



*Julia Bryant
Realtor of the Year*

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“I believe that minority homeowners are important to our community, and I have worked hard to educate perspective homeowners on their ability to purchase. Many are not aware that they qualify and that there are programs available to assist them.”

This Strikes Us ...

A Sojourner's Truth Editorial

Here we go again.

As the new year approaches, several Toledo City Councilmen are jockeying for the number one position in our municipal legislature. Council presidency is the prize and last week, Democrats Wilma Brown and Frank Szollosi announced that they want the job. The current president, Republican Rob Ludeman, presumably wants to keep such a powerful plum. So the battle is joined.

For those who don't remember last year's shenanigans on council, let's recap it a bit. This time a year ago, there were only 11 council members (a district seat had been abandoned so that the incumbent could run at-large) – seven Democrats and four Republicans. Brown, who has been on council for nine years (and before that for 12 years on the Toledo School Board, including several terms as president of the board), could not garner the necessary six votes that then comprised a majority.

So Democrats Mark Sobczak and Bob McCloskey, "B" teamers from Mayor Carty Finkbeiner's wing of the party, voted for a Republican to lead council rather than a fellow Democrat. Keep in mind that Ludeman, who had run for the mayoralty himself, dropped out of the race early and switched his support to Finkbeiner. One can only surmise that that was the *quid pro quo* equation.

Weeks later came the *quo*, when Finkbeiner's folks on council dutifully forgot they belonged to a political party and a Republican became president.

There were rumblings at that time that the "B" teamers preferred a pro-business leader of council in order to work more effectively with the new pro-business mayor. So the two Democratic council members from big labor pretended for a moment that they were really had business backgrounds and mouthed that pro-business phrase almost as if they had come up with it all by themselves. This is, of course, part of the new world order, Toledo-style.

Just as an aside, we would challenge any councilman to stack his or her record against Wilma Brown in the pro-business arena. Brown has been virtually indefatigable in helping to retain and recruit businesses to her district.

Now, a year later, we have part two of the search for a council president. A vote will have to be called in order to reorganize, but that may be a foregone conclusion with so many lean and hungry types craving the top job. And we now have the full complement of members – 12 – who seem to be split 4-4-4, for Brown, Szollosi and Ludeman at early count.

There are two qualities that members of a legislative body are seeking in a leader. First, there is the ability to promote the members' good standing among their own constituents. In other words, can the leader, or the candidate for leadership, help the members do those things in office that are necessary to get them re-elected – that is, placing them in positions to be successful in terms of committee assignments and helping them to raise funds for campaigns.

If anyone wonders, by the way, why Teresa Fedor has skyrocketed to the top of the heap in Columbus after a mere six years in office, it's because she has proven that she is capable of doing good things for those whom she leads in the Ohio Senate.

Secondly, the leader has to be able to work effectively with enough members and with the executive in order to get ordinances passed – that is, avoid gridlock.

It would seem logical to expect a Democrat, since that party holds an eight to four advantage, to come out on top in this year's contest. But hold on a second. That seemed logical last year as well.

The problem for the Democrats now is that they are offering two candidates who appear to be equally matched. Something has to give in order for the Democrats to obtain that top job.

Our vote obviously doesn't count but Wilma Brown would be our choice.

Brown has demonstrated that she can indeed work with everyone else on council. She can work with the mayor. She does not hold grudges or carry vendettas and our guess is that committee assignments will probably be handed out as fairly as is possible.

The vote that took place a year ago demonstrated the results of political intransigence when the Democrats, faced with a stalemate, could not bring themselves to caucus in order to retain for the party one of the top political jobs in northwest Ohio. A repeat of such a debacle would not bode well for party unity and the continued success of the Democrats in this area.

With yet another big national campaign kicking off shortly, one can only wonder if logic will finally prevail or will egos trump common sense ... once again.

The Sojourner's Truth

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Community Calendar

December 8-Jan 19

• Bagley Housing Art Gallery: Diverse and United; Multi-media Christmas exhibit featuring 40 Detroit-area artists; 2715 Bagley, Detroit; M-F 9 to 5; Sat 1 to 5 pm: 313-964-5942

December 20

• Xmas Gifts for Children aged 2 to 12; Good News Bible Chapel: 419-241-2728

December 23

• Toledo Gospel Rescue Mission: Annual Christmas Service; 5 pm: 419-241-6579

December 25

Merry Christmas!!

• Toledo Gospel Rescue Mission: Breakfast 7:30 to 9 am: 419-241-6579

December 26 to January 1

• KWANZAA!! Wayman Palmer YMCA; 5 pm each day; sponsored by the Toledo Kwanzaa House Committee; 40th Anniversary

December 30

• Toledo Gospel Rescue Mission: Annual Christmas Dinner; 5 pm: 419-241-6579

January 1

Happy New Year!!

January 1-6

• Mt Zion Baptist Church: 21 Days of Blaze a Prayer and Fasting Explosion: 1st to 6th – week of prayer/sensitivity at 6 pm nightly: 419-246-1850

January 5

• Amazon Lodge #4 Fish Fry: 11 am to 5 pm; Deliveries available on orders of 3 or more: 419-531-7079

January 13

• Mt. Zion Baptist Church: NAACP MLK Youth Explosion; 11 am to 1 pm; Open to any youth group: 419-246-1850

January 15

• 24th Annual King "Oratorical" Contest: The "Ghanaian" Foundation Honors Dr. King; Civic Center Promenade; 9 am to 3 pm; K through 12 grades may compete in their age group: 419-868-8396

January 19

• Amazon Lodge #4 Fish Fry: 11 am to 5 pm; Deliveries available on orders of 3 or more: 419-531-7079

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My View

By Jack Ford
The Truth's Political Columnist

Governor Bob Taft gets ready to step down after a long career in Ohio politics. Of course, the Taft name is synonymous with Ohio politics going way back into the 1860's. The governor stumbled over some ethics filings and he personally never caught on to the mood of the voters about their concern over these matters but he did have some areas of success.

Governor Taft made some outstanding appointments. Fred Darling has been a good administrator in agriculture and has led the way in pushing Ohio to be a leader in ethanol production so that we can wean our reliance off of oil. His partnerships with the Andersons and Sterling food marts have been good starts with more to come. Generally the Ohio food economy has thumped along pretty well and we should be grateful for that.

The Ohio Department of

Natural Resources, led by Sam Speck, is in pretty good hands and is considered a leader in the country, particularly in the area of water conservation which has been in the news lately. I personally saw Taft in action two years ago in Chicago at the Peggy Notebaert Museum where he led a seven-state conference on Great Lakes Water policy.

Mayor Richard Daley of Chicago, Congressman Rahm Emanuel of Illinois and various governors attended the conference to discuss the steps necessary to protect the integrity of the Great Lakes. There are many forces in the Southwest who want a gigantic water pipeline to be built taking water from Lakes Superior and Michigan to the Colorado River bed.

Taft also had the good judgment to keep the erstwhile Reggie Wilkerson as the head of the Ohio Department of Corrections. He is the

best in the country and most professionals in the criminal justice field would agree.

Likewise, we have seen no major blowups in the mental health field in Ohio led by Nick Baird. Remember times past when the newspapers were replete with stories of atrocities within Ohio's mental health system?

Economically, Taft has suffered the same fate as has Governor Jennifer Granholm in Michigan - a sagging economy based on the auto industry which struggles to redefine its products, its work conditions and market share. This redefining will continue for several more years.

Finally, Taft's huge bond initiatives will pay off in time. The recent \$18 million solar cell grant to UT-MUO is a prime example of building for the future.

Speaking of the future and jobs, everyone calls for policy makers to figure out how to attract young, cool profes-

sionals to Toledo. We want them to buy homes and sink roots into the community. It happens more than you think.

The Toledo Symphony Orchestra is not just an arts organization, it is also an economic enterprise. Just in the past three months, four musicians have been recruited and hired to live and play in Toledo. These are good middle-class jobs with educated folks coming to Toledo! All of us should buy some tickets to the Symphony programs to help support this kind of "economic development."

Last week's mayoral announcement regarding the funding of CareNet speaks for itself. Anyone who would scuttle such a program that saves lives has not thought the issue through completely.

Mayor Carty Finkbeiner would lack vision and heart if he denied the program funds

to operate. It would also be hypocritical of him to have willingly sipped at the public trough for health care when he needed it for his daughters and now speaks of his intent to willingly pitch poor women to the wind.

This decision, I might add, is caused by the unholy conspiracy to win the last election by giving away the store. The city is now in debt because of a deal for which there was no money in the city coffers when it was negotiated.

I reported last week that Toledo City Councilwoman Wilma Brown had discussed the council presidency with the mayor. That was incor-



Jack Ford

rect, according to the councilwoman. However she did acknowledge last week that she does want to be the president. All of the Dems should get together and vote for one of their own party to lead the legislative branch of city government.

Contact Jack Ford at jack@thetruthtoledo.com



Dear Editor,

On December 11, 2006 a letter from Francine Lawrence to The Toledo Blade was published in which the African American Parents' Association feels that she threatened the well being of every student in this city. Being the president of the most powerful union in Toledo, Ohio equates to being a very powerful woman in the Toledo Public School system and beyond and therefore we feel that her words should not go unchallenged.

This ominous threat to parents and students should not be taken lightly. She stated, "You don't cheat and lie to your employees and then expect that life will go on as if nothing happened." This statement is a threat to the educational well being of every TPS student, if not every student in Toledo and parents should remain vigilant that their student's safety (educationally, physically and psychologically) is protected.

Twila Page

Ed. Note: Toledo Public Schools and the Toledo Federation of Teachers reached an agreement to extend their contract for one year with no changes in wages or benefits last Tuesday. The extension runs through March 32, 2008.

Take A Journey With Storyteller LaRon Williams

Special to The Truth

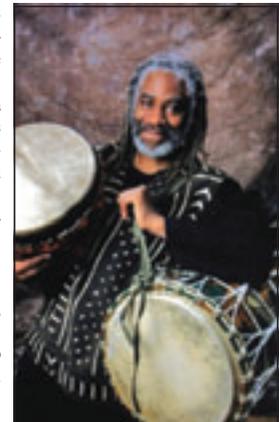
Take a journey at three Toledo-Lucas County Public Library branches with nationally acclaimed storyteller **LaRon Williams**, of Michigan, as we embark upon an adventure into the land of imagination!

This program, presented by the Toledo Area Community Credit Union and the Toledo-Lucas County Public Library, is scheduled on Wednesday, December 27 at the following times and locations:

- 1 p.m. - Main/Children's Library, 325 Michigan Street (419.259.5231)
- 3 p.m. - Birmingham Branch Library, 203 Paine Avenue (419.259.5210)
- 7 p.m. - Reynolds Corners Branch Library, 4833 Dorr Street (419.259.5303)

This event will encourage participants to sing songs, play games and share stories. All ages welcome.

For more details, please call 419.259.5207.



KWANZAA 2006

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Minority Student Medical Organization Connects with Community During Banquet

By Artisha S. Lawson, *The Sojourner's Truth* Reporter

Student National Medical Association (SNMA) members of the University of Toledo College of Medicine, sponsored their quarterly banquet while celebrating accomplishments and planning for the future.

During the banquet several members of the university administration welcomed guests and shared the joint progress directed by members of SNMA and administration. "There are plans to attend Oberlin College, Wilberforce University, Central State University, Xavier College and Grambling State University; we also plan to host more second look weekends in Spring 2007," explained Dr. James Kleishinski, Associate Dean of Admissions.

The guests were also enlightened by a slide presentation by Frederick Cason Jr, MD, who works in the Department of Surgery at the University Medical Center. His statistics showed that currently 46 million Americans are without health coverage, also by the year 2020 there will be a great need for more medically trained personal and that the United States may have to hire in-



Medical students

ternational medically trained personal to meet the high demand.

During the December 15 event, members of SNMA connected and networked with local organizations such as the NAACP, the Links, Inc. and the Stewart Academy for Girls who are ready to aid organization's five main areas of focus. The areas are recruitment, retention, on-campus seminars for the College of Medicine, educational pipeline programs and community programs off campus.

"The community is here for you," began Willie Ann Moore, Toledo NAACP president and Links member, during a portion of the program that was dedicated to updating the community networking with the SNMA. "You don't have to look for resources, I brought them to you.

Last year was the first wave and some are here from that wave, but here is the second wave of resources for you."

Moore conveyed to the guests that members of the community organizations represented there that night were ready to help the SNMA with events dealing with AIDS, mentoring Toledo Public School students through current university pipeline programs like Gear Up and even with assisting members with living arrangements.

The SNMA is the nation's oldest and largest independent, student-run organization focused on the needs and concerns of African-American, Hispanic and Native American medical students. The University of Toledo's chapter has sponsored this banquet each quarter since December 2005 and plans to continue with their five areas of focus in 2007. "Our plans are to incorporate the community in the planning of our events in 2007 and definitely increase the number of enrolled minority medical students," said SNMA University of Toledo College of Medicine Chapter President Bernice Rumala.



Willie Ann Moore and Bernice Rumala

"Let Us Help You Out"

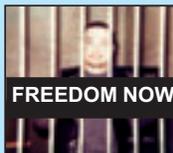


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Kapszukiewicz Announces New Revenues From First-Ever Tax Lien Sale

Sale brought almost \$10 million for schools, seniors, and other community programs; result may be fewer levies on the ballot

Lucas County Treasurer Wade Kapszukiewicz announced at a news conference last week that a new program his office implemented to collect delinquent taxes will bring in \$9.7 million additional into the coffers of the county's 50 taxing districts. Of this total, \$7 million has already been collected, he said.

This additional revenue was generated without an increase in taxes and, according to Kapszukiewicz, the new program could result in fewer property tax levies being placed on the ballot.

"Clearly, the taxing districts will benefit when delinquent taxes are more successfully collected," Kapszukiewicz said. "The districts will enjoy these increased revenues without having to make additional levy requests at a time when many people believe prop-

erty taxes are already too high.

"What is more, all taxpayers benefit when everyone is paying his or her fair share. Not only is the tax burden more equitably distributed, with additional resources taxing districts may not need to place levies on the ballot as often," he said.

Under the plan, the liens on 2,314 delinquent parcels were sold to a private company, Xspand, Inc., which will in turn collect the taxes at a higher interest rate than that charged by the Treasurer's office. Xspand paid the Treasurer's office \$4.87 million for the liens on Nov. 30.

Parcels owned by certain groups of taxpayers—seniors on the homestead program and taxpayers involved in one of the office's payments plans, to name a few—were not included in the sale to ensure that the program did not affect anyone who is making a good-faith attempt to pay his or her taxes. Out of 206,000 parcels in Lucas County, only roughly 4,800

were initially included in the tax lien sale, and the liens on only 2,314 parcels were eventually sold.

"When tax delinquents don't pay, honest taxpayers suffer," said Kapszukiewicz, noting that only one percent of all Lucas County parcels had their liens sold to Xspand. "I will work to set up payment plans with anyone who is willing to catch up on his or her unpaid taxes, but out of fairness to the vast majority of taxpayers who do pay on time, everyone must pay their fair share."

In addition to the \$4.87 million that was received by Xspand from the transfer of liens on 2,314 delinquent parcels, an additional \$1.3 million was collected from 646 parcels that paid in full during the length of the program. Kapszukiewicz said this shows that some taxpayers with the ability to pay had refused to do so until they were threatened with an aggressive program like the tax lien sale.

(Continued on Page 7)

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LISC Awards \$200,000 to "Connecting the Pieces"

Sojourner's Truth Staff

The Toledo Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC) announced its largest grant ever last week in the amount of \$200,000 to a trio of community development organizations in order to assist them in leveraging the new East Toledo waterside development—the Marina District—with community development of the areas surrounding that district.

The collaboration of the organizations—Neighborhood Housing Services, River East Economic and Housing East Revitalization—is entitled "Connecting the Pieces." That group has already obtained the services of the East Toledo Family Center, the River East Association, the Toledo Design Center, Paul Sullivan AIA, the Urban Affairs Center of The University of Toledo, the City of Toledo and the Dillin Corp. to focus on three areas adjacent to the Marina District.

LISC's plan to dole out the sum of \$200,000 in a lump sum deviates a bit from the group's normal practice which typically awards much smaller sums to a wider array of entities.

"LISC has taken a strategic change... let's focus on making an impact in a neighborhood instead of spreading ourselves too thin," said Thomas Palmer, chairman of the group's local advisory committee.

"What's different is that we did concentrate our resources," said Hugh Grefe, senior program director for Toledo LISC. "We put our money into a little tighter bundle and we're helping groups develop the capacity to have a [role]. The East Toledo [group] will springboard off the investment in the Marina District."

"We believe this is an opportunity, an unparalleled opportunity, to build on that tremendous project," said Dan Stiengraber, head of the River East Association. "It will enhance East Toledo, it will enhance the northwest Ohio community."

Participants in the "Connecting the Pieces" project will each develop a scope of services that includes new housing construction, revitalization of existing homes, weatherization and loans to new and existing homeowners, according to LISC's literature explaining the concept of the grant.



The Dillin Corp, lead developer for the Marina District, will also handle those chores for the "Connecting the Pieces" project.

The project will also solicit input from community residents in a series of meetings held on the east side. The first public meeting will be held on January 11 at the East Toledo Family Center.

LISC has contributed more than \$70 million to development projects in the Toledo area since 1989 in grants, loans and equity fund investments. Founded in 1979, National LISC has programs in 38 cities and was rated by SmartMoney Magazine as the number one philanthropic investment organ for community development.



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Kwanzaa, Seven Principles and 40 Years Later – Are We There Yet?

By Geneva Chapman
Sojourner's Truth Reporter

It was a great idea. Seven principles that, if practiced, would change the African-American community. Clothed in ritual and adorned with the trappings of African culture, **Kwanzaa** was created by Dr. Malauna Karenga in 1966, as a non-religious, community-building event that had implications reaching far into the future.

Well, it's the future.

Forty years later, those seven principles still sound like good ideas, but are we following them? Principled or not, black folks are still robbing, raping and killing each other. Looking at each of the seven principles, it's easy to see that 40 years of just celebrating them without concrete plans for putting them into action has yielded little benefit to our community.

Unity: using the Kiswahili word "umoya," Karenga envisioned a coming together of people across socio-economic, political, religious and other lines. However, African-Americans still tend to support those in their church, their fraternity or sorority or club or lodge, their political party or their income level to the exclusion of everyone else. This borders on tribalism at times and degenerates into divisive competitiveness at others. There is occasional unity, but too often it's only about being a Delta or a Mason or a "Q" or a Democrat or a B.U.M.P. (black upwardly mobile professional). So much for the first principle, without which, it is very difficult to realize the six other principles.

Self-determination: using the Kiswahili word "kujichagulia," Karenga hoped that we would start determining the direction our community would go economically, politically, etc. However, all too often, we cannot agree on what that direction will be. Look at all of the derision between our former school superintendent and members of the community. There was very little agreement about what should happen to and in our schools and the rancor and acrimony reached such levels, Eugene Sanders, Ph.D., gladly accepted a position in Cleveland, where I hear he is doing very well.

Our first strong African-American mayor, Jack Ford, had similar problems. Lack of unity means lack of self-determination, too. And people who are unable to determine their own future have a very bleak one.

Collective work and responsibility: using the

Kiswahili word "ujima," Karenga envisioned a community working together and taking responsibility for our community as a collective unit. However, that would require unity, which we've already established we don't have as a community, and determining for ourselves the direction in which our community would go, which we've also established hasn't happened. So, what happens when we try to come together to work toward improving our community and taking collective responsibility for our community as a people? We are un-unified and directionless; therefore, we are unable to work together and take responsibility for our community. Without this collective effort and acceptance of our own responsibility in building our community, we continue to falter and have little hope of moving forward.

Cooperative economics: using the Kiswahili word "ujamaa," Karenga foresaw the kind of economic interdependence that other ethnic groups have been successful at creating. However, because we are not unified and cannot even agree on a direction for our community or work together to take responsibility for our community, any real effort to create a cooperative economy is out of the question.

There have been some improvements with black-owned businesses thriving in some areas, even some areas here in Toledo, but many more have failed due to lack of support. Yet, African-Americans spend six billion dollars a year on goods. Imagine what would happen if only 10 percent of that money was invested in creating businesses in our communities instead of buying consumable goods?

But without unity, self-determination and collective work and responsibility, we will never be able to see a need for economic cooperation with people in our community and, therefore, will not be an economically self-sufficient community like the ones many other ethnic groups have established.

Purpose: using the Kiswahili word "nia," Karenga urged us to find a purpose; one we could all strive to accomplish. However, any purpose we hope to achieve cannot be accomplished without unity, self-determination, cooperative work and responsibility or the economic cooperation needed to finance and sup-

port that purpose. So, 40 years after the creation of Kwanzaa, we have a community where our children are less interested in things like getting an education, earning a decent albeit moderate living, buying a home and having a family.

During slavery, those things were of utmost importance to African-Americans who had little hopes of having them. Now that each of these goals is within our reach, it seems too few of our children aspire to them, but rather go for the 'bling-bling' and a 'thug's life.' What purpose do our children have in life and how can we show them one when we are in disunity, lacking in self-determination, can't work together and take responsibility for our community and do not cooperate with each other economically to build a community in which they want to work, buy homes and have families?

Creativity: using the Kiswahili word "kuumba," Karenga probably thought this principle would help us realize the previous five principles, using our innate ability to come up with creative solutions to problems. However, although creativity may not seem to be directly affected by the previous unrealized principles, it is to some degree.

Creativity is nurtured in a particular environment. Where there is disunity, no self-determination, little collective work and responsibility, lack of economic cooperation to support creativity and no purpose for it, creativity will not thrive. However, were all of the other principles realized, creativity—the likes of the kind that built great kingdoms in Africa and created America's only original art form in slave spirituals and the musical genres that they spawned (blues, jazz, rhythm and blues, and rap)—would abound in our community. But even when it does, as it does in actuality in Toledo, we take it for granted and don't give artists the kind of support they need, spiritually, emotionally and financially.

Faith: using the Kiswahili word "Imani," Karenga added a spiritual principle to the other six, giving them a new element of power. Faith does not depend on any of the other principles, but it might help us realize each of them. However, too many of us have had a lapse of faith since our ancestors created slave spirituals and have little interest in the faith of our fa-

thers because it involved self-sacrifice, moral integrity, forgiving each other and each individual sharing with the rest of the community.

I saw evidence of this where I grew up in rural Texas when each individual AfrAm landowner shared whatever he or she grew or butchered with everyone else. Only one person in the community refused to do it and he was the only one in the community that was poverty stricken and had to depend on the kindness of the others to support his large family. All others thrived and had plenty to give and were constantly making improvements to their homes and lands while the selfish landowner never even had indoor plumbing in the 11 years I lived on my family's land.

Read This Before You Offer Another Libation!

In conclusion, we can't unify because, instead of forgiving the petty grievances we have against each other, we hold onto grudges for dear life and let resentment and past wrongs keeps us divided. We

can't determine our course of action for our community, because instead of knowing that God will get us through the hard times, we're looking for easy solutions like government-funded entitlement programs that take away our right to determine the direction for our community and make us dependent on the folks in "the big house" for our very existence.

We can't work and take responsibility for our community collectively, because instead of our allegiance being to God, it's to a religion, sect, denomination or church that prevents us from associating with people from different religions, sects, denominations or churches. We can't cooperate economically, because instead of sharing our money and supporting black businesses in our community, we lust after 'the golden calves' outside our community that tempt us with promises of social acceptance and assimilation and distrust those who look like us, fear-

ing if we help them they may become successful (isn't that the whole point?); and sometimes when we do support our own and they do become successful, they have a "I got mine, you get yours" attitude and fail to continue the cycle by helping others.

We can't find our purpose, because instead of looking for a purpose in serving our God and our community, we are only interested in serving ourselves or our church, organization or other affiliation. We can't find our creative inspiration, because instead of looking inside ourselves to be inspired by God, we look outside ourselves, hoping to be inspired by the latest music, fashion or other trend. We don't have faith in ourselves and each other and our ability to overcome the problems facing our community. We give up on young people and refuse to listen to the wisdom of our elders. Yet, these two groups hold our future and the knowledge that will help us build on our past. Possessing very little unity,

(Continued on Page 11)

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The Sojourner's Truth Business

Business Section • Business Section

Julia Bryant: 2006 Realtor of the Year Is First African-American to Receive Honor

By Alan Abrams
Sojourner's Truth Reporter

When Julia Bryant arrived at the annual Toledo Board of Realtors business meeting and installation of officers Dec. 7 at the Pinnacle in Maumee, she thought she might have a good shot at receiving the board's 2006 Citizen of the Year award.

Instead, Bryant was named Realtor of the Year, the first African-American to receive this award in Toledo since it was instituted in 1966.

"I was very much surprised when I heard my name being called," says Bryant, who manages the Collingwood Blvd. office of Coldwell Banker Flex Realty. "I had been asked to fill out a nominee form for the Citizen of the Year award listing my accomplishments, what I am doing within the community and the boards on which I serve. So when the Realtor of the Year award came first on the agenda, I wasn't prepared."

Bryant has been a licensed realtor since February 1988. She was born and raised in Toledo's Central City. "My mother, Jacqueline Murphy, was a single parent. I was the oldest child, I have two brothers, Willie Dudley and Robert Dudley, who live in Toledo; and two sisters, Cicely Murphy and Robyn Murphy, who live in Columbus," says Bryant.

"I attended Fullerton elementary; the old Roosevelt school before it was torn down and replaced by the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., school; Lincoln and Stewart schools; and went on to high school at Scott. I started at Ohio State University but then my mother became sick, and because I was the oldest child, I had to come back home to Toledo," she adds.

Bryant spent 12 years in banking, working for the old Ohio Citizens Bank before it was merged in National City. She eventually became a group leader in the bank's item processing division.

"My husband, Ronald Bryant, was working out of town and he had some rental property. I had to maintain it while he was away, and I liked being involved. I was making repairs to the houses and dealing with contractors. I liked the business aspect of real estate, so I decided I would get a license.

"I saw an ad from Century 21 Goldcrest and just showed up. I went to all the classes even though I was still working at the bank. Eventually, I gave up my job at the bank and went full time into real estate," says Bryant.

Her first sale was a home on Mulberry Street. "I remember saying, 'You mean I actually have to write a contract?'" says Bryant. One of the par-

ties lived in Point Place, and in the course of putting the deal together, every modification had to be initiated by both parties. "So I had to drive back and forth until midnight to get it done. My husband was out of town, so my two daughters were in the back seat, and they were hungry. Now, of course, you can do all this by fax. But back then, there weren't even any cell phones and I had to keep looking for and stopping at telephone booths," recalls Bryant.

Because of her banking background, Century 21 Goldcrest offered her a job and she worked there from 1988 until 1992 until they were absorbed by another company.

"I've enjoyed my career as a realtor, but it is lots of hard work. It is very challenging work," says Bryant.

She recommends that anyone interested in entering the field contact and join one of the trade groups. "That way, you can network with individuals who have a lot of knowledge.

Bryant says that having people skills is as important as the training in becoming a successful realtor.

One of the many joys she gets from her work is helping people become home owners instead of just paying rent. "Most people are not even aware of how the require-

ments for home ownership have changed over the years. They are surprised to hear you no longer need 20 percent down of the purchase price, and that there are good programs that will help you buy a house with no money down. The same thing applies to bankruptcy. You no longer have to wait for seven years after you've filed, there are programs that will come into play for you after just one year," says Bryant.

And she stresses that these are not the high interest programs offered by predatory lenders. As president of the Lagrange Community Development Company, she has seen the damage wrought by companies like John Ulmer's Westhaven Group. The company has been civilly charged with racketeering, but to date no criminal charges have been brought against Ulmer or the company which did so much to devastate the Lagrange area.

"I believe that minority homeowners are important to our community, and I have worked hard to educate prospective homeowners on their ability to purchase. Many are not aware that they qualify and that there are programs available to assist them. Some are just intimidated by the system and give up easily," wrote Bryant ear-



lier this year.

"I live in the central city and I love it," says Bryant. As she told the Toledo Board of Realtors in her nominee form, "I am doing what I love and from the heart. I don't seek awards or recognition for that. I grew up in central city Toledo. I've been here all my life and I understand the community in which I serve. I can relate to the fear and obstacles that many face. Some are not ready for homeownership, but those who are I want to help. Every single organization I am involved with has meaning. It's not a name on my resume or an opportunity to say that I belong to this or that. It's a way to make a difference. Many talk the talk, but how many actually walk the walk?"

Bryant is a past president

of the Toledo Realist Association and has served as past chairman and co-chairman of the Toledo Board of Realtors Equal Opportunity Committee and as co-chairman of their Affordable Housing Committee.

She was actively involved in the Organized Neighbors Yielding Excellence (ONYX) One Block at a Time neighborhood project. She has been a volunteer at the Lagrange Polish Festival for the past three years.

Bryant and her husband have three children. Daughter Ronata, 25, is a graduate of the University of Toledo. Daughter Courtney, who is 20, is a student at the Illinois Institute of Arts in Chicago, and son Caleb, who is seven, attends the Old West End Academy.



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Kapszukiewicz Announces New Revenues From First-Ever Tax Lien Sale

(Continued from Page 4)

"In the past, millions of dollars of delinquent taxes went uncollected," Kapszukiewicz said. "That's money that should be going to the programs and projects we support with our tax levies - schools, Metroparks, children's services, and senior citizen programs, just to name a few. While those dollars went uncollected, we have seen our taxing districts forced to increase taxes in

part because some people refuse to pay their fair share. This is unfair, and now that I am Treasurer, I will not allow it to continue."

The largest single beneficiary of the program was the Toledo Public School system, which will receive an additional \$3.5 million. Other agencies that will see a substantial windfall from the initiative include: Washington Local Schools (\$489,000), Board of

Mental Retardation (\$472,000), Sylvania Schools (\$462,000), the City of Toledo (\$343,000), and Springfield Schools (\$302,000). In all, 10 local taxing districts will receive at least \$200,000 additional from the sale.

The additional revenues generated from the new program will be distributed to the taxing districts in February.

THE LAST FRONTIER, BUSINESS OWNERSHIP, TIME FOR CHANGE

By Vince Davis
Guest Columnist

Some passing thoughts on the recent election results

The current federal political administration prefers giving incentives to big business at the expense of the little guy. Tax payers in the highest brackets got the heftiest cuts while middle to low income folks bore the brunt of the load.

The general attitude of the Bush administration is one that, if given the opportunity, it would have repealed every gain that we have achieved over the last 100 years. It seemed OK again to "black bash."

I have not heard of any stories about blacks being chained to a truck and dragged about of late, however the arrogance of our national leaders almost guaranteed that sort of behavior is on its way. It seems that there was a deep disdain for any type of program that has given African-Americans an opportunity to participate in the American Dream.

It is as if the powers that be are saying, "we have already leveled the playing field and if you can't pull yourselves up by your own boot straps than, "TOUGH LUCK BUDD." When in reality we just got into these decent jobs, just recently got a chance to vote, to sleep at the same hotels, to eat at the same places ... all of this in my and your life times. We are "new faces at the table of wealth" and ain't nobody giving us a prayer! In the past, corporations sought diversity. The past six years have allowed companies, universities and municipalities "to talk diversity," but act pragmatically.

GOP control of the Senate

and Congress changed the business atmosphere for African-Americans. I can't put my finger on it but "things just didn't smell right". You know that feeling that you get when you mistakenly wander into a neighborhood that does not like black? YOU KNOW AND THEY KNOW THAT YOU JUST ARE NOT WELCOME THERE.

The plight of our people left behind after Katrina, many left for dead, depicted the mood of the administration better than any word could ever describe. While Condi Rice shopped for shoes in Paris or wherever it was, while President Bush traveled the world selling his foreign policy quagmire, American People, mostly black, were dying in their own filth in "the Nasty Dome" in New Orleans.

The general mood of the power structure was "So what, they should have left when they were told to evacuate." We treat our dogs better than that. If 15,000 pedigree dogs were left behind there would have been a public outcry. The whole mood of the political power structure was "I got mine, you get yours".

Furthermore the political mood suggested that if we were ever going to get ours it was clearly going to be done without the help of the federal government. The way they handled Katrina and Iraq eventually became their political undoing. Poor people, mostly of color, dying like refugees on American soil. What America will not tolerate is the images of our sons and daughters dying for a cause that most Americans find it difficult to articulate.

It has somehow been OK



Vince Davis

for universities throughout the country to set aside their programs that favored diversity over strict adherence to academic guidelines that generally do not depict how we will achieve as students.

Under the current economic climate we are less likely to get loans from banks to start businesses. Banks that lend us start-up money will not lend us "finishing money." Therefore they are able to say, "see there, we lend THESE PEOPLE money and they don't pay us back. We get barely enough from the bank to start a business. We hardly ever get enough to finish a business. Lending institutions know going in that our fledgling little businesses are undercapitalized. They really don't care. All they know is "they gave us a chance and we could not make a go of it."

Maybe under the new political regime we will be dealt a fair hand rather than being required to play what ever hand "that we are given."

That's My Time, See Ya

Ed. Note: Vince Davis is the owner of Vince Davis State Farm Insurance Agency at the corner of Cherry and Sherman Streets. He is also a partner in the Captain D's Seafood Franchise at 2060 W. Laskey.

Mortgage Banker Moves to National City

Sojourner's Truth Staff

"We have just always been committed to increasing homeownership, especially African-American homeownership," says Charles Turnbough, the newest member of National City Bank's mortgage banking team.

Homeownership in the African-American community, notes Turnbough, "is only about 50 percent, while the national average, overall, is 70 percent." That's a gap Turnbough and National City, he says, are eager to close. And National City, he adds, has not been a part of the problem in the past. The bank is already the second leading lending institution for African-American borrowers.

Even though Turnbough is new to National City, he is no rookie when it comes to mortgage

lending. After more than five years in the business, Turnbough is a seasoned veteran who prides himself on his ability to work with clients to help them achieve their dreams of homeownership.

"I'm not going to blow anyone off because of credit scores," he says. "If I can't get you approved, I'm going to tell you exactly what you need to do to get a house. Over a period of time, I've positioned myself so that I know what the underwriter wants to see."

Turnbough, who joined National City in the fall, is working on a bank campaign titled "In the Home" which is targeted towards the African-American community in an effort to improve homeownership statistics. And he offers a broad range of services in order to realize



Charles W. Turnbough, Sr.

this goal such as: conventional fixed rate mortgages, adjustable rate mortgages, VA mortgages, balloon mortgages, construction loans, home equity lines of credit, FHA mortgages, among many others.

The move to National City allows Turnbough to continue doing what he started at Midwest Mortgage and what now has become second nature. "I'm selling service, knowledge and competence," says Turnbough. "I enjoy doing this, I enjoy helping people."

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Year-End Personal Finance Checklist

To be sure, you have time to get your financial act together before 2006 ends. But not much time. Here's a recap of what Sue Stevens, director of financial planning at Morningstar, and other financial planners suggest doing:

Fix your portfolio. Year-end is the perfect time to rebalance your portfolio. At a minimum, investors and their financial planners should revisit (or create if they don't have one) their Investment Policy Statement (IPS) to see if you need to make any changes to the asset allocation. An IPS is a written document that articulates the investor's overall investment goals and how those goals will be accomplished. It's designed to take the emotion out of investing and keep the investor on track, regardless of what the market or the economy is doing. In some cases, rebalancing will be required because the percent invested in certain assets exceeds the limits established in the investment policy statement. In other cases, circumstances may have changed, requiring changes in the percent invested in asset classes.

When rebalancing, it's a good idea to review whether you can sell some securities at a loss and others with a gain to reduce potential taxes. In addition, it's a good time to check whether you have any losses from prior years that can be carried over to this year.

Because many mutual funds are expected to declare capital gains this year, find out if any of the investments

you own now expect to distribute these gains. It's also important to examine whether the mutual fund or funds you plan to buy or sell in the last part of the year have had any year-end capital gains distributions. Usually, people try to avoid these payouts because they can complicate a tax return and result in unwanted and needless taxes.

Catch up if you can. Those who have an employer-sponsored 401(k), 403(b) or 457 retirement plan, should contribute as much as possible to their plan. The maximum is a total contribution of \$15,000 in 2006 and \$20,000 for persons who will be at age 50 or older by December 31, 2006. In some cases, employees can adjust their payroll deduction before year-end to reach that amount. In other cases, they may have to use a portion of their bonus.

Besides socking money away in an employer-sponsored retirement plan, taxpayers should also consider — if eligible and possible — contributing to an IRA or Roth IRA. This can be a bit complicated. If you have earned income, you are always eligible to contribute to an IRA—which may or may not be tax deductible—but income restrictions may rule out Roth IRAs. You contribute up to \$4,000 in 2006 or \$5,000 if you're over age 50 in 2006. Of note, you can do this up to next April 15.

For those who are self-employed, consider setting up a 401(k) or profit-sharing plan before year-end, or a

SEP-IRA, or for potentially even larger tax deductions a defined benefit plan.

Plan that estate. People tend to procrastinate when it comes to getting their estate planning documents in order. Consider these a priority before the year ends: Name guardians for your children and trustees for your assets. Make sure you have named someone who could make health care decisions for you if you are unable to do so. Of course, if you already have estate documents, review them with a qualified professional who will know about recent changes in the law that might affect your plans.

Put money away for your children's education. Be it a 529 Savings Plan, a Coverdell Education Savings Account, a Uniform Gift/Transfer to Minors account, or something entirely different, start socking money away for your children's future. The new tax law change causes kids under 18 (previously 14) to be taxed at parents rate so this could be a good time to consider switching to a 529 plan from an UGMA.

Charitable giving. You can give \$12,000 each to as many people as you'd like this year without triggering gift tax. But that gift doesn't have to be cash. In fact, lots of people who have appreciated stocks in their portfolio give those instead.

Take those RMDs. If you're over age 70 1/2, you probably have to take at least

the minimum distribution required by Uncle Sam from your qualified retirement plan (unless you're still working for that company) or traditional IRA. Don't wait. You'll owe 50 percent of the amount you should have taken plus ordinary income tax if you miss the year-end deadline.

Do a Year-End Tax Projection. Most people hate tax surprises. If you do tax projections throughout the year, that could help reduce the odds of surprises next April. It's especially important for those who have to pay AMT (alternative minimum tax), exercise stock options, or have income from multiple sources.

Consider a Roth IRA Conversion. If you meet the criteria, if you have AGI (adjusted gross income) under \$100,000 and you have a traditional IRA, you may want to think about converting to a Roth IRA. You can convert all or part of the traditional IRA. Of course, you will have to pay ordinary income tax on the portion of



Bill Harris

the traditional IRA that you convert.

This column is produced by the Financial Planning Association, the membership organization for the financial planning community, and is provided by Bill Harris, Financial Advisor and a local member of the FPA. Bill Harris is a financial ad-

visor with Informative Financial Services of Toledo, Ohio. Securities and advisory services offered through Mutual Service Corporation, member NASD/SIPC. Informative Financial Services is not affiliated with Mutual Service Corporation. For seminars and speaking engagements, Bill can be reached at 419-885-8384.

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March 13 Module 7 Building

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Kwanzaa, Seven Principles and 40 Years Later – Are We There Yet?

(Continued from Page 6)

self-determination, collective work and responsibility, cooperative economics, purpose, creativity or faith, we still go through the annual ritual celebration and act as if we're making progress.

Before You Light Another Candle, Light a Fire!

It's been 40 years and those seven little principles still seem to elude us. So why do we still celebrate Kwanzaa? Perhaps it's with the hope that if we keep repeating the ritual and keep lighting the candles and keep saying the words, it'll sink in some day and we'll suddenly wake up with a unified, self-determined community, working together collectively and taking responsibility, cooperating economically and finding a purpose, using our creativity and faith to make it all happen.

Well, that would be nice, but highly unlikely. Maybe after this year's celebration, we should stop and take a look at Kwanzaa to see if we

really want to spend another 40 years - or even another 10 to make it 50 years - of not accomplishing anything. Let's dispense with the rituals and beautiful African language long enough to come up with some real solutions on how to realize these seven principles. There's nothing wrong with the principles. Each of them is a great idea, but maybe instead of Kiswahili, we need to give them and the celebration itself AfrAm names that have a clear and precise meaning (how many AfrAms can even pronounce Kiswahili words?). Let's stop just talking about Kwanzaa, for now, and get busy doing the "Things Black Folks Need to Do to Succeed."

What You Go'n Do?

Consider these "Things Black Folks Need to Do to Succeed":

- 1) Get together;
- 2) Figure out what you do;
- 3) Everybody agree to

work together to do it;

- 4) Buy what you need from black folks when you can;
- 5) Figure out what we trying to accomplish;
- 6) Put all our heads together to figure out how to do it;
- 7) Trust God.

Instead of celebrating seven nights once a year, meet every seven days to work on each of the above, one by one, eventually meeting monthly or bi-monthly as more and more of the 'things black folks need to do to succeed' are accomplished.

Then, by December 26, you will have a reason to have a celebration - a big one, with the lighting of candles, invoking of ancestors and feasting. Once we've done these seven things and are on our way to success, we'll finally understand the meaning of Kwanzaa and Karenga's vision will be realized.

Christmas Spirit Abounds in Toledo

By Geneva J. Chapman, Sojourner's Truth Reporter

This year I decided to forego the tree-trimming, gift-giving and eggnog-sipping, as well as all of the other secular celebratory fixtures around the "Yuletide Season."

Instead, I wanted to find the real spirit of Christmas and my search proved very fruitful. I didn't have to make a pilgrimage to Bethlehem or go into seclusion to pray. All I had to do was travel around Toledo to find what I was looking for among those I know and love, such as my favorite community choir, the Clarence Smith Community Chorus, directed by none other than the inimitable Clarence Smith himself.

"There's a difference between Negro Spirituals and gospels," said Smith at the beginning of CSCC's Christmas Program, December 10, 2006, held at Friendship Baptist Church. "You might say the spiritual is the parent of the gospel. The spiritual came first.

It came out of the slave experience."

Smith explained that the authors of spirituals are unknown, while we know who wrote the gospel music we sing. "We didn't have gospel until Thomas Dorsey came along," continued Smith. "What we do are concert spirituals."

Demonstrating their mastery of this particularly difficult music genre, CSCC sang two concert spirituals to open their annual concert, "Ain-a-That Good News" and "Hush! Somebody's Callin' My Name."

The first was spirited with refreshing joyfulness, while the second showcased the group's ability to produce crisp, close harmonies as soloist Patricia Thomas showcased her beautiful soprano voice. Professional actress and Toledo native Sylvia Carter provided a dramatic interlude with an African perspective of 'the night before Christmas,' bringing current conditions on the continent of Africa into focus at a time

when most of the western world celebrates a particularly joyous holiday.

"How could we celebrate Christmas when we had not known any peace - just war and suffering?" Carter spoke the words in the articulated English of someone who learned it as a second language.

"That night my sister gave birth to a beautiful baby boy! We had to celebrate! War or no war, Africans have to dance! We danced until the rooster crowed. All of the pain and suffering of the past was gone!"

Carter's final words from the narrative were as profound as the experience it described. "I had learned that Christmas comes in spite of all circumstances."

CSCC's strong, vibrant male voices dominated the low, almost defiant melody of another spiritual, "Don't Let Nobody Turn You Around," in one of the best arrangements of perhaps
(Continued on Page 12)

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9pm GIRLFRIENDS

9:30 THE GAME

WT05-TOLEDO

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A.E.I.O.U. Tour Artists pose for pictures after the show

A.E.I.O.U. Tour B.Y.O.B. Open-Mic Party: Underground Artists Grace the Glass City

By Monique Ward
Special to The Truth

The Artist Exchange Initiative Out of the Underground, a/k/a the A.E.I.O.U., held its first tour titled, "The A.E.I.O.U. Tour B.Y.O.B. Open-Mic Party," on November 18, 2006 at MarSyl's Jamaican Restaurant. This movement was organized to support independent artists and to raise money for Alternative Directions Counseling & Wellness Center's "Any Kid Can Program" which helps nurture troubled youth in the city of Toledo.

MarSyl's Restaurant banquet hall was packed wall-to-wall with poetry lovers and independent artists from all over the country.

The room throbbed with life as people mingled amongst themselves and enjoyed the sounds of old school music played by resident DJ Mel Johnson. As the crowd waited for the show to begin, drinks were being sipped in abundance - everything from fine wine to Jamaican ginger beers.

By 9:00 p.m., the DJ silenced the music and the smooth tunes were replaced with the rhythm of cow bells and African drums by Kenneth Peterson a/k/a Kewape. He recited his poetry and prepared the audience for what was to follow. The roster of performers was an incredible mix of talent from New York, Miami, Columbus, Detroit, Toledo and other surrounding areas. The artists were called at random so no one, not even the host herself, knew who would be next. This kept the crowd on their toes and yearning for more.

Toledo performers represented with some of their most notorious talent; Lethal was sharp and deadly; C.C. Ardrey recited one of her well-known pieces; Miss T told us who she was; John Dorsey took us back to Harlem; Dawud spit some truth; Eternal Fire spoke the gospel and, of course, we had DreDay with his Dre-

zms. New faces to the scene included Toledo-born Asharah, a/k/a Shyy, whose soulful musical performance almost brought the audience to tears. Ed McDaniel kept it real and brought his whole crew from Dayton, Ohio as he performed with his brother and his friend Jay, who hails all the way from Jersey City.

It was about 9:30 p.m. when MarSyl's presented its exceptional, generously sponsored, complimentary buffet. The menu featured sweet fried plantains, a wide variety of chicken (including curry, fried and jerk), and large vegetable platters. The lines were long but the food never disappeared because the restaurant staff kept everything hot and in stock. This display of hospitality made the night even more enjoyable.

Some of the guests who came to support the event included radio personalities Schylar Meadows, D.J. OneTyme, and Martini of 107.3 WJUC; Lisa Hightower of The Mark-Et Place, The Village Voice host D.J. Boo-Dyl, Stewart Walker of The Blade, Michael Hayes of The Sojourner Truth and many others.

Resident photographer Aqeelah Abdul-Rahim of Elevated Events was on site to take pictures of anyone who was willing to pose and smile for the camera. There was, of course, no limit to the volunteers.

The N.Y. artists set the house on fire with spiritual hymns from poet/vocalist ItsRealight, conscious words from Priest, tag-team erotic pieces by poets Essence & Element, rhythmic tales by iSekou, stories of sex and dissatisfaction by NightWriter as well as thoughts from the mind of The Alterego. The reaction of the audience was so intense that you would have had to be there to believe it. This was especially true

when featured international recording artist, Soulflower, blessed the microphone.

Soulflower possessed a sound that most people in Toledo have never had the pleasure of hearing before. With positive lyrics and conscious ballads full of wisdom, the awe that accumulated throughout the night remained visible on every listener's face. There was a fresh feeling that came with her music; her words possessed a peaceful vibe as if they had the power to heal wounds or wash all your worries wash away.

The night concluded with a phenomenal performance from Toledo legends Lagik and Swill Gates of Da Basix representing real hip-hop in the Glass City. The host Pozativ thanked all the artists, sponsors, and everyone in the audience for coming especially Food 4 Thought Café in Brooklyn, New York. The owner Will Deceus, to his dismay, couldn't make it because he had to run his business. MarSyl's owners Tony O'Neal and Paulette Lalor asked to make a special announcement and told the crowd how wonderful the event was and also extended their gratitude to the people for coming and supporting their business.

The event was taped by Digital Architects Multimedia & Entertainment and will be available for sale to the public. You can pre-order your copy by calling (419) 471-0094 or (419) 490-5122. You can also email aceiu_4life@yahoo.com to order. Please make all checks payable to Alternative Directions Counseling & Wellness Center 501(C) 3. All proceeds from this event go to benefit the "Any Kid Can Program." The show program listing all the artists, sponsors, and mission of the A.E.I.O.U. can be found online at www.myspace.com/PozativPromo.

Christmas Spirit Abounds in Toledo

(Continued from Page 11)

my favorite spiritual of all.

A male soloist, Carl Christopher, lent his beautiful bass voice to a beautiful song, "Child of Peace," followed by soprano Laura Lawrence whose operatic voice soared as she sang "Oh, Holy Night."

Lawrence received an enthusiastic standing ovation, partly for the beauty of her singing voice and partly for the energetic and passionate performance that her public has come to expect from her.

"Wasn't that inspiring?" asked Smith, midway through the program. "Can't wait to get up and sing, can you?"

Yes, it was time for a 'carol-along,' an annual CSCC tradition, which is probably the part of the program the audience both dreads and looks forward to most, because Clarence Smith won't stop until *everybody* sings!

This year's selected carols were "Hark! The Herald Angels Sing" and "Silent Night." In customary fashion,

Smith gave a brief history lesson of both carols, and then the real fun began when the audience sang "Silent Night," first in unison, then with women's voices only and, finally, with just the men's voices.

A couple of audience members (one of each gender) even got to sing a verse solo and received thunderous applause.

The second half of the concert included more seasonal music, "Breath of Heaven (Mary's Song)," "Hail Mary" (another spiritual), "Bethlehem Spiritual," "Glory, Glory to the Newborn King" with "Go Tell It On the Mountain" (featuring soprano Lesli Lane Rodgers) and "Joy to the World" featuring Keith Powell on trumpet and CSCC pianist, Sandra Kellogg.

However, I missed the second half of the concert because I had to go to another Christmas program not far away at the True Church of God Apostolic.

Now, while CSCC is my favorite community choir,

the best church choir Christmas program in the program is at True Church of God Apostolic presented by their Chancel Choir.

Under the direction of Robert Arnett, this amazing choir in the past has performed a program that included everything from classic operatic pieces in languages like German and Italian to gospel music that make you want to get up and shout.

Every year their programs are novel and full of surprises. This year was no exception.

"2000 Decembers Ago," created by Joel Lindsey and arranged and orchestrated by Russell Maudlin, tells the Christmas story through the most beautiful medium of all, music.

When I arrived, narrator Dwayne Gibson sat center stage in the most beautiful setting, telling children gathered around his feet the story of Jesus' birth. Choir members were scattered on both sides of the stage and suddenly burst into song.

(Continued on Page 16)

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The Truth in Music 2006 Pt. III Year End Wrap Up

By Michael Hayes
Minister of Culture

Peace Glass City, it's ya boy. Thanks to everyone who has been paying attention to The Truth's TV spot - we appreciate the love.

I know what ya'll been sayin in the emails is true, I've given a lot of attention to the albums of the past year but not the singles.

And I've saved the best for last by compiling a list of everybody's most talked about joints from 2006. The industry is crazy right now, hardly anyone is selling albums like companies used to. Record companies aren't even pressing the amount of discs that they did even five years ago because the only thing moving is ringtones.

Besides T.I.'s *KING* and Jay Z's already platinum *Kingdom Come* - only a very small handful of hip-hop acts were able to move a million units this year. So as we move on to 2007 one thing you can bet on is that a hot single will be the only bread and butter some artists have to look forward to. That means that everyone within reach of a microphone is gonna try and bang out something to get your attention.

The radio spins, the downloads, the Hot 100 - it's all about having *that* song, with *that* beat, and *that* hook that the public just can't ignore. And if people like it enough, maybe they'll cop the album.

If they don't, well at least you've got a hit.

Okay fam, let's get into it...

SONGS YOU LOVED TO HATE/HATE TO LOVE 2006

"Chicken Noodle Soup" - Young B/Webstar

Don't front, it was catchy as hell even if you didn't know what they were talking about.

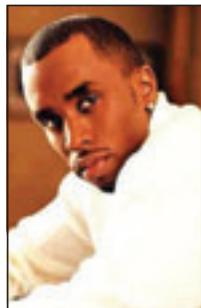
The dance craze and the song itself might be some Harlem-ish, but the entire nation was singing this joint at one point this year - and it was hard to tell if we liked it or not.



"London Bridge" - Fergie

Yeah, "that white girl from Black Eyed Peas" is what everyone called her and this year she came out on her own and actually went number one for two weeks.

But with lines like "I'm such a lady but I'm dancing like a hoe" - it's no wonder people were confused over how much they actually like this song.



"Come To Me" - Diddy

From a production standpoint, using that 808 so liberally ruined what would've been a flawless club hit. Diddy's flow was much improved but Nicole from

Pussycat Dolls still sounded better on this record than he did. And that video... omg that damn video!!



"I Love My 'Chick'" - Busta Rhymes w/ Kelis & Will.i.am

I love the track, I loved the concept, and I was feeling the video with Bussa Bus and Gabrielle Union getting down like Brangelina in *Mr. & Mrs. Smith*.

However, the rhymes weren't really that solid and the album version was just too much. I know this is hip-hop ya'll, but even I get sick of hearing the word "B*tch".



"Chain Hang Low" - Jibbs

Wack as hell, I don't care if he is only 15.

"I Done Came Down" - Fat Al

Wack as hell. However, people *did* like it.



"Ms. New Booty" - Bubba Sparxxx w/ Ying Yang Twins

Just some ign'ant mess. But, it had that beat so people hate to love it.

BIGGEST HOOD ANTHEMS 2006



"We Fly High (Ballin)" - Jim Jones

Yeah, can't even front. It's not that it's a great song... but it's so hood you've just gotta mess with it.

"I Know You See It" - Yung Joc

My kids at the National Youth Sports Program this summer were all singing this song.

Everybody in Shadow Lounge this summer was singing this song.

It didn't bubble up on the charts in a big way, but this was a crazy successful single from Bad Boy South's newest phenom. It was unpolished and raw... just straight gutter.

"I Don't Like The Look Of It" - Da Backwudz

Willy Wonka-type hip-hop. Once again, didn't make noise on the charts and it didn't really dent radio that much but everybody and their mama knew this song when it came

out this spring.

"Stuntin Like My Daddy" - Lil Wayne featuring Baby/Birdman

Did they kiss? Who knows or cares? I don't.

And I don't really care for this song, just like I don't care for Weezy saying he's better than Hova. However, enough people liked this song this year for it to be a certified hood banger of 2006.

BIGGEST CLUB BANGERS 2006

"Shoulder Lean" - Young Dro

No way you could hate on this. T.I. is a genius maan, instead of rounding out his Grand Hustle Roster with folks who are different from him... he actually scored a Gold album by putting out an artist that people will respect for his humble demeanor and skillful wordplay... just like him. This song was BIG. And you know a song is big when the D.J. fades out the words and everybody sings the rest of the verse.

Perfect breakout single and even more perfect club banger.



"It's Goin Down" - Yung Joc

Nitti makes them joints that hit hard. I mean, you would swear the club was about to break in half when this joint knocks from the speakers. Yung Joc is gonna have a hard time improving on this because it matched his flow perfectly, it had it's own dance, it was catchy as hell and even landed in the Billboard Hot 100 top five. In addition to every Chevy Impala or Escalade you could find this year.

"Touch it"/ "Touch It Remix" - Busta Rhymes

It gets no bigger than this, ya'll.

This song locked down everything this year. Radio. Video. Internet. Dance floor. Ringtones. EVERYTHING! And peeps still aren't 100 percent clear on what that computerized female voice is saying on the hook.

But the only way to improve on a fire single is to come with a blazing remix and Busta Rhymes/Swizz Beats knocked it out the park by pulling a true East Coast move and making a remix that lasts damn near eight minutes!

"Hustlin" - Rick Ross

Another banger with an ill remix, but I somewhat feel the original a bit more.

This was basically the last time a chopped/screwed vocal went mainstream and it hit big with everybody. But when it came on in the club, people would go bananas!



"Snap Yo Fingers" - Lil Jon, E-40 and Sean Paul

You can't have a movement in the ATL and leave out the King of Crunk.

No doubt the snap movement isn't exactly the type of sound Lil Jon is known for, but he revitalized both sub-genres with this hit.

MOST POPULAR RAP/HIP HOP SINGLES 2006

"What You Know" - T.I.

"Shake Dat Money Maker" - Ludacris

"Kick, Push, Skate" - Lupe Fiasco

"Show Me What You Got" - Jay Z

"Why You Wanna" - T.I.

Outside of the rap/hip hop world there were tons of big songs this year.

"Crazy" - Gnarls Barkley

"Buttons" - Pussycat Dolls

"Me & U" - Cassie

"Do It To It" - Cherish

"Get Up" - Ciara

"Torn" - Letoya Luckett

All right, Glass City, hit me up if you wanna discuss what else was hot in '06.

Next year is sure to bring more surprises and more great music (and more crappy music - LOL).

I'll have a movie re-cap of 2006 on the way soon.

Peace and be blessed this season.

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Christmas at Water's Edge Returns

Special to The Truth

Starring all-grown-up of age, family commitment “Cosby Kid,” Keisha and multicultural traditions. Knight Pulliam (Rudy) and Producer Cleveland Tom Bosley (Happy Days), O’Neal III will make a cameo appearance in the movie explores Christmas spirit, community, coming O’Neal, a graduate of Ot-tawa Hills High School, was recently inducted onto the Ottawa Hills Foundation Hall of Fame. O’Neal is the son of Brunetta O’Neal, retired Toledo Public Schools (Scott High School) teacher, and Cleveland O’Neal Jr., retired research chemist.

Christmas at Water’s Edge will air on Sunday, December 24 at 3:00 p.m. on the Lifetime network.



Pulliam, O'Neal and Bosley

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Advocates for Basic Legal Equality, Inc. (ABLE), a non-profit law firm that provides free legal assistance to low-income people, seeks a full-time executive assistant for its Toledo office. The executive assistant will provide administrative support to the Executive Director, including office support, scheduling, record keeping, communications, meeting planning, travel planning, support for Board of Trustees, and other related work.

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Christmas Spirit Abounds in Toledo

(Continued from Page 12)

"There's Something Going on in Bethlehem," an energetic piece with a decided Jamaican beat, seemed to fit the setting and the festive costumes worn by the choir.

Narration continued, but it was the music that told the story, including "See How Bright He Shines;" "We Fall Down," sung by the children with guitar accompaniment; "Give Me This Night," sung so sweetly by soloist Donna Coffey, you felt Mary's joy at the birth of her son who would be Savior to the world; "His Kingdom Will Not End," sung beautifully by soloist Christopher Hickman; "The Night That Christ Was Born and 'I Will Bless the Lord," sung by the Ottawa Lake Chancel Choir from Michigan, a choir of less than 20 that sounded like a hundred and got people up on their feet and kept them there; "Two Thousand Decembers Ago/Lift Your Voice and Sing Adore Him;" "Thou Didst Leave Thy Throne," with dances soloist D'Erica Murphy; "Joy to the World" sung by soloist Jameelah Johnson and finale "Oh, Come All Ye Faithful."

The showstopper for the evening was a combination of

two songs. The first was a piano solo by James Brown from Florida, who played a classical version of the traditional Christmas song, then brought the house down as he started playing a gospel version that everyone yelling for an encore.

The encore was the other half of this showstopper. Accompanied by Brown, Jameelah Johnson sang "Ave Maria." Not since Aretha Franklin stood in for Luciano Pavarotti at the Grammy's has this Italian classic piece sounded so beautiful.

"We did something different this year," said Missionary Annette Collins. "We hope you enjoyed it." I certainly did!

I had to wait six whole days for my next dose of Christmas spirit. "A Second Chance at Christmas," a seasonal offering by Denise Williams based on Charles Dickens' "A Christmas Carol," was presented at St. Mark Baptist Church, Saturday, December 16, 2006, to a SRO crowd.

While Dickens' popularized secular 'Christmas story' endeavors to teach us the true meaning of the holiday without talking much about *Christ*, Williams' morality tale reminds us that Jesus really is the rea-

son for this season.

Although the play is an annual event, a few things have changed since I saw it for the first time last year. The acting has vastly improved by all but one cast member: Clifford Majors.

Majors as the main character does such an excellent job portraying a man described by another character in the play as "selfish, arrogant and egotistical," that if you didn't know him better, you'd think he was type cast.

Giving a consistently outstanding performance again this year, he was joined by a cast that seemed energized and totally at ease on stage. Energy levels escalated to seismic proportions with every single person on stage moving and acting as if they were feeling what they were saying and singing.

The biggest improvement was in the second male lead's character, played by Steve Dewberry. Dewberry's performance as the sincere, hard-working and much mistreated nephew of Majors' character, "Scott Scroogler," made "Joe Saint" seem so genuine and empathic that everyone in the audience was ready to help his

wife, "Mary" (Regina Wilson), "hit him upside his head."

Also improved was the characterization of "Grandma Lucy" (Lorraine Bell) who was portrayed much classier this year with a classy, mink-trimmed hat and a smooth but still sassy walk to go with her new refinement.

My favorite was not one, but a group of people: the church choir. They could very well travel with Kurt Franklin with their youthful enthusiasm and spirited singing. The church services that began and ended the play were so real, I actually took out my wallet when they had the offering on stage! That's what I call acting! Now, we all know the Dickens' story: three ghosts visit old Ebenezer Scrooge the night before Christmas; one from the past, one from the present and one from the future. Well, in the capable hands of gospel playwright Denise Williams, those ghosts become angels; Angel Past, Angel Present and Angel Future, with the addition of the angel of death.

The Tiny Tim character, played again by Darius Coleman, as in Dickens' tale is the subject of a side plot, while



The Clarence Smith Community Choir with Michael Hayes, Sr. (r)

the theme in both versions of this classic story remains redemption, only Williams shows us that true redemption can only come through Christ. Highlights of this year's production included: a live nativity scene (the *real* Christmas past) and Angel Present played by Wesley Watson in a white suit with matching hat, shoes and a cane, causing a woman in the audience to exclaim, "That's a pimp angel!"

Other highlights included Coleman's rendition of "I Don't Mind Waiting," which had the audience clapping and singing along; Coleman and Wilson singing "Faith That Conquers," eliciting spontaneous applause and shouts of joy; Angel of Death played by Joanne Turner; "Scroogler's" transformation (Majors' ability to convey the conversion experience would qualify him

for a Tony Award if this were Broadway!); Williams singing "Second Chance" and receiving applause as she scaled some incredibly high notes; the church scenes as aforementioned; the finale, "Oh Come All Ye Faithful" and one fantastic group of musicians that formed the 'show band.'

Despite some missed cues and long scene changes, this year's production was good and I know "Second Chance" will be even better next year in St. Mark's new building. [Perhaps next year, a group of carolers could sing classic Christmas music near an old-fashioned street lamp, ala Dickens' London, and distract the audience, which would probably sing along with the singers, while sets are being changed. Just a suggestion.]

Contact Geneva Chapman at Geneva@thetruthtoledo.com

Lawyer Returns to His Roots

Patricia Ann King 1947 - 1996

Eric Brian King, a graduate of Rogers High School defended our nation in the Persian Gulf War as a Petty Officer in the United States Navy. King an Ohio State Buckeye Alum and a Thurgood Marshall School of Law Graduate passed the Ohio Bar in 2001 and opened KING Law Offices in July 2001 in the state capital. King yet to start his own family faced a tragedy in September 1996, when a reckless driver killed his mother Patricia Ann Sturdivant-King. So, he definitely understands the pain and frustration that his clients endure when they are forced to deal with a personal injury case. This is why King became a personal injury lawyer, and that's why as he states "To Others It's Just Business at KING Law Offices— We Take Your Personal Injury... Personal!" King explains "Returning to Toledo is very personal to me. As a child I often noticed the absence of business leaders that look like me— black. Every other racial group has leaders they can be proud of and so should we. Blacks are much more than entertainers we are professional, intelligent and innovative. I don't just represent my clients, I represent my God, my Race, my Mother and my Self and if I can inspire one black child in Toledo to live a 'purpose driven life' and to not accept being called 'one of those people' my goal is accomplished."



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