

Sen. Barack Obama

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This Strikes Us ...

It's Got To Be Obama

Last week in these pages, two of our staff discussed the cases for Hillary Clinton and Barack Obama by focusing on the merits of selecting a black candidate versus a female one – both historic firsts for the United States. No African-American or woman has ever been selected as the nominee of a major party, much less been elected president.

Now that we have had that discussion, let's move on and examine the merits of the two candidates for the Democratic Party nomination. We are going to put aside any mention of race or gender as a factor in our decision to endorse Senator Barack Obama for the Democratic Party nomination for president of the United States.

And having examined the two candidates on their merits, we have to encourage our readers to go to the polls and cast their votes – we hope in overwhelming numbers – for Obama.

We have said in the past several months that there is less than a dime's difference between the two candidates on the issues. But those few cents of a difference are worth a brief glance.

Both candidates, of course, have health care plans that would greatly expand coverage to the under and uninsured of this nation, estimated at around 41 to 47 million. Clinton's plan proposes to make insurance affordable and would mandate that individuals purchase coverage in order to make it truly "universal."

Obama's plan also attacks health care costs but would forgo such a mandate. His plan leaves open the possibility that some folks, who choose not to participate, would be uncovered even though they would be able to afford it.

But with both plans, the devil is in the details, and neither candidate can provide enough details to answer accurately questions such as how much will it cost, how many will still be uncovered or how will the mandates (Obama's plan mandates coverage for children) be enforced?

They cannot answer these questions because they are venturing into the unknown and even such an expert as Jonathan Gruber of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, regarded as perhaps the foremost expert on health care plans, can only guess at the costs and impact of such proposals.

We do know this, the Clinton "universal" coverage plan would not really be universal and that the costs that are attributed to the Obama plan by the Clinton campaign are mostly guesses. Some experts say that Clinton's plan will cost less per individual but it does not appear that they have factored in to the equation the costs that the mandates will inflict upon individuals and families.

But for the most part, these are distinctions without much a difference because, in the final analysis, any health care plan is not going to make it through Congress intact since there are going to be so many alterations and compromises if the new president is willing to compromise.

The only stark policy difference that we can discern between these two candidates is in their stance on Cuba.

Cuba?

Cuba indeed. Clinton is on record as saying that she will maintain the policies of the last 50 years or so – banning travel, trade and normal relations between the U.S. and Cuba. She obviously wants the votes from those South Florida Cuban exiles who feel that one day they will be able to return home and reclaim the property Castro stole from them during the revolution.

Obama has called for lifting sanctions, permitting travel and allowing families to send money to the island. Obama has said, as he has in most of his foreign policy statements concerning relations with so-called "rogue" states, he will try to open dialogue with the rulers of the island nation.

Clinton calls this approach "naïve."

In a sense, however, the Cuba issue is what this campaign of change is all about. Our 50-year old Cuban policy has done nothing other than to help keep an island of 11 million people poor and isolated. The policy Clinton would continue is clearly due to the fact that administrations since that of JFK have felt personally insulted that a nation in our sphere of influence would have the effrontery to establish a type of government we scorn. Of course, there has been no need for practicality in this diplomatic approach because unlike China, Cuba does not contain a market of over a billion individuals hungering for American products nor does it have a government willing to serve up its people as a supply of cheap labor for American corporations.

Clinton's chief selling point is her "experience." We are not convinced that being a first lady marks her as experienced. It certainly has provided knowledge. But to our way of thinking, judgment is a good deal more important as a predictor of success. With all of her experience, Clinton voted to allow Bush to invade Iraq.

We think that Clinton would make a good, albeit second, choice for president. However, she does have some baggage that we believe will render her less able than Obama to enact major parts of her program.

First, she is of a generation still embittered by the turmoil of the late 1960's and early 1970's – particularly the Vietnam War. That war has colored all discussion since among baby boomers. We only have to look back to 2004 to recall the bitterness engendered by memories of that conflict.

Second, Clinton's husband has done her no favors during this election cycle and we doubt now if he will be an asset should she win the White House. Our take is that Americans are more than a bit weary of the former president.

Third, beyond the weariness, there is simply so much very real contempt and disdain for the Clintons. In a nation almost split by political divisions, do we dare take on the very symbol of these divisions?

We believe that if, for example, a universal health care plan is the goal of the Democratic Party, we need Obama in place to get that done. Clinton demonstrated in 1993 that she is far too inflexible to collaborate on such a project and, as we view this campaign and her approach to such issues, she does not appear to have changed in this regard.

In Obama, we have the opportunity to make a break with the divisiveness of the past. We have an opportunity to place into office a man with the ability to embrace all Americans and to unify the nation in a most extraordinary manner.

The Ohio primary is on this upcoming Tuesday, March 4. We urge northwest Ohioans to get out and vote. It may well be one of the most important votes you will ever cast.

Community Calendar

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 28

2008 Prayer Summit: "Your Year of Release," Clarion Westgate; 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

Monthly Public Board Meeting: Board of Community Relations; West Toledo Branch Library; 5:30 pm: 419-245-1565

March 1

"A Decade of Celebrating Black History:" The Event Center; 6 pm; Guest Speaker Greg Moore, editor of the Denver Post: 419-478-3327

Autistic Forum: St. Vincent's; 10 am to 1 pm; Free, open workshop; Sponsored by NANBPWC, Toledo Youth Club, AKA Sorority: 419-244-5390

March 4

The Ohio Primary – Get Out and Vote!!!

5th Annual Black College Tour Student and Parent Meeting: Maumee Bay Club of Negro Business and Professional Women's Clubs, Inc; Pre-tour meeting at Scott HS Cafeteria; 6 to 8 pm: 419-944-5912

Boot Camp Night for Parents: Toledo-based boot camp program for young men and women; Open enrollment for kids ages seven to 18; 567-277-5352

March 8

Free Rebuild Your Credit Workshop: Main Branch Library; 9 am to noon; 12 steps to improve your credit score: 419-213-4293

Support Group for Those Suffering from Severe Medical Conditions: Flower Hospital; 11 am to 12:30 pm; For patients that need to be fed intravenously or home tube feeding methods: 419-291-4557

March 9

7th Annual Multifaith Banquet: Hosted by the Multifaith Council of Northwest Ohio; Holy Rosary Cathedral; 4 to 7 pm: 567-661-7080

March 10

Board of Community Relations: Open, public focus group session; South Branch Library; 6 to 7:30 pm: 419-245-1565

March 18

Board of Community Relations: Open, public focus group session; Reynolds Corner Library; 6 to 7:30 pm: 419-245-1565

March 16

Consecration Service: "Lord, Keep Me Day by Day;" Toledo Interfaith Mass Choir; 6 pm; Calvary Bible Chapel

March 24

Board of Community Relations: Open, public focus group session; Sanger Branch Library; 6 to 7:30 pm: 419-245-1565

March 28-29

"Old Fashioned, Holy Ghost, God Sent, Soul Saving Devil Hatin' Evangelical Crusade:" New Beginning Community Church; Speakers Pastor Marilyn Wilson – host, Min. James Brooks, Evang. Ric Trench; 6 to 10 pm:

March 29

Style Show Luncheon: "Swing into Spring;" Upton United Methodist; 1 to 4 pm: 419-244-4420

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Vote YES on Issue 7 – School Renewal Levy

Nothing quite like a levy request to get people all worked up, is there? This particular levy, a renewal levy, is – first and foremost – not a request for more money. It is a request to continue providing the Toledo district with the same amount of money.

Since it is a renewal levy, the amount is frozen at \$15.8 million annually. So even if a home were to increase in value, the dollar amount does not increase along with the home's new valuation.

This particular levy is needed for operating expenses for a district already in such dire financial straits that teachers have not been given a raise in over five years.

The levy is on the ballot for the March 4 primary and if it fails, say critics, the district will still have the opportunity to place it on the ballot in November. The problem with this theory is that if the levy is defeated, trying to pass it at a later date will be much like trying to put the toothpaste back in the tube.

We have to keep schools open and maintain services for students. If we want to send a message that the schools are not serving our students well, there is perhaps no more emphatic way to make this point than to render it virtually impossible for the district to serve our children by denying the system necessary funds.

Critics who are urging defeat of the levy contend that it is imperative to send a message to the district that its efforts over the years have fallen short of expectations.

That's more than a little heavy handed and far too draconian an approach. Much of this criticism is also far too personal. The animus that critics have developed over the years for so many aspects of the district – the board, the administration, the teachers and their union – have, in the final analysis, little to do with the best way to teach students and more to do with who calls the shots and makes the decisions.

In addition, such a scorched earth approach overlooks the most important element of a child's education – the home. We have been saying for years that students from homes where parental involvement is lacking have – statistically speaking – little chance for success. No matter how good a school is, it cannot overcome a home environment that is not conducive to learning.

As long as we continue to place the blame entirely on the public school system for our children's lack of educational attainment, we are doomed to continue the cycle of failure.

Let's leave the political squabbling out of this equation

We urge a vote YES on Issue 7.

Education, The Doorway To Life

Proverbs 4:7

“Wisdom is the principal thing; Therefore get wisdom. And in all your getting, get understanding!”

By: Bishop Stephen Ward

Why is our public education system failing our students? Most of today's school children can barely read or write. They can't perform math problems without a calculator. It's pure and simple: today's children aren't coming out of school with an education.

Colleges know it. They have to set up remedial courses for incoming freshmen just to prepare them for classes. The politicians say they know it. They hold hearings to grill education “experts,” and they hold high to debate and discuss the coming up with more federal standards and spend more tax-
 lem. But the problem contin-



Frankly, any parent can find through their child's textbooks classroom structures that their If you look around at today's are different. The access to and advanced communication experts in thinking strategies They need to be lifelong learn-
 change during their working years. They need a curriculum that does not focus on acquisition of basic facts but on the process of learning. Sure phonics, spelling, math computation and the like are valuable, but they are one piece of a balanced approach.

With the blink of an eye, these basic facts are being mandated as the entire curriculum. Right now, the way public education functions are being rewritten, and since educators are not on the author list, politicians, with corporate America in their back pocket, are writing curricula that they want.

We cannot correct what's wrong with public education using mandatory tests. The main problem with public education, including TPS, is that it is a political institution controlled by

(Continued on Page 7)

On Open Letter to Mayor Carty Finkbeiner

Mayor Finkbeiner, in observance of Black History Month, we the frustrated members of the African-American community feel it is appropriate to highlight and publish the “results” you have delivered to our community during your terms as mayor of the City of Toledo. We would like to highlight some of your notable achievements in the area of humanitarianism in this week's edition.

You have exhibited abusive behavior towards women and black males throughout your terms as mayor. A few examples are as follows:

Women

It is reported that you physically abused Carolyn Smithers by throwing a coffee cup at her. We understand that Ms. Smithers filed a lawsuit against you and the city which ultimately caused the City of Toledo to settle the lawsuit and create an unnecessary expenditure of our tax dollars.

Dr. Patsy Scott resigned as director of Information and Technology because she refused to take your verbal abuse any longer.

Perlean Griffin faithfully served you during one of your previous terms (and during your current term) until you fired her. Ms. Griffin has consistently said she was fired because of her refusal to support an injustice that you apparently wanted her to support against another African-American female.

It was recently reported that you (on several occasions) have stated in staff meetings that black women don't know how to raise their children.

Black Males

It is reported that Paul Hubbard resigned his employment with the city because of the abrasive environment you created for Mr. Hubbard.

Jimmie Gaines sued the city (as a result of Carty's treatment of him) for discrimination and won. Kenneth Dobson sued the city (as a result of Carty's treatment of him) for discrimination and won.

You referred to Fire Chief Mike Bell as “King Kong” on more than one occasion and prompted Bell to “retire” and later take a position in the same line of work he left (fire safety).

Dewayne Morehead was fired in retaliation for his support of an African-American female (Perlean Griffin). That claim has been substantiated by the Ohio Civil Rights Commission.

Gary Daugherty was fired in retaliation for his affiliation with Mr. Morehead and Ms. Griffin. You also said he was “perceived as being lazy” in spite of Mr. Daugherty's impressive professional work history.

Waymon Usher left the City's employ after repeated verbal abuse from Carty. Mr. Usher went on to have a very productive and distinguished career with Lucas County prior to his passing.

Lionel Patterson, an African-American attorney, was reportedly run out of the City as a result of mistreatment by Carty.

You have allegedly referred to black ministers as a “bunch of pimps” on a number of occasions.

You spent two years plotting the demise of Mayor Jack Ford, the City's first and only African-American mayor.

You threw Council President Michael Ashford under the bus in favor of Mark Sobczak which was the last straw as far as we are concerned.

These are just a few examples of the “results” that you have delivered to our community and you wonder why we are upset? You have probably figured out by now that our frustration is not going to go away in “24 hours.”

We will publish more of your “results” in the areas of “leadership” and “fiscal management” during the observance of Black History Month.

The frustrated members of the African-American community.

Reid A. Russell, Sr.



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It's time for a Quiet Conversation.™

Obama Arrives in Ohio Hoping People Will Take an Interest ... They Have

By Fletcher Word
Sojourner's Truth Editor

What began as a ripple at the 2004 Democratic Party Convention has turned into a February 2008 tsunami in northwest Ohio. Senator Barack Obama, who delivered a keynote address at the convention when he was not just an unknown outside of the Chicago environs, he was merely a candidate for the U.S. Senate.

Last week, the Obama campaign roared into town and immediately demonstrated why the junior senator from Illinois has been so successful at delivering body blows to the concept that Hillary Clinton's coronation was inevitable. And speaking of Clinton, her campaign has been virtually invisible in this northwest corner, at least, of Ohio.

Obama's organization here has reflected what observers have noted from the early days of Iowa – that his years as a community organizer on the streets of Chicago have enabled him to change, if nothing else, the way that presidential campaigns are run. Obama has conducted his campaign as a grassroots effort.

In state after state, he has brought in staffers and volunteers to open and manage offices in greater number than has Clinton while the former frontrunner has conducted a top-down campaign, relying on endorsements and traditional party pressure tactics.

As the campaign arrived in Ohio, the differences became immediately apparent. The Obama campaign has bombarded the media with ads, press notices, calls for interviews with the candidate and his surrogates. The Clinton campaign has been non-responsive.

Obama's most recent state primary victory in Wisconsin demonstrated clearly the impact his organization as had. Obama won among white voters, young voters, black voters – every segment except for senior citizens.

"The movement for change has been evident in every kind of state... eastern states, southern states, states with large African-American populations, states with small African-American populations," said Obama on Sunday during a conference call with journalists from some of Ohio's black, weekly newspapers. "There were a lot of skeptics about where we could build a coalition but we have had a large grass roots



response. This represents a serious change about how a campaign is run ... it's been all grass roots for us."

That grass roots response has convinced the candidate, he said, that all the things he speaks about on the campaign trail are possible. "It's possible to provide health care," he said. "It's possible for any student to receive \$4,000 to help with college; it's possible to deal with the foreclosure crisis; it's possible to end the war in Iraq in a responsible way. My hope is that people in Ohio take an interest."

They have indeed if Sunday's turnout at The University of Toledo's Savage Hall is any indication. The site was filled as hundreds of people were turned away and missed an opportunity to listen to a candidate who has taken on rock star status.

But as the Obama express has gained momentum, he has not lacked for endorsements. Ohio is being deluged by politicians from other states, educators and celebrities.

One such visitor is Harvard Law Professor Charles Ogletree who taught both Obama and his wife Michelle during their law school days.

"Little black boys and girls can write in their kindergarten class about becoming president and it can be a reality," said Ogletree during a conversation with The Truth on Sunday about one of the impacts that he feels Obama will have. "We can run, we can win; I never thought it could happen."

Ogletree spoke to this reporter about why he has thrown his support behind Obama and has served his former student as a campaign advisor.

"He is an honest politician," said Ogletree. "He has gone into Michigan and told voters that we have to produce more efficient autos;

he has addressed the NEA [National Education Association] and said that teachers should have incentives. He has introduced an urban Marshall Plan for the 21st Century.

What about the "lack of experience" label that keeps getting tagged to Obama?

"My sense is that some of our greatest leaders – such as a Lincoln – have had less experience in Washington than Obama," said Ogletree. "But judgment makes a difference. We need judgment rather than the kind of experience we have had lately such as that of Dick Cheney or Donald Rumsfeld. But [Obama] is not a guy who won't be able to read the instructions and he won't avoid the collaborative process. He's always been mature, reflective and in command."

Two aspects of the swelling Obama support are especially distinguishable: the backing of white, southern males and the overwhelming allegiance within the black communities in which he has campaigned.

As late as the summer of 2007, Clinton had a lead in African-American communities, a lead forged by the affinity many black voters have felt over the years for President Bill Clinton. But once Obama hit town, that lead quickly evaporated and he has managed to win about 80 percent of the black vote in state after state.

Clinton, however, in her top-down strategy, had managed to snare the endorsement of numerous black, elected officials around the nation at a time when most undoubtedly thought that Obama had little chance of beating the frontrunner. Now, of course, black officials in Ohio and elsewhere are shaking their heads at the fact that they seem to be so out of touch with their constituents on this most important matter.

But are black voters vot-

ing for Obama merely because he is black?

"My sense is that people are not going to vote for Barack Obama because he is black," said Ogletree. "If that were the case, African-Americans would have been in support back in February 2007 – that was not the case. He has earned that vote."

Ogletree noted that candidates such as Al Sharpton in the past have not been able to secure the black vote to any great extent.

And now comes the opportunity for voters in Ohio on March 4 to have their voices heard. Some time ago, just before Super Tuesday, in fact, many in Ohio were questioning the wisdom of not having an earlier primary. Such questions have been muted in recent days. Once again, the eyes of the nation are awaiting the decision from the Buckeye State.

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Teamsters and Other Unions Announce Obama Support

Sojourner's Truth Staff

The Teamsters', the United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW) and the Service Employees International Union (SEIU) have all announced their support for Senator Barack Obama.

On Monday, local union officials and representatives held a news conference at the Teamsters facility to explain why their unions had banded together in Ohio under the Change to Win coalition.

"We're here to show our support for Senator Barack Obama," said Mark Sobczak, vice president of the local Teamsters and president of the Toledo City Council. "He represents a clear choice for the Teamsters since he will fight for higher wages, universal health care and fair trade. The Teamsters Union has said 'yes, we can' to Barack Obama. He's the type of person we need for change in Washington.

As Sobczak explained, part of the rationale for the Teamsters' support of Obama is that he was promised to place people in charge of the U.S. Department of Labor and the National Labor Relations Board "who care about labor, not the other way around."

Steve Ridley, assistant state director of United Here, spoke of Obama's support for the Employee Free Choice Act and Dale Parker of Local 911 UFCW, noted that the senator "has no ties to special interests."

The unions' endorsement decision was based at least in part on their concerns about the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) that was signed into law during the Bill Clinton administration. While Hillary Clinton has expressed her own concerns about the act, she has taken criticism over it.

"NAFTA did not do us any favors," said Sobczak. "We need trade agreements that help both sides of the borders. It wasn't well thought out." Noting Obama's pledge to take a critical look at the NAFTA components, Sobczak said: "We can't afford to allow our jobs to be sent overseas."

**IF ISSUE 7 ISN'T RENEWED,
THINGS ARE GOING TO LOOK A LOT
DIFFERENT AT THE
TOLEDO PUBLIC SCHOOLS
BY THIS TIME NEXT YEAR.**



ISSUE 7:

- 5-year renewal levy.
- Not a new tax.
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- Help protect Toledo Public Schools from school closings and layoffs.

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More reductions in teachers, principals and staff. More neighborhood schools closing. More cuts in textbooks and school safety. Larger class sizes. And fewer programs to support at-risk students and continue academic progress in the district.

Presidential Candidate Senator Barack Obama Holds Toledo Rally

By Artisha S. Lawson
Sojourner's Truth Reporter

Toledo welcomed presidential candidate Illinois State Senator Barack Obama on Sunday, February 24, 2008 to The University of Toledo's Savage Hall. Supporters began lining up at early as 5:00 a.m. for the chance to attend the rally, while some other visitors drove over three hours.

Savage Hall filled to capacity with supporters who showed their allegiance to their candidate by wearing campaign T-shirts, buttons and hats. Families with young children, first-time voters and older voters attending the event—all in hopes in hearing the candidate whose slogan includes the words "believe, change and hope."

Many supporters attended the rally because they felt that "history was being made." That is why the three-generation family of Brittany and India Hart, Paris and Kristina Mitchell and Pamela and Larry Harriston felt that it was important to have the entire family attend the rally to participate in the political

process. "They can see that their parents and grandparents had a part in making history. I've been hearing a lot about Obama and his campaign. The change that he speaks of should and needs to be done. So I wanted to be a part of this today and make my presence known with my family," explained Larry Harriston.

The program opened at 2:15 p.m. with Lucas County Treasurer Wade Kapszukiewicz telling the audience why he's endorsing Senator Obama. "I want change. I want someone different, someone to make a difference. I want change that's why I'm voting for Barack Obama. He's winning in the north, south, east and west, winning with independents and Republicans because he's someone who can bring us together. I want someone who's going to get rid of those George Bush tax credits for millionaires and turn those to working class who need them," he said.

The University of Toledo

President Dr. Lloyd Jacobs told the crowd that the university was proud to be a part of this community event. "We at the University of Toledo are proud to be a part of the public discourse that will lead to the selection of the next president. Education is a prerequisite for democracy, without an educated citizenry, democracy would ultimately fail."

Before Senator Obama spoke, the National Anthem was sung along with several Negro spirituals including "We Shall Walk with Thee." Chants were shouted out by supporters including "Fired up ready to go" and "Obama 08."

Praise dancers and choirs presented their ministries to the audience while waiting for the senator to enter the room which was filled to capacity with some supporters even standing on the open gym floor.

Upon entering the room filled with supporters, local officials and the media the candidate addressed the citi-



zens of Toledo. "Holy Toledo, it's a big crowd here what a wonderful crowd," he began.

Supports cheered and waved banners, while refusing to sit as the senator spoke about the importance of voting and the opportunity for early voting in the state of Ohio. "I know some of you like to put this off to the last minute, but Ohio has early voting. You do not want to procrastinate, take advantage of early voting. Monday you should go and cast your vote. I won't tell you who to vote for, but you got to vote in this election. Then you'll have the whole week to grab people and tell them to vote," he stated.

After speaking about the early voting location for Lucas County, which is located at One Government Center, he addressed concerns about his purpose for running in this election instead of waiting for another. "I'm running because of what Dr. King said about the fierce urgency of now, because I believe there's a thing as being late and that the hour is upon us. But we are in a defining moment in history, and all of you here in Toledo know that in your own lives," he said.

Among the thousands of young potential voters, was Charmaine Davis, who is currently undergoing cancer treatments. Davis said that even though she's researched both candidates, Obama's health plan impresses her more. "I'm in support of a candidate for change, history is being made here. The health care plan is most important to me, but especially young people who've graduated from college and don't have the right health care," she said.

Obama addressed Davis' concerns and briefly outlined

his plan. He wants to create a national health care plan for all Americans, including self-employed and small businesses. According to his plan, no American would be turned away from any insurance plan because of illness or pre-existing conditions. "Healthcare has 47 million people without right now, and those who have health insurance their concerns are co-payments, deductibles and premiums going up and up and up," he said.

Another issue Obama addressed was the economy, which he said is failing because of companies moving jobs overseas, non-functioning trade agreements and lack of improvements in labor and safety standards. "We will stop providing tax breaks to companies that ship jobs overseas, and are going to give those tax breaks to companies that invest right here in the United States of America. We are going to have trade agreements that make sense, not just for Wall Street but main street. Which means labor standards that are enforces environmental standards that are enforcing, and that don't undermine U.S. labor and safety standards. So we don't have our children chewing on led-based paint on them or drugs that might make us sick instead of make us well," he said.

Along with addressing health care, economic problems and his reasons for running, Obama also addressed senior citizen concerns—such as the recent spike in foreclosure rates across the nation. "Senior citizens if you are making less than \$50,000, you shouldn't have to pay income tax on your social security. You're already feeling the strain and stress. I want to give more mortgage deductions to people who are living in their homes but don't

have itemized deductions like those people who live in fancy homes do. So you can lower your cost a little bit. I want to put a \$10 billion dollar foreclosure prevention fund to people who are at risk of losing their homes," he said.

Another point he addressed while speaking about the economy was the battle over minimum wage versus the cost of living. "I don't just want to raise the minimum wage every 10 years; I want to raise the minimum wage to keep pace with inflation every year because if you work in this country—you should not be poor. That's a goal that I want to set as president of the United States of America," he said to a cheering crowd.

During the first of several times he asked the crowd, "Are you ready for change?" The crowd, responding "yes," heard the senator's plan for education in this country. "If you are ready for change, we can start providing the best education that this country has to offer. To every child from the day they are born, to the day they graduate from college. Everyone talks about education, the problem is not that we don't know what to do—it's that we don't believe in our own rhetoric. We say no child left behind. The truth is there are a bunch of children who we really don't think are our children. Children in the inner-city in sub-standard schools we say—it's not our problem, it's not our child. They are all our children, and they are all our problem," he said.

Obama went on to explain how teachers would be rewarded for their nurturing and teaching of the children and how education must first begin in early childhood education. "I'm not going to just

(Continued on Page 8)



This February join TV One and Buckeye CableSystem in celebration of Our History Month!



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OUR HISTORY MONTH

4304

Rudy Barker Brings MLK's Speeches, Voice Alive at Toledo's Main Library

By Geneva J. Chapman,
Sojourner's Truth Reporter

Prior to re-acting parts of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s "Mountaintop Speech," Rudy Barker talked about Dr. King's state of mind leading up to his death.

"Ralph Abernathy said he was the saddest he'd ever seen Dr. King," said Barker, adding that Abernathy states King had been saying "They're going to kill me."

Barker had already read excerpts from the "I Have a Dream" and "Drum Major for Justice" speeches. "Sometimes I have to do excerpts, because Dr. King would talk for hours," he said, after indicating he would only be reading parts of Dr. King's final oratory.

Changing the modulation of his voice and putting on his "black Baptist preacher face," Barker held the small gathering in Toledo Main Library's McMaster Center in rapt attention, Saturday, February 23, 2008, as he spoke the familiar words of a speech that has been played and replayed, time and time again.

Some of the younger members of the audience heard the historic words for the first time and were fascinated by their

eloquence and Barker's ability to take on the persona of a face from their history books, bringing history to life for them.

Older members of the audience remembered the time and place where they first King describe his final journey, the journey to the mountaintop.

As Barker launched into the familiar litany at the end of the

traying Dr. King has changed his life. "Well, I don't beat people up any more," he said. "I didn't want to do this. I wanted to be Richard Pryor! This is hard, man!"

Barker recounted his troubled youth and how he changed as he started performing King's speeches 23 years ago.

was killed on my 12th birthday. I started studying his philosophy and reading about his life," Barker told the Detroit News.

Barker has been performing as Dr. King for more than two decades, delivering the legendary leader's speeches and preaching peace and non-violent conflict resolution. Barker and "Black Heroes in the Hall of Fame"—an international acting group based in London—have performed together abroad, and Barker continues to travel the United States while impersonating Dr. King. T

he Toledo-Lucas County Public Library hosted Barker's performance in celebration of Black History Month. The documentary film, "King—Man of Peace in a Time of War," was shown, and the library is hosting an historical photo exhibition and showcase news clippings from Dr. King's era in the gallery on Main's second floor.

The event was free and open to the public. A children's craft workshop was included in the program and held in the Children's Library.

Someone from the audience asked Barker how portraying Dr. King has changed his life. "Well, I don't beat people up any more," he said. "I didn't want to do this. I wanted to be Richard Pryor! This is hard, man!"

speech, even those who were hearing the words for the hundredth time sat enthralled. "So that's the mountaintop speech," declared Barker as the audience applauded, adding that he'd exerted himself so much "I nearly had a stroke."

Someone from the audience asked Barker how por-

"Dr. King has changed me a great deal," he said. Now a teacher, Barker spreads the slain civil rights leader's message of peace, love and equality in a live recreation of Dr. King's most noted speeches, a question and answer session, a mock press conference, and more. "When (Dr. King)

Two Local Men Honored for Community Service



Jan Scotland, Mayor Carty Finkbiener, and Bill Mangrum

The Office of the Mayor of the City of Toledo and the Toledo Pride Committee honored Bill Mangrum, executive director of the Frederick Douglass and JB Simmons Center, and Jan Scotland, owner of a State Farm Insurance Agency and head of the Sleepy Hollow Athletic Association, in recognition of their "outstanding service," on Friday, February 15 at Government Center.

Mangrum and Scotland had previously been honored by the Northwest Ohio Black Media Association (NOBMA) during the MLK Classic at Owens Community College on January 17.

"I am pleased and surprised to receive this community service award as I was the one from NOBMA," said Mangrum.

"It's a matter of your commitment to the community," said Scotland. "I appreciate this because you don't do these things you do expecting rewards."

Rev. Floyd Rose Returns to Toledo

Special to The Truth

The Rev. Floyd Rose is back in Toledo to campaign against the city's 3/4 percent tax renewal and to urge the people to vote for Senator Barack Obama.

His schedule includes meetings with the Baptist Ministers' Conference and the Interdenominational Ministerial Alliance, Toledo's two most powerful black ministerial groups. He will explain why he returned to Toledo and why he recommended that the 3/4 percent tax should be initially defeated on March 4.

According to a statement by Rose, he will not seek approval or endorsement of the ministers, just their understanding. "I am grateful that both groups were willing to give me a hearing," he said in the statement.

He had planned to speak to the Toledo Board of Education on Tuesday evening, February 26, and before an assembly of Scott High School students on Wednesday morning, February 27.

On Saturday evening at 6:00 p.m., Rose will hold a pre-election rally at Pinewood Tabernacle. The pur-



pose of the rally is to emphasize the importance of the defeat of the city's 3/4 percent tax and to clarify any misunderstanding about his motives. He expressed concern that the people, who are calling his tactics unwise and uncaring, are not equally concerned about the problems which brought the city to this point. Those are the problems he plans to address at the rally.

Rose said: "Power still

concedes nothing without demand, and all demands must be made from a position of strength, not of weakness. An elephant has no need to negotiate with a flea unless the flea gets in his ear. The defeat of the 3/4 percent tax renewal gives us a position of power from which to negotiate."

Rose will be in town until March 11 and can be reached at 229-444-1938.

New Works Writers Series to Perform Live "African Folktales"

Special to The Truth

Northwest Ohio's oldest independent theater group will present "An African Folktale Festival" at selected Toledo Public Libraries and community venues in celebration of Black History Month. The festival combines music with colorful and lively African folktales. These tales from the culture of African-Americans celebrate African legends and myths designed to entertain and inspire both young and old.

"An African Folktale Festival" is adapted and directed by Imelda Hunt, Ph.D., artistic director of New Works Writers Series with performances by Latoya Williams, Kenneth Taylor and Latesha Williams. Festival dates are scheduled at Birmingham Branch Library on Feb. 19 at 4 p.m., Wilier Homes Community Center on Feb. 25 at 4:30 p.m., Locke Branch Library on Feb. 27 at 4 p.m., and Sanger Branch Library on Feb. 28 at 7 p.m. All performances are free and open to the public.

New Works Writers Series is a non-profit drama and artistic development organization that sponsors performances and workshops throughout northwest Ohio. For more information or to schedule a performance call (419) 380-0257.

The Doorway To Life

(Continued from Page 3)

politicians! They have screwed it up but, as usual, they will not admit their own failings and instead blame teachers, students and parents. We are in the era of political correctness and crack brain theories that now flow out of schools like odors out of an outhouse. We have overcome the old segregated schools of the Civil Rights Era, and yet our schools now segregate according to the students' ability. One of the cruelest things public education has done is to implement the idea of segregating students by ability, or at least by what the school thinks are their abilities. That is a system of vicious labeling and does great psychological harm. How would you like to be labeled a "slow learner?"

Uniform results are impossible because students are not uniform. They are all different. They differ in IQ, general health, family background and genetic inclinations. A good teacher simply tries to get from every student his or her best effort. That is the way it should be.

We have, and have had for a number of years, a generally sorry class of politicians. They are masters of evasion. The real problem, which is becoming public, is the policy of social promotion. Rather than cause a hassle, school bureaucrats had crafted various schemes to promote children whether they learned any of the material or not.

I wonder if the politicians and teachers ever considered WHY students can be disruptive and unwilling to come to class? Their ability to fail a failing student is to not understand where we are as a people. Let's use Libbey High School as an example. As a

teacher you go out and master the higher education that the Europeans have designed for themselves and you try to instill that knowledge in black children. We rejected as much as we failed to comprehend the things we didn't think would help us. That's our creative intelligence at its best. Slaves weren't lazy, they just weren't being paid. The European curriculum that is failing our youth is being heralded as a much needed vehicle in OUR society. Why? Most of us have succeeded in life not because of that knowledge but because of what we have learned subsequent to (and in spite of) that education.

You will as teachers never be able to hold the attention of the majority of students who don't look forward to coming to your classes. Why is the education that you are providing so out of touch that kids sleep through your lessons? The school system will never change the curriculum to accommodate the needs of our black kids. You compound their misery by giving them a failing grade when in fact you have failed to understand that you are a pawn in their failure. These kids walk around school suppressing their knowledge because they know that something is wrong with the information that is being taught. Even a young child can figure out and understand that they are not the focus of an effort to educate them but are more a by product of what they decide to learn.

To continue to teach in a system that has a staggering failure rate is to continue to get paid. I hear teachers say that they must teach what the school systems want. Did you go away to get that educa-

tion to fail someone already suffering from the ills of low self esteem, etc. The people who control the school system obviously think that they have theirs and the kids have theirs to get. To not understand this cycle of dysfunction is to be blinded by your mastery of irrelevant subject matters. To fail our children for not mastering subjects you just learned to master as an adult is treason. Your stringent, structured, society approach to education is suffocating the life out of kids who could master the world with a little help from a realistic teacher. I guess you have bills to pay and can't look out for our children in spite of your failure to deliver an education designed to fail.

The politicians are doing what they want, when they want and how they want with no accountability to anyone, except how much money they can get in their personal pockets, at the expense of our children's education and future. The public-school industry - and that's what it has become - is too riddled with entrenched bureaucrats and too politicized. The TPS curriculum and policies have derailed the academics of a generation of Toledo's children. Just take a look at the OGT scores, they represent a social injustice to our children. How long will we wander in this wilderness? It is time to take a stand!

Hold TPS accountable! Don't Hurt Our Children...VOTENOON THE TPSLEVY, ISSUE?!

Bishop Stephen Ward may be contacted at: pastorsmward@yahoo.com

Obama in Toledo

(Continued from Page 5)

them more money and giving them more support. I want to raise the highest standards in our schools because our children have to compete with children in India and China. We have to have high standards," the senator explained during a standing ovation.

In addition to early childhood education, Obama wants to provide assistance to college students who in return will help their communities. "We're going to provide \$4,000 tuition credit to every student, every year ... but students you're going to have to give something back, spend some time doing community service. Work in a homeless shelter. Work in a Veteran's home.



Join the Peace Corp. We'll invest in you, you invest in America, together we will march this country forward," he said.

A second time he asked the crowd, "Are you ready for change." Excitedly the crowd replied, "yes." And the senator introduced to Toledo his energy plan which will fine polluters, create jobs and invest in alternative energy. "If you are ready for change, then we can have an energy policy that finally makes sense, because the one we have right now makes no sense. "We have \$100 barrel oil, gas prices shooting through the roof, we send a billion dollars in foreign nations - many of them hostile - and we're melting the polar ice caps. Now that makes no sense. So what we're going to do is cap the admission of green house gases that cause global warming, we're going to charge polluters for the carbon they send into the atmosphere - that will generate billions of dollars. We are going to invest in solar, wind, and bio-diesel. We're going to put people right here in Toledo to work building solar panels, building wind turbans. We're going to hire young people who are out of jobs and hanging on street corners. Let's train them to build more energy efficient buildings," he said.

He went on to explain how automobiles will have to become more efficient, and pointed out that companies overseas have already be-

gan working on this plan. "You know that Suburban you're driving with six-miles-per-gallon? We're going to have to do something; we can't allow Toyota and Honda to dominate the fuel efficient market. We got to get the Big Three to make their own fuel-efficient cars, and so we'll work with them," Obama said.

While standing before Toledo, he spoke on the qualifications of the future president. "But what we need from the next president is someone who will not just tell you what you think you want to hear, but will tell you what you need to hear. Will tell you the truth, that's part of the reason why I'm running for president of the United

States of America," he said.

For a third time Senator Obama asked the crowd, "are you ready for change?" Again the audience answered "yes" as Senator Obama spoke on the need to build schools instead of jails and



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the introduction of new after-school programs. "If you are ready for change, we can start building schools instead of jails to help reduce violence in our cities and salvage young people and give them a second chance," he said.

"And if you believe in change," Obama said, "we have a foreign policy that must reflect the best of America. You know as commander in chief, my job would be to keep you safe. And I will do whatever is required to fulfill that task. I won't hesitate to strike against those who do us harm, but I have to say part of that means keeping our military the finest force on Earth. That means training our troops properly, equipping them properly, and giving them proper rest."

Obama closed his speech by asking voters if they were ready to believe and ready to hope. He noted that voting rights for women and African-Americans would not have happened if hope wasn't involved. "Nothing worthwhile in this country has ever happened, except somebody somewhere decided to hope."

The rally ended with supporters waving their banners, yelling chants - while Senator Obama sang along with some music as he walked off the stage.

Following the close of the program, several residents



talked about some of the issues that inspired them to make a change. TEACH Daycare owner Artina McCabe was one such resident. "It was awesome, seeing so many nationalities and cultures in one arena for the same cause. Two issues that

he spoke on inspired me. The first was early voting. I knew that Ohio had this but hearing it explained really made a different; and the second issue was about making education equal for all no matter the neighborhood. Some of what he said about that sub-

ject was true, even I have said 'those aren't my kids,' and since I work in childcare - that really caught my attention."

Ohio's primary is March 4, 2008.

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Area High School Students Celebrate the 26th Annual Afro Ball

By Artisha S. Lawson
Sojourner's Truth Reporter

For 26 years, the Afro Ball has been the singular event that so many Toledo-area high school students look forward to each February. This year's ball focused on the theme, "Black Carpet—A Celebration of Black Film," which welcomed high school Afro-American Clubs, and acknowledged the club that has worked over the past year, while students still enjoy a formal night at Gladioux Meadows.

Upon entering the hall, spectators could view community service projects performed by high school students at Libbey, Scott, Springfield, Start and Woodward. Woodward's display included explanations of their Thanksgiving Day basket for one family, a coat drive in conjunction with Salem Church, Christmas baskets, soul food bake sale, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. honoring and the Black History program.

This year the long-established tradition was still honored, by allowing each school to present a court which performed a coordinated routine and crowned their school's Afro Ball king and queen.

Springfield's 13-member court opened the presentation portion of the ball and danced to traditional formal

movements. Rogers' eight-member court began their presentation with up-beat hip-hop music and mixed in popular artists like Faith Evans and Ice Cube with ball room dancing.

Waite's 11-member court presented their attendees in purple and white attire and danced to slower beat music. Woodward's 14-member court romanced the crowd with Dru Hill music and finished with a classic hustle, while the boys wore baseball caps tilted to one side and girls wore royal blue gowns.

Woodward's Afro-American Club court crowned senior Sharitta Thomas as queen and crowned senior Antonio Dunbar as king. "I've been active in the court for two years and with the club for four years, it feels amazing to win this honor to represent Woodward as their 2008 queen. Our dance was so together, and practice makes perfect," said Thomas.

Woodward followed their own tradition, by presenting their school's Afro-American Club Court during their annual Black History program, which is always before the Afro Ball. "I've been active in the court and club for one year, but it's shocking to win as king. Our performance was okay today, but we did better

during our performance yesterday at our school for our Black History program," said Dunbar.

Libbey's 12-member court surprised the audience by tossing red rose pedals across the presentation floor



DJ King Keyser

while the court danced, and then crowned their queen, Konswayla Houston, and king, James Rose. The club's president was extremely proud of the school's club and court performance. "We've worked very hard this year including work at a nursing home, hosting conversations about the Jena 6, and supporting our school's choir. Our court of course is the best to me," explained Shalynn Taylor.

Scott's Bulldogs presented their 14-member court in their school's colors, and President Brittany Burgess said their court worked the hardest. "We've worked close with our advisor this year, and worked hard to complete our projects and present the best court possible."

Start's 10-member court represented their mascot and colors. The girls wore yellow gowns, and tiaras and the boys wore black and green tuxedos. Club President Kevin Okoyomo, a three-year active club member, is proud of the work the students have done this year. "We've worked with the Sydney

Welch Foundation to organize a toy collection and pass out to the hospital, hosted a Black History dinner and history program," he said.

Music was provided by DJ Big Trav, while DJ King Keyser from 97.3 was the featured performer following the court presentations. "Keyser came out to share an inspirational message with the students, which is a part of the 'Get Your Mind Right Tour,'" said India Santos, co-coordinator of the Afro Ball.

Since October 2007, Santos and Aufwiederschen Winfield have been at work coordinating plans for the upcoming year and have worked with area club advisors to finalize the 2008 theme. "Courts were judged on the following: community service, culture, education, health, and service within the black and school communities. Woodward High School won 2008 Club of the Year for Community Service, Waite High School won last year and this is the second year of such an award," said Santos.

The club's were judged by Darsha Phillips, NBC-13 reporter; Tiffany Tarpley, FOX-36 weekend anchor; Linda Collins, Phi Delta Kappa Sorority local president and Victoria Furr, Lake Erie Academy educator. Since October, club advisors from Rogers, Woodward, Libbey, Scott, Waite, Start and Springfield have met each month and have raised funds throughout the year to support the ball.

The various schools' advisors included Libbey's Rochelle Dunning, Rogers' Janiese Hawkins, Start's Cynthia Mayfield, Scott's Winfield, Waite and Woodward's Santos and Springfield's Bonita Adams.



Libbey's court



Rogers' court



Scott's court



Springfield's court



Woodward's court



Start's court



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Owens Express Basketball Programs Bowl Strikes, Spares and Gutter Balls to Benefit Big Brothers Big Sisters

Special to The Truth

Strikes, spares and the occasional gutter ball were abundant on a recent Sunday afternoon at Toledo's Imperial Lanes as Owens Community College's basketball programs traded their basketball shoes for bowling shoes and participated in the Big Brothers Big Sisters of Northwestern Ohio's Bowl for Kids' Sake initiative.

In addition to bowling for Bowl for Kids' Sake, the two teams made a donation of over \$200 to Big Brothers Big Sisters of Northwestern Ohio from contributions raised during recent collection drives held at Express home basketball games. Donation efforts will be used to help Big Brothers Big Sisters of Northwestern Ohio in providing quality



mentoring relationships between children and adults.

"It's important to give back to your community," said Stacie Coressel of Hamler (Patrick Henry H.S.), Owens sophomore

guard on the Express women's basketball team. "My parents were my role models and I understand how important it is to have someone to look up to. Big Brothers Big Sisters is an outstanding organization and it feels good to lend a helping hand."

According to Owens Express men's basketball sophomore guard Sedelle Broyles of Canton (Canton McKinley H.S.), a big brother or big sister can leave a lasting impact on a young child. "I am thankful for my big brother. He meant a lot to me when I was younger. Unfortunately, not everyone has a big brother or big sister. It's good that the Owens basketball teams are stepping up and helping Big Brothers Big Sisters," said Broyles.

On the basketball court this year, the Express women's basketball program has amassed a 19-8 overall record and currently is in third place in the OCCAC standings. Led by Head Coach Michael Llanas, their conference record is 8-3. In this week's NJCAA Division II poll,

Owens Express women's basketball is ranked No. 25 in the nation.

The 2007-08 edition of the men's basketball program has experienced similar success as the women's team. Owens has an overall record of 17-8 and an 8-3 mark (second place) in the OCCAC. The Express is led by Head Coach Kevin Skaggs.



Toledo Clubs Partner to Benefit the Community



Members of the Toledo Club of the National Association of Negro Business and Professional Women's Clubs, Inc. volunteered their time on Saturday February 16, 2008 at the Toledo Seagate Food bank.

This is a community service project to give back to the community during Black History Month. This is a yearly event for the NANBPW, INC.

This year the Top Ladies of Distinction partnered with The Toledo Club NANBPW, INC

Wanda Terrell is president of the NANBPW, INC and Mary Dawson is TLOD president.

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GAME SAVVY

It's the show the players watch!

Stop being so suprised!

Young, Black and Voting for Obama

By Gabrielle Seay
Special to The Truth



There has been much ado about Senator Barack Obama's presidential campaign. Often referred to as a rock star of a candidate, Barack has inspired thousands of people throughout America to get involved in the political process. But special attention has been given to folks of my demographic, young people. In every contest thus far, young people have turned out in droves to support Barack. Political pundits, pollsters and politicians alike have offered their opinions for why young people support Barack so fervently, but I wanted to share why this young person is supporting Barack.

I first learned of Barack

Obama during his Senate campaign in 2004. I was immediately impressed by not only his intellect, but by his ability to rise above the irrelevant. In a campaign where his opponent was willing to say and do anything, Barack shined as a common-sense legislator and a champion of the people he would eventually represent in the Sen-

ate. I followed him in his new career and was motivated when I saw him dive right into the issues that matter most. He immediately began to work on ethics reform and launched an effort to making government transparent and accountable by creating an online accounting of government spending. Even

I support Barack Obama because he can bring about the change that America so desperately needs.

though Barack was elected to represent the people of Illinois, I felt as though he was representing me as well. He was smart, articulate and had an innate sincerity that is often missed in politics. So imagine my excitement when Barack Obama announced he was running for President! Barack had the good judgment to defy

conventional Washington wisdom that said presidential campaigns should be run by party-insiders and big-dollar contributors. He created a truly grassroots campaign centered around one unifying idea that all Americans could identify with: HOPE.

Naysayers say that it takes more than hope to turn our nation around, but

I would disagree. Hope is exactly what we need at a time like this. We are engaged in costly war which should have never been authorized and never been waged. Our economy is near recession. Our planet is in peril. Hope is the only thing that keeps us going day after day. We could have all the plans, initiatives and roadmaps to address our many problems, but without hope and leadership, they'll go nowhere. We need a president who will not allow us to settle for mediocrity, but will expect excellence from our government and our leaders. For too long Americans have expected to receive empty promises and little results from the people they elect. Barack Obama inspires people to believe their government can truly be "of the people, by the people, for the people" once again.

But don't be mistaken,

Barack holds up his calls for hope and change with sound policies.

His plan for universal healthcare would guarantee that anyone who wants healthcare can get it and get coverage at least as good as the plan he has as a member of Congress.

He has a plan to make college more affordable by offering tuition credits for students who are willing to invest back in their communities after graduation.

He has a plan to create jobs by investing in innovative technologies like solar and wind energy and by ending tax loopholes that reward companies for shipping jobs overseas.

His plans on other issues can be found at www.BarackObama.com/issues.

I support Barack Obama because he can bring about the change that America so desperately needs. He has not been sullied by Wash-

ington politics and has the audacity to believe that America can and must do better. Barack has the courage, judgment and experience to bring integrity and trust back to the White House.

It's just an added bonus that Barack Obama happens to be a brotha!

Forum to Address Health Care Disparities in African American Community

Special to The Truth

While the month of February is dedicated to the rich history of black culture and history in the United States and throughout the world, it also serves as a reminder work yet left to do.

Health-care providers at The University of Toledo will join Lima-area family physician Dr. Anthony Adkins at a forum titled "Improving Health Disparities in the African American Community" **Friday, Feb. 29 at 11:30 a.m. in Health Education Building Room 103.**

Mark Chastang, vice president and executive director of University of Toledo Medical Center will moderate a panel that will include:

- Dr. Anthony Adkins
- Dr. Frederick Cason, associate professor of surgery
- Dr. Linda French, chair of the Department of Family Medicine
- Dr. Patricia Hogue, assistant dean for student diversity, recruitment and retention and chair of Physician Assistant Studies program

Adkins has been a strong advocate for African American youth, using innovative ways, such as rap music, to communicate with them about steps they can take to ensure their own health.

Currently a family physician in Lima, Adkins works to help provide care to those who may not be otherwise able to afford it.

Ooops .. Our Bad!

In our article on Dr. Darrell Hall several weeks ago, we mistakenly made a reference to his business partner, Lisa Harris, as Lisa Hall.

For the record, his partner is indeed Lisa Harris.

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Commentary

Can We? Lima Residents Rally for Obama

By Vickie Shurelds
Sojourner's Truth Reporter

In 1915 America received a major gift from filmmakers. The first epic story ever told complete with technological advances in special effects, on location scenes and even a full-color sequence at the end of the film. In 1988 the film was named one of the top 100 most important movies ever made by the American Film Association and was placed in its archival registry because it symbolized a landmark in the history of American Cinema.

The film is *Birth of a Nation*, the name was changed from its original titled release *The Clansman*. Yes, the pride of the American cinematic world is a majestic

city workers are people of color. Seventy seven police officers are in the Lima Police Department, two are black.

Of the 68 officers with the Allen County Sheriff; two are black. In our media, there are two black reporters. In the school system the numbers are a little higher, but when taking into consideration the number of African-American students within the city, the number of school teachers and administrators pale in comparison. Few of them reside within the city limits.

Since the death of 26-year old Tarika Wilson, there has been an outcry of "we're not

change we've been waiting for," said Pastor Daniel Hughes to an impressive crowd gathered at the Holidome in Lima for its first Obamarally. And as the room began to fill with people of every color, race and station, it was also obvious the attraction to the Illinois Democrat also spanned age, economics and educational backgrounds as well.

"The change has to happen on every level of government. This is the man that can lead the change. I've read his books, I've gone to hear him speak in person, and I'm convinced that he is our best chance for change, because things just cannot stay as they are." Beverly McCoy is one of four delegates for Obama in Ohio.

The rally was held just one day after Lima's NAACP President FM Jason Upthegrove opened his mailbox at home to find a hangman's noose inside along with a letter instructing "Lima Niggers Shut Up" and horribly disrespectful statements regarding Tarika Wilson. Apparently, the chance that Lima's residents could find working solutions to its inclusion problems is too much for some to bear.

"Fear is a great motivator," said Upthegrove of his Valentine from the KKK at the February NAACP general meeting. "There was a time that these items could invoke fear making the receiver question their actions - but at this point in time - 2008, we see that the fear belongs to the cowards that send out these messages. They are afraid that we will succeed in healing this community. They are afraid that Lima's government, schools, and safety services can be a reflection of the community they serve. That we will become stronger because of our willingness to work things out - their fear motivates me to keep trying!"

America has been faced with those images from *Birth of A Nation* for a long time. For some, there is a feeling that the movie gives an accurate description of the country under the influence of black leadership as mayhem, debauchery and chaos ensue within days of the change over and nothing short of killing can stop the madness. Is this the fear that grips them in the energy brought forth following the Tragedy on

Third Street?

In Lima, the scale has been tipped so far in opposition of fairness, what would it take to even the playing field? "We have to assure justice prevails," said Rev. Jesse Jackson leaving behind words of action for Lima and Allen County. "The structure that is currently in place is unjust. That's why these things are happening in Lima. There are laws that are already in place; they must be enforced. The laws on the books about civil rights cannot be ignored, they must be upheld and, as they are upheld, the people of Lima will begin to blossom and grow and be ready to take their place in the workings of the city; that is as it should be; everybody working together for the common good. It shouldn't matter who your family is, or what has always been; and we must remember this is not about black or white, it is all about what is wrong and what is right."

The room at the Holidome swayed in time to the music of Obama's theme song, his New Hampshire speech put to music and performed by a variety of contemporary art-



ists and 'plain folk.' Yes, we can.

We know the battle ahead will be long, but always remember that no matter what obstacles stand in our way, nothing can withstand the power of millions of voices calling for change.

We have been told we cannot do this by a chorus of cynics who will only grow louder and more dissonant in the weeks to come. We've been asked to pause for a reality check. We've been warned against offering the people of this nation false hope.

But in the unlikely story that is America, there has never been anything false about hope. For when we have faced down impossible

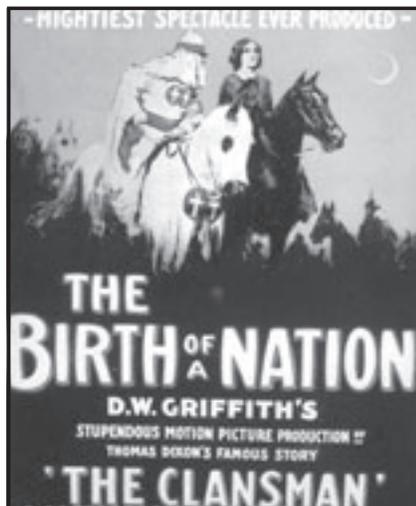
odds; when we've been told that we're not ready, or that we shouldn't try, or that we can't, generations of Americans have responded with a simple creed that sums up the spirit of a people.

Yes we can.

For the citizens of Lima/Allen County change is the hope they cling to as they poise to weather the storm ahead as the demand for equality echoes through every government office. Hope for justice. Hope for change. Hope for a future with a level playing field. Hope. Belief. Optimism.

Yes we can. Yes we can. Yes we can.

Can't we?



tribute to the Ku Klux Klan. The film is still used today to introduce new members to its beginnings and to provide the history and philosophic basis of its core values.

There is a scene depicting what happens to the once-dignified congressional floor once African-Americans are given the right to vote and take their place as representatives of their respective states, the actors in blackface do their best rendition of 'shuckin' & jiving.' At \$2.00 per ticket, the film grossed \$8 million dollars at the box office. It held the place of the biggest hit until knocked off the block by Disney's *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs* in 1937.

In 2008, the city of Lima faces a brutally honest look at its own infrastructure. According to the Census bureau, 27 percent of the residents are African-American, yet less than one percent of

going to take it anymore" as hundreds move forward to speak openly about the injustices they believe they have endured in a community that has long ignored a major resource in its midst. How has this omission been left unchecked? Why did it take a drug raid on January 4, 2008, the end of one life, and the shooting of a 13-month old child to snap the community into action?

As the investigation continues to search for a justifiable reason why an unarmed woman would be shot twice by a 'well trained' police officer, the community tries to find common ground among its own residents.

"Look at yourselves! Turn your heads and look at the people sitting around you! black, brown, white; all of you hear together! This is what Lima looks like. We are all here looking for a change; and in the words of Barak Obama, we are the

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The Lima Truth

Page 13

The Sojourner's Truth

February 27, 2008

Lima YMCA Makes History

By Sharon Guice
Sojourner's Truth Reporter

For the first time in 16 years the Lima Family YMCA has hired Black Achievers director. This may seem like small potatoes, but it is a big deal to the people involved in the program as volunteers. The program has been operated by volunteers ever since its inception in 1992 when a group of young adults saw the need to help the African-American youth in the city school system achieve academically, socially, financially, mentally and culturally.

Now that the YMCA has hired a person to take the lead role as director, the program can only be enhanced, say those familiar with the situation. Lewis Shine was hired as director in December 2007 and will be responsible for the overall planning, implementa-

tion and evaluation of the Black Achievers Program at the Lima Family YMCA. He will report to Jerry Courtney, president/CEO of the YMCA.

Shine will have major tasks to deal with as he gains experience in working with the program. Some of his duties and responsibilities include developing, managing, and monitoring the Black Achievers' operating budget along with meeting budget targets.

Shine's people skills will help him work well with the Black Achievers Advisory Committee and, one day, his own staff. He will have to call on those skills by maintaining visibility with the community to ensure that the YMCA Black Achievers maintain a high degree of acceptance and credibility within the

service area.

He must recruit, train, supervise and evaluate the staff and volunteers while raising funds for the program. Not only must he do all the above, he is also required to provide "hands-on" leadership for program activities.

Shine will represent the YMCA Black Achievers at YMCA meetings and local, regional and national events.

Shine must model the values of caring, honesty, respect and responsibility in an environment in which these values are evident to staff, YMCA members, volunteers, and the youth he serves in the program.

He is required to participate as an effective member of the YMCA management team, providing assistance in YMCA

activities and special events, and attending all association-wide staff meetings and retreats as directed. This means he has something to say about what goes in the work place and the community.

And he will be participating in community activities that promote the YMCA to ensure that positive relationships are maintained with agencies where YMCA programs are held.

Reports, reports, reports, will be part of Shine's daily routine as well since he has to prepare statistical, analytical and narrative reports regarding programs and operations of the YMCA Black Achievers as needed.

In addition, Shine's duties and responsibilities require him to develop and maintain collaborative relationships with community agencies in service delivery as well as coordinate management and maintenance of the YMCA facility and equipment.

How will Shine get all of this done? He says he will because he has been trained and has prepared himself for the task at hand?

His objective on his resume boasts of wanting to contribute skill and knowledge in a challenging sport, exercise, health and/or team-oriented environment. He most assuredly found that challenge when he became a part of the Black Achievers team.

Shine graduated in May 2002 from Miami University in Oxford, Ohio with a B.S. in Exercise Science. In May 2004 he completed his studies course work for a M.S. degree in Exercise

and Health Studies.

Shine's skills and talents include those of a professional athlete, coach, personal assistant, professional basketball draft consultant, player personnel, exercise specialist, personal trainer, strength and conditioning, health appraisal/promotion, camp and event director and coordinator, public relations consultant, scout, youth leader and mentor.

Shine graduated with honors making the President's List with a 4.0 GPA and was a member of the varsity basketball team in 1998-99. He also won the Graduate School Assistantship Award in 2002-03.

Shine is very active in the community and is well known among his peers in the city. He is very active in his church, Cornerstone Harvest, working with the youth. He was the head basketball coach (eighth grade) at Heir Force Community School for the October 2005 - February 2006 season leading the Heir Force Generals to an 11-5 record.

Shine was the Camp and Charity Game Director for June 2005 and June 2006 for the Bean City Charity Classic, Lima, Ohio. He directed and coordinated a week-long youth camp as part of the local youth ministry. He played in both Annual Bean City Charity Classic Celebrity Basketball Games and held the first Annual Bean City Charity Classic Slam Dunk Champion Contest.

From November 2004 - February 2005 he was an ABA (American Basketball Association) star

player with the Louisiana Cajun Pelicans. He was a participant in the Slam Dunk and 3 Point Contest of the 2005 ABA All-Star Weekend in Las Vegas, Nevada. In addition, he was ABA assistant coach, November 2004 - February 2005 with Colorado Storm and Louisiana Cajun Pelicans.

As a student, Shine worked as a graduate assistant with the Office of Multicultural Student Enrichment in August 2002 - May 2003 coordinating and promoting multicultural events for students, faculty, and alumnae.

Shine completed an internship with the Miami Redhawks Strength and Conditioning Program in January 2003 - May 2003 at Miami University, Oxford, Ohio. There he implemented workouts for spring in-season and off-season athletes.

Shine also completed an internship with Cincinnati Memorial Children's Hospital in May - July 2001, working in the Cardiology Department as a fitness instructor for obese children.

What such an impressive resume, one can see that he should be able and up to the challenge of being the first African-American hired at the Lima YMCA as the director of the Black Achievers Program.

The YMCA Black Achievers will be hosting the 5th Annual Unity Breakfast, Saturday, February 23, 2008. The event will be held at Lima Senior High School from 9:00 AM - 11:30 AM. \$10.00 for adults and \$5.00 for youth 18 and under.

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PCN 996489: Project Manager

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To apply, submit a cover letter (include position title and job #), a resume, as well as the names and contact information for three professional references to: The University of Toledo, Human Resources Department, Toledo, Ohio 43606-3390; Fax (419) 530-1490; or email recruit@utoledo.edu. Use only one method of application. Previous applicants do not need to re-apply. Resumes must be received by February 29, 2008. The University of Toledo is an Equal Access, Equal Opportunity, Affirmative Action Employer and Educator.

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The successful candidate must either hold a Ph.D. degree in Operations Management, with an emphasis on green manufacturing, or be an ABD candidate. Ten years minimum of private sector experience is required. Proficiency is required in word processing, spreadsheets, database management, presentation software, and analytical software packages for statistical analysis, structural equation modeling and geographic information systems. Experience is required in research article writing. Full Time. Salary to commensurate with education and experience.

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Jamil Lewis Multicultural Center Fundraiser

The Jamil Lewis Multicultural Center for the Arts presented an Art Around the Town Fundraiser in celebration of Black History Month at the new Truth Art Gallery at 1811 Adams Street on Saturday, February 16. If a picture is worth a thousand words, the pictures at the Truth Gallery were worth a million.

Executive Director Audrey Johnson and her able staff set the standards for the new Truth Gallery with a first-class display of local African-American art and a delicious culinary presentation that was quickly consumed.

Among the many artists presented were Odes (Orobs) Roberts, Alice Grace and Navarro Gibson.

The Truth Art Gallery will have its official opening on March 15. For more information contact Warren Woodberry at 419-243-0007 or by email at hccwarren@yahoo.com.



Audrey Johnson and John Scott



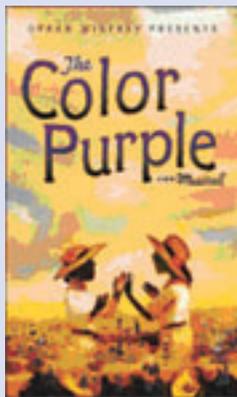
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Open Letter to Toledo Residents

The 3/4% temporary income tax levy has been in place since 1982. This levy generates \$57 million annually for the city of Toledo, which represents approximately 22% of the city's general fund. If the levy does not pass in 2008, it will result in the lay off of approximately 200 police officers. This will have a devastating effect on the ability of the Toledo Police Department to provide the same level of service that the citizens of Toledo have grown accustomed. The lay off of 200 police officers will necessitate the following:

- The closing of the Scott Park District Station located at 2301 Nebraska Avenue
- The closing of the Northwest District Station located at 2330 W. Sylvania Avenue
- The closing of the Ottawa Park Substation, the Cherry Street Substation, and six additional neighborhood offices
- Police officers will no longer be deployed as School Resource Officers in the junior and senior high schools in the city of Toledo
- Police officers will no longer respond to investigate non-injury traffic accidents that occur in the city of Toledo

The purpose of this letter is to educate the citizens of Toledo as to some of the changes that will become necessary in the event that the % temporary income tax is not renewed in 2008. This is not intended to be an all-inclusive list, but is only intended to highlight the changes that will have the greatest impact.

Michael J. Navarre

Michael J. Navarre
Chief of Police

CITY OF TOLEDO
DEPARTMENT OF POLICE OPERATIONS



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