 419-243-6991

Old Ship of Zion: Ebenezer Baptist Church; 6 pm; Mass Choir

Bethesda Christian Center Cathedral Black History Month Celebration: State of the Black Church Address by Bishop Marjorie Holt; Clarion Reynolds Hotel; 11 am: 419-250-3577

February 28

2008 Prayer Summit: "Your Year of Release;" Prophetic intercession at noon; Speaker Shaunette Houghton of Chicago: 419-531-1862

An Evening With ... Toledo Children's Hospital: Opportunity to meet an ambassador family and bid on fabulous, unique and exciting silent and live auction items; 6 pm; Gladieux Meadows: 419-291-5463

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Trinkets and Luncheons and Awards ... Oh My!!!

By Lafe Tolliver
Guest Column

As a self confessed habitué of bookstores, I had, on recent occasion, to visit The Frogtown Bookstore located on Reynolds Road.

At this retail store, they sell books and books and more books. Dog books, art books, nature books, philosophy books, military books, religious books, cooking books, mystery books, well ... you get the gist.

While browsing through the section on political science, I reached down to a lower bookshelf to pick up a book curiously entitled, **Theories of Containment of Minority Class Members In The United States** by the august author Mr. Efal Revillot, an expatriate of Brazil, who came to the states in 1996 after involuntarily serving short stints in political "re-education camps" in Honduras and then in Chile.

I have heard of other works by this author but invariably when I would call the publisher, PlumeBook, the tome was either out of print or discontinued.

This particular book was ostensibly self published (vanity press) in 2001 and seemingly had a limited run of about 20

thousand volumes.

One of those dog eared copies, through apparent happenstance, ended up at The Frogtown bookstore. It was a small brown hard-backed tattered book but readable and I bought it for the princely sum of \$11.45.

My first reaction was that this was to be another political diatribe on the ills of the black man and woman in North America but after reading the preface and introduction, it was totally opposite in its hortatory.

The book's main theme was that there are four main skill sets (among others) that are invariably successful when you want to blunt or thwart aspirations of minority people in their quest to organize strategies for change in their community.

One: Whenever the powers that be are challenged or accosted regarding accusations about their lack of fair play with an oppressed or minority (indigenous) population, you are to go on the offensive by mixing and confusing their complaints so that it appears that the minority group is either ignorant of what they really want or that they do not understand the dy-

namics at work. You hide them for what you term as "childish" behavior when they act out and demand change and call them immature since they are not patient enough to wait for change to come to them.

Two: At all costs, you seek to dilute their leadership by accepting certain

leaders who you believe are amenable to your position and then you castigate the other non-selected leaders as being ill tempered or rabble rousers or worse yet ... communists. The ones that you have handpicked, you will give favors to and speak highly of them so that your prestige rubs off on them while in the presence of other minorities.

Three: Constantly create situations in which you can exploit your chosen leaders as being the "real" leaders of the minority community and reinforce this image by presenting your selected leaders with awards and trophies and gifts and dinners and honorariums and fictive positions of power or influence so that the "others" have to come to them in order to get an audience with

you.

Four: Whenever you are in conflict with people of color and they are clamoring

for change or redress, simply stall with blue ribbon committees and investigative bodies and press releases that profess that justice is being done and that it will take sometime to get to the bottom of the matter. Reason being, it is known that people of color, "shout loud but they shout short" so ... wait them out and they will invariably go away and give up the struggle.

With your stamp of approval, these pre-selected leaders will invariably influence the dissidents to become more like you in their deportment and expectations.

After reading the above, I thought about the current political flux in Toledo and under-

stood how the above skill set is being implemented with exacting and cool precision.

The current black leadership is being divided on superfluous points so that we have different classes of leadership all scrambling for the same leaky rowboat seat.

Certain leaders are being denigrated by the powers that be as either ineffective or carrying too much baggage so as to hurt and not help the current political/economic imbroglio.

Certain minority characters or personalities are being vaunted and exalted over others due to their perceived ability in helping the, "powers that be" stay as, "the powers that are." They are lauded with proclamations and ribbons and trophies and rubber chicken luncheons in their honor while the inner city atrophies.

Meanwhile the instigators

of these racial skill sets collaborate amongst themselves and congratulate each other for a job well done and the various puppet masters chortle at the discordant cacophony that comes from denizens of the central city while they profess their innocence through glib lips.

After I read the book, I took it back to the bookstore to exchange it for another book (a Frogtown policy to encourage readership) and asked Walt, the owner, was there anyone waiting for the book's return. He said no. I then asked him how in the world did he ever come across such an incisive and prophetic book and he nonchalantly stated that the book was sold to him a few weeks ago by a Carty Finkbeiner who stated that it was his favorite book of all time!

Lafe Tolliver, Attorney

An Open Letter to the Black Community from Rev. Floyd Rose

Subject: Why we must defeat the 3/4 percent sales tax

Since we left Toledo more than 13 years ago, we have received hundreds of calls, and several letters, asking us to return. For a long time we resisted the idea for three reasons: (1) There were civil rights groups here which we felt were better qualified to right the wrongs about which people complained, including the NAACP, the Committee of the Whole, the Interdenominational Ministerial Alliance and the Baptist Ministers Conference. (2) We were sensitive to their feelings about our involvement in the affairs of a city where we no longer lived. (3) Since we had been away so long, we didn't think that anybody would be interested in anything we had to say. Our warm and enthusiastic reception on January 24, suggested that we were wrong.

After meeting with several people, including ministers, political figures and ordinary citizens, and reviewing documents, we had no interest in making a speech, leading another march, and leaving town. In concert with others, we recommended that our first act of non-violent resistance should be to work for the defeat of the 3/4 percent payroll tax, which will appear on the March 4 ballot.

We have been locked out and hemmed in for so long, that we must shock Toledo's
(Continued on Page 4)

Include Young People in Leadership Movement

There is one thing that Toledo Blade columnist Roberta de Boer got right in a recent column on Rev. Rose's return to Toledo. She suggested that Toledo's black community must be in dire need of leadership if he must come back from self-imposed exile to jumpstart some momentum.

Let me be clear - this is not an attack on current black political leadership. However, I do intend to encourage new direction in their efforts.

First, we have to recognize successful movements. Take Obama. One reason why he is competitive against Clinton is because he has effectively brought in new people into what he calls "the movement" to elect him President.

Toledo's black community must follow a similar example. A new approach to galvanizing momentum for causes in the black community must be initiated if material success is the goal. No offense, but the SCLC's power has diminished significantly since Dr. King's assassination. Hence, a minister-led SCLC approach I do not think is effective.

Here's why. First, there are few young people (under the age of 40) involved in this effort. The purported leadership is at odds with the current mayor and thus anything that the group would need city support for (e.g., changing zoning laws for revitalization of Dorr Street) simply will not happen. It would be different if their goal was to remove Mr. Finkbeiner from office, but it's not. Since the goal is to get him to respond to black issues, appointing someone he fired at the head is clearly ineffective. At best, you need someone whom the city and council respect and the organization respects.

Second, policy and political consultants must be part of the process. Without rational and reasonable rallying cries, the effort will fail. From a city public safety perspective, not supporting the 3/4 % tax levy is ineffective. Blacks would suffer too. The result would be, at best, a symbolic victory, and no material changes as a result.

Finally, black young professionals must be invited to participate. The same leadership, as we see in the presidential primaries, yields more of the same. This generational divide I speak of is important, but don't get me wrong. Black-led efforts need as much support as possible, from the old and young. However, the young must be integrally involved. After all, the effort is for their future, right?

Ravi Perry



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The Case for Hillary Clinton

By Geneva J. Chapman
Sojourner's Truth Reporter

Should she win the election, Hillary Clinton's victory won't just be hers any more than Barack Obama's will be his should he win.

My mother, a veteran of the Civil Rights Movement, will be 78 years old 13 days after the Ohio primary on St. Patrick's Day. She says every day that she wishes my father, who marched with Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. was alive to see Obama win primary after primary. Everytime he wins, he wins for my father, Dr. King, Rosa Parks, Fannie Lou Hamer, Medgar Evers and all of the others who campaigned for racial justice.

Likewise, many women (and men) who have struggled for equal rights for women will share victory with Clinton: Sojourner Truth, Frederick Douglass, Susan B. Anthony, Gloria Steinem and a courageous woman in Oklahoma.

Twenty-five or so years ago, I was in that state with the Wichita NOW (National

Organization of Women) Chapter, of which I was a member at the time, getting women who had indicated their support for the Equal Rights Amendment to sign a petition.

We arrived at a house to find an older couple there and a husband insistent that no one in his household would ever support the ERA. As he admonished my fellow feminist and I for daring to knock on his door and present our petition, his wife quietly signed her name with a look triumph on her face that is usually only seen on the playing field.

However, the look I will always remember is the look he had on his face when he realized that his meek, submissive wife whom he thought he had completely under his control had signed her name on a petition championing the right of women to be equal under the law to men. It was priceless.

Hillary's victory will be that woman's victory and that



man's defeat, a win for human rights and a loss for those who seek to take them away. Sure, Hillary is a good candidate, but so is Obama. Sure, she has good ideas for how to turn around the nation's health care crisis, but so does Obama. Sure, she could use some of that Clinton economic savvy to strengthen our economy and with the right economic advisors, so could Obama.

The differences in the candidates are not that great and their strengths are nearly the same. I'm not voting for Hillary Clinton because she

is a better candidate than Barack Obama and I will support him if he gets the nomination, most likely. Hillary Clinton represents, not a minority, but a majority of American citizens – the better half of this country that has been historically disenfranchised, discounted, dismissed and after the failure of the ERA to pass, disillusioned (well, some of us were anyway).

However, despite that defeat, women have moved up through the corporate ranks, the military ranks, the ranks of financial and education institutions and the ranks of the political system. The next logical climb is to the top

position in government.

The same can be said of African-Americans, of course, but remember: long after black men had the legal, if not actual, right to vote, women didn't. We've always been the last ones to be considered and are still paid less than a man for doing the same job, even less if we're African-American or Hispanic.

When I imagine a President Hillary Clinton, I imagine young women aspiring to be more than V-girls, hoochie mamas and drugged out starlets. When I imagine a President Hillary Clinton, I see a woman making decisions that affect the world and changing the world view of women in places like the Congo, where women are tortured and raped and left maimed for life; China, where baby girls are killed just because they are not boys; Eastern Europe, where women and girls are fooled with promises of jobs into leaving their homes to become sex slaves and Iraq, where women with mental retardation are unwittingly turned into suicide bombers.

Sure, there have already

been many female heads of state: Golda Meir Israeli Prime Minister, Pakistan's former Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto, Margaret Thatcher, the longest serving British prime minister of the 20th century and President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo from the Philippines, as well as ancient female rulers like the warrior queen who held off the Portuguese for 36 years when they tried to enslave her people, Queen Nzingha of Angola.

A President Hillary Clinton will encompass all of the strength and power of these mighty rulers because she will rule the most powerful nation that ever existed in human history. She would have the diplomacy of Meir, the fearlessness of Bhutto, the tenacity of Thatcher, the intellect of Arroyo, and the steadfastness of Nzingha. Clinton's election would finally validate Rosie the Riveter, all those pioneer women, the working class women of the last two centuries and every woman who has been both a mother and a worker

(Continued on Page 13)

An Open Letter to the Black Community

(Continued from Page 3)

political and economic establishments into the reality of our presence and our needs. For too long, we have had taxation without representation.

Don't be fooled. You are being told by those who want to continue to feed off the economic breast of the black community, that if the 3/4 percent tax is defeated on March 4, policemen and firemen will lose their jobs and your trash won't be picked up. That is not true. As The Blade acknowledges, "collection from the current tax will continue until the end of the year, when it expires."

If the city's 3/4 percent payroll tax renewal is defeated, the mayor and his representatives will have 10 months to negotiate with black leaders. The levy could be put back on the ballot on November 8. And if negotiations are fruitful, we will work equally as hard to pass it. Nobody would have lost anything and we will have gained something.

This approach is no different from what the United Auto Workers, the Toledo Federation of Teachers and the Farm Labor Organizing Committee do, when they seek to extract concessions from their employers that are favorable to their members. It is what Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. did in Montgomery and the black leaders did in Birmingham.

It is what we did with the Contractors Association Coca Cola. It is an approach

We have prayed, marched and we have got the 3/4 percent payroll tax our leaders and their strength from which to neis never equal to a man on

We have neither the militia the mayor, nor bring some have suggested. We longer to participate in our and economic exploitation. representation is unfair.

that we vote for tax increases more than whites, but get less for them. The defeat of the 3/4 percent tax will enlighten the mayor and help him and other political leaders understand that political decisions which adversely affect our community will no longer be accepted without challenge.

Common ground is never so small that people of mutual respect cannot find it. And we believe that there are people, white and black, who are committed to the principles of political, social, economic and judicial justice. This struggle must never be between black and white, only wrong and right. After all we are all things human before we are anything racial – white or black.

We will return to Toledo for a pre-election rally on Sunday evening, March 2. And we have accepted an invitation to meet with the Interdenominational Ministerial Alliance on February 28, to state the case on principle that we intend to make with pressure; an opportunity we welcome and for which we are very grateful.



Rev. Floyd Rose

Lion Store, the Building of Northwest Ohio and both legal and productive. begged, pleaded and ten nothing. By defeating worth \$57.7 million, we give porters a position of gotiate. A man on his knees his feet.

need nor the desire to hu- the city to its knees, as simply cannot afford any own political domination After all, taxation without And everybody knows

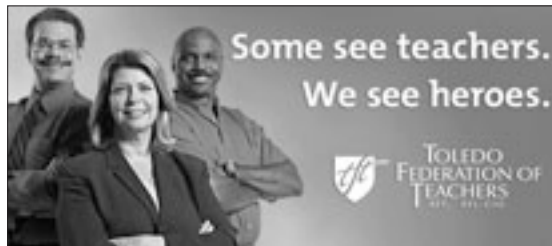
"When the architects of our republic wrote the magnificent words of the Constitution and the Declaration of Independence, they were signing a promissory note to which every American was to fall heir."

—Martin Luther King, Jr.

At the Lincoln Memorial during the March on Washington, August 28, 1963



Honoring heroes in the struggle for justice for all



Above is a billboard erected to honor the teachers of the Scott High School area. Pictured are Ron Edwards, a teacher at Scott; Susan Breymaier, a teacher at Lincoln; and Byron Harris, a teacher at Robinson.



Francine Lawrence, President

The Case for Barack Obama

By Fletcher Word
Sojourner's Truth Editor

First, let's put to rest what this election is not about. This election is not about the difference in Senators Barack Obama and Hillary Clinton's stances on the issues or their relative experience.

There is virtually no difference between the two candidates on the issues and neither, quite frankly, has the amount of experience we would ideally like to see in our next president – not even close for either person.

The same can be said for Senator John McCain, in fact. Indeed, if we had to shape the resume of a prospective president, if we were in the human resources seat and sifting through the applicants for the job of president, we would probably not have selected any of the top tier candidates on either side of the political aisle.

That said, just how important is experience for this job anyway? George W.

Bush had a pretty good resume as the owner of a big business and the chief executive of a mega state. He assembled a talented, experienced staff. Look what we got. This has surely been the most incompetent administration since the Jimmy Carter fiasco of the late 1970's.

And Obama has more governmental service under his belt than did Lincoln – arguably our greatest president – at the time of his election.

This election, then, is not about such issues or experience.

Hillary Clinton, by the way, is a terrific candidate – as smart as they come, politically savvy and connected. After Bush defeated John Kerry in 2004, my attention immediately turned to Hillary Clinton as the ideal Democratic candidate for 2008. And I thought the ideal contest would be between Hillary and Condoleezza Rice. I would



have gone with Rice in that match up.

But the political winds shift quickly ... ask John McCain about that. Last August he was pronounced dead – his money was gone, his staffers were on the run, he looked old and tired. His immigration bill – McCain/Kennedy – was an albatross around his neck.

Now the ideal scenario

for those who appreciate an orderly line of succession is that Hillary should win in 2008, serve eight years, then pass along the leadership to Barack in 2016. That's what Republicans would do. But we're talking Democrats here and they love conflict and disorder. The political winds would never subside and allow the two of them to play such an orderly script to the hilt in the Democratic Party's organizational mess.

Obviously, Obama realized, as so many voters have, that his time is now. Tomorrow may never get here.

So what this race really is about for so many voters is prioritizing whose turn it is in 2008 – the woman or the black male. So if we look around this country and we look around this world, the clear choice is the black male. The man with the smarts – he doesn't take a back seat in that department, the man with the charisma – the kind of charisma that we

haven't seen since the untimely deaths of the Kennedys in the 1960's, the man free of the political baggage that baby boomers such as the Clintons wear about their necks like badges of honor.

By political baggage, I mean the bitterness and hardened hearts forged by the struggles of the late 60's and early 70's as young people chose sides on the Vietnam War, sides that they would never abandon. Those positions have defined a generation and, even in 2004, a presidential election was decided because of those positions.

But the black man is a black man and we can do all the math in the world, and talk about experience, issues, age and gender. What we can't escape is the fact that Obama is African-American and that is – once we have narrowed the field to the two remaining Democratic candidates – a good reason to vote for him. Granted ... it may not be the politically correct reason. We are so careful these days to repeat the mantra that voting on the basis of race is not the right way to go about our business. Well, I'm here to say – it is now.

Yes, it is now.

If you can barely separate the leading contenders on the basis of such matters as experience and issues, why not use race, gender and personality as the defining standards for selecting one over the other?

What the heck are we waiting for? We have a guy here who has everything a good Democrat should want

in a president. He can bring us to tears with his eloquence, he is squeaky clean, he is politically savvy, he has given up the opportunity to fade quietly away in some high-powered law firm where he could have been earning millions a year to work as a community organizer, he wants to reach out to world leaders that Bush has scorned for years.

So folks, just what do we want in a president if not a Barack Obama? If he were not black, we would wish he were, just as some folks always wished that Bill Clinton had been black.

The election of Hillary Clinton is going to inspire millions of women around the world. But it's not that much of a "first" anymore. There have been a score of women leaders in both developed and underdeveloped parts of the world.

The election of Obama as the leader of the developed world is going to inspire billions of people of color – male and female.

A year from now, when Obama is inaugurated, African immigrants living in squalor in the suburbs of Paris are going to see Obama as the face of America, as the leader of the developed world, and they are going to cry with joy and dance in the streets.

Young boys in Pakistan studying the Koran in madrasas and learning how to hate the Americans and the rest of the West, are going to see Obama's face on a newspaper and recognize that this is not the face of the enemy as they have learned it to be.

And young black boys right here in our urban cores are going to have an opportunity to realize that a role model doesn't just have to be named Kobe, LeBron or Usher. They are going to have the opportunity to see that bouncing a ball or stringing together a few meaningless rhymes are not the only way to achieve their dreams of escaping the mean streets.

If it's a matter of whose election will have the greatest impact on the nation and the world, that's not really a close call.

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Robin Goings: Toledo Native, California Resident Has a New Perspective on Life

By Alexis Randles
Sojourner's Truth Reporter

A timezone away and miles from what some would consider her "small town of Toledo, Ohio," Robin Goings is still fond of the values instilled by her family.

Goings' family, which is often compared to the Huxtables from the Cosby show, is whom she gives credit to for molding her in to who she is today. Despite a divorce freshly under her belt and a multitude of other underlying issues, actress and King Cobra calendar model Goings is ready to talk about how she is able to maneuver through the waves that have often threatened to keep her from staying afloat.

In a candid conversation Goings, opens up about her ever empowering role as a woman and a mother, her most recent endeavor to pass a legislative bill that requires all entertainers to show legitimate proof of wages and her exciting new cover story on the January 2008 issue of Heart & Soul magazine. She also discussed her relationship with God and passion for exercising.

On a whim, Goings entered the 2007 Heart and Soul magazine cover model search and rather unexpectedly came out as the announced winner among hundreds of other contestants. "The magazine asked the contestants to write an essay that addressed why you were healthy, wealthy or wise woman in 200 words or less," said Goings.

In her own way she tackled all three issues while interweaving how specific life choices led her to whom she is today. "I talked about what I was going through in my divorce, how I put God first and my workout routine," said Goings. "I was surprised when I got the call saying that I won, because it was such a hard time for me and it still is."

Upon the finalization of her divorce to comedian Earthquake on September 17, 2007, she emphasized that this was a much-needed surprise to keep her balanced while additional pending litigations continued.

As the conversation between this reporter and Goings continued, a sense of

normalcy resonated throughout the interview. This model-actress's humble yet optimistic personality was easy to

and values that had been introduced to her by her parents and older and more mature women she had encountered



identify with. She occasionally would insist that she was simply a small town girl who always relied on the morals

along the way. "I think it is really important for you to know who you are in spite of or whatever is going on in

your life, so when you get fame or you become successful that part doesn't change," said Goings.

"When I moved to Los Angeles from Toledo, I still was grounded and knew what family was about... but I was married to someone who didn't have the same beliefs that I had and with his fame he just turned into somebody else. I saw the change and just said Wow!"

She emphasized that money and success does complicate a divorce when responding to a question about whether there is such a thing as a good and bad split. "It has been a long hard fight for me," she responded. "I had a man for some reason who decided he did not want to be married anymore, he filed for divorce did not tell me and just basically walked out of our lives."

Her consistent obstacle has been getting her ex-husband to report his income, however, due to the laid-back lifestyle of comedy entertainers, they often have a significant amount of unreported

income coming in from a multitude of venues.

Goings' newest endeavors of drafting a bill that applies to entertainers justifying their finances was a direct result of the battle between her and her ex-husband not being able to come to agreement with their finances. Goings recognized that there are already some existing programs and laws that are intended to help divorced wives but she knew that there could always be something more that can be done.

Although, the legislation is merely in the beginning stages, Goings hopes the bill will place more stringent restrictions on how entertainers can receive monies that have not been documented as a source of their income. Thus far, Goings and her publicist are in the process of reaching out to other state officials and legislators such as Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger, who has already given her some vital advice on how to continue with her efforts.

(Continued on Page 10)

Jerry Jones: Bringing the Art of the Deal to Toledo

By Fletcher Word
Sojourner's Truth Editor

Do you have a few problems in your company and need to improve your employees' abilities to get things done on time and on target. Maybe your department's communications skills are not up to par?

Or, perhaps, you have your eye on a development project and need venture capital?

Jerry Jones and Woodlands might just be the answer to a variety of management or marketing problems in a large or small operation. Or, he might be able to raise the funding to put you in the driver's seat.

After a full, more-than-30-year career with The Blade – the last 25 in sales management, Jones retired at the turn of the 21st Century. But he just couldn't sit on his hands and putter around in the garden.

So in 2002, Jones formed the Woodlands Consulting Group and, these days, he finds himself far busier than he was during his Blade days.

What is there about Woodlands that keeps the

former sales and marketing executive so busy? Just about everything, in fact.

Woodlands really started with the mission of training executives – The Blade, Buckeye Cable and Chrysler were some of the company's earliest clients – in "change management." "Normally for a corporation that is stagnant, everything is maintenance driven," says Jones. "We try to help corporations get a vision of change as opposed to an 'if it ain't broke, don't fix it' mentality."

But as Woodlands was teaching change, it was also getting involved in market research, as it did for the City of Toledo on the Waterways Initiative in order to gauge what price customers were willing to pay for water and sewage rates. And then it was on to strategic planning for clients such as Buckeye Cable and the Port Authority.

As Jones' vast network of contacts grew, many developed during his days with The Blade, he found himself taking his fledgling company into yet another

direction – providing a full array of services for clients developing commercial properties.

Five months ago, Woodlands helped clients develop the Stone Oak Market at the corner of Angola and Crissey Roads. The store grew from a 1,700 square foot operation to one of 5,200 that now includes a grocery store, a liquor store and a restaurant, says Jones.

"We did the business plan and pulled together the financing," says Jones. That was Woodlands first completed venture development.

But more are now in the pipeline.

Sheena Management is a Woodlands client and the company will soon be setting up shop – doing business as Pizza Papalis – near the downtown Fifth Third Field in the building formerly known as Brenda's Body Shop. That building, which has been empty for years, has been the source of controversy ever since Fifth Third Field opened in the spring of 2002.



"A former client wanted to be a franchisee," says Jones explaining how the venture developed. That client, however, could not afford the franchise fee. "I got an opportunity to work with the corporate office." Jones helped to put the deal together along with the financing that was necessary for the project to work. He expects to see the project completed in the fall of 2008.

Soon, in fact, the warehouse district will have Jones' imprint all over it. In addition to Pizza Papalis, the location formerly known as the Dirty Bird, will be reopened under new ownership. Jones' clients, Alan and Denise Proudlock and Rick and Pamela Graziano, closed on the deal last week and will oversee the Legends Sports Grill on South St. Clair. They will also re-do the attached building at 403 Washington with a retail store and art gallery on the first floor and artists' residences on the second, according to Jones. Another Wood-

lands project for the warehouse district is also in the works.

Strategic planning, crisis management, market research, leadership training, feasibility studies, achieving SBA loan approvals ... just a few of the services provided by Woodlands Consulting.

Jones also serves as a consultant for the Dorr Street Coalition and for the Economic Opportunity Planning Association of Greater Toledo (EOPA)

And if that weren't enough on his plate, Jones has served the Toledo community in any number of ways over the years as a board member, for example, of the American Red Cross, the Lucas County Improvement Corporation, the Toledo Mud Hens, the Ohio United Way, the Humane Society, to name a few. Apparently, there is no rest for the retired.

Jones has been an adjunct professor at The University of Toledo for the past 22 years and was a

professor of marketing in the MBA program at the University of Findlay for eight years.

Next up on the Woodlands agenda is a project on Alexis Road – the Ice House – a multimillion dollar venture and helping a small firm looking to expand its catering business.

"I'm a person, because of networking and relationships, who has become a deal maker, someone who a person can come to and get things done," says Jones of his recent accomplishments. "We stay with a client and consult on many aspects of their business to carry it through to fruition."


Jones, a graduate of UT has lived in the Toledo area for over 40 years. He and his wife Ann have two children – daughters Bridgette Jones who works with Buckeye Cable Systems and Michelle Parish who is with Appliance Center – and three grandchildren.

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To be eligible to receive funding, applicants must be a 501(c)3 organization in good standing and must demonstrate the capacity to engage in economic development at the neighborhood level. Priority will be given to projects in areas of economic distress such as Community Reinvestment Areas and areas eligible for HUD Slum & Blight designation.

The funds will be used for "bricks and mortar" economic development.

The deadline for the fifth round of funds is 5:00 P.M., March 28, 2008. To obtain more information and a PDF version of the application, log on to www.toledoportauthority.org and click on the hotlink provided, or contact the Port Authority at (419) 243-8251 or the Local Initiatives Support Corporation offices at (419) 242-3836.

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“Citizenship, Sportsmanship and Scholarship:” UT’s MLK Scholarship Benefit Dinner

Sojourner's Truth Staff

The Martin Luther King Scholarship Fund was established by The University of Toledo in 1969 to help African-American students realize Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s dream of equality and opportunity.

During the annual Scholarship Benefit Dinner on February 18, UT President Dr. Lloyd Jacobs, MD pointed out in his welcome address his pride in the fact that the university he now heads, took it upon itself

hop artists and their words to demonstrate how such music has relevance to the issues that concern both young people and baby boomers.

“We are intolerant of generational differences,” he admonished the adults. “I encourage us not to allow superficial differences from being able to relate to young people.”

Graves, a graduate of the Syracuse School of Law, was appointed to the Mis-

rious about diversity. “Until American embraces its diversity, we, as a nation, will never recognize our greatness.” And part of getting serious about diversity includes putting an end to our need to assign blame to others for each and every mishap.

“We’re all very busy looking around trying to figure out who we can blame,” said the justice. “Remember that private citizens have a public responsibility.”

Along with Graves, the stars of the evening were the three scholarship recipients. Roquel Cunningham of the College of Business and Shian Harper of the College of Arts and Sciences received scholarships sponsored by UT and LaVonia Roane of the College of Health Science and Human Service received a scholarship sponsored jointly by UT and the College of Health Science and Human Service.

Cunningham, a graduate of Start High School, is majoring in business. She is on the Dean’s List and participates in the IMACT Movement, Miniya, the Order of Omega, Zeta Phi Beta sorority along with a host of community activities.

Harper is a graduate of Sandusky High School and is also on the Dean’s List. Majoring in art and psychology, he is a member of the Student African American Brotherhood (SAAB), the Order of Omega and Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity. He is also involved in a variety of community activities.

Roane graduated from Canton McKinley High School and is on both the President’s List and the Dean’s List. She is a recreation therapy major and a member of Lambda Sigma



LaVonia Roane and Dr. Jacobs

to establish such a fund long before legislatures around the country dedicated MLK Day in honor of the slain civil rights leader.

Each year, UT selects several students at the university who have achieved success both in and outside of the classroom. The annual dinner is accompanied by a silent auction to help the university fund the grants.

And each year, UT invites a guest speaker to address the students and adults in the audience. This year’s speaker was James E. Graves, Jr., justice of the Mississippi Supreme Court since 2001. Graves is no stranger to the Toledo area, this being the third time in the past four years he has been invited to speak at a Black History Month event. In 2005 and 2007, Graves was the keynote speaker at the Perry Burroughs Democratic Women’s Club Annual Black History Brunch.

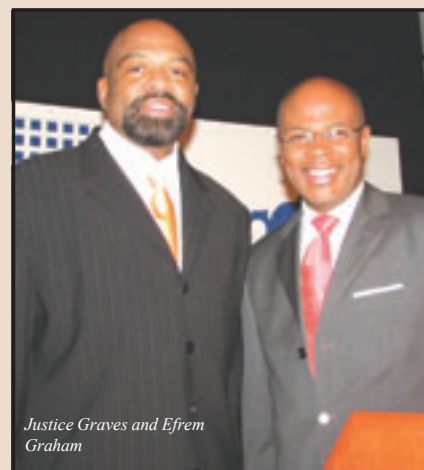
Graves’ speech this year focused on the issues of citizenship, sportsmanship and scholarship.

Addressing the adults in the audience, Graves referenced a number of hip-

mississippi Supreme Court in 2001 and won election to the court in 2004. He spent his time in town on Monday doing more than merely giving an address at the evening dinner. During most of the day, he met with various student groups at the university.

“There is nothing more important we can do for young people than to ensure they get an education,” he said on Monday night.

Graves also spoke of the need for America to get se-



Justice Graves and Efreem Graham



Dr. Jacobs with Shian Harper and Roquel Cunningham

Honor Society.

The annual event is organized by the MLK Scholarship Committee. Sandra Rivers-Gill of the Office for Institutional Diversity, served as chairman for this year’s event.

The evening closed with

remarks by Samuel Hancock, Ph.D., who heads the Institutional Diversity Office. Hancock extended his thanks for the participants and contributors to the dinner’s success.

Most of the diners probably departed the audito-

rium with Graves’ final words ringing in their minds. He quoted from the Paradoxical Commandments written by Kent Keith ... “The good you do today will be forgotten tomorrow ... do good anyway.”

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The Perry Burroughs 4th Annual Black History Brunch

Sojourner's Truth Staff



WilliAnn Moore starts the Anthem

The Annual Perry Burroughs Democratic Women's Club Black History Brunch has become, in just four short years, one of the town's hottest tickets thanks to the club's energetic president, Yvonne Harper, and her enthusiastic promotion of the event.

This year's brunch, on Saturday February 16 at Gladioux Meadows, brought together an audience of more than 400 to recognize local students, dignitaries and to hear yet another inspiring speaker address the Democratic Party faithful.

This year's speaker was no stranger to politics. Janet E. Jackson, president and CEO of United Way of Central Ohio, one of the largest

United Way organizations in the country, served for six years as City Attorney for Columbus, OH and, prior to that, was a Franklin County Municipal Court judge for 10 years, the first African-American female judge in Franklin County history.

But Jackson did not speak about politics before this most political of crowds; she spoke of a "people in crisis." Jackson told her audience at the start of her speech that she wanted to make them squirm. In that, she succeeded well beyond her own expectations as she spoke of poverty and the impact such condition has had on the well being of millions.

"From my perspective," said Jackson, "Dr. King's dream has become a living nightmare."

It did not take long for Jackson to drive home her point that African-American males are suffering dispro-



Councilman Michael Ashford, Board President Steve Steel, LC Treasurer Wade Kapszukiewicz with YMCA members

portionately in the national crisis. She asked the students in attendance to stand and, when they did so, she estimated that number at about 150. She then asked the girls to sit. Left standing were about 30 to 40 boys, numbers indicative - although there was no need for her to explicitly say so - of the crisis in education that young black males face.

Jackson asked her audience to respond appropriately to the "national crisis" by giving time and money to groups such as United Way that are committed to erasing poverty, by becoming advocates for change and by volunteering to work with youngsters.

Jackson, as is the case at

such gatherings, received a number of plaques, gifts and offerings from those in attendance.

Also recognized at Saturday's affair was George Hillard, a long-time party official. Hillard has become renowned within the party over

the years for his campaign organizational skills.

State Representative Edna Brown served as mistress of ceremony for the brunch, WilliAnn Moore led the Negro National Anthem and Prestein Waddell performed the invocation.



Rep. Edna Brown, Yvonne Harper and Rose Keetion



Councilwoman Wilma Brown presents gift to Janet Jackson

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Dr. Mae Jemison: Still Finding Where the Wind Goes

By Alexis Randles
Sojourner's Truth Reporter

Why is it that even still today, as black Americans we rely on Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s 'I have a Dream' speech as our gateway to success, economic empowerment and cultural elevation?

As black Americans do we in some peculiar way feel that without hopes and dreams we are indeed incapable of being all that we can be? According to Dr. Mae Jemison, MD, the first black American to orbit space on the space shuttle crew 'Endeavor', it is just the opposite.

In the words of King, "We must use time creatively," said Dr. Jemison. She believes that it is a unique combination of King's Powerful words and the essence of time that reminds us that our days are numbered thus catapulting blacks to achieve in ways never believed possible.

"Time is the one truly irreplaceable commodity that we all have at our disposal," said Dr. Jemison. "Time presents us with a paradox because while our time is limited it offers infinite possibilities ... it is what we decide to do with our time and it is the choices that we make

that gives it unlimited potential."

This past Wednesday, Dr. Jemison was invited to speak to The University of Toledo students and Toledo natives in the Student Union about her life experiences on the harsh streets of the southside of Chicago, her liberating encounters in space, King's non-violent philosophy on racism, world peace and success and, lastly, on her achievements in the medical field.

The evening was sponsored by a number of UT groups: The President's Lecture Series on Diversity; African Studies Program; Catharine S. Eberly Center for Women; Office of Institutional Diversity; Office of Multicultural Student Services; College of Engineering; College of Pharmacy; the Provost's Office; Health Science Campus; Campus Activities Program; Master of Liberal Studies Program and the Dean of the College of Arts & Sciences.

Rubin Patterson, Ph.D., interim director of the Africana Studies program and associate professor of sociology, was the mastermind behind the event. "I



knew that it would be a tall order to get her here, so immediately we began to get a lot of people involved. We built a large coalition of people who wanted to have their name associated with Dr. Jemison's name and from there we were able to make this night possible for our students," said Patterson.

Even though, Dr. Jemison is primarily known for her trip to space, she has a multitude of other notable accomplishments. After graduating from high school at the age of 16, she went on to earn undergraduate degrees in African and Afro-American studies and chemical engineering from Stanford University.

A few years later she earned a doctorate in medicine at Cornell University Medical College. Dr. Jemison went on to use her

Nonetheless Dr. Jemison would probably say this reporter is being a little too formal and most definitely describes herself in a completely different manner. "Let me tell you who you are hanging out with today," she laughed " (Well...I'm not going to tell you my age) But I'm a way over 40-year old African American woman who is an engineer, a wannabe dancer, a medical doctor, an astronaut, a college professor, a struggling business owner, I do sit on the boards of Fortune 500 companies. I am a lover of cherries, chocolates and melons. I am a short term pessimist, a long term optimist and a person who loves cats but I absolutely hate to wash dishes."

After introducing herself to the audience, she began by putting into perspective how this world operates and how as human beings everyone must find their connection to it. "There are 86,400 seconds in each day and we can never get a single one of those seconds back, so let me first thank you for sharing with me some of your time," said Dr. Jemison.

Throughout the evening

she encouraged the audience to look deeply at what the leaders of the world have achieved and who they are as a person. "Certainly, we can go on and on and talk about individual events and people but it is really what did they do, what they accomplished and how you can put them into the context of your life," she emphasized.

Dr. Jemison reminisced on how King's passion to change the future for the black children of her time caused her to look at the context of who he was and ultimately who she would become. She further stressed that it was not his famous 'I Have a Dream' speech, which would years later become his legacy, that provoked a change but it was the man underneath.

She gave the example of how she lived in a country and a world that often did not think to recognize her as a full person. "Many did not care to take into account my motivation, my creativity, imagination, energy, perseverance and talent," she said. "It [the world and country] did not care to train me to my full potential, it didn't want

(Continued on Page 13)



Dr. Jemison talks with Jeff Smith of Toledo 11 News

Robin Goings

(Continued from Page 6)

As Goings starts a new refreshing chapter of her life, her main focus is on her children: her five-year old son and 16-year old daughter. "I want them to be able to keep their friends and keep their lives as much as I can," emphasized Goings. Drawing from her own upbringing and life experiences, she says that she uses similar tactics in raising her children, such as going to church regularly and getting involved in their activities.

She wants her daughter to have self-respect for herself and know that she does not have to sacrifice who

she is to accomplish her goals or maintain a relationship. And for her son, "I want him to see me as a strong woman and I do not want him to do the same things that were done to me," said Goings. "I try to teach him how to be a man, how to open up doors, how to be courteous and how to treat women because so many of our men do not do that anymore."

Before concluding our interview, this reporter asked Goings if she believes that her ex-husband is being sincere or making a mockery of her during his new comedy skits. Goings re-

plied that she believes he is making a mockery of her but she finds peace in knowing whom she is and how strong her faith in God is.

As far as pursuing her career again she said that she definitely intends to finish what she started. "When I was married I kind of took a backseat to all that," said Goings. "I was a mom and a wife and taking meetings with him and I kind of put my dreams on hold doing the stay at home mom thing." Nonetheless, Goings admits it is a passion of hers but her children are what ultimately come first.

Legitimate Versus Popular Theatre: Two Plays Bring Toledo the Best of Each

By Geneva J. Chapman,
Sojourner's Truth Reporter

Glaciy Theatre Collective may be Toledo's connection to the latest in theatrical fare. The company's recent production of Laura Wade's "Breathing Corpses" in The Truth's new gallery space, January 31-February 3, 2008, puts it on the cutting edge with groups like New Works Writer's Series founded by Imelda Hunt, Ph.D., who has an amazing talent for finding really good, albeit not well known, scripts by African-American authors.

Usually, you find such edgy theatrical presentations on college and university campuses, like UT's recent production of "Top Dog/Underdog" by Suzan Lori Parks, an African-American author first introduced to Toledo by Hunt who staged her play "In the Blood." UT's production of Park's Pulitzer-Prize winning drama was directed by Equity actor/director Sylvia Carter, recently returned to her native Toledo after performing throughout the Midwest for many years.

One often finds unusual plays at The Village Players and really great productions of

musicals (my personal favorite) in the many community theatres in the area, but except for Hunt, few folks venture out as far as Glaciy did with its most recent production.

A British import, "Breathing Corpses" might be considered rather morbid, since it deals with death and not the 'natural' kind. No, the deaths in this play are intentional, sometimes brutal and always disturbing.

I recently heard "The Circle of Life" from "The Lion King" performed at a wedding and thought it so appropriate to associate marriage with the cycle of birth. Likewise, Wade associates death with the cycle of life in a rather twisted, 'suspended reality' kind of time loop that allows interconnected plots to bring unlikely characters together in the most intimate of moments: their deaths.

Not an easy script to cast, but director Cornel Gabara showed remarkable brilliance in his casting of each character with the absolutely perfect actor to play the part, a rare thing in the world of theatre. Amy, played with just the right

amount of hopeless naiveté by Risa Beth Cohen discovers Jim, played by Dave DeChristopher after he commits suicide late in January, in the hotel where she works as a maid. Her reaction and dialog with the dead man is at once comical and pathetic.

That pathos is an underlying theme in "Breathing Corpses," as Jim's desperate life unfolds in the next scene in mid-December, when his irritating wife Elaine, played like fingernails scratching a chalkboard by Holly Monsos, pays him a visit at his storage business where his slightly less irritating employee Ray, played by Brad Arner, keeps reminding him of the smell of decomposition coming from storage unit B16.

Next we meet Kate, played by Irene Alby, who makes even the word 'shrew' sound tame with her violent and abusive personality that has left her husband Ben, played by Richard Furlong, covered with bruises and scratches, and his poor little dog with a gash in its side where she kicked it in the

first few moments of Scene 3 in late December, the day after she discovered the corpse of a hotel maid in some bushes while out walking the same dog.

Although they only appear in one tense and emotionally draining scene, it is Kate and Ben's relationship that seems to be at the heart of this drama, named for a quote by Sophocles. "When a man has lost all happiness, he's not alive. Call him a breathing corpse." Not that they are any unhappier than Jim and Elaine or Amy; it's just that their unhappiness is expressed in unrestrained rage, well, at least in Kate's case.

Jim does find out what was in B16 and it has left him muddled and mumbling in mid-January as he fusses with assorted tools in his garage, refusing to leave the house or go to work. All of this explains his suicide. Finding a woman stuffed in a box strangled by a dog leash proved too much for him.

But it's the last scene that sends "Breathing Corpses" into the realm of the surreal. Amy becomes enchanted with a guest, Charlie, played by Ben Pryor, who woos her, then takes out a dangerous knife while she cleans his bathroom and later makes a date with her for early the next day, a Saturday morning in late September. The play ended with the SRO crowd that attended the second to last performance knowing what happened but unable to sequence the events in any kind of timeline outside of "The Twilight Zone."

Like another British import, the film "Sliding Doors," "Breathing Corpses" operates outside of time and space, bending the laws of physics to examine the human condition in a new and novel way.

Kudos to Gabara and his marvelous cast. Alby, Monsos, and Pryor are faculty members at the University of Toledo; Arner and Cohen are UT theatre majors, and DeChristopher and Furlong are professional actors. I expect more great things from Glaciy Theatre Collective.

Now, from the sublime to the bawdy - I could have said ridiculous, but that would have implied inferior and my second play is anything but that. I have news for all of Madeah's fans. Tyler Perry's got company and, no, it's not another Madeah rip-off. Well, there is a man dressed like a woman, but she's no Madeah.

No, "Miss Mary" is a totally original character with very little resemblance to the gun-toting Madeah. "Miss Mary" is

one of five characters J. D. Lawrence plays in his play, "Rumors," which was shown at the Stranahan Tuesday, February 5, 2008.

Everyone knows I always speak disparagingly of the plays that cycle through the Stranahan in what we call the "chitlun circuit," meaning they are attended by mostly African-American audiences, and have little if anything to do with legitimate theatre, although they are very popular and extremely lucrative for the producers of such fare. Lawrence's play is no exception.

It is bawdy, comical and never quite rises above sit-com level, although I enjoyed it immensely. Hey, Lawrence writes great one-liners, what can I say? And he's funny - really funny!

There was a theatrical moment or two in the production, which I'll explain momentarily. The plot hinges around a completely vilified 'white girl' played by Lisa D'Amato from "America's Next Top Model," who latches on to a black doctor as her meal ticket, but gets pregnant by another man, showing what a sleaze she really is - you get the idea - a variation on Spike Lee's "Jungle Fever."

The doctor is played by Darius McCrary from "Family Matters." Of course, there is a beautiful African-American woman, played by Destiny's Child original member LeToya Luckett, that our young doctor really loves, but she left to go away and get her degree at Spellman (can you spell 'set up'?) only to return home to find the doctor, who she also loves, engaged to the sleaze.

Well, the plot thickens (they always do, don't they?) and the doctor's tuggish brother played by comedian George Willborn gets out of jail, creating more problems for our young hero (no, not protagonist - these plays are all 'black and white', no shades of gray here!), his loving mother played by sitcom veteran Telma Hopkins and grandfather played by Lawrence.

Other characters include the doctor's best friend played by the only white comic to ever host BET's "Comic View," Gary Owen, and best friend of the villain (no, not antagonist - I told you there are no shades of gray in this kind of play!) played by Puff Johnson. Regardless of the lack of complexity of the characters and the simplistic nature of the overly-complicated plot, the play is funny and there are some great musical numbers by Lawrence, Luckett, and Johnson.

Actually, my favorite musical numbers were the ones performed by McCrary because he performed them completely in character and as if he was speaking dialog. That's talent! Speaking of talent, Tyler Perry, Eddie Murphy and Martin Lawrence have nothing on J.D. Lawrence when it comes to portraying numerous characters.

In one show-stopping moment, the playwright, director, actor and singer plays a flamboyant waiter and starts singing "I'm Telling You I'm Not Going" to a man in the audience, walks off the stage and sits on the man's lap. More supper club than theatre, I know, but it was funny!

The actors frequently broke the fourth wall and spoke to the audience - Lawrence even talked to the lighting technician when the lights kept flashing during the first scene of the play, coming out on stage in character and threatening to kick his a-- and file a lawsuit because "These people paid too much money for these tickets!"

Another time, as "Miss Mary," he returned to the stage threatening to kick someone's a-- said something insulting about his character. The audience ate it up - oh, speaking of the audience, I was very proud of Toledo's audience for "Rumors." You know we have a reputation of not reacting when shows come here. Well, that's all changed now! The audience yelled, screamed, laughed and generally became part of the show - maybe it was the cocktails they kept going out to the lobby to buy - no, I really think it was because the play was so funny! Sure a lot of the humor was very broad and burlesque-like. But there were also theatrical moments.

One was a scene when three conversations were taking place in each of the locations depicted in the exceptionally good set. The conversations overlapped with all ending with the same line spoken by all the characters, "She's having a baby!" Great theatrical technique.

Another little bit of business was the doctor's brother catching him every time he got down on his knees in front of a woman and chiding him for it. "Rumors" has and will make Lawrence a lot of money and, hopefully, some day he will be as successful as Tyler Perry. But neither of these playwrights will be remembered a hundred years from now. Laura Wade will. That's the difference in legitimate and popular theatre.

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Forget About Black History, What About Black Present?

By Michael Hayes
Minister of Culture

Okay, does that seem too harsh? Too abrasive?

I'm not in any way trying to diminish our wonderful heritage, our overlooked contributions to humanity or anything like that.

I guess my mood, my outlook is very much based in the here and now these days.

And when I think about February... first I think of my birthday so this month always has two effects on me.

Time to celebrate, no doubt.

But also time to evaluate. That's how I see myself.

And that's how I see Black History Month.

People, it's 2008.

How do you feel about being alive, about being here, about being black?

Do you even think about the color of your skin as much as you did five years ago?

When is that State of Black America address by Tavis Smiley and Co. coming back on C-Span?

That was a highlight of 2007 for me, because it brought an accord to our often varied accounts of where we stand on pertinent issues.

Look at that.

I'm using words like "pertinent issues" when the truth is a large number of black youth don't have a vocabulary outside of what they've picked up from X Box, B.E.T. and some dude down the street.

See, that's why I focus not so much on Black History but

Black Now!

So, let's look at the areas of concern.

Black love & relationships, black consciousness/culture, black entertainment, the black generation gap.

Lets start with the biggie.

Black Generation Gap:

Oprah Winfrey's aversion to hip-hop has more to do with her age and her generation than anything else. It's not because she's acting "white," or she's lost touch.

Stop hating on her, it's really just par for the course for her age group. Black Americans who are 50+ have raised the rest of us, but for the most part they understand less and

less about us with every passing year and trend.

What does it mean when the most powerful of our elders don't understand those of us who are defining culture and entertainment for the entire planet?

The same thing it means when your mom/dad want to talk to you about your life but they don't know how to speak your language or relate on your level.

One thing about most other ethnic minorities—from Hispanic, to Arabs, Asians etc.—the old teach the young.

Of course, the young will rebel and all that, but pretty much, that's how wealth, knowledge and heritage can survive through time.

In Black America, there's not a lot of teaching going on.

It's pretty much an all out war. Baby Boomers (ages 44 to about 62 currently) in Black America want to understand their children, but fail to do so.

Although many parents in that age group the rest of us to get educated, settle down and all that—they really are out of touch with the reality we live in.

My dad used to tell me all the time when I was in high school in the gang-infested late 90's that he couldn't imagine dodging bullets on his way to school or going through metal detectors everyday. For me, it was like that when I got there. The state of the black family hinges on our ability to discuss openly what's going in our lives, but many Baby Boomer parents criticize or control their offspring right into the downward spiral they tried so hard to prevent.

Generation X (ages 34 to around 44 currently) in White America were the "careless, lazy slackers who didn't care about much," but in our America these were the architects of the hip-hop movement and also gang culture.

Though not as apathetic as others, black Gen Xers possessed a view of the world very different from their Baby Boomer parents and as rap music emerged the gap widened.

Then you have us, Generation Y (ages 17 to about 33). The second wave of Baby Boomer offspring, the younger brothers and sisters of Gen X. We were born into gang activity, video games and home computers.

Our greatest rift with our parents is over technology but the hot spot topic is usually over issues of where the line is drawn between child and adult.

It's our generation that

took "acting grown" to a whole new level with rampant teen pregnancy and prison sentences for 14-year old black males.

So once again, the gap widens because we are the kids that our parents not only can't relate to but also couldn't completely control.

But our lives have been advanced in a way that our innocence could never lasted as long as generations before us. Then, there's the so-called "I Pod Generation". These are the offspring of Gen Xers.

The technology gap has never been wider.

If a baby boomer grandparent tells one of these kids to read a book about some Black History fact... they will likely react as if they have been slapped in the face!

This is the generation raised on Lil Wayne.

And hell, none of us understand them.

So how do our various generations deal with each other?

Well, the parents either spoil their kids or treat them like prisoners.

But either way, no real dialogue is taking place so no true value is being passed down.

Something I've noticed with how black women raise their daughters, it seems that at least education is being heavily pushed... which is cool.

But for some, the girls are damn near beaten into success while their brothers are allowed to become an Olympic-level screw up.

Either way, there's discourse that needs to occur.

Older folks tell me all the time that this paper is one of the few things that

they and their kids both share and relate to so, hey - whatever works.

But as black Americans, we need teachers who actually have positive life lessons to offer and we need students awake enough to receive the wisdom.

Okay, the other biggie: Black Love & Relationships.

I know so many people looking for love right now. I know of so many situations where decisions were made, later regretted.

One thing peeps who know me personally will say is how picky I am when it comes to females, but I take this part of life seriously.

I always tell peeps "don't half ass love unless you want love to half ass you."

Or some mess like that - LOL.

Friends of mine will recall (especially back in the day at our poetry night) that

my view of black women in my age group was... bitter to say the least.

I just didn't know many girls who valued relationships, monogamy and stuff like that. I'm happy to report that now I can admit - black men and women are equally riddled with issues - LOL.

And I'm no exception. Who has the key to a happy, successful relationship?

Hold up. Let's start before that.

How many of you truly want a happy, successful relationship?

Do you want to be married?

Are you even sure of what type of person you are interested in?

See, this is important because the American family and the black American family all begin with choosing the right mate/partner.

If you are just out there "doing you" and sleeping around with little regard to compatibility or relationships or even love, your risk of inadvertently starting a family with someone you probably can't even tolerate outside the bedroom.

That affects our children, that affects our future, that affects the state of our larger black family in this society.

There are those of us who would rather die than to have a "baby's momma/baby's daddy" situation because we

are trying to holdfast to the ideals we've had since childhood.

There are also those of us who have learned to take life as it comes and really see very little problem with kids out of wedlock, same sex partners, or just a lifestyle of pointless physical encounters with people who are little more than strangers.

I'm not being judgmental (well if I am, that's just like me anyway so...)

but when I think about our Black NOW, I think of the kids affected by growing up in single parent homes. How did the homes become single parent homes?

Well in many cases the family didn't originate out of a loving, committed, marriage bound relationship.

People hook up over hormones, stay together long enough to find out they are incompatible and if kids come along they are raised in a weird balance where mommy and daddy are somewhere between war and peace at all times.

Little girls feel the effects of being disconnected with Daddy.

Little boys grow up unsure of a man's role in a relationship and our culture basically devolves to a point where no one is looking for love, we're all just looking for the longest sustained thrill.

Which is cool for some, I guess.

But it comes at a cost.

I think it would be so righteous if we as a people found a way to bring love and togetherness to the forefront.

When you look at the state of the black fam... it all starts with who did you hook up with and why.

A lot of us love the person we are with.

But how many of us have put the time and energy into attracting someone that can be life long?

Which brings me to *Black Culture* in our Black Now:

What do we value?

What do we spend our money on?

How do we speak, dress and conduct ourselves in public?

When do we come together as a family?

What separates us from other racial minorities?

I sometimes wish I had been alive in the 60s and 70s when it was all afro-picks and black fists. To be around our people as they were identifying themselves with empowerment... maan, I would've loved to have been there. Black Culture now... I don't know.

The middle class black America, that I so wished I was a part of growing up... seems to be feeling the crunch of all middle class Americans financially.

But even though times may be tougher, there's still

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Dr. Jemison

(Continued from Page 10)

to help me develop skills and at times it didn't even seem to care that I existed!"

She also credits her achievements to the way she was raised by her parents; her mother was a schoolteacher and father was a maintenance engineer. "My parents helped me to maintain my self confidence," she said. "I had to learn very early never to limit myself because of others limited imaginations."

As Dr. Jemison got older she said her main dilemma was either becoming a budding scientist or a budding dancer and artist. "I would struggle with the notion do I have to narrow down my interest so people aren't always trying to put me back in the box that they want me in," she said. Dr. Jemison claims she is and will continue to be a

better person because she continues to think outside of the box even when outside factors threatens the way she operates.

Before concluding the event Dr. Jemison spoke to the intuitive and analytical nature of human beings. Most people argue that one is better than the other but it is foolish to classify yourself in to one category because you need to use both sides of your brains, she said. She said science provides an understanding of a universal experience and arts provide a universal understanding of a personal experience.

"People try to say that when you're intuitive you're in touch with nature's relationships and society, and when you are analytical you let your mind do the work," she said.

However, Dr. Jemison argued that the main problem with this debate is that

our technological advances have turned technology into a destructive and insensitive weapon. "Our technological advances have been breathtaking, yet our moral concepts and out ability to integrate with ourselves and our nature have lagged pitifully behind," Dr. Jemison continued. "What science we decide to research, what technology and what tools we decide to develop depend on the people we are, it depends on our society."

Dr. Jemison's closed her speech by encouraging the audience to have a more holistically perspective on life. "Dr. King said that there is nothing in this world more dangerous than sincere ignorance and conscientious stupidity," said Dr. Jemison. "We have to think about what we are doing, pay attention to it and call it out."

Hillary

(Continued from Page 4)

and those who chose to be just mothers, the most difficult and thankless job of all. She would not be an Amazon, shunning men, but a liaison welcoming men to the table, as long as she sat at the head of it. She would find no need to say, "I am woman" or to be "every woman," because she is woman.

"Nuff said." This line spoken by an ancient mother in a piece written by Pajil Wiggins-Hancock for Da Coloured Gurlz Collective says it all. We have waited a long time for a woman to lead us and

now we have one that can. One last note: if Obama wins the nomination, I hope Clinton will, like Arroyo (who also started out as a senator), take the vice-presidential position.

If she doesn't and McCain selects Condoleezza Rice as his running mate, I may vote Republican this go round. I became a Republican for four years, from 2000 to 2004, when I voted for John McCain in the 2000 Ohio primary in a futile effort to keep George Bush out of the White House.

Now, I'm willing to do

anything short of election fraud to get a woman into the White House. I hope it's Hillary Clinton who gets there with "first man, Bill," but I'll take Condoleezza Rice. Maybe if she gets the chance, she'll show the nation that she really is an intelligent woman and that her abilities were woefully underused by the Bush administration.

I doubt that she'd run if McCain asks her, which he probably won't do, but it's an idea whose time has come. So is the idea, the dream of President Hillary Clinton.

Black Present?

(Continued from Page 12)

when they don't have a clue what its like to be a product of the inner city.

We live and work around every race under the sun, so do we really identify with struggle these days?

Previous generations were consumed by that feeling of being black in White America. It depressed them, but it also made many strive to the success they now enjoy.

But these days, it's less and less common to find black folks discussing how we fit in the world alongside everyone else.

I think our culture has become very "ME" centered instead of "WE" centered.

We are becoming a population of users.

That's why Jena 6 was so important, because the entire black world stopped so we could stick up for those being misrepresented.

But didn't you feel it? Didn't you feel the eerie shift in our awareness when that was going on?

It was almost like each one of us was like "Oh yeah, things are still effed up for people in other places... let me do something to show my support!"

And that little click occurred because we've grown so used to going for self that it's actually like reality shock when we abandon our selfish ways and ride out for each other like we should.

Maaan, The Boondocks.

I wish that show came on a private access channel that somehow only black folks had the ability to tune into because all our cultural flaws are exposed on that

show. Our dependence on entertainment culture, our reliance on buying new stuff (that song "Watch My Shoes" - it hits in the club no doubt, but when I'm out and that joint comes on and I look at everybody around me... I feel sick to my stomach at times)... even our self hatred and racial complacency is front and center on that show.

Our culture is eroding faster and faster with every name brand we purchase.

Not because we are doing what we have to do to live well, but because the only things we seem to value are things that "let them haters know..." blah blah freakin blah.

The follower mentality. That's what our Black Now is showing me about our Black Culture.

Stand up for originality when everyone else is doing the same ol'.

Stand up for love when everyone else is just taking whoever home from the club. Stand up for the deep thinkers and poor righteous teachers who got us as far as we currently stand.

I'm gonna finish this next week.

But just peep my vision on this and walk with me... our Black History is wonderful... but our Black Now severely needs our attention. When ya'll see me trying to move away and get my record label off the ground and work with my artists and music and all that... these thoughts are involved in all of that even then. It's not about chasing limelight as much as it is

I know my contribution to all of this and I'm trying to make it.

I can't judge you, but "I'ma dooo meeee."

That's my word for the week y'all.

Events to know about: Keith Success is bringing Golden Era Rap Legend DANA DANE to Jacksons February 22nd - Friday. GET THERE EARLY, it will be a nite you won't forget... promise.

Also... Erykah Badu's new album is expected to drop Tuesday February 26th.

Guess what else is significant about that day?

That's right ... it's my born day.

I felt old at 28 for some reason but 29 has been cool and I'm imaging 30 will be even cooler. I used to panic, but I have learned that what they say is true... back in the day... turning 30 meant mortgage payments, being home at night, and ...hell, I don't know... empty bottles of Roloids and Ben Gay or some mess. But I can't think of any 30 year olds who live like that in THIS day and age.

Life expectancy creeps past 80 all of a sudden, 30 really may be the new 20.

I just thought Jay Z was trying to hang on to his fading youth when he said that but yo... it seems to be true.

When I think of all the 20 year olds I know, and all the 30 year olds I know... they pretty much are living the same lives with the same priorities and facing the same issues, listening to the same music and etc. so hey.

Am I having a party??? Damn.

I probably should've. Too late now, I guess.

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
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28009	Garage Construction @ 1936 Christie	02/28/08 @ 10:00am	03/06/08 @ 11:00am
28010	#8 Boiler Renovation @ Weiler Homes	02/26/08 @ 10:00am	03/18/08 @ 11:00am
28012	Renovation of 336 Ivanhill (RE-BID)	02/26/08 @ 10:00am	03/11/08 @ 11:00am

Bid packages will be available at 201 Belmont Street, Modernization Department. A **non-refundable** fee of **\$20.00** will be charged for each set of plans provided.

The prevailing wages for this locality, as established by the Department of Labor as Wage Determination OH20070028, as modified, must be paid all persons employed for this work.

All bidders shall be required to meet the Affirmative Action requirements and Equal Employment Opportunity requirements as described in Executive Order #11246. Each bidder must insure that all employees and applicants for employment are not discriminated against because of their race, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability, handicap, age, or ancestry.

MODERNIZATION DEPARTMENT
(419) 259-9462

The Lion King Arrives in Toledo With a Roar

Sojourner's Truth Staff

The *Lion King* opened on Broadway in 1997. Over 4,000 performances later, the show has garnered six Tony awards – best musical, best choreography (Garth Fagan), best scenic design (Richard Hudson) best direction and costumes (Julie Taymor).

This week, the award-winning Broadway musical's road company arrives in Toledo for a six-week engagement at the Stranahan.

Among the play's

Simba and Erica Ash as Nala.

Young, a Buffalo, NY native, is a mere 24 years old and already in his second major show – the first being a national tour of *Hairspray*. Young attended Cal State-Fullerton for several years majoring in musical theatre before heading to the Great White Way to make his round of auditions. He quickly got the role in *Hairspray* and shortly after that landed Simba which he has played for nine months.

What keeps Young feel-



stars are two young newcomers to the theatre scene – Dashaun Young who plays the role of the grown up

ing fresh and excited about the role after nine months?

"This show is just so different from anything else out there," Young told The

Truth last week in a telephone interview from Pittsburgh, the musical's previous stop on tour. "There is so much going on that re-

quires your dedication."

Young expects to complete his contract that extends through May and then head back to Broadway.

"I would love to have a full career in theatre in New York," said Young explaining his life's ambitions. And so far, his ambitions have been met in a fortuitous, timely fashion.

"Each step has been something I didn't expect," he said of his early and immediate success. "My mother often brings up how lucky I am and I am so grateful."

Also with reason to be grateful is Ash, who attended college at Emory University in Atlanta before heading to Japan for a year's interlude. Ash planned to teach English in Tokyo before coming back to the states to attend medical school.

But she found her voice in Japan and four years later, after a variety of singing, modeling, dancing, choreography gigs in the Far East, Ash put thoughts of medical school behind her. She ended up in New York upon her return to the United States and quickly found theatre work.

She is as grateful as Young that she is making a living at what she loves to



do when so many of her theatre peers are struggling to make ends meet.

"If you want something to happen, you have to express gratitude for what you already have," she told The Truth last week. And *The Lion King* is what she is most grateful for. "It's an excellent play and an excellent opportunity for African-Americans to get out

and strut their stuff. Julie Taymor created something brilliant and each time you see it, there's something new."

The *Lion King* will run at the Stranahan from Thursday, February 21 through March 30. Performances are at 8 p.m., Tuesdays-Fridays, 3 and 8 p.m. on Saturdays and 1 and 6:30 p.m. on Sundays.

FirstEnergy

**BAY SHORE POWER PLAN
Instrument and Control Specialist**

The FirstEnergy Corp. is seeking an Instrument and Control Specialist for the Bay Shore Plant in Oregon, Ohio.

The Instrument and Control Specialist performs testing, troubleshooting, inspection, repair, maintenance, installation, modification, adjustment, calibration, overhaul and construction work on all types of power plant instruments and control systems.

Installs, maintains, analyzes and modifies instrument and control systems associated with plant generating units, environmental systems, plant chemistry, and auxiliary systems.

Diagnoses, isolates and resolves the most complex problems on the steam power and automatic control systems and instrumentation. Records, analyzes data and prepares necessary reports.

Applicants must possess the following: Two year technical degree in related field from an accredited school (Power Plant Technology preferred and/or equivalent work experience, such as applicable military training, or a Journeyman certification with three (3) years work experience.

Candidates will be required to successfully meet aptitude test requirements and successfully complete a criminal record background check with drug and alcohol screening.

Benefits include health, life insurance, company-funded pension and 401k with Company match.

For a complete job descriptions please visit us on line at https://www.firstenergycorp.com/career_center/forms/JobDescription.do?jobNo=BS08.0004

In order to receive proper consideration, please submit your resume by using one of the following methods. Preferred Method: Visit Us On Line at https://www.firstenergycorp.com/career_center/forms/JobDescription.do?jobNo=BS08.0004 and submit an on-line resume by clicking on the "Submit Resume" button.

You can mail a resume to: FirstEnergy Corp. Bay Shore Human Resources, 4701 Bay Shore Road, Oregon, OH 43616, or FAX: 419-249-5798.

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