



Allen Smith of the Toledo Boys & Girls Club

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“The kids we see need to know there is more to the world than what they see in their immediate neighborhoods. If they know more of what is out there, their perception of what they need to do in their lives changes.”

This Strikes Us ...

A Sojourner's Truth Editorial

We have national holidays, some more important than others, of course. Christmas tops the list and Thanksgiving is right up there.

Very few holidays, however, capture more of our attention than does our national football holiday – the Super Bowl.

And this year, of course, we were treated to a very special moment – the first two African-American football coaches participating in the annual spectacle.

Tony Dungy of the Indianapolis Colts and Lovie Smith of the Chicago Bears rose to the top of the class after years of watching other, less capable coaches get the plum jobs. Year after year, NFL owners passed over African-American candidates even to the point of recycling white coaches who, time after time, proved that they could neither motivate young athletes nor put together an organization capable of winning on the gridiron.

Why was this year's moment so special? After all, athletic endeavor is the ultimate meritocracy, isn't it? Black athletes have been participating in a meaningful way in professional sports for six decades now. In some leagues, such as the NBA or NFL, they comprise the overwhelming majority of the players.

Coaching is different, however, especially coaching a big-time football team. The head coach is arguably, the most important figure on a college or professional organization. He controls the operation and the fate, in the NFL, of a half-a-billion dollar entity.

It was pretty much a no-brainer to bring to the team guys who could run, jump and catch a pass. But could black folks think? Could they inspire? Could they manage a huge operation and bring glory to owners and community alike?

For too many years NFL owners thought the answer to that question was no.

Selecting someone of color, they must have reasoned, to run a big-time team is not as easy as the very natural process of selecting someone who can run and jump, it is the appointment to a position of responsibility ... a position of responsibility for the operation of an enterprise that for many fans determines the viability of their towns and communities. It is an enterprise that carries with it the hopes and dreams of owners, players, employees and millions of residents.

It took years for a breakthrough. Tony Dungy was, in fact, one of the first black head coaches hired in the NFL but only after many, many years as an assistant and numerous rejections by owners who did not see someone, across the table during the interview process, who looked liked themselves.

When Dungy was finally hired in Tampa Bay, he immediately set about turning around an organization that had been nothing but miserable since its inception. And there he hired Lovie Smith as an assistant, and Herman Edwards and Rod Marinelli – all future head coaches. And for his pains, and his failure to get to the big stage on our national football holiday, he was unceremoniously dumped.

Thence to Indy to perform another set of miracles.

And for Lovie Smith, he would land in Chicago with an equally moribund franchise which would quickly resuscitate.

There have been whispers over recent years about the ability of black coaches to inspire black players, more so in the NBA with its surfeit of black coaches. Are black athletes responding to black coaches or are they more responsive to white leadership? It's a disturbing debate in the professional game of musical coaches. Every time a change is made, one can draw so many conclusions about the performance of a team when a new face is addressing them.

What Dungy and Smith showed us this past weekend, however, is that there is no one blueprint for a successful coach. They can come in any color and they can employ any demeanor to get the best effort from their players. Smith and Dungy are famously low-keyed, non-yelling, non-abusive, non-profanity-laced-speech leaders who believe in emphasizing emotional control during practice and contests.

And while this past Super Bowl represents a breakthrough, from the standpoint of race relations, of greater importance than just about any other sports moment since perhaps Jackie Robinson in 1947, there is still more to come. Division I college programs have been notoriously lax in their consideration of minority candidates to lead their programs. There are, in fact, fewer Division I head football coaches (there are almost 120 such programs) than there are in the 32-team NFL.

All that will change in the next few years, we predict. It will change because of what happened on Sunday. In the aftermath of the Super Bowl, folks are no longer talking about the history of two African-American coaches at the event, they are discussing the game and who out-coached whom. That's the way such discussions should flow.

Who won the game, by the way?

All of us.

The Sojourner's Truth

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Community Calendar

February

Black History Month!!

February 7

• National Black HIV/AIDS Awareness Day: Toledo-Lucas County Health Dept from 9 am to 4 pm or Planned Parenthood of NW Ohio from 4 pm to 8 pm: 419-213-4131 or 419-255-1123 ext 308

February 9

• Mays Chapel United Holy Church: Wyndham Hotel; Speakers Bill and Ann Harris; "Men Are Like Waffles, Women Are Like Spaghetti;" Food, fun and fellowship: 419-246-4046 or 419-243-4509
• Northwestern Ohio Missionary Baptist Association: "The Outstanding Servant Leadership Award" and "The Outstanding Stewardship Award;" 6 pm; Union Grove MBC: 419-537-0420 or 419-213-6902

February 10

• End Time Christian Fellowship: Adult Singles and Couples Valentine's Dinner; night of love, laughter and inspiration; 6 pm; Dinner, music, entertainment and more: 419-729-1027 or 419-346-7426
• Youth Kwanzaa Committee Meeting: Lighthouse Community Center; Training, education on Kwanzaa/mentoring: 419-471-1912

February 11

• Calvary Baptist Church: Annual Culinary Heritage Food Taster; 4 pm; Deadline for registration for women's Ministry 2007 Spring Retreat: 419-865-0019/419-531-9443
• First Antioch Baptist Church: Pastoral Installation Service for Rev. Gary Black; 4 pm: 419-377-6251
• Bethlehem Baptist Church

February 12

• Toledo Lucas County Library Kent Branch: Black History Film Series: *Rising from the Rails: The Story of the Pullman Porter*; 6:30 to 8 pm: 419-259-5381

February 15

• Fair Housing's Mardi Gras Party: The Pinnacle; Fundraiser to benefit the Fair Housing Center; Cajun food; Music by KGB; Costume contest: 419-243-6163
• Greater Toledo Urban League Young Professionals: "Urban League Thursdays" Networking Forum; 5:30 to 7:30 pm; 20 North Gallery; discussion of the Civil Rights Movement and the role that young professional can play in the lives of youth in Toledo: 419-297-3664

February 15-18

• Singles and Marriage Ministries of Bethel Apostolic Temple: Annual Weekend Conference Retreat; Services at 6:30 pm nightly and Noon and 6 pm on Sunday; Evangelist and Prophet Elder Robbi Warren of Baltimore, MD; "Evening of Elegance," a semi formal dinner at 6 pm on Saturday at the Park Inn Hotel: 419-473-8933

February 17

• Toledo Lucas County Library Kent Branch: Black History Month program; *Slavery to Freedom: The Story of Africans in the Americas*; African drummers and dancers, speakers, a storyteller and a marketplace full of vendors: 419-259-5381
• Citywide Afro-Ball: "Back in the Day;" Gladioux Meadows; For high-school students; Formal attire; Dinner, dancing, entertainment

February 18

• Ridgewood Church of Christ: A Celebration of Black History Month; 12:30 to 5 pm; Blood pressure checks, health screenings, crafts, ethnic food, free haircuts, manicures, games, door prizes, among other activities: 419-726-2210
• Third Baptist Church (Holland): Mass Choir sponsors 20th Annual Black History Musical; 4 pm

February 19

• UT 27th Annual MLK Benefit Dinner: Guest Speaker Dr. Alvin Poussaint, professor of psychiatry and associate dean for student affairs of Harvard Medical School; 7 pm: 419-530-2508 or 419-383-2508

The Sojourner's Truth

Toledo's Truthful African-American Owned and Operated Newspaper

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My View

By Jack Ford
The Truth's Political Columnist

Let's wish Mayor Carty Finkbeiner good hunting on his trip to Columbus this week to meet with Lt. Gov. Lee Fisher, the chief economic leader for Governor Ted Strickland. The mayor needs help with the Marina District, the Fiberglass Tower and Southwyck. The time to make hay is at the start of a new administration. State help on these projects will send the continuing message that Columbus wants to help.

Fisher got quite a nudge from The Blade regarding the Fiberglass Tower in a lead editorial in which they seemed to anoint him as the savior of this structure. Veteran observers of the editorial page know this can prove to be a double-edged sword. Usually an editorial "nudge" is then followed with several editorial reminders, specifically pinning the anointed down. Maybe, agreements have already been reached to fix up the tower and all of this is just window dressing before a big announcement. If I am George Eyde, the owner of the tower, I would have a great big Cheshire Cat grin on my face while allowing The Blade to prod city and state officials to come up with the financing on a rehab deal that will cost me

very little on a building that I bought for less than a song.

We can see down the road where Fisher will be a formidable candidate for the U.S. Senate in 2010. That race is just two years away (in political terms) and the stance of Noegate is not going away anytime soon. Raising the Noegate flag ought to be good for the Democratic Party for the next three election cycles - 07, 08 and 09. Depending on Iraq and other things, Senator George Voinovich may not even run again. Fisher is in a great position for the future.

So is Toledo City Councilman Michael Ashford with his \$35,000 in campaign funds in the bank. Ashford will easily raise another \$20,000 before this year's district rounds are over. Then with \$50,000 plus, Ashford is going to be tough to topple, regardless of what the Madison Avenue Democrats want.

Ashford will find himself with a lot of new friends as the campaign heats up. He can be a kingmaker in another race with this type of cash and he can donate to someone else to run on a joint ticket with him.

Councilman Mike Craig will need help from a whole



Jack Ford

lot of folks but he deserves it. His courageous action on CareNet was undoubtedly the right thing to do. The 8,000 CareNet members and their families ought to remember the name Mike Craig for standing up to the mayor and making sure that the program remains strong.

We all can help Craig now by supporting his campaign and talking up his name. I plan to do my share on both fronts because I believe in his courage.

The battle on the Toledo Board of Education continues. Again, I remind all those who want to make a difference to offer their services to the new president, Deborah Barnett. Now is precisely the time to step up and step out to make a difference for Toledo's future.

Contact Jack Ford at jack@thetruthtoledo.com

Ladies and Gentlemen of the Board of Education:

I urge you to rename a Toledo Public School for Rosa Parks.

With one single, solitary act of defiant courage, Rosa Parks changed the course of American history, and rewrote black/white relations for generations yet unborn. Without what she did on December 1, 1955, it is not likely that we would have ever known Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

I have often wondered why people nationally and locally who have contributed much to our schools and public education generally are overlooked. Instead we honor past presidents, past mayors, and others long since forgotten today.

We name and rename public buildings, parks, streets, and schools for people whose characters, achievements, and lives we admire and respect. They are symbols of all that we hold dear. In most cases our children do not know the backgrounds of the people for whom their schools are named. However, Rosa Parks is a household name, and has international significance. Children who attend Rosa Parks School will be proud to say so.

Thank you for your consideration of this matter.

Francine Lawrence, President
Toledo Federation of Teachers

Rehearsals

The Toledo Interfaith Mass Choir and Friends

"YESTERDAY" A Gospel Concert at the Stranahan Theater on April 14

Rehearsals every Tuesday at 7 pm At St. Paul AME Zion Church
Contact 419-241-7332 or 419-241-3330

Dear Editor,

I don't know how to contact Chief Bell, so I'll let you know how disappointed I am to hear the Chief is resigning. He will be greatly missed by the city. He is a genuinely nice person. I am handicapped and could not find a place to park when I was downtown one day. He assisted me in finding a spot and conducted traffic for a minute so we could park. Not many people would do that.

Sincerely,

Caroline Campbell

You're Invited!!

Barbara A. Baker will turn 55 this month and her friends will be celebrating with her on Sunday, February 11 at the Peacock Café starting at 7:00 p.m. And you are invited!! Cover charge after 9



The Peacock's staff (l. to r.) Shaunte Wallace, Karen Harris, Barb Baker, Rhonda Goings, Jessica Armstrong

Isn't it time for a Quiet Conversation™ about estate planning?

Without an estate plan in place, federal and state laws dictate how property, personal items and assets are divided. Family conflicts and legal problems may result. Talk to Kevin for expert guidance in estate planning and a network of specialists to help get you closer to all of your financial goals.



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It's time for a Quiet Conversation.™

Allen T. Smith: Helping Expand the Horizons for Toledo's Youth

By Alan Abrams
Sojourner's Truth Reporter

The roots of the Boys & Girls Clubs of Toledo run deep in Toledo history.

The full-service youth organization can trace its lineage back to 1892 and the founding of the Toledo Newsboys Association by John E. Gunckel. The association's first building was constructed in 1908 on Superior Street.

Camp Big Silver in Pinckney, Michigan was established in 1936 to provide resident summer camping experiences for Club members.

The organization, which changed its name in the 1940's to Boys Club of Toledo and in 1985 became the Boys & Girls Club of Toledo, serves 5,600 kids through its four locations (South Toledo, East Toledo, North Toledo and the Old West End) and three after-school programs in Sherman, Riverside and Newbury Schools. The members are between the ages of seven and 18.

So why is it still one of Toledo's best-kept secrets?

"People underestimate the resource we have here," explains Allen T. Smith, the organization's director of operations. "Two thousand kids use this (the Homer Hanham Club on N. Detroit Ave.) site."

Opened in 1976, the club was once the auto dealership

showroom and garage of Merollis Ford. It now sports two gyms, a pool, a game room, educational activity center and a computer-equipped technology center.

But there are a lot of tell-tale empty spaces on the bookshelves and the small-screen Gateway computers with Internet access are starting to show their age.

Smith explains that membership in the club is only \$3 a year, and that amount is frequently made available through scholarships for those needy members who often come from single-parent homes.

So how can the club continue to pay the salaries of the adult workers who supervise the activities as well as the salaries of the full-time professional youth workers, and still be able to recruit more top-notch employees?

"We have expectations that in the next few months there will be an announcement for a capital campaign," says Smith. Such a campaign would be long overdue.

From his unique vantage point, what does Smith see as the club's biggest challenge?

Smith replied first from a child development perspective, and then from a resource perspective.

"The kids we see need to

know there is more to the world than what they see in their immediate neighborhoods. If they know more of what is out there, their perception of what they need to do in their lives changes," says Smith.

"Our kids do not see the purpose of a good education. They are not inspired to go and do anything with their lives. They do not have a goal. All they know about is rap and basketball. They don't understand the need to set tangible goals today.

"They are a bunch of great kids with great hearts. They just don't know what they can have and what they can be," he says.

Dealing with the resource issue, Smith explains the need for the "community to understand what we do and the importance of what we do, and to help us and support us.

We're helping Toledo. People do not make the connection about helping one agency and how it trickles down into the community and into the city."

Deeply committed to his faith, Smith adds, "As a society, we are beginning to underestimate the strength and power of God. When we tap into that power, we are more prone to become competitive, more aware of those in need, and to act on it.

"People make a difference in the city," says Smith.

If you are a pro football historian, you'll recognize the name of Smith's father, Allen Smith. His dad graduated from Scott High School in 1962 and went on to then-Findlay College. He played with the NY Jets in 1966-67 as a running back, but an injury kept him off the 1968 season and out of the 1969 Super Bowl championship.

Smith's mother is the former Loraine Boyd. He has four sisters: Tanya, Gerri and Lindsay who live in Toledo, and Kelly, who lives in Boise, Idaho.

Smith graduated from DeVilbiss High School and went to Bowling Green State University.

He says he was led to the Boys & Girls Clubs by God. And in fact his life has been intertwined with the organization.

"When I was a kid, my uncle, Glyn Smith, was director of this building. My first job after college was at the Sky Bank operations office in



Bowling Green where I worked in Human Resources. I was very unhappy and quit. I had a friend who worked here and he told me to come in and fill out an application. I did, and Stanley Lewandowski hired me in 1992 as assistant director. "I moved to Cincinnati in 1993, and then came back here as unit director in 1994-97. I was transferred to Ypsilanti, Michigan where I served as executive director from 1997 to 2000, and then came back to Toledo that year as director of operations."

Smith, who is 38, is married to Vontyna Smith, the Safe Start Project Coordinator at the Cullen Center for Children & Families, Center for Health Services, Toledo

Children's Hospital.

Smith has one daughter, Ashley, who is a senior at Point Park College in Pittsburgh. A graduate of St. Ursula's Academy, she is a talented dancer with expertise in both ballet and theatrical productions, having appeared in a play with actor Jeff Goldblum in Pittsburgh.

"She inherited the Smith athletic genes in terms of dancing," says her father. Ashley has been studying dance since the age of two.

Smith is an active member of St. Paul's Missionary Baptist Church, which he describes as being comprised of "a bunch of very caring committed Christians who really desire the best for the city."

Toledo EXCEL Hosts 23rd Annual Conference for Aspiring Minority Youth

Sojourner's Truth Staff

As it usually does, The University of Toledo EXCEL's Annual Conference for Aspiring Minority Youth packed the house – the Student Union Auditorium – on Saturday, January 27.

Students in various academic programs, their parents, a host of educators and those youngsters who want to participate in the various opportunities presented by UT's Office of Excellence turned out for workshops, speeches and vendor presentations.

The morning's keynote speaker for this year's event was Sharon Draper, author, educator, National Teacher of the Year, Ohio Outstanding High School Language Arts Education Teacher and three-time winner of the Coretta Scott King Literary Award.



Toledo City Councilman Michael Ashford, EXCEL's Shawanna Smith, Singer Rodney Jordan

Draper, a New York Times best-selling author, has published 16 popular, critically-acclaimed books for her predominantly teen-aged readership.

She spoke to the students about "opening doors."

"I have been blessed to go through a whole lot of doors," she said recounting how she started her success-

ful writing career after years as a teacher. "I think I can write a book that kids will read, I think I can do this," she told herself before embarking on her first project.

That project was *Tears of a Tiger*, a book that many in the audience were familiar with.

"It was not quick, it was
(Continued on Page 13)

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Performance Art Used to Present Powerful Message about Teenage Prostitution

By Geneva J. Chapman,
Sojourner's Truth Reporter

Local drama troupes could benefit from a tutorial with Carol Chehade on how to pack a theatre. Barely an empty seat could be found in The University of Toledo's Doerman's Theatre, Friday, February 2, 2007, when documentarian Chehade's play on teenage prostitution debuted to raise needed funds for the Toledo Area Ministries' Second Chance Program.

However, the SRO crowd didn't come to see a play; they came to hear a message. And they got what they came for and, although anyone attending the event for a strictly theatrical experience may have been disappointed, the play's message was a powerful one.

Real life stories, dramatized by scenes from their troubled lives, were shared by a series of former 'teen prostitutes,' some portrayed by amateur actors and some actually portrayed by the real women through the horrendously repeated cycle of child molestation; sexualization at an early age; victimization by family members, mothers' boyfriends

and husbands, friends of the family and men they loved; addiction; domestic and street violence and, finally, recovery.

The stories, though similar, dramatized the individual journeys taken by each of the women into a life of prostitution. 'Sunshine,' molested at age six, seemed baffled by her molester. "I was just six years old. I will never understand why a grown man can get hard next to a child's body."

According to Celia Williamson, Ph.D., a former social worker for 10 years in Toledo who has done extensive research in the area of street prostitution, "The antecedents to prostitution are often childhood trauma defined as sexual abuse and/or physical abuse. Poor coping skills are developed as a result of family dysfunction. Prostitution often begins in adolescence and is characterized by runaway behavior, general delinquency, and eventual entrance into prostitution."

Similar stories of childhood molestation, running away

from home and getting into trouble on the streets were told by 'Pumpkin,' 'Perfect Performer,' 'Sally,' 'Love' and 'Step Daddy's Toy,' a male teen prostitute.

"I know it sounds like a redneck stereotype, but the first man I messed with was my cousin," said 'Pumpkin,' who was born in West Virginia. "He was 18 and I was 12. We didn't have sex, but did a lot of other stuff."

However, her mother's boyfriend did molest her when she was 13. "The next day he said he thought I was Mom." After dropping out of school at age 16, she ran away from home.

"While most little girls had brothers who protected them, I had a brother little girls need to be protected from," said 'Perfect Performer.' "I told my mom, but she beat me for seducing her son."

Her mother was paranoid schizophrenic and a fanatic who beat her religiously, but viewed her brother as a 'king.' When she was 12, 'Perfect Performer,' joined a street gang

and went through initiation. "There I was at 12 being passed around like a blunt." 'Sally' was molested by her mother's boyfriend who she said "wasn't happy just to ruin Mama's life. He was poison to our whole family."

Molested by her brother, 'Love' yearned for her deceased father to protect her from her older sibling who she said "passed me around to friends and family like I was a party favor." She also found herself in competition with her mother for female sexual dominance in the household.

"There can only be one Alpha 'ho, so I was the Beta b—ch, always second best," she said. "This did include her sleeping with my boyfriends."

'Step Daddy's Toy' said, after molesting him, his stepfather threatened to leave his mother like his father had if he said anything. "I wasn't trapped. It was so slow. So slow, it started to feel good." Even when his mother found out, she kept quiet so his stepfather wouldn't leave, so the confused teen ran away and was placed in foster homes where he was molested time after time.

"Women did it, too," he said, offering proof that sexual predators can be of either gender. "Most people get to choose... guess I was confused because I had no choice."

Story after story, scene after scene dramatically demon-



strated how each individual became demoralized and sexualized at an early age, venturing first into promiscuity, then into the logical progression for young men and women with no education, no jobs, no healthy family relationships and no hope: prostitution.

'Sunshine' became romantically involved with a pimp named 'Suave' while still a teenager. "He was the only man I was to be satisfied by, but I was to satisfy all other men on the streets," she said.

'Pumpkin' started selling her body on the street for her boyfriend and they eventually went to New York. "My first night I made \$1500." Williamson explains the pimp 'culture' that lures young girls like 'Sunshine' and 'Pumpkin' into the streets. "The pimping game requires strict adherence to the rules. The idea of a 'game' parallels the formal economy in that one can be said to be in a game, e.g., he's in the real estate game. Players and pimps are also said to 'have' game. To have game is to possess a certain amount of charisma and

smooth talking, persuasive conversation toward women.... There are several rules that one must be willing to follow in order to be a successful pimp. The most paramount rule in the pimping game is, 'the pimp must get paid' (Bromfield & Juan, 1994; Owens & Shepard, 1998; Slim, 1969).

Philosophically pimps believe all capitalistic pursuits are parallel to pimping. According to pimp philosophy, in life there are two types of people, pimps and ho's. It is up to the individual to choose which role to assume. A pimp says to a ho, 'hmmm you look nice...you gonna make me some money'...and he puts her out there on the track the way an owner puts a horse out on a race track. When the ho has produced all she can for the pimp, she is discarded and the pimp finds himself a new ho to make him money. To pimps this is the basic recipe for all money making industries both legal and illegal (Milner & Milner, 1972; Owens & Shepard, 1998).

(Continued on Page 6)

Buckeye Cable System celebrates...

BLACK HISTORY MONTH

This month, spend some time learning about the extraordinary accomplishments of African-Americans and how they have overcome enormous obstacles throughout history. In recognition of these remarkable accomplishments, **Buckeye CableSystem** proudly promotes programming from **The History Channel, Black Family Channel, TV One, BET, The Biography Channel, ESPN** and many more. Please join us in our effort to bring national attention to the contributions of African-Americans.

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The Greater Toledo Urban League Young Professionals present

"Urban League Thursdays" Networking Forum

All Toledo-Area Young Business Professionals

are urged to attend the monthly Networking Forum, sponsored by the *Greater Toledo Urban League Young Professionals*. We will discuss the Civil Rights Movement and the role that we as young professionals can and should have in the lives of youth in Toledo.

February 15, 2007 ~ 5:30pm – 7:30pm

20 N. Gallery
18 N. St. Clair St. in Downtown Toledo
(across from 5/3 Field)

Young professionals need an avenue to engage each other and receive critical information on various topics that will develop their lives both professionally and personally. We also recognize the need for professional networking events specifically targeted to young, minority business men and women.

The Greater Toledo Urban League Young Professionals Networking Forum is free and open to the public.
Light refreshments will be served.

Organized in February 2005 as an auxiliary organization of the Greater Toledo Urban League, the membership of the *GTULYP* runs the gamut — from entrepreneur to engineer, scientist to social worker, production worker to politician. Our mission is "to engage young professionals, from all industry backgrounds, in the movement towards the achievement of social and economic equality". Despite varied backgrounds, all *GTUL* Young Professionals are: 1) Young — between the ages of 21 and 40; 2) Dedicated — to their communities, and, 3) Committed — to seeking innovative solutions to persistent economic and societal problems.

Performance Art Used to Present Powerful Message about Teenage Prostitution

(Continued from Page 5)

Sometimes the motivation for becoming or remaining a prostitute is drug addiction. "Once involved in street prostitution, drug addiction and violence threaten the physical and emotional well-being of women in prostitution," observes Williamson. "Drugs self-medicated me so I could pull off this insanity," said 'Sunshine.'

'Step Daddy's Toy' started prostituting himself to support his drug habit when a female friend showed him how to shoot up; not knowing if he was straight, gay or bisexual when he hit the streets. "A hole is a hole when it comes to getting paid," he said. "I started hustling on the down low."

However, prostitutes under the influence of drugs take many risks. When 'Pumpkin' started using drugs, she got careless about who she picked up and was eventually beaten and raped by one of her customers. "He used all kinds of stuff to rape me," she said. 'Perfect Performer' also started using drugs after she became a prostitute and said she suffered many violent beatings. 'Sally' who started out her addiction to crack cocaine not 'chasing cars' – "I was a dignified crack head!" – later ended up taking many of the same risks as the others.

"Getting into cars with men I didn't know," she said, "as long as I got my money to get my fix."

Williamson has identified the primary risks women who become prostitutes take. "Four main risks to women involved in prostitution on the streets of Toledo have been identified. The risk of contracting and spreading HIV/AIDS, drug addiction, customer-related and pimp-related violence, and the deterioration of emotional, mental, and physical well-being. Paradoxically, street prostitution

which earns women the most money in this economy represents the bottom rung in the underground economy in terms of power, prestige, and respect. Irrespective of how much money they make or how well they establish themselves in the business, women are relegated to a secondary labor market (Maher & Curtis, 1992).

To 'Sally,' disclosure of prior prostitution activities to boyfriends altered and ultimately destroyed relationships. "Guys that I kicked it with [dated], I would tell them I use to do that [prostitution] and from that point on their attitudes changed and the respect changed." These same risks are taken by male prostitutes, as shared by 'Step Daddy's Toy' who left prison after serving a sentence for robbing a convenience store, only to have contracted HIV/AIDS while incarcerated.

"It's cool because I don't wanna live much longer any way," he said.

There are other ways for prostituted die besides contracting HIV/AIDS. This was graphically staged in the most chilling scene of the performance. Changing the pace in the middle of the two-hour play, six 'prostitutes' walked on stage, followed by a man dragging a limp body.

"Their real name is they don't deserve a name except the name we bury them with – rest in peace," said veteran community theatre actor Melvin Johnson, who, along with Grant Walker, another veteran actor in Toledo, brought professional acting skills to the mostly performance artwork.

Delivering one of the evening's most powerful performance in one of the few actual theatrical moments in the event, Johnson portrayed a

'john' who was a compilation of sexual sadists who become serial killer, victimizing prostitutes.

"I baptize women in their own blood," he said. "See, they thought they were ticking a tick, but I showed them how the game was really played. I f—ed them, then I made them pay with their lives."

Graphic images of real-life serial killers who've preyed on prostitutes were evoked, such as the Green River Killer. "There are soldiers like me all over," Johnson said. "Our real name doesn't mean thing. Our mission is bigger than our name."

The smallest pin could have been heard falling to the carpeted floor of Doerman Theatre as each of the 'prostitutes' walked forward, said her name and when she was killed, then exited. Finally, the limp body came to life as Johnson dragged her offstage screaming. The impact of this scene was so powerful, it really should have started the play, with the 'prostitutes' then returning to tell their stories as a kind of choreopoem, blending the common elements together rather than repeating them one by one; and ending with each telling how her story ended before exiting for the last time. That is, if creating theatre is the aim; however, Chehade's goal is far larger than just creating a seamless piece of drama.

"All of you helped write this story," she said, introducing her work. "If it takes a village to raise a child, it also takes a village to turn that child into a prostitute, a pimp and a john."

Chehade, who didn't apologize for making her audience uncomfortable, said her intention was to follow Wynton Marsalis' directive to create "an expansion of feeling."

"You're not supposed to sit here and feel comfortable," she said. "You're supposed to feel something."

Theatrical or not, the play definitely evoked strong, passionate feelings in the performers and a deep, resonate response from the audience. Most of the stories had a happy ending. 'Sunshine' decided to become a counselor. "I have seen the worst of humanity and I still want to heal it," she said.

'Pumpkin's' in recovery and so is 'Perfect Performer.' "I am currently working on my master's degree and I am a drug counselor," said 'Perfect Performer.' "I'm not trying to blame my mother for everything. I understand now. I'm not trying to blame my brother for everything. I understand now. They translated their history into what they were. She has a recovery program called 'Flip the Script.' "This is your mama's symptom-treating program," she said. "I hear stories like mine and they still shock me."

Having children made 'Sally' want to straighten out her life and she found her way at Aurora House. "Being re-born means you have to learn everything from day one," she said.

The second most dramatic scene in the play (the first being

the scene with the serial killer) was 'Love' being surrounded by all of the other performers yelling the verbal taunts she had heard all her life by family, peers and almost everyone around her. The din kept getting louder and louder until she yelled "STOP!" like she meant it.

Boldly embracing all of the things she'd always been ashamed of – her skin color, her size and her racial heritage – she reaffirmed her own self-worth. "Whoever said you can't turn a ho' into a housewife was wrong," she said. "You can turn a ho' into a housewife just as easily as you can turn a housewife into a ho."

Happily married now, 'Love' is forgiving of those who hurt her. "I was raped by those raped by oppression." Their stories ended in recovering their lives, their self-esteem and their dignity. Yet, as Williamson reminds us, the problem of prostitution remains a serious one for Toledo, which has its own FBI task force for teenage prostitution, one of only 17 in the

country.

A recruiting city for the traffickers of teen prostitutes, Toledo and its adolescents are jeopardized by these sexual predators. "The visibility of prostitution in residential areas has an impact on our youth. An informal survey done with young girls in the north end of Toledo who attended a girls recreation group at The Friendly Center revealed that some girls believed prostitution to be a viable option in the event they were unsuccessfully pursuing conventional means of employment. Efforts to provide focused services toward the reduction of prostitution would decrease and/or prevent the option of prostitution as work for young low income girls." (Williamson: for more information on Dr. Williamson's research, please go to her website.)

Following the performance, Williamson urged the audience to contribute to the efforts of the Second Chance Program, which endeavors to provide support for victims of teenage prostitution.

(Continued on Page 7)

Girl Scouts Celebrate 95th Anniversary

In honor of the Girl Scouts' 95th Anniversary, a parade and service project will kick off the Girl Scout

"Making the World a Better Place Week,"

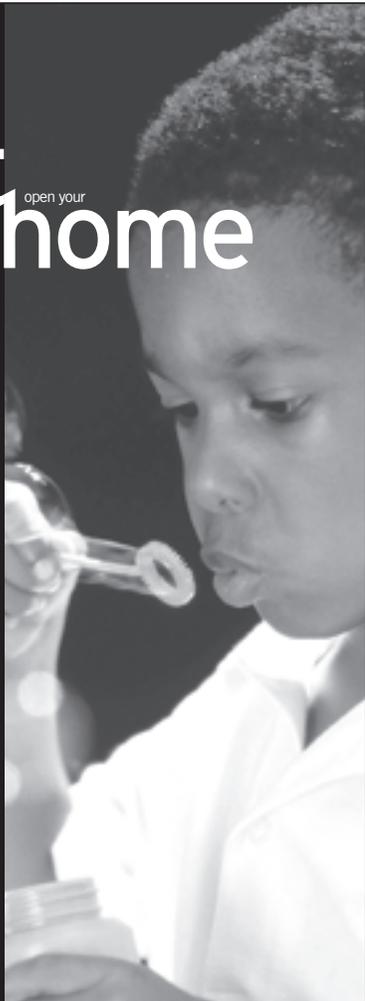
March 11-17

Along with the parade of banners, reenactments by "Women of the Past", clowns, and S.W.A.P. meet will take place.

Admission is a donated non-perishable food item that helps support the Wood County Food Pantries service project.

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For more information visit www.gsmvc.org <<http://www.gsmvc.org>>



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Lucas County
Children Services

Rev. Jesse Jackson Helps BGSU Celebrate Dr. King's Legacy

By Ashlee Austin
Sojourner's Truth Reporter

As a tribute to the legendary Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., Bowling Green State University recently welcomed civil rights activist, Reverend Jesse Jackson, to their campus as a guest speaker on Thursday, January 25, 2007. The event was held at 7 p.m. in the Lenhart Grand Ballroom of the University's Bowen-Thompson Student Union, and free of charge to all members of the community.

According to Amika Letcher, a BGSU student and a member of the planning committee for the program, a great deal of thought went into organizing this event:

"The committee chose Jesse because of his popularity amongst the community and the fact that he had spoken recently in the area as far as we knew. In planning for Jesse's visit, the committee made sure that all of the proper accommodations were made for his arrival and stay. We also wanted to make sure that both the community and the students had an opportunity to attend the event, especially the students," said Letcher.

As soon as the community gained awareness of Jackson's expected arrival, the limited number of available tickets sold out fast!

BGSU student, Amesha Tate, was especially eager for Jackson's visit.

"His years of experience as a preacher, civil rights activist, and even a presidential candidate certainly gave the community something to look forward to in his message, and the rapid ticket sales proved the obvious interest in Jackson among the community," she said.

The program opened with Tanasio Loudermill's powerful rendition of Dr. King's "I Have A Dream" speech. Twelve-year-old Loudermill was named NAACP Outstanding Junior Talent in 2006.

Following Loudermill's piece, the BGSU Gospel Choir approached the stage and performed a few spiritual selections. Jackson advanced to the platform and joined the choir in finishing their final song, "I Need You To Survive" before he began his message.

Jackson discussed various political, racial and spiritual topics, but his main focus remained on Dr. King's mission. "His mission was to save the soul of America," he said. "There is a continuous battle to make the American promise real," he continued. "In order to do this, we must structure and participate."

Throughout his speech, Jackson continued to remind the community that we must learn to live together! "English is a great language, but it should be used to communicate, not divide," he said. He also emphasized that language and color barriers both within our country as well as amongst other nations create a massive dilemma. "Beyond color and culture is character," said Jackson. He explained that we are born into our color and culture, but we develop our character on our own.

Indeed, Jesse Jackson left the BGSU community with a lot to think about.

Eugene Partridge, a BGSU student and member of the University's Gospel Choir, confirmed the impact that Jackson has left on the community. "He is a true man of integrity," he said. "We were very impressed by Jesse Jackson's delivery and his message. I feel like he boosted the overall morale of the student body by pushing the notions of equality and collaboration," said Partridge.

After Jackson spoke his final words, he invited the Gospel Choir to return to the stage to teach the audience the lyrics to the song, "I Need You To Survive."

The program came to a close as Rev. Jesse Jackson, the Gospel Choir and the entire audience echoed the lyrics to the song in unison:



Jesse Jackson and Yulanda McCarty Harris



Jackson, Vince David and Brown

"I need you, you need me. We're all a part of God's body.

Stand with me, agree with me.

We're all a part of God's body."

It was a scene for the ages – a grand ballroom full of people of every race, religion and gender together in one room to receive the same message and singing the same song together – a gospel song at that!

"I was amazed by the cooperation of the entire audience as well as the spiritual movement that filled the ballroom," said Tate. "God was definitely there and Jesse Jackson helped Him bring us together."

Rev. Jackson's entire message, stressed the importance of learning to live together as a united nation.

As most of the audience seemed to agree as they filed out of the Grand Ballroom, this was definitely a start.



Angelo and Sheila Brown and Jackson

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Performance Art Used to Present Powerful Message about Teenage Prostitution

(Continued from Page 6)

STAGES OF PROSTITUTION (Table by Dr. Celia Williamson)

Stage	Central Focus	Well-Being
Entrance	*Enticed by prospects of financial gain *Shed moral objections	*Problem-focused strategies *Prostitution activities initiated to alleviate the stressors associated with poverty, structural barriers, and family dysfunction
Social Adjustment	*Adapting to new environment *Modification of one's behavior to accommodate personal & social needs *Intense street learning focusing on the code of conduct including protective strategies & introduction to the lifestyle of prostitution *Focus on rewarding aspects of prostitution	*Problem focused strategies (learning and using protective strategies) *Belief in their ability to control events related to prostitution activities *Presence of daily hassles
Social Immersion	*Assumes full persona of street prostitution (seasoned street worker who is committed to street life) *Immersed into the lifestyle *Emotional attachment to the lifestyle (addicted to lifestyle) *Movement from conventional society into prostitution lifestyle *Increased drug use for functional purposes-to fight depression *Broader range of client encounters	*Presence of daily hassles & acute traumas *Emotion-focused responses (denial, dissociation, depression) *Acknowledgment of skill & chance conditions
Caught Up	*Chronic Depression *Feelings of shame *Drug abuse-reaction to depression *Drug taking & drug seeking activities	*Daily hassles, acute traumas, and chronic conditions (namely, depression and drug addiction) *Acceptance of skill & chance conditions *Emotion-focused responses
Evaluation & Exit	*Re-evaluation of life (prospective, retrospective, and current) *Restrictive factors (pressures from law enforcement & child protective services) *Physical deterioration *Relational factors-threatened end or demise of a valued relationship	*Accumulation of stressors (daily hassles, acute traumas, chronic conditions) exceed the persons ability to meet the demand of prostitution

Williamson, C. (1999). *Entrance, Maintenance, and Exit: The Socio-Economic Influences and Cumulative Burdens of Female Street Prostitution.*

The Village Elders — Part Two

By Martino Harmon, Sandra Rivers and Robert Smith
Special to The Truth

Many African-Americans understand that we have progressed, *succeeded if you will*, because we stand on someone else's shoulders. Without the efforts of community visionaries, those who not only saw a better future, but those who acted upon their vision; much of what seems so ordinary today simply would not be.

Our parents and their parents dared to defy status quo; they fought Jim Crow; they challenged the military and gained the right to vote. There were a lot of Browns and Smiths and Johnsons who challenged the inequalities of this country's educational systems. It was this group who were *sick and tired of being sick and tired*. They wanted a better life for their children.

They taught their children to value education, to respect others and themselves. They marched; they negotiated. They built businesses, churches, communities and, most importantly, nurtured and grew healthy families. At times it appears that succeeding generations have only lived off the fruits of their elders' labors. Sometimes our

[the current generation's] accomplishments seem so meager and frail by comparison.

As the ranks of our community [village] elders diminish, it is incumbent upon us to document their individual and collective accomplishments, to celebrate their lives and — *at the same time* — to revisit lessons shared.

Since June 2006 The African American Legacy Project, thanks to a grant from the Toledo Community Foundation has been documenting important community stories. On Friday February 16, 2007, in celebration of Black History Month, we will share many of these stories with students from The University of Toledo when the students visit the Legacy's Archival Center, 2321 Upton.

Martino Harmon, director of UT's African-American Student Enrichment Initiatives Office and chairman of the 2007 Black History Month Committee, believes this visit presents a special opportunity for the students to learn about the rich traditions and history of African-Americans in Toledo. Many students

attending the university are unaware of Toledo's history, especially as it pertains to African-Americans. The visit to the Legacy Archival Center will provide a foundation for knowledge and appreciation of Toledo's history.

**Professor To Engage Students**

John Scott, Ph.D., professor emeritus at Bowling Green State University, will engage students from The University of Toledo about his experiences as a student at South Carolina State College. This playwright, a Toledo native, has authored several books and will offer opportunities for students to discuss selected works from his collection of poetry.

Scott founded The Obsidian, BGSU's African-American student newspaper.

Along with several of his contemporaries, Scott developed and initiated BGSU's PROJECT SEARCH a program directed at identifying, attracting and retaining minority faculty, staff and graduate students at BGSU. Scott is also credited with establishing BGSU's Black Theater Department.

The Elders Speak

We as a people are experts of our own experiences. No one can just slip into our '*one of a kind shoes*' and become a replica of who we are, because one size definitely does not fit all. Besides, a particular fit may produce some calluses or certain elements of the challenge may make us abandon the effort. Yet there are certain shoes that must be filled as those shoes serve as testimonies to bestow upon the next generation.

Some of us have well-traveled shoes and have journeyed from other places. Some of us have run similar races, yet for others of us there have been divine interventions.

In the late 1960's, a local physician, Dr. Charles Rowan, would settle with his family in

Toledo and begin a medical practice. He recalls that his road to higher education came in Indiana in the 1950's when an uncommon stranger saw potential in him and assisted him in enrolling in college.

"My mom and dad didn't have any money. Once I got accepted at Franklin College [in Indiana], a former banker and his wife took me into their home for four years, while I attended school," he reflected. "After I was accepted into medical school, I worked hard and saved my money — I paid my way. I did my residency at Fort Howard in Maryland, and became the first black to integrate the medical service there."

Life was so much different, as they say, "back in the day." We have learned much and will continue to learn from those who have preceded us. They have demonstrated strength, confidence and resiliency.

"There were places in Toledo we just didn't go," said Mary Gregory, recounting her exposure to racism in Toledo. She was referring to the historic theatre, Rivoli, downtown. "There were no signs that said *black or white* —

we had to sit upstairs."

Gregory moved with her family to Toledo for better opportunities. "Education was seen as important here. It was at Gunckel that I learned about black history", she said. "Even though there was some prejudiced attitudes, it really didn't affect me until I went into nursing."

As a young woman she had been told that Toledo hospitals were not accepting black students into nursing school. "But I was allowed to apply that following year at St. Vincent's and I had worked there 45 years," beamed the retired nurse and educator.

If we are to continue to break new ground, all of us need encouragement to be able to fill those large shoes sitting just down the hallway. Whatever shoes we must wear, we as African-Americans have become conquerors of yesterday and seekers of tomorrow.

Jean Overton wrote her way to Toledo initially with an interest in journalism. After experiencing education in a segregated school in St. Louis, she was cognizant of the influ-

(Continued on Page 9)

FREE TO BE FUNNY**MONDAY**8pm **EVERYBODY HATES CHRIS**8:30 **ALL OF US**9pm **GIRLFRIENDS**9:30 **THE GAME****WT05-TOLEDO**
THE CW

Advanced Care with the Heart of Mercy.

This summer St. V's will open their Regional Heart & Vascular Center, the area's first stand-alone facility for the treatment of heart and vascular diseases. "This building is an important evolution in our cardiac services to the community," said Dr. Anwar Zacharias, the center's Medical Director. "Its technology and attention to patient comfort is a first for this region."

The center will provide full treatment capabilities from cardiac catheterization to angioplasty to stenting. Its operating suites will feature the latest imaging technologies – critical for conducting minimally invasive vascular procedures. "People don't realize that vascular disease, often called hardening of the arteries, is as big of a problem as heart disease. It can have a devastating impact on people's lives," said Dr. Gregory Kasper, St. V's Section Chief of Peripheral Vascular Surgery. "The Center will be the region's most advanced for treating vascular diseases."



The Regional Heart & Vascular Center doesn't stop at cutting-edge medical technology. "The facility has been designed to blend the latest technology for diagnosing and treating heart problems with the most comfortable setting as possible for patients and their families," said Dr. Paul Berlacher, a cardiologist with Northwest Ohio Cardiology Consultants.

The emphasis on patient convenience begins from the moment of arrival. Check-in occurs at the patient's bedside as part of a "universal bed" approach. As patients progress from preparation for a procedure through recovery, they remain in the same room. Appropriate equipment and personnel move to the patient. The spacious, private rooms feature large windows for a more comforting environment. Patients' loved ones also will appreciate the relaxing family gathering areas complete with kitchen amenities.

"Walking through the facility, particularly the spacious, private patient rooms, you immediately notice what a comforting environment it will be," said Barbara Dianda-Martin, R.N., St. V's Vice President of Nursing Services.

The Regional Heart & Vascular Center is the centerpiece of the St. V's Legacy Project, a \$90 million investment in enhancing the hospital's services. "By providing highly qualified physicians with the most up-to-date technology, the facility is a tremendous advancement in this region," said Dr. Ameer Kabour, Section Chief of Cardiology for St. V's.

Learn more about St. V's cardiac care at mercyweb.org.



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Looking for Big Brothers and Big Sisters® at Church

Special to The Truth

There has been a shortage of adult minority males volunteering to serve as mentors known as "Big Brothers" in the greater Toledo area over the past two years, said **Shelley Wilbert**, Partnership Development Manager, Big Brothers Big Sisters of Northwestern Ohio, and **Cynthia Ford**, special events coordinator at the same agency. The two advocates have been visiting local churches to issue a call for "active men of the church" to consider stepping forward to spend an hour per week with a young person on the waiting list at Big Brothers Big Sisters of Northwestern Ohio.

Ford recently attended the youth service at Ebenezer Missionary Baptist Church on Ashland Avenue at the request of First Lady and Pastor J. L. Jordan and Youth Services Coordinator Keith Jordan.

"A godly man does not have to alter his life style to become a mentor as he can include a youth or "Little Brother" in normal daily activities with his own family or interests such as sports, hobbies, fitness, or even youth outings with the church," said Ford.

Ford also complimented the youth and Keith Jordan



at the church as they committed to building teams for the upcoming "Bowl For Kids' Sake" event taking place February 10, 11, and 17, 2007. She added: "Spending time with other youth is a form of ministry in itself. Bowling is fun for everyone and this is an activity-based event that allows for conversation and camaraderie." The adults and youth at Ebenezer volunteered to fill three bowling lanes at the event and include youth on the waiting list as a means for mentoring and fellowship. The event includes a DJ, refreshments, prizes, caps and t-shirts for all in attendance.

Wilbert was invited to present the "Big Brothers Big Sisters" message at Upton United Methodist Church by Pastor Pat McKinstry. She

spoke with individuals after service and explained that: "consistency is the key to being a 'Big Brother.' Calling or checking in on a weekly basis works fine if you aren't able to meet in person on a weekly basis. If you say you're going to call every Monday or Tuesday after school to see how the week-end went and review some math problems or spelling words, then call every Monday evening and you've got Tuesday as a back up! When we make commitments to our own children we let them know that if we can't keep them like we intended, we'll make it up to them as soon as we're able."

Pastor McKinstry also committed to presenting a check to Big Brothers Big Sisters to sponsor a youth team for Bowl For Kids' Sake. Ford and Wilbert have sent letters to all area pastors inviting them to build youth teams for Bowl For Kids' Sake to introduce them to the need for adult male mentors at Big Brothers Big Sisters of Northwestern Ohio. Currently, there are nearly 100 minority youth on the waiting list.

To contact Big Brothers Big Sisters of Northwestern Ohio call 419-243-4600 or go online at www.bbbsnwo.org



The Village Elders

(Continued from Page 8)

ence of education. Overton attended The University of Toledo in the late 1940's and discovered later that broadcasting was her niche.

"It was a challenge because women were not in broadcasting at that time; especially African-American women," she stated. Following a stint at WTOD, Overton was asked to work at station WSPD and the radio program took off. "It became so popular. I feel that I was the mother of broadcasting – I'm proud of Toledo." She spoke of the many African-American's in TV and radio today, "However there

are still some areas of broadcasting that need to be looked at closely."

Our Elders may not be as mobile or move as fluently as time has exercised its privilege; their knowledge, wisdoms and grace, overshadow any motor deficits. We are a better people because of their keen sense of self and greater sense of community. The voices of our Elders are voices of unyielding spirits that guide us in through darkness.

The African American Legacy Project has already documented dozens and dozens of compelling community stories and the visit by the students from University of

Toledo students marks the first opportunity for the community to share The Legacy's archival experience. Our goal is to share past lessons and experiences to build a better tomorrow by seeking the council of our Elders, we have already begun to do so! We realize "What an old man can see while seated a young man can not see standing."

It is so very appropriate that this first experience belongs to our youth as it truly reflects the motto of The Legacy Project... "preserving the past and gifting the future."

African-American Brides & Grooms Get Help Planning

By Geneva J. Chapman,
Sojourner's Truth Reporter

Romantic music greeted perspective brides and grooms, already-marrieds and hopefuls, Saturday, January 27, 2007, at G-Creations Second Annual Black Bridal Expo, held this year at The Genesis Dreamplex Hotel & Conference Center.

The Dreamplex's elegant ballroom provided the perfect setting for the event with crystals cascading from three pairs of chandeliers and mirrors on three walls illuminated by crystal-dripping sconces. As they did last year, vendors showcased everything the bride needs for one of the most important days in her life.

"I came today because I need some ideas," said Lameshia Eldriege, whose fiancé, Anthony Conley accompanied her to the Expo. Eldriege explained how she got her groom to come with her. "I said, 'You've got to come help me explore.'"

The young couple was able to see every conceivable need of the bride & groom-to-be – from floral arrangements to wedding cakes to photo/videographers to shoes to limos – represented by the vendors' booths on one end of the ballroom, while festively dressed tables at the other end of the ballroom anticipated a very special grand finale: a marriage renewal ceremony.

Leading up to that big moment, several special events planned for brides-to-be sitting in front of a stage area, presented a plethora of ideas and possibilities for their own weddings.

The Michael Witty Band

provided live music, opening the possibility of hiring an ensemble featuring live music for the wedding reception to many of the brides who attended the Expo. Their smooth jazz sound appealed as much to the younger brides as it did to older ones.

T-Towns DJs distributed free wedding CD's, offering the possibility of using a deejay for that special day. NeVaeh Salon & Spa and Motivations Salon of Beauty offered the latest in hair fashions during a prequel to a showcase of bridal fashions.

"Yes, there is an African-American spa in Toledo and it's called NeVaeh – that's 'heaven' spelled backwards," said emcee Rhonda Sewell. "This is from a national show that Motivations won in the fall," explained Sewell as the salons outrageous and ultrahip hair styles, make-up and fashions were modeled by some of Toledo's most professional models. "They got top honors."

A real crowd pleaser at the Expo, Motivations offered brides a few non-traditional hair style possibilities for their wedding day while giving them a glimpse at a little urban style. "We presented a mini-hair show. They brought some sass and sophistication to the show," said Sewell.

President Tuxedo Westfield Mall presented this season's tuxedo styles. "I didn't know they made tuxedos that small," said Sewell when Jeremiah Anderson modeled a tiny tuxedo while carrying the traditional ring

bearer's satin pillow. Later, his brother, Elijah modeled white tails. "You better be careful of this Anderson family," said Sewell. "They're going to be requesting them at all weddings."

Asked if he saw anything he liked, groom-to-be Conley said, "I think I'm going to go with gray. I gotta have my James Bond bowtie, though."

It was his bride-to-be's turn to explore fashion possibilities when entrepreneurs Threads by Balinda, M-Sews It, Madeline Creative Stitches and Sew Faithful presented bridal fashions. Among the crowd favorites were "The Great Gatsby," a lace gown with a fish tail skirt; a gold gown with a detachable sheer bottom that M-Sews-It's Marie Dunlap-Ali painstakingly removed to give a glimpse of the little 'shimmy' dress that was ready for dancing at the reception; the coronation gown worn by Scott's Homecoming Queen and, the *piece de resistance*: a sequined bustier topped flowing gown with a removable skirt that once removed, revealed sequined capris that match the reception.

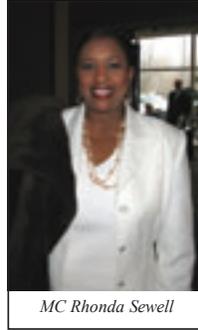
"I've never seen that!" exclaimed Sewell. "Like I said ladies, don't listen to Mama – do what you want on your wedding day."

During the fashion show, a chocolate brown empire waist gown with ethnic trim caught the eye of our betrothed couple, who paused while whispering sweet nothings in each other's ear to take a long, interested look.

Prizes were given to some lucky brides, including two \$50 gift certificates from RRT Images; a giveaway bag from NeVaeh; a set of champagne glasses and a champagne glass and cake server from Henry Jewelers and Paradise Shoes; a 50 percent-off coupon from Hummer for Hire – Bowling Green, Ohio; two tickets to a Valentine's Day Celebration at The Blueprint Lounge on February 15; a Valentine's Day room package at the Clarion for \$99; a \$100 gift certificate for Mary Kay Cosmetics from Think Pink and a gift certificate from Teacakes Southern Bakery.

There was also a raffle drawing for any \$99 painting and a statuette from Kimberly Bailey, Artistic Impressions consultant. Following the fashion show, our couple took advantage of a break before the grand finale to visit various vendors.

Forty-five minutes later, they returned to their table loaded down with flyers, brochures and business cards. "We don't have a date yet,"



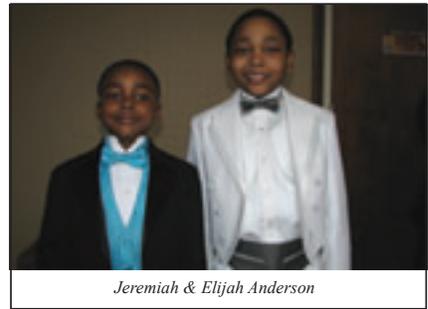
MC Rhonda Sewell



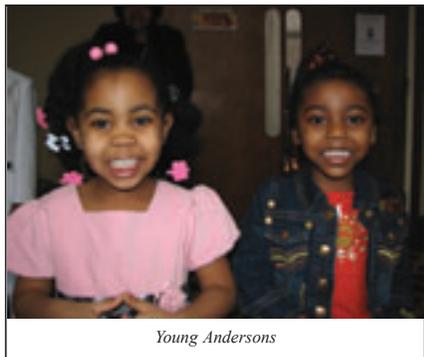
Photographer Sheila Mosby

admitted bride-to-be Eldriege. A bit overwhelmed by all of the pre-wedding planning still yet to be done, the young couple left, armed with what they came for – a multitude of ideas – and the added bonus of finding out where to get the things they need for their wedding, right here in their own community.

Black bridal fairs across the country provide this needed service for African-American brides, who, unfortunately, are often ignored by



Jeremiah & Elijah Anderson



Young Andersons



Blessed Blossoms Florist

Their Big Day at the Second Annual Black Bridal Expo

the bridal industry. Thoughts of getting married generate images of white – white dresses, white flowers and white wedding cakes. But according to a recent study, they also generate images of white brides. White, thin and attractive brides, to be precise. Women of different ethnic groups, particularly black brides, are continuously left out of advertising and content of the three major bridal magazines, creating a reflection of which group of people should get married in American society, according to Cynthia Frisby, an associate professor at the University of Missouri at Columbia.

Frisby, along with Erika

Engstrom, associate professor of the Greenspun College of Urban Affairs at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas, conducted a study that found fewer than two percent of brides featured in the three major bridal magazines were black.

The sampling consisted of covers and advertisements in 57 randomly selected issues of Bride's Magazine, Modern Bride and Elegant Bride published between 2000 and 2004. Of the more than 6,000 ads, fewer than two percent featured a black woman as a bride, the study found. No black woman was featured on the cover, and the most frequent image of a black woman in the

magazines was as a bridesmaid.

The phenomenon points to a larger problem in society and could have negative effects on black women, according to Engstrom. "It kind of tells black women who is supposed to get married, and basically re-establishes the concept of a white wedding being white," Engstrom said.

Bridal magazines, because they consist almost entirely of advertisements for dresses and other wedding products, are an accurate projection of what group of people businesses cater to, according to Engstrom. "Bridal magazines are basically a specialized form of publication. It kind of tells us something about society in general."

The results were little changed since a similar study looked at bridal magazines in 1999, she said. "Despite significant improvements in media representations of African Americans," the study stated, "images appearing in popular bridal magazines are fairly homogenous, and contribute to the notion African American women seem to be socially unimportant in this form of media." [Mower, Lawrence. "White Weddings:

Bridal magazines reflect white world - study finds no black women on covers, fewer than 2 percent of brides in ads were black." *Las Vegas Review Journal*, 12/12/06]

Black Bridal Expos like the ones in Atlanta, Georgia, and St. Louis, Missouri, and, now, in Toledo, Ohio, offer African-American brides-to-be the opportunity to avail themselves of the resources of the ever-expanding bridal industry, particularly those businesses in their own communities that provide wedding services, as well as an opportunity for African-American business owners to get a share of a growing industry.

According to Brides Today, a three-month-old Northbrook, Ill.-based bridal magazine for black brides and grooms, African-Americans spend an average of \$7,000 to \$10,000 on their weddings. (The national average for a formal wedding is \$16,698, according to Modern Bride).

With more than 200,000 blacks tying the knot each year at an average cost of \$8,000 per wedding, it's estimated that African-Americans shell out more than \$1.6 billion annually on weddings. "The bridal industry," observes Sawyer, "is one lucrative industry." [Gite, Loyd. "Do You Take This Business? Wedding Supplies and Service Industry" *Black Enterprise*, July 1992.]

Twenty-one of the vendors that exhibited at this year's Black Bridal Expo in Toledo are graduates of ASSETS Toledo, a local entrepreneurial program that provides training and assistance to those wanting to start their own business ventures. The inclusion of so many ASSETS Toledo businesses demonstrates a strong "cooperative economics" theme in the showcase sponsored by Glenda Brown, owner of G-Creations Events Planning and herself an ASSETS Toledo graduate.

This year's marriage renewal ceremony, the grand finale each year for the Black Bridal Expo, celebrated 20 years of marriage for Pastor Alvin Dawson, Sr. and First Lady Rolinda Dawson.

Sponsored by Blessed Blossoms Florist, M-Sews-It, President Tuxedo Westfield Mall, Revelations Photography, Teacakes Southern Bakery, T-Towns DJs, Hummer for Hire and G-Creations, the ceremony was a somber, quietly beautiful event with occasional humor interjected by the groom.

A musical prelude featured Shonda Gordon, wedding soloist, singing "The Lord's Prayer." Soloist Iva Farrow sang "Jesus, You're The Center of My Joy," following the entrance of the minister, groom and best man, while



Scarves and Such from Diane



Clarion Hotel Booth



Designer Kewape

the rest of the bridal party entered. The bride entered dressed in a beautiful ivory gown and escorted by Robert Williams. The radiant vision of his bride of 20 years prompted a joyous exaltation from the groom. "Hallelujah!" he exclaimed with a broad grin.

Rev. Roger English from Atlanta, Georgia, performed the ceremony, witnessed by the best man, James Wilson; maid of honor, Renthe English; bridesmaid, Raina Dawson; flower girl, Rhea Dawson; groomsmen, Alvin Dawson, Jr. and ringbearer, Arthur Dawson, who needed a little encouragement from his father to complete the long walk to the altar.

The ceremony ended as it started – with a prayer – and the groom was invited to salute his bride after exchanging rings. The bride and groom received their guests before posing for photos. The bridesmaid and maid of honor were resplendent in shimmering gold gowns with spaghetti straps and sheer fabric wrapped around their shoulders.

Elaborate but classy hairstyles finished off their looks while the bride's softly fitted gown with sheer trumpet

sleeves was at once demure and sophisticated, befitting a bishop's wife.

"She said she wanted long sleeves," confided designer, Trevor Black, "but I told her she couldn't have just regular sleeves." Black, a Toledo fashion design legend, works with M-Sews-It.

The men in the wedding party all wore black tuxedos, gray vests, gray bow ties and white shirts. Prior to the reception, Two Steps Up's Victor Knighten and his partner, Angie, gave the crowd a ballroom demonstration, gliding like silk across the dance floor. Later, after guests enjoyed a delicious meal catered by Cooks Caterers and scrumptious wedding cake from Teacakes Southern Bakery, younger guests hit the dance floor, inviting adults to join them. A couple did.

However, the bride and groom waited until Shonda Gordon sang a romantic love song to do their traditional dance. "Glenda Brown put this event on with the help of her crew," Sewell commented during the fashion show earlier. "I'm glad she's brought a black bridal show to Toledo."

Contact Geneva at Geneva@thetruth Toledo.com



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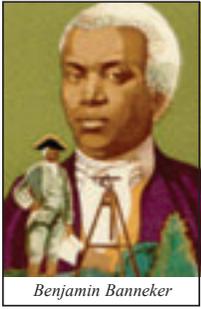


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• Black History Month Special Issue • Black History Month Special Issue • Black History Month Special Issue •

Milestones in African American Scientific Achievement



Benjamin Banneker

1753
Benjamin Banneker (1731 – 1806) carved, out of wood, and constructed the first clock assembled in America. Banneker went on to study astronomy and was soon predicting solar and lunar eclipses. His Benjamin Banneker's Almanac was first published in 1792 and was a top seller. Banneker was an assistant in the survey and design of the District of Columbia.

1821
Thomas L. Jennings became the first African-American to hold a U.S. patent. The patent was for a dry-cleaning process.



Norbert Rillieux

1846
Norbert Rillieux patented an evaporator for refining sugar. His technique is still used in the sugar industry and in the manufacture of soap and other products.

1840's
Benjamin Bradley, a slave at a printing office and then at the Annapolis Naval Academy, developed a steam engine for war ships. He was unable to patent his work.

1867
Rebecca Cole becomes the second black woman to graduate from medical school. She joined Dr. Elizabeth Blackwell (the first white woman physician) in New York in practice.



Elijah McCoy

1872
Elijah McCoy, "The Real McCoy," invented the lubricator for steam engines and established his own manufacturing company.



Edward Alexander Bouchet

1874
Edward Alexander Bouchet became the first African-American to graduate from Yale College. He received a Ph.D. from Yale in 1876 – the first African-American to receive a doctorate. He spent his career teaching college chemistry and physics.

1881
Lewis Howard Latimer invented an electric lamp and in 1882, a carbon filament for light bulbs. Latimer was the only African-American member of Thomas Edison's team of inventors.

1887
Granville T. Woods patented the *Synchronous Multiplex Railway Telegraph* which allowed communications between train stations and moving trains and between several moving trains. This invention accelerated train movements and prevented numerous accidents and collisions.



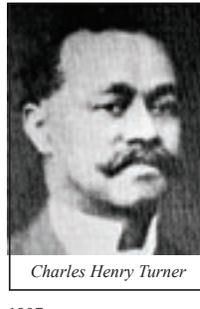
George Washington Carver

1896
George Washington Carver becomes director of agricultural research at Tuskegee University. He revolutionized southern agriculture by introducing peanut, soybean and sweet potato production to replenish nitrogen in the soil. He then created more than 300 peanut-based products to give the farmers commercial markets for their products.



Madame C.J. Walker

1905
Madame C.J. Walker developed a conditioning treatment for straitening hair. Walker would become the first African-American female millionaire.



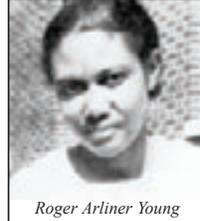
Charles Henry Turner

1907
Charles Henry Turner received his Ph.D. from the University of Chicago. A noted authority on the behavior of insects, Turner went on to become the first researcher to prove that insects can hear.



Ernest Everett

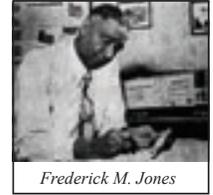
1916
Ernest Everett Just earns his Ph.D. from the University of Chicago. His work on cell biology took him to marine laboratories in the U.S. and Europe and led him to publish more than 50 papers.



Roger Arliner Young

1924
Roger Arliner Young, zoologist and biologist, was the first black woman to conduct research in her field. Working with Ernest Just in 1924, Young made significant contribution to the study of structures that control salt concentration in paramecium. In 1928, she published several studies on the effects of direct and indirect radiation on sea urchin eggs.

1907
Charles Henry Turner received his Ph.D. from the University of Chicago. A noted authority on the behavior of insects, Turner went on to become the first researcher to prove that insects can hear.



Frederick M. Jones

1935
Frederick M. Jones invented the first automatic refrigeration system for long-haul trucks. Jones had previously invented a number of devices for the movie industry which adapted silent movie projectors to use talking movie stock.



Dr. Charles Richard Drew

1939
Dr. Charles Richard Drew established the first blood bank for the Columbia-Presbyterian Medical Center in New York. His work in plasma research altered the manner in which blood was utilized during World War II on the battle lines.



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Debra Miller, 7-Year-Old, Receives Honor



Debra Miller, 7-year-old Lagrange Elementary School student, was honored by Safe Kids Great Toledo (SKGT) representatives and local fire fighters at a SKGT meeting on Feb. 2. Debra used a fire escape plan she developed after attending a Safe Kids fire safety program at her school when her apartment caught fire Dec. 16, 2006 at 3:19 a.m.

Maumee Valley Country Day School's Afro-American Club Kicks off 8th Biennial African-American Cultural Symposium

By Nadean Hamilton
Sojourner's Truth Reporter

Stand Up! Speak Up! Be Heard! was the challenge presented to more than 70 students who gathered at Maumee Valley Country Day School on Saturday, Feb. 3, to participate in a series of workshops designed to inform and inspire.

The program, which is usually organized as a three-day weekend event for MVCDS students only, was expanded this year to include students enrolled in other Toledo area high schools.

This year, the day-long event included five 40-minute workshops on African-American History and Diversity, College & Careers, Relationships, Health

& Beauty, and Music & Media; performances by Self-Expression Teen Theatre and The House of Adonis, as well as a dance later in the evening.

The African-American History and Diversity workshop led by Laurentz Lewis, touched on a myriad of topics such as the arrival of Africans to Virginia, the Dred Scott decision, Emancipation Proclamation, Reconstruction, Jim Crow and the Voting Rights Act of 1965.

During his lecture, Lewis told the students that during these tumultuous times in African-American History, the United States of America was attempting to answer

the "Negro Question," [which is to say,] "What are we going to do with the Negro?" said Lewis. Referencing the State of Virginia's recent refusal to apologize for slavery, and the recent killings of Sean Bell and Kathryn Johnston at hands of law enforcement, Lewis suspects that the United States is still struggling to answer the "Negro Question" today. Lewis ended the workshop by asking the students, "Are Africans in America "full" citizens?"

During the College and Careers workshop, guest speaker Carnel Smith, Ed.D. challenged students to become lifetime learn-

ers. "Education is the foundation of your life! You can pay now or you can pay later; however you will pay!" warned Smith. Smith told the students that those lacking education, whether formal or informal, oftentimes find that their lives are dictated to them by others. "Education determines the spouse you marry and how you raise your kids," said Smith.

Relaying the story of a former student who worked 40 hours per week, but who had not yet passed all of the proficiency tests needed to obtain her diploma, Smith reminded the students that sometimes they will have to make short-term sacrifices in order to reach their long-term goals.

The Health and Beauty workshop was facilitated by Shani Watson, who aptly informed the students that what they put on their bodies is just as important as what they put into their bodies. Watson spoke about the dangers of high-fructose corn syrup, trans fat and partially hydrogenated oils. The students were also cautioned not to believe everything that they see on TV and to always read the labels of everything that they consume.

According to Adrielle Parker, co-president of the MVCDS Afro-American club, the purpose of the program is to bring students together to discuss common goals and concerns, while illuminating the accomplishments of African-American leaders long ignored.

Music of the African Diaspora Featuring Adisa Ababa Black History Month At the Library

Adisa Ababa will have you moving to the beat as you learn how the countries of Africa have influenced the world around. Ababa will wow you with her children's music and percussion program, scheduled from 4:15 p.m. to 5 p.m. on Wednesday, February 21, in the auditorium of the Kent Branch Library, 3101 Collingwood Blvd.

Ababa uses a variety of musical instruments, puppets, and folklore for her program designed for youth ages Kindergarten through sixth-grade. The program is open to all ages.

Adisa Ababa's name is similar to the capital of Ethiopia, which is spelled Adiss Ababa. This largest city in Ethiopia is a main trade center for coffee, the country's chief export.

Ababa's musical program honors Black History Month, which is celebrated during the entire month of February.

For more information, please call 419.259.5207.

EXCEL's Conference

(Continued from Page 4)

noteasy," said Draper. "It took two years to write, it took two years to find a publisher, it took two years to get it into a bookstore and it took two years to get a check ... for \$85.50." "But I was a writer, the door was open and I didn't even know I was through it ... and the publisher knew my name and started to return my phone calls," she said.

"And so every time I have a chance to talk to young people, I talk about opening doors. That door is open for you and you will make a difference," said Draper. "You get thousands of opportunities every day to screw up ... so how do you decide?"

After the opening session and greetings from the various dignitaries, the students moved to sessions designed to motivate them to develop skills, find role models for improving the human condition (the theme of this year's conference) and to make plans to help them prepare for leadership roles.

Parents and educators attended their own session de-

signed to provide them with tools for guiding and mentoring their young charges.

The Office of EXCELlence Programs, under the guidance of Interim Director David Young, offers five primary programs for area students:

Toledo EXCEL is a scholarship incentive program of UT and helps prepare minority students for success in college. Established in 1988, EXCEL involves students in pre-college academic programs and offers tutoring, travel, campus visits, financial aid advising, among other services. To date more than 900 students have been enrolled in the program.

Toledo Prep/Tech is a math and science enrichment program sponsored by UT and the Engineers Foundation of Ohio. Thirty sixth-graders are selected annually and, under the guidance of university professors, perform hands-on engineering experiments to help them better understand mathematical and scientific concepts.

(Continued on Page 16)

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Tour Main Library's Black History Exhibit: From These Roots: African Americans In Toledo (1890-1976)

Last Thursday was the start of Black History Month. The public can celebrate by taking a self-guided tour of the Toledo-Lucas County Public Library's Black History Month exhibition, *From These Roots: African Americans in Toledo (1890-1976)*, on the second floor Gallery at Main Library, 325 Michigan St., downtown Toledo.

This exhibition of 15 sepia-toned African American photographs has from the Local History and Genealogy Department of the Toledo-Lucas County Public Library.

Photographs include a c. July 19, 1934 photo of black men repaving Cherry Street at Spielbusch Avenue and a photo of keyboard master and Toledoan Art Tatum (1909-1956) and Oscar Peterson (1925 -), both jazz pianists.

For more information, please call 419.259.5207.

The Lima Truth

The Lima YMCA Black Achievers Experiencing Record Success

By Vickie Shurelds
Special to The Truth

It's an exhilarating thing, say a variety of observers. Watching minority youth move with a positive purpose. Watching experienced entrepreneurs work with future employees, executives and business owners as they strive to find the best fit in career choices. It's the way it should be: Each One Teach One.

Under the relentless determination of its president, Emmanuel Curtis, the Black Achievers program is experiencing record-breaking attendance at their monthly scheduled meetings and extracurricular outings as well. An average of 75 youth are active at any given outing, and they are benefiting from the core of adult volunteers that have been assembled. The effect does not stop there.

They have decided on a strong force permeating the city school system as well. They are scheduling visits throughout the district requesting access to the students during reading sessions, general assemblies or select presentations, however they can be integrated without causing havoc in the

school schedule.

As many as 22 adults at a time have entered a school building from an impressive list of career choices: sales, entrepreneurs, engineers, health care specialists, firemen, counseling ... they present themselves as open books for the students to observe, question, and challenge. It's a great experience for both sides. The adults are often surprised at the questions posed to them, and the level of knowledge as well.

What is the purpose of this systematic descent on unsuspecting students? It has long been the belief among many youth, especially those of color, that the community as a whole does not care about their success. The Black Achievers main goal is to help youth train for success. In school, in business, in life providing the tools they need, and the confidence, too.

There is a misconception that today's students are a selfish, uncaring group, incapable of critical thought. Thankfully, for the most part, the opposite is true. Many are searching for their place

in their own community – as well as where they fit in on the planet. Their considerations have to be so broad, it boggles the mind.

Right now, the Black Achievers program is preparing for one of two major fund-raising events they host each year. A *Multi-Cultural Expo* that also features a power breakfast aimed at creating a brain-trust of premiere success stories. Participants will choose one goal to identify as needing the most focus. The discussion is always stimulating, and kindles huge flames of excitement, that sadly for some, die out within the next six months, but somehow – the goal is still addressed, and change begins to happen. The *EXPO* is slated for Saturday, February 17, 2007 from 9 a.m.-3 p.m. at the Bradfield Community Center.

Of course, the public is encouraged to attend the day's festivities and enjoy the presentations by local entertainers and be struck at how much business is being conducted in Lima and Allen County by minority owners – and be inspired by histori-

cal facts presented on the local, statewide and national contributions by African-Americans. If you need a boost of confidence about the direction we're headed as a community – this is a great place to get it. But, that's not all.

The event also gives you a chance to become a part of the solution. Our youth are in need of our help, our support, and our encouragement. Check your schedule to see how much time you might be able to give toward this worthy project.

The Black Achievers program runs through the entire school year. It offers a variety of opportunities for members of the community to add their own brand of expertise – mock job interviews, chaprones for college visits, mentor programs and, of course, tutoring in all areas of education.

There is a place for everyone and a chance for those interested to help these "at

promise" youth one mind at a time. All types of career advice are needed. If you have experience, please consider sharing it with some of these outstanding youths.

* * * * *

And if you know of a young person who has an interest in the media as a career choice – please pass this information along:

Have you ever wanted to work at NBC, CBS, ABC, Turner, Clear Channel, etc? If so, the Emma L. Bowen Foundation is looking for you! We are currently seeking high school juniors, high school seniors and college freshmen for PAID summer internships in television, radio, or cable stations in various US cities. Eligible students must have a 3.0 or higher GPA, an interest in media, and plan or currently attend a 4-year college. Selected candidates will work every summer throughout their college years, as well

as earn an hourly salary and matching scholarship dollars to help pay for college expenses. Please visit their website: www.emmabowenfoundation.com to learn more about the program and to obtain an application. The application deadline is *February 16, 2007*.

The Foundation's mission is to create career opportunities in the media industry for minority youth through a program that focuses on scholastic achievement, direct work experience and professional development. Since 1989, they have successfully placed hundreds of high school and college students in various media companies throughout the United States.

Please consider donating a portion of your time, skills and valuable knowledge to the Lima YMCA Black Achievers Program. Contact Emmanuel Curtis at (419)998-5274, or ecurtist@allencountyohio.com.

Church's Chicken's Grand Opening

Sojourner's Truth Staff

Although Lima's Church's Chicken opened its doors for business in mid-December, the restaurant's official "grand opening" was held just this past Saturday, February 3.

Wild 93.9 brought their remote truck to do a live broadcast from the



The Church's staff

Church's Chicken



Paul Hubbard with store manager, Brenda Cooper

Offer good for Churches Chicken locations at
2124 Franklin Avenue, Toledo & 629 S. Main Street, Lima



2 PC 99¢
Legs & Thighs
Add Reg. Washed Potatoes & Biscuit for 1¢ More

3 Crunchy \$1.99
Tenders & Biscuit
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5 PC \$2.99
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Church's Chicken's ...

Continued from page 14
restaurant's parking lot and customers braved the low temperatures to sample the variety of chicken products offered by the Main Street Church's.

Owner Paul Hubbard, who also has a Church's franchise and is a partner in a Captain D's Seafood Restaurant in Toledo, was on hand along with several Toledo staffers – Moe Rahman and James Adams – to assist in this past week's festivities.



Radio remote during Saturday's Grand Opening



Lima Councilman Derry Glenn and Church's owner Paul Hubbard

The restaurant will employ 35 workers. Church's will be open from 10:30 a.m. to 11 p.m. on weekdays; from 11 a.m. to 11:30 p.m. on Saturdays and from 11 a.m. to 10 p.m. on Sundays. Along with the restaurant seating and the take out service, customers can also call ahead and have their orders waiting for them when they arrive.

Ohio Northern University will be commemorating Black History Month this February with a number of scheduled events:

- Throughout February An Exhibit of African American Art
The art exhibit is provided by the Findlay Black Heritage Library.
- Wednesday, Feb. 7
Finding Your Abundance: Black History Chapel Service, Part 1
11 a.m. - ONU English Chapel
The first of two Black History Chapel Services will feature guest speaker Pastor Albert Rush of Detroit, Mich. The service will also feature selections by the ONU Gospel Ensemble and other special music. This event is sponsored by the ONU Office of Multicultural Development, the ONU Black Student Union and the ONU English Chapel.
- Thursday, Feb. 8
Where are the African American Leaders?: Cultural Conversation Hour, Part I
Noon - ONU Multicultural Center
The first of two cultural conversation hours, lunch will also be provided in addition to lively discussion.
- Saturday, Feb. 10
Annual Kuumba Festival
7 p.m. - McIntosh Center Ballroom
"Kuumba" is a word from the Swahili Language that means "creativity." This annual showcase of talent includes dance, song, poetry, culture, and music. The event is all-campus inclusive and welcomes the creative influence of all ethnic backgrounds and cultures. This year, the event will feature a special performance by Soul and Kontradiction.
- Monday, Feb. 12
New Dimensions in Diversity Film Series: Bamboozled
7 p.m. - Dicke Hall Forum
This event is sponsored by the ONU Black Student Union
- Wednesday, Feb. 14
Reflecting Forward: Black History Chapel Service, Part 2
11 a.m. - ONU English Chapel
The second of two Black History Chapel Services will feature guest speaker Vonzelia Woods of Columbus, Ohio. This event is sponsored by the ONU Office of Multicultural Development and the ONU English Chapel.
- Thursday, Feb. 15
An Evening with Dr. Jack Ford
7 p.m. - McIntosh Center Ballroom
Jack Ford, former mayor of Toledo, Ohio, also previously served in the Ohio House of Representatives for seven years and was Democratic Leader of the Ohio House for three. Ford also spoke at the 2000 Democratic National Convention.
- Saturday, Feb. 17
Annual Black Student Union Fashion Show
7 p.m. - McIntosh Center Activities Room
Come enjoy the annual fashion show sponsored by the ONU Black Student Union. For more information, contact Evan Roberts, President of the ONU Black Student Union, at e-roberts.1@onu.edu.
- Sunday, Feb. 18
Soul Food Dinner
6 p.m. - ONU Multicultural Center
ONU's Office of Multicultural Development and the ONU Black Student Union invite you to a dinner with soul. Participants can look forward to a time of good food and fellowship.
- Thursday, Feb. 22
Why Us, Why Now? Young Black Males and Violence: Cultural Conversation Hour, Part 2
11 a.m. - Dicke Hall Forum
This forum will examine the critical issue of violence and African American males. Lunch will be provided following the event.
- Date TBA
Black Student Union Skating Outing
Time, Place TBA
Enjoy an evening of fun with the ONU Black Student Union. For more information, contact Evan Roberts, president of the ONU Black Student Union, at e-roberts.1@onu.edu.

"When I lost my appetite, something was wrong."



Louise was 53 when she was diagnosed with heart disease.

"I love to eat and I love to cook. When I lost my appetite, I knew there was something wrong. I couldn't even stand the smell of food cooking. I became so weak, I could hardly walk."

Heart disease is America's leading killer of women. Since 1984 heart disease has claimed more women's lives than men. But there is hope.

With better prevention, more than 80 percent of women's heart attacks may be avoided. Visit stritas.org for lifesaving information on heart attack warning signs and risk factors.

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Pastor Robert L. Curtis Jr. *They do not care what you know, until they know that you care.*

Restoring the Afro Ball

By India Santos
Special to The Truth

The year was 1987 and on that particular Friday, the school day was crawling to an agitating end. I was anxious to get home. More so than on any other school day. My dad had a surprise for me.

Back in the 1980's, my family owned a clothing boutique. Often I would come home and find all sorts of the latest fashions sprawled across my bed. This was one of those days and, as expected, my dad "came through."

Mr. King was no slouch, I had the complete ensemble—shoes, designer nylons, handbag and a white quarter-length fur were the accents to an elegant sequined gown.

I was a freshman in high school and it was my first dance. Yet, not just any dance. If you are walking down memory lane with me, then you know this was not Homecoming or a student council dance. Even the acclaimed junior/senior prom paled in comparison to this night. *Our* night — The Citywide Afro-Ball.

In the early 1980's, key educators within the black community came together and discussed an epiphany of sorts, the designation of an evening set aside to acknowledge and honor the music, the cunning sense of style, the incomparable beauty, the distinction and the insurmountable intelligence of our people. This was not just a night out for the black kids, this was a teaching tool. What better lesson to learn than one that embraces and celebrates the heritage and culture of a people, who are without a question, tried and true?

In 1982, Don Martin,

Ernie Jones and C.J. Martin joined forces and brought the novel idea for a dance to life. The theme expanded and Arnethia Tooson, Marvin Vines, Brenda Powell, LaRouth Perry and Avie Dixon joined the ranks of those whom modern-day advisors revere as "pioneers" of the Afro-Ball. Through their hard work and dedication an event evolved that became known as the favorite of the local limousine and tuxedo companies.

The Citywide Afro Ball students arrived at the ball in style! The young men were dapper, to say the least, in their tuxes with tails, Dobb hats and canes. The young ladies donned sequined, taffeta and silk evening gowns. On this night, our teens dressed to impress! There was absolutely no room for "half-steppin'" here.

The citywide courts were the epitome of culture and school pride. If not in authentic African garb, their dresses and tuxedos were representative of the school's colors. Members of the courts "represented" by tastefully performing choreographed routines before crowning the kings and queens of their respective schools. During the course of the evening, scholarships were given. We later danced the night away. We mingled with old friends we had not seen since the sixth grade. Simply put, we had a good time.

We had a *good* time. There were no fights, no chair throwing — no evenings ruined.

In 2005, somehow the dream became defiled and in 2006 deferred. When there is no purpose, chaos will prevail.

Initially, the local buzz was "there isn't an Afro-Ball anymore." We do not even recognize hidden racism within our own community. There are fights and "drama," so to speak, at homecomings and proms all the time. They are not cancelled. So why the Afro-Ball? As a people, we have an uncanny ability to shut ourselves down without a second thought.

Thankfully, Avie Dixon had second thoughts. Last spring, she called a meeting for all citywide advisors. Three advisors answered the call. From that meeting was born the three "R's": Restoration, Revival and Renewal.

The Afro-Ball is back! Citywide Afro-Club advisors have again come together with the goal of restoring the Ball to its original purpose: an evening for our youngsters where culture is celebrated.

The 2007 Citywide Afro-Ball, "Back in the Day," will be February 17, 2007 at the Gladioux Meadows on Heatherdowns Blvd. a two-entrée buffet of lasagna and grilled chicken is included. Bids are \$3.00 per person. Bids will not be sold at the door. The last date to purchase a bid is February 9, 2007. Bids are on sale at Scott, Libbey, Start, Woodward, Rogers, Waite, Springfield and Central Catholic High Schools. They are also available at St. John's Jesuit and Notre Dame Academy. The attire is strictly formal. Young ladies are expected to be in after-five, formal eveningwear. Young men are expected to be in tuxedos or formal suits.

As in the past, citywide courts will be presented and kings and queens crowned.

Two scholarships will be awarded to qualifying seniors. A new award, "Club of the Year," will be presented to the club that excelled in service to the community.

Do you remember your Afro-Ball? Advisors are imploring parents to keep the Ball alive for their children. Revive your school's Afro-Club. Some of our schools do not even have active clubs. Speak with administrators and make sure that cultural diversity is being welcomed and embraced in your child's school. Restore the purpose of the club and the Ball by encouraging your child to attend the Afro-Ball. Renew



the celebration of our culture by sharing with your children, students and youth groups your memories of the Afro-Ball from "Back in the Day."

Ed. Note: India Santos is the citywide coordinator of the Afro-Ball and the advisor at Woodward High

School. Local advisors include: A. Winfield (Scott), C. Mayfield (Start), F. Dunning (Libbey), J. Willis (Central Catholic), A. Hawkins (Rogers), B. Holmes (Woodward), B. Adams (Springfield), M. Ransey (St. Johns Jesuit) and K. Jankowski (Notre Dame Academy)

EXCEL's Conference

(Continued from Page 13)

Gear-Up Toledo Students (GUTS) is a federally-funded math and science enrichment program designed to enhance the academic achievement of students from low-income families

Upward Bound is a federally-funded college access

program designed to help low-income and first-generation college-bound students through their high-school years.

Student Support Services (SSS) is a federally-funded TRIO program also designed to help low-income, first-generation,

college-bound students with academic skill development.

More information on any of the programs can be obtained by calling the Office of Admissions at 419-530-8700 or via email at enroll@utoledo.edu.

New Works Writers Series' Encore Presentation Bourdon at the Border

by Pearl Cleage

February 16, 2007 at Owens College

New Works Writers Series continues its tradition of bringing to the stage thought-provoking African-American drama with an encore performance of "Bourbon at the Border" by Pearl Cleage (pronounced *kleeg*). The staged reading performed at Owens College, AVCC 125-6 on February 16, 2007 at 7 p.m. Cast includes actors Grant Walker, Latoya Williams, Monica Watkins

and Terrell "G-Face" Shelmon.

"Bourbon at the Border," deals with the aftermath of American historical events: a middle-aged couple in mid-1990s Detroit copes with the memory of their experience as young civil rights activists, when their attempts to register black voters in Mississippi during the "Freedom Summer" of 1964 met with violent resistance.

"Bourbon at the Border" is a complex, delicate love story. "The play demon-

strates the unending love and bond between two beings who are victims of their own dreams for a satisfying and meaningful life," says director Imelda Hunt, Ph.D. Guest artists include poet, Andre "Dre Day" Knighten and visual artist Wade Harrison.

Tickets can be purchased for \$5 at the door or by calling New Works Writers Series at 419.380.0257 or email director@newworkswritersseries.org.

Memorial Service for Three Former Toledoans Held

On Saturday, January 27, 2007, a memorial service was held for Robert H. Jordan, Jr., his mother Margie G.J. Graham, and his sister Tonya N.H. Jor'Dan at Warren AME Church. All three died within 11 months of each other in Los Angeles, CA where they had lived since 1962. Burial for mother, son and daughter was at Forest Lawn, Hollywood Hills, Los Angeles. Ties to Toledo had been maintained throughout their years in Los Angeles through family,

friends, religious, educational and social organizations.

Those in attendance at the memorial service expressed great joy and honor at having been a part of a unique service honoring Mrs. Graham, born in Woodville, OH, and her two adult children, born in Toledo.

With heart-touching song, scripture reading, prayer, expressive obituaries and the use of the latest video and audio technology, the memorial service was one to be remembered. Repeatedly, those present spoke glowingly of the experience. Attendees were especially glad to see Mrs. Graham's 101-year-old mother, Lillie B. Sneed. A luncheon followed the service.

While growing up in Toledo, the two children attended Washington and Lincoln Elementary Schools. Mrs. Graham was a former director of the Lucas Metropolitan Housing Authority and a 50-year charter member of the Women's Service Institute in Toledo.

A \$1,000 scholarship was presented to the Women's Service Institute in the name of the deceased by the family. An additional \$100 was added to the scholarship by one of Tonya and Robert's uncles.



Are You Really Ready for Black History Month?

By Michael Hayes
Minister of Culture

This week, instead of just hittin' y'all with an album or a movie I figured I'd sit back and take stock of yet another Black History Month as it gets underway.

Does it still seem like a monument to the milestones of our culture in this country?

Does it make everyone stop and reflect?

Or is it just an annual habit we fall in and out of without investing any real meaning in the moment?

Peeps who are new to my column, I appreciate the support. But for those heads who've been rocking with me for a few years now - y'all might remember that article from a few Februarys ago where I asked some folks I truly respect to tell me how they feel about Black History Month.

It wasn't like when I reach out to my label mates inside the U.G.E. camp, I got answers from various people in various age groups and educational backgrounds and even from other parts of the country. One thing that seemed to be consistent in all of those answers was most of us remembered those school activities.

Soon as February 1 rolls around, grade schools all around the country start working on arts and crafts projects to commemorate the month. Using the same cotton balls we used for Santa's beard, we now used for Frederick Douglass's do. We make timelines about the black experience and do our best artist rendering of what we thought The Underground Railroad might've looked like.

I remember hanging the same Thurgood Marshall

poster in the same exact place in the hallway during my years at Ella P. Stewart Elementary but I don't remember knowing much about how important he was until later on in my education.

Having people submit their recollections on what B.H.M. means to them taught me a lot but I've been stayin' on my grizzy when it comes to this subject in my normal everyday life without necessarily asking a panel to chime in.

If you remember my boy Marcus Harrison at Channel 30 and his "Through The Looking Glass" series of vignettes that gave Toledo's African-American's favorite historical subject some light.... I learned a lot from discussing with him what he learned from our elders around the way.

Maybe segregation wasn't as overt up here as it was down South, but anyone will tell you that plenty of whites in northwest Ohio acted in ways that could make life a living hell for black folks in the 60's and 70's. It was an uphill battle for our people to gain recognition for their contributions to American society much less have the simple freedoms to eat and shop where they pleased. Or even drive out near Byrne road and not have beer bottles thrown at their heads.

I talked with my barber Jameel (Fosters - big shouts y'all!) about how black pride was so strong and beautiful that the white establishments felt they had no choice but to undermine it however they could.

No doubt, we still don't have things all that good now

but when I think about then it really brings things into focus.

So for all of our parents and grandparents, I would love to say that Black History Month could possibly be a hard-earned badge of honor.

And don't get me wrong, I value every single activity our community offers in support: praise dances, poetry nights, luncheons, awards ceremonies and all that.

But when you're not at school... when you're not at work or church or the barber-shop/beauty shop then what happens?

When you're just at home and you notice that it's the beginning of February, is there some Black Historical Fact that flashes its way across your mind?

And if there's not, is there some desire to learn a new black history fact that builds up inside your soul?

February is a wonderful month for many reasons (yours truly will be turning 29 on the 26th!). Naw, seriously tho - there's a groundhog that predicts the climates to come, a bunch of presidents and even Cupid himself turns up.

With all of that to remember, it wouldn't surprise me if average black folks found themselves making more Valentine's Day plans than Black History Month celebration plans. Honestly, some of y'all forget about B.H.M. until it's about half over and someone tells you they want you to come to some event and you're like "Ohhhh yeaahh,, it/SBlack History Month isn't it?"

So as my own personal way of acknowledging the shortest but sweetest month of the year, I've comprised a few thoughts about being black in 2007.

Check it:



Jennifer Hudson

Black Entertainment:
The sports world has been kind to us already in the '07 by featuring the first ever Super Bowl (arguably the biggest sports event on planet Earth) where two African-American head coaches go head to head. Yeah, Kobe slapped Ginobili, things ain't looking good for Barry Bonds and white folks are still on that whole O.J. thing - but overall things are looking up.

Oh yeah, can't leave out Serena Williams... always doing it big (real big!).

Dreamgirls not up for Best Picture? Who cares? Oscars mean less and less every year.

Jennifer Hudson is a beast, Eddie Murphy is about to retake his throne as THE King of Comedy, and Forest Whitaker is getting the props he so completely deserves.

But then again, we've got Soul Plane on B.E.T. and the White Rapper Show on V.H.1.

Which actually isn't so bad after all, I just wish that some of the education then cats are receiving about hip-hop culture was also being given to young black rappers who learn all of their hip-hop information by watching 106 & Park.

The message being sent out to the masses probably won't improve much this year.

Iced out grills, diamonds

on everything that can be worn and chrome on everything that can be driven ... hip-hop's guiltiest pleasures will likely continue to dilute our art form this year. At least we've got new music from Musiq and Jill Scott coming out sometime in 2007, and like always they will help us black folks escape from the redundancy of 'nigga music'.

Black & White Relations
Janet Jackson accidentally exposes a nipple a few years back and she's still paying for it.

But Britney Spears can expose her God-forsaken little hot box at will and it's supposed to be "cute?" You can call me petty, but to me that just reinforces the double standard placed over our heads in this society. And this whole notion of so-called "white-guilt," that's one of the most ridiculous and laughable concepts I've ever heard of.

I've never understood how that works exactly.

If a white person hears me talking about what has been done to my people in this country then they feel as though I'm blaming them? Is that how it goes?

Like I'm supposed to stop myself from discussing how their system of prejudice and institutionalized racism has affected my life just so they can continue to feel good about themselves. Like I'm supposed to bite my tongue just to keep it from raining on their parade? I don't get it, but I do think that this year we will see more and more claims of so-called "white-guilt."

I was actually around a Caucasian person a few weeks ago who, in casual conversation, used the word nigga like it was nothing.

That happened on Myspace recently, this girl from Monroe holla'd at me using the term and I told her it's not for her to use and she said some black folks up there allow her

to say so she calls herself and everyone she knows "nigga."
2007 is just getting started and I've already become fed up with this.

What's really real is that good people are good people, regardless of skin color and etc.

This year, if we all just try to be considerate of each other then we should be okay.

The last thing we need in our city is more racially-motivated angst.

But damn... I kinda feel like "don't start none won't be none" - nahmeen ?



Barack Obama

Black Leadership

A few years ago I was asked to speak to a group of inner-city sixth graders and after I stepped down from the podium a teacher asked me "What do you think our people need in our next black leader?" and I replied with another question

"Who says we need another black leader?"

Barack Obama is already creating such a buzz that people are calling Cory Booker the next Barack Obama. Kinda ridiculous when we haven't seen what all Obama is capable of yet

Black leadership as a whole is more important to me than just having one or two faces in high places that we all look at say "aww, how nice - one of our own in such a high place." I'd rather instill values in our people that make us all want to excel to greatness ourselves instead of just expecting someone else to do

(Continued on Page 18)

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Dear Editor

I don't know how to contact Chief Bell, so I'll let you know how disappointed I am to hear the Chief is resigning. He will be greatly missed by the city. He is a genuinely nice person. I am handicapped and could not find a place to park when I was downtown one day. He assisted me in finding a spot and conducted traffic for a minute so we could park. Not many people would do that.

Sincerely,
Caroline Campbell

Black History Month

(Continued from Page 17)

it so we can marvel at it. Why glorify one or two shining stars when we would all be better off if we just embraced the ideals of being a leader in everyday life.

Our culture and our people are amazingly blessed to make it through all we've been

through and still be fortunate enough to have the W.E.B. Dubois and Harriet Tubman stories from our past.

But I'm much more intrigued by the greatness that awaits us tomorrow, if we could just focus.

That's my word, ya'll.

Think about what you want, and focus.

glasscitytruth@yahoo.com (From last week - Jerry Hobbs would like to add that anyone who would like to become a featured guest of On The Edge ... please call 419.255.0206)

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The Lucas Metropolitan Housing Authority is seeking bids from qualified contractors/builders for construction of one (1) single-family home at 3530 Willow Run Drive:

JOB NO.	Job #37002
PROJECT	Construction of Single-Family Home
WALK-THRU DATE	Contractors choice
BID OPENING DATE	February 27, 2007 @ 11:00am

Sealed bids will be received in accordance with law until **February 27, 2007 @ 11:00am** in the office of the Lucas Metropolitan Housing Authority, 201 Belmont Avenue, Toledo, Ohio 43604, at which time and place all bids will be publicly opened and read aloud in the 2nd floor conference room.

NOTE: There will be no scheduled walk-thru for this project. Contractors wishing to see the site may do so at their convenience. Any questions should be submitted in writing, no later than one week before the specified bid opening, to Matt Sutter at the address shown on the cover of the bid package.

Contract Documents and Technical Specifications are available in the office of the LMHA Modernization Department, 201 Belmont Avenue, Toledo, Ohio 43604, (419) 259-9462, and will be provided upon request. A fee of **\$20.00** will be charged for each set of plans provided. This fee will be non-refundable.

The Davis Bacon prevailing wage law does not apply to this project.
Bid bonds are waived for this project. Performance bond will be required.

Lucas Metropolitan Housing Authority reserves the right to reject any or all bids, or to waive any informality in the bidding. No bids shall be withdrawn for a period of sixty (60) days subsequent to the opening of the bids.

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

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DIRECTOR - AMERICORPS HOUSING PROGRAM

Make a Change for the Better

Legal Aid of Western Ohio (LAWO), a non-profit law firm that provides free legal assistance to low-income persons, seeks a dynamic attorney committed to providing legal services to the poor to serve as Director of its Homelessness Prevention and Housing Opportunity Program. LAWO's 10 member AmeriCorps Program provides newer attorneys an opportunity to use their legal skills to serve low-income individuals and groups by working to prevent homelessness and expanding the supply of safe, affordable housing. The Director works in conjunction with other staff to oversee and implement the Program's legal work. The position will be located in either Toledo or Dayton. Membership in Ohio Bar or ability to be admitted by motion or temporary certification required. Experience in legal services, working with community groups, and housing preferred. Excellent legal and communication skills; strong organizational and interpersonal relationship skills; computer proficiency; and commitment to legal services to the poor required. Salary depends on experience. Excellent fringe benefits. Send resume ASAP, electronically preferred in Microsoft Word format, to:

E-mail: jobs@lawolaw.org
Subject: AmeriCorps Director Position or AmeriCorps Director Position c/o Recruitment Coordinator LAWO
520 Madison Ave. Ste. 640
Toledo, OH 43604



Those applicants requiring accommodation to the interview/application process should contact the Office Manager at the address listed above. Equal Opportunity Employer.

Second Annual Black Bridal Expo



Photos courtesy of Sheila Mosby

Are you listening?

Heart disease kills more people than the next six leading causes of death combined.¹ But you should know your body often tells you when there's a problem with your heart.

The question is: Are you listening?

The experts at St. Vincent Mercy Medical Center, the region's most preferred hospital for heart care², urge you to call 1-877-MERCY-4-CARDIAC or visit mercyweb.org and request your *free* Healthy Heart Kit.

Find out what your heart is telling you.

¹American Heart Association ²AZG Research, 2006



Care you can believe in.®

Free Healthy Heart Kit
mercyweb.org or call
1-877-MERCY-4-CARDIAC 1-877-637-2942



TAKE ME TO ST. V'S

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