



Local and National News

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The Truth

Sojourner's

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Drummer Jason Marsalis of the Ellis Marsalis Quartet

*“Walk my way, and a thousand violins begin to play
Or it might be the sound of your hello, that music I hear,
I get misty the moment you’re near” — Johnny Burke
1955*

This Strikes Us ...

A Sojourner's Truth Editorial

Let's toss this one out there. Is there a downside for African-Americans to a Barack Obama victory in the November general election? Is there a possibility that social progress may be slowed or delayed if Obama moves into the White House?

Or is it simply possible that progress will not be slowed but the mechanisms we have employed in the past to ensure progress may be held up to closer scrutiny?

In a recent conversation on race held here in Toledo, one of the panelists suggested that an Obama victory might mean that affirmative action for African-Americans "might be de-emphasized with the idea that ... OK, we reached a point, the world's not perfect, but possibly some of the strategies and remedies of the past are not needed as much any more."

The panel did not really have an opportunity to get into a discussion of this point because the speaker took his comments in another direction and that sidebar captured everyone's attention.

Nevertheless, the question remains, will an Obama victory lead many Americans to believe that "see, anything is possible for anybody as long as he or she is determined to succeed?" If that is the case, the pressure to eliminate programs that assist the disadvantaged may well increase to the tipping point - due to the success of a single individual.

There are few issues in America today that are as contentious as affirmative action. In the recent Supreme Court cases (*Grutter v. Bollinger* and *Gratz v. Bollinger*, 2003) involving preferential treatment at the University of Michigan undergraduate and law schools, the Court split the baby and preserved some elements of the program and struck down others.

One of the critical points of then-Justice Sandra Day O'Connor's line of questioning during oral arguments to the UM legal team was - how long will we need any sort of preferential treatment for underrepresented minorities in situations such as college enrollment?

In her decision, O'Connor took the decidedly arbitrary stance that this ruling in favor of continuing at least some form of affirmative action should be good for 25 years. Why 25 years?

At that point, O'Connor had no idea that a black man would be in a position, just five years later, to capture the presidency. At that point, Barack Obama was on no one's horizon as a transformative political figure. We have no doubt that were she writing that decision today, she would have been much less generous with her timetable - 10 years, five years?

The reality is that an Obama victory, in and of itself, will mean absolutely nothing to the social standing, the educational attainment, the housing prospects or the pocketbooks of the various members of minority groups in this country.

The other reality is that his victory will mean everything, at least psychologically, to the downtrodden, not only in this nation but also around the world. And that counts for a great deal.

But there is no way we can envision that an Obama victory will reaffirm the need for continued preferential treatment for underrepresented minorities. Many of those in both the minority and majority populations will see a need to move past the policies of the 1960's that have brought programs such as affirmative action into so many aspects of our lives, regardless of the perceptions about the success of these initiatives.

The Pew Research Center stated recently that 57 percent of blacks believe the nation should make "every effort to improve the position of blacks and minorities, even if it means giving preferential treatment," according to a poll conducted last year. That's barely a majority. But only 27 percent of whites feel the same way and 48 percent of whites feel the country has gone too far in pushing equal rights. Twenty-seven percent of black Americans feel we have gone too far.

These numbers are hardly etched in stone.

Here are some interesting numbers. A CNN poll in December 2006 revealed that 65 percent of whites and 54 percent of blacks felt the country was ready for a black president. Answering the same question in a CNN poll conducted in January of 2008, 72 percent of whites and 61 percent of blacks felt the country was ready for a black president. Both of these questions were posed well before anyone had an inkling that Obama would, in fact, be the Democratic Party's presumptive nominee and hold, at least for now, a five to six point lead over his Republican counterpart in the polls.

It's the feeling here that an Obama victory will substantially erode support for affirmative action among all groups.

The Sojourner's Truth

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Community Calendar

June 16-19

City-Wide Dance Team Tryouts: Youths in grades 6 to 12; Mon at Reynolds Corner Library; 4 to 5:30 pm; Tues at Kent Branch from 5:30 to 7:30 pm; Wed at Sanger Branch from 4 to 5:30 pm; Thurs at Mott Branch from 4 to 5:30 pm; 419-509-1118 or 419-266-5308

June 16-20

Sixth Annual Carnel Smith Summer Youth Football Camp: Boys in grades 3 thru 8; Scott HS; 11 am to 2:45 pm daily; 419-917-3547

June 19

Spirit of Faith Adoptions: Informational meeting; 7 pm; 3315 Centennial Rd. Ste A-2; 419-843-5355

June 20

Rally on Community Health: Rally and health fair raising tobacco-related health issues; Ottawa Park the Pavilion off Kenwood; Hosted by UMADAOP; 4 to 7 pm; 419-255-4444

June 21

4th Annual Juneteenth Celebration: Toledo Museum of Art: 11:30 am to 7 pm; Free family festival; Hands-on "creation statements;" Music, dance, art and film; Food from local vendors; Presentations and demonstrations; Exhibitions featuring local artists: 419-254-5771 ext 7390

Women of Virtue Ministries' Prophetic Prayer Summit: "Stirring Up the Gift of God;" Noon Prophetic Prayer; Worship Service at 1:30 pm with guest Bishop George Bostic of Asah Praise and Worship Center; Genesis Dreamplex: 419-531-1862

Warren AME Church: Recognition of High School graduates; 6 pm; Gesu Hall: 419-535-1090

Art Exhibit and Luncheon: United Children and Babies Fashion Extravaganza; United Baptist Church Fellowship Hall; 11 am

BBQ Dinners and Sandwiches: St. Mark Baptist; 11 am to 3 pm; 419-535-5960

June 22

15th Pastoral Anniversary at Mt. Nebo MBC for Rev. Cedric Brock and First Lady Debra Brock: 4 pm; "Worthy Laborer for 21st Century Ministry;" Guest Pastor Tellis Chapman of Galilee of Detroit

Sistas With a Vision: Women's sexual reproductive health seminar; 6 pm; 419-936-8989

June 23

27th Pastoral Anniversary of Rev. Bobby L. and First Lady Vickey Wellborn: Charity MBC; 4 pm fellowship; "Setting the Church in Order;" Guests are Rev. Theodis Horton and Shiloh: 419-726-4975

June 23-27

Vacation Bible School; 3rd Baptist Church: "Chosen Champions for Jesus; 5:30 to 8:30 pm; Free food, crafts and t-shirts: 419-248-4623

Vacation Bible School: Union Grove MBC; 6 to 8 pm (Fri-5:30 to 8 pm); "God's Big Backyard; where kids have a blast serving Jesus!" Ages 4 to adult: 419-531-1994

June 24-27

"Power Conference 2008;" Evening Services at Upton United Methodist; Daytime sessions at Clarion Westgate: 215-748-6510/6111

June 25-29

6th Pastoral Anniversary for Elder Nolan White and First Lady Sharon White of Christian Community Church; 7 pm nightly, Sunday at 10 am: 419-536-8357

June 28

Girls' Retreat: Warren AME; Ages 10-19; 10 am to 4 pm; Yoga, skin care, career planning: 419-472-8668 or 419-243-2237

A Luncheon with Dr. Sam Christian: Presented by Zeta Alpha Omega Foundation; 11:30 am to 2:30 pm; The Holland Gardens, 6530 Angola Rd: 419-340-9630 or 419-531-2321

Citywide Christian Trustee Association Meeting: James B. Simmons Bldg; 10 am: 419-380-9477

The Sojourner's Truth

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Presidential Politics: Obama Settles in as the Presumptive Nominee

By Fletcher Word
Sojourner's Truth Editor

Senator Barack Obama entered a period of relative calm this past week as the presumptive Democratic Party nominee for president.

The Clinton issue seems to have been put behind him, as have the preacher eruptions... finally. The most recent bit of drama involved the departure of vice presidential search committee chairman, Jim Johnson, a prototypical Washington insider, and the failure of the Obama campaign to vet the vetter.

But the Obama forces

moved swiftly to dump Johnson, having learned that lesson from the mistakes of the recent past with Rev. Jeremiah Wright, and the fallout seems to have been contained.

It's a lesson that both the Obama and the Senator John McCain campaigns have had to learn in a hurry—this is not your father's run for office. Mistakes hit the Internet and the cable news shows in a hurry and the legion of pundits salivating over this contest have little else to do but wait for someone somewhere

to make a mistake and experience a slip of the tongue.

Obama seems to have had no such slip this past week. He did, on the contrary, have two big moments that would seem to cause no damage. First, he had his Sister Souljah moment. Second, he garnered another big endorsement.

Back in 1992, candidate Bill Clinton decided to go after fledgling hip-hop star Sister Souljah for comments she made in the wake of the Los Angeles/Rodney King riots when she famously said "if black people kill black people every day, why not have a week and kill white people."

Bill Clinton harshly criticized her at a public forum and criticized Jesse Jackson as well for allowing her to be on his Rainbow Coalition. The attendant brouhaha seemed to do candidate Clinton a lot more good than harm.

Obama had his Sister Souljah moment on Sunday when he called absentee black fathers to task. Black fathers, said the senator at a

church on the South Side of Chicago, "are missing from too many lives and too many homes."

In truth, this was not a new message for Obama. He has made such comments on several other occasions.

Then, on Monday, Obama ended up in the Joe Louis Arena for a rally in front of 20,000 cheering fans. His guest for the evening was former Vice President Al Gore who endorsed the Illinois senator for president.

Gore was, of course, the Democratic Party nominee for president in 2000 when he lost in one of the most hotly contested elections this country has known. He led, in fact, in the popular vote but lost the electoral college decision when the U.S. Supreme Court stepped in to overrule the Florida Supreme Court's decision to hold a series of recounts.

Gore has risen in stature over the years with his dedication to the cause of bringing to light and correcting a global warming crisis. An award-winning documentary and a Nobel Peace Prize (shared with the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change) have added to that enhanced stature.

"Why didn't they choose change when they had a

chance?" said Gore on Monday evening of what future generations might be asking themselves if the issue of global warming is not addressed.

Gore's endorsement, and commitment to doing all he can to assist the candidacy of Obama, is the latest in a series of high profile commitments—not the least of which was that of Hillary Clinton on the weekend after the last of the primaries.

Gore's endorsement also raised the issue of whether he will be considered by the Obama camp for the vice presidency although the question of whether or not Gore would accept such an offer is highly speculative. The popular former vice president seems to have his own agenda these days.

So, all in all, a good week for the Democrat.

The Republican nominee was conspicuously quiet over the past several days. McCain has been attending fundraisers, trying to keep his distance from President George Bush and has unveiled a new round of ads emphasizing his Vietnam P.O.W. days.

It's hard to believe we only have about four and a half months to go in this election cycle. The first 18 have been all too brief.

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Special to The Truth

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Whatever the circumstances are or the situation is, sometimes people forget about the children when there's a break up. You as two "ADULTS" can handle the situation like responsible, mature individuals or you can argue, fuss and fight about things that you think and feel are important, but has nothing to do with raising the child or children!

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University Anti-Tobacco Social Marketing Campaign

Special to The Truth

Tobacco use is the number one preventable cause of morbidity and mortality in the United States and in Ohio. The annual death toll from tobacco is approximately 440,000 in the US and 19,000 in Ohio. Smoking among college students is on the rise. The tobacco in-

dents who smoke began while in college and one third of students increase their daily tobacco intake while in college. Many consider themselves as "casual" or "social" smokers and traditionally couple their tobacco use with other social behaviors. Tobacco use in

participate in the project's investigative research, conducted and designed to:

- ? Determine the identity associated with tobacco use
- ? Measure the prevalence of smoking
- ? Identify situations where tobacco is used
- ? Types of tobacco used
- ? Motivational factors
- ? Perceived rates of smoking
- ? Social norms in the university setting

Upon completion of the investigative research, the Is It Worth It Brand was designed to influence the behaviors of 18-24 year old students of the University of Toledo who do not currently use tobacco and may consider initiating the use of tobacco and those who currently use tobacco and may consider increasing their usage of tobacco.

The brand includes a reference to tobacco in the tag line that is subtle, effective

The annual death toll from tobacco is approximately 440,000 in the US and 19,000 in Ohio.

dustry is aggressively pursuing college students (18-24), the youngest legal target market, with such actions as free product giveaways, event sponsorships and promotional activities on campus events. Non-smoking college students who are exposed to such tobacco industry events and promotions are more likely to initiate tobacco use than their non-smoking college student counterparts who are not exposed to the industry marketing events.

Nearly a quarter of stu-

dents who smoke began while in college and one third of students increase their daily tobacco intake while in college. Many consider themselves as "casual" or "social" smokers and traditionally couple their tobacco use with other social behaviors. Tobacco use in

social settings in commonly viewed as a norm on college campuses. It is for these reasons that the Ohio Department of Health's Tobacco Risk Reduction Program is executing a major research, strategic plan and anti-tobacco social marketing campaign at the University of Toledo intended to enforce the standard social experience of socializing among college students without the use of tobacco.

Ashford Calls Mayor to Task for Too Much Green, Green Grass of Summer

Sojourner's Truth Staff

Toledo City Councilman Michael Ashford sees neither splendour in the grass nor glory in the flower as he surveys the uncut lawns in District 4 – that part of the central city he represents on council.

And the councilman knows exactly whom to blame for the overgrowth on Rosewood Avenue.

"Unfortunately, we have a mayor who neglects certain neighborhoods," said Ashford last week as he held a news conference at a vacant lot on Rosewood Street in front of, and in the midst of, an unruly growth of grass and weeds that, in spots, topped the councilman's 6' 4" frame.

"I have called Carty Finkbeiner and personally spoken to him to get the grass cut," said Ashford. "This has to stop. He has his own priorities and keeping neighborhoods clean is not one of them. You can go down any block in District 4 and see a lot that looks like this."

Ashford, when asked, made it clear that he felt that other parts of Toledo, such as south Toledo, were



given preferential treatment when it comes to city services. "If you can spend \$1 million on your own neighborhood streets, that's unfair," said the councilman.

He did, however, express optimism that the tall weeds would not last forever. "In a year and a half, this will be fixed because we will have a new mayor and it won't be Carty."

"It is my understanding Mr. Ashford was standing on private property," said the mayor in a press release issued shortly after the news conference. "It is not the City of Toledo's responsibility to cut tall grass belonging to a private property owner."

Ashford disagreed with

the mayor.

"There is a program in place to deal with vacant lots," said Ashford.

There is indeed, The Truth was informed by the Department of Neighborhoods. Inspectors are sent out to such reported problem spots and write deficiency reports as necessary. If the owner does not respond, an inspector is sent out again for a follow up. After two such write ups, the city can then take care of the maintenance problem and bill the owner for the expense.

An inspector, The Truth was told on Monday, is on the way to the Rosewood Avenue property.



and inclusive of all forms of tobacco. Most notably, the brand includes the image of a shattered mirror designed to encourage self reflection with the understanding of how their personal decision to use tobacco will affect the various aspects of their lives. In addition, the brand

also includes reference to the many values and opportunities that are at risk by using tobacco including image, career, health and money that various members of the target audience may not consider when making decisions to use tobacco. To promote the brand, Is

It Worth It will sponsor a number of events, offered a variety of promotional items and most importantly, had a lot of fun without the use of tobacco! For more information about the campaign and a schedule of events, visit www.isitworthittobacco.com.

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Lucas County
Children's Services

Summer Bridge to Success Program Starts for Woodward Graduates

Sojourner's Truth Staff

Thirty-nine recent graduates of Woodward High School began their college careers at Owens Community College this past Monday as they started Summer Bridge to Success, a seven-week comprehensive program that will introduce the students to academic preparation, exposure to campus life, mentoring, coaching and embracing the expectations of college-level success.

The Summer Bridge program is an offshoot of the Success Program that was announced earlier this year

in which Owens offered to "bridge the gap" between the grant aid a student at Woodward receives and the cost of an Owens education.

For these 39 students, the Success Program offers the opportunity to attend college for two years for only the cost of books.

"Today your success starts here," said Stan Paige, a member of the Summer Bridge team welcoming the students and their parents to Owens. "This is the first day of adulthood," he cautioned them.

"We want to help students make a smooth transition from high school to college," said Tamara Williams, Owens dean of Academic Services.

Each student will be provided with a mentor from the faculty or staff, as well as a student success mentor. They will be provided with free academic textbooks, public transportation from Woodward High School to the Owens campus and an iPod that will be used for interactive, experiential learning activities.

Javar Thomas and Jenell Jones were among the recent Woodward graduates who decided to avail themselves of the opportunity to attend college for two years at relatively no cost.

"I would have gone to Bowling Green [State University] said Thomas. "This is a great opportunity.

Jones had her sights set on Cleveland State. "I hope to get basic classes out of the way and get a head start on my major - communications," said Jones. "My parents think it's great because they don't have to worry about finances."

Each student will earn six college credits from their efforts this summer in basic college preparation and in math.



Javar Thomas and Jenell Jones

Lucas County Adopts New Nondiscrimination Policy

*By James Fowler
Sojourner's Truth Reporter*

It's a familiar scene that's often taken for granted.

A couple walks out of a movie theater and immediately starts discussing the film they've just seen. As they make their way through the lobby, one of them runs into a co-worker and his wife. The couples exchange pleasantries and engage in some small talk before saying goodbye and going their separate ways.

For most people this is hardly a panic-inducing scenario. But for those who are gay or bisexual it can be. Looks of disapproval, averted eyes, and the fear that someone might learn your secret and use it against you are common anxieties among some who are LGBT (lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender).

For them, progress on this front, one of the more recent battles in the fight for equal rights, has been slow. Ohio does not have a state law banning discrimination based on sexual orientation and neither did Lucas County ... until now. Last month, the Lucas County Commissioners passed an employment policy that forbids discrimination based

do. While this distinction sets Lucas County apart from others, the commissioners were not the ones who initiated it. In fact, it was a little-known organization that helped set things in motion.

Over the last several years, Equality Toledo, a local organization dedicated to ending discrimination for people regardless of their sexual orientation or identity, had approached the Lucas County government about updating its discrimination laws.

"We'd been talking about this for a while," said Kim Welter, the former executive director of Equality Toledo who now works for Equality Ohio in Columbus. However, "We'd never really gotten around to it."

The talks were mostly on a recurring basis until Franklin County passed its own sexual orientation/gender identity ban. Equality Ohio then provided Lucas County officials with samples of the Franklin County law. With an actual model to base a plan on, the commissioners instructed the human resources department to look into the issue further.

They did. And what they found was surprising.

Lucas County. "But now was the time to publicly have something."

Konop felt the policy would help Toledo with something it needs: economic growth.

"There's a connection between diversity and acceptance for all people and economic growth," he said. "The more diverse a community is the more economic opportunities will be present."

Is he right? In 2006, the Brookings Institution in Washington, D.C. issued a report examining the state of U.S. cities. In it the research noted that young "workers tended to migrate towards larger, more diverse metropolitan areas, perhaps reflecting a higher degree of tolerance and appreciation for diversity."

However, the study also found that job growth and high wages were factors in attracting new workers. Both are areas Toledo's had trouble with recently, thanks partly to a shaky U.S. economy.

Still, there are some things even a robust economy can't fix.

"It (the policy) doesn't do anything for a person's lived experience," said Welter. "If someone goes into a restaurant in Sylvania, he can be thrown out because he's gay. That's still a problem."

The Ohio legislature is considering a bill that would ban discrimination based on sexual orientation for all housing, employment and public accommodation. The bill has bipartisan support, but it's unclear when, or if, it will become law. So for now Lucas County remains one of the few counties to take a stand on the issue. And that's something Konop sees as a positive step.

"I think what's important about the measure is that it makes our community more of a beacon of progressive thought, progressive policy," he said. "Toledo can be a community that promotes diversity and that will lead to economic growth and opportunities for all Lucas County citizens."

"We wanted to make sure we're evaluating our employees and promoting them based on the work they're doing and not on other factors"

on sexual orientation or gender identity.

The law, which applies only to county employees, was something the commissioners unanimously supported.

"We wanted to make sure we're evaluating our employees and promoting them based on the work they're doing and not on other factors" said Commissioner Ben Konop.

The new policy is similar to ones in Cuyahoga, Franklin and Summit counties. However, the laws in Cuyahoga and Summit counties do not protect the rights of transgender employees whereas the Lucas and Franklin ones

"I was told we didn't have any equal opportunity employment policy in place and that we hadn't really taken a look at this since the early 1980s," said Konop.

Lucas County's discrimination laws were based on Ohio's nondiscrimination policy, which is, essentially, Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 reworded. Signed by President Lyndon Johnson on July 2, 1964, the act prohibits most harassment and discrimination in the workplace.

"It wasn't like we said, 'Oh, wow! We've haven't been doing this right!' We'd been doing it right," said Brian Cunningham, director of human resources for

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TOLEDO-LUCAS COUNTY HEAD START

Action PARTNERSHIP

Greater Toledo Urban League Announces New Leadership Team

Special to The Truth

The Greater Toledo Urban League, which recently brought a new president and CEO on board, John C. Jones, has added a few

Jamilah Jones, a Toledo native with a master's in higher education from The University of Toledo, coordinates graduate recruit-

goals is to double that number.

The GTUL helps to raise funds for the League and focuses on the professional development of young professionals in the Toledo area.

According to Jamilah, there are a number of upcoming items on the GTULYP's agenda:

*The GTULYP will host the Ohio Young Black Professional Conference that will be held in Toledo October 24-25. The conference will address health issues and disparities;

*The GTULYP will partner with the Lucas County Board of Elections, along with other community organizations, to address the problematic issue of provisional voting;

*The GTULYP will be joining other young professional organizations across the city to network. The next joint networking event will be Thursday, June 26 at Fusions on St. Clair in downtown Toledo

Cheryl Slack, who had been secretary of the GTUL Guild and is a member of the State Farm Insurance Co. family, has assumed the du-

ties of the presidency.

The Guild is a fundraising arm of the GTUL and has organized events such as Christmas parties and golf outings to provide funding for specific programs.

"We want to raise more money and do more in the community," says Slack. "We want to team up with other organizations, such as sororities, to help women in the community." Slack expects her group to target homeless shelters in increasing its service projects.

And, speaking of golf, the Third Annual Golf Classic will be held this year on August 15 at Bedford Hills Golf Course.

According to John Jones, the focus of the GTUL, along with the two support groups, will be on the following areas:

*Opportunity to thrive ... for children that begins with quality education;



Jamilah Jones

*Opportunity to earn... for people seeking a living wage and needing job training;

*Opportunity to own ... for those seeking to become first-time home own-

ers and those needing assistance during this foreclosure crisis;

*Opportunity to prosper ... for those seeking to become entrepreneurs and enhance their quality of life.



John C. Jones

other new members to its leadership team.

Jamilah Jones will be taking on the role of president of the Greater Toledo Urban League Young Professional. That was the position that John Jones had prior to his move to CEO of the GTUL.

ment at UT for 140 programs, a job she has been doing for over five years. Prior to that, she was with the UT Office of EXCELlence.

The YP arm of the GTUL has an active membership of about 50 young professionals. One of Jamilah's

YOU GOT THIS DAD - - HERE'S TO YOU! YOU ARE #1!

To Hubby:

- *For the tons of trash you have taken out smiling ear-to-ear
- *For the many lawns that you have mowed for hours on end
- * For being a friend and listening to me talk while looking at me and not paying attention to the game on ESPN
- *For forgoing playing golf to spend time with me on our special date
- *For saying you love me and I still look great after I ask you for the 10th time if my butt looks big!

To Daddy: For the countless balls you've thrown and caught, even though your back hurt

- *For staying awake and presenting us flowers after our recitals
- *For coming to our rescue when Mom was, well... you know, a little hormonal (wink, wink!)
- *For encouraging us to do our best, even when you knew we hadn't a clue
- *For teaching us how to drive with every new gray hair you grew
- *For helping to foot the bill...ok BILLS when we blew our budget
- *For loving us even when we totaled the car at 16 and hiked up our insurance premium
- *For loving us with kind discipline and staying the course!
- *For protecting us and loving us unconditionally For providing us guidance according to God's Plan
- *For setting the example of a Godly Man and building a POSITIVE LEGACY! And for so much more we say... THANK YOU!!! WE LOVE YOU - Happy Father's day!!

Diana (Toledo, Ohio) and Tonja Ward (Houston, Texas) co-own and operate a company called FITATUDES, a Christian based wellness organization that enhances and empowers women and sports families' lives with the FITATUDES concepts.

For information about FITATUDES or to receive our free newsletter, log onto www.fitatudes.com, or feel free to send an email to diana@fitatudes.com or call 419.450.3362 to inquire about the FITATUDES JUMP START PROGRAM!

Pastor and First Lady Brock Celebrate 15 Years at Mt. Nebo

Sojourner's Truth Staff

Pastor Cedric Brock and First Lady Debra Brock are in the midst of celebrating their 15th Anniversary at Mt. Nebo Missionary Baptist Church. The chosen theme



for the commemoration is "Worthy Laborer for 21st Century Ministry."

The first part of the anniversary celebration took place on June 8 with a visit from Bishop James A Jennings, Jr., pastor of Shield of Faith International Ministries of Detroit. Rick Morris served as the master of ceremonies.

The second part of the

celebration will take place on Sunday, June 22 at 4 p.m. The guests will be Pastor Tellis Chapman and Galilee Baptist Church of Detroit. Both Pastor and First Lady

Brock will close with remarks.

"Mt. Nebo, Thank You! And we want you to know that we love you. We want you to know that without you, we could not have made it these past 15 years. Your prayers and many expressions of love for us down through the years, is appreciated so very much. God bless you and your family in Jesus."

Department of Aging To Present Elder Caregiving Award to Delores Latson, Sally Helm, Bobbi Simms, Candace Coates and Earma Algee

Toledo Residents Honored in Columbus at Annual Award Ceremony

Barbara E. Riley, director of the Ohio Department of Aging, and members of the Ohio General Assembly honored **Delores Latson, Sally Helm, Bobbi Simms, Candace Coates, Earma Algee of Toledo** and 10 other caregivers for their dedication and compassion at the 15th annual **Elder Caregiving Awards** ceremony at the Capitol Theatre in Columbus on Thursday, May 22.

"Family members and informal caregivers truly are the backbone of our long-term care system, providing 80 percent of all home care, nationally. In Ohio, informal caregivers voluntarily provide care each year that would cost in excess of \$12.1 billion," said Riley. "The Latson sisters work together to take care of their mother, ensuring she remains safely and comfortably in her own home."

The daughters of Leola Latson have been caring for their mother, who is al-



Latson Sisters Elder Caregiver Award Recipients

most 98, for more than 16 years. Delores Latson, Sally Helm and Bobbi Simms go to their mother's home every day to prepare her lunch and dinner. They set up her medication, run errands, and take her to doctor's appointments. Candace Coates and Earma Algee stay with Leola at night, help her get dressed and

serve her breakfast.

The Elder Caregiving Award symbolically honors the thousands of Ohio caregivers who lovingly take care of family and friends day after day. Although the award is given to only a few caregivers, it heightens public awareness of the contributions of all caregivers.

Brief biographies and photos of the 2008 Elder Caregivers of the Year are on the Department of Aging's Web site at www.goldenbuckeye.com/caregiver/.

Twelve outstanding individuals also will be inducted into the Ohio Senior Citizens Hall of Fame at the event.



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Toledo Museum of Art Celebrates Fourth Annual Juneteenth Festival

Special to The Truth

On Saturday, June 21, the Toledo Museum of Art and its Committee for Cultural Diversity present the fourth annual Juneteenth Celebration. This free festival features music, dance, film, art demonstrations, food and hands-on art activities. A highlight of this year's event is a talk and book signing by author and actress, Victoria Rowell. Rowell will speak about how the arts influenced her childhood in the foster care system. Following her presentation, she will sign copies of her book, *The Women Who Raised Me*. A limited number of free book signing tickets will be available after June 3 by calling 419-254-5771, ext. 7494.



TMA's Juneteenth Celebration recently received an Institutional Excellence Award from the Ohio Museums Association – the association's highest honor. In 2006, Juneteenth was named winner of a Northwest Ohio Black Media Association Impact Newsmaker Award for making a positive, newsworthy difference in the local African-American community

What Is Juneteenth?

President Abraham Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation went into effect on January 1, 1863, freeing all enslaved people in the Confederate States. However, it was two years later, on June 19, 1865, when more than 250,000 enslaved African-Americans in Texas heard the news that they could call themselves free. The celebrations that followed the reading of the Proclamation in Texas began a tradition that has lasted more than 130 years and is celebrated today in cities across America.

Art Tatum Heritage Jazz Festival 2008

Promenade Park

By Michael Hayes
Minister of Culture

I am starting to wonder what happens when you read this article.

I wish there was a way for me to know if this little exchange is having an affect on anyone.

One thing I've tried to accomplish as a writer for this publication is awareness.

I want Toledo to know Toledo.

Ask anyone who knows and they will tell you that I have used my platform in the art/music scene in this city to do the same thing for many years but then gave up ... kinda.

But, here, where you have time to read these thoughts of mine, I still want Toledo to

know Toledo.

Trying to make a post- under grad living here in this city and trying to live as an artist here in this city has certainly affected my awareness.

Yeah, I see a point in someone such as myself leaving ASAP.

Yeah, I see all the limitations.

However, there must be balance.

So for all of the things you have all shown me about Toledo... if I have realized or conceded any point, I still push for awareness.

I STILL push Toledo to accept that it's not as bad off as it wants to think it is.



Every year in June I tell people "I'm going to the Jazz Fest."

Every year I get the whole "where? In Cincinnati?"

Every year I reply "No, that's not jazz - jazz... I mean a JAZZ festival. right here in Toledo, downtown on the water."

Every year I see jaws drop and eyes widen in disbelief.

As if I just told someone something that just changed their whole way of thinking.

And if that's the case, okay.

But it's kinda sad, fam. Your city has culture. Your city has class.

True, your city has issues.

But if we don't patronize and support the few things we do have going on, one day when everyone complains of how little there is to do around here...one day that sentiment will be hauntingly correct.

But that day isn't here yet. Right now, right here -

Toledo has plenty to do.

The Art Tatum Jazz Festival has many sponsors, but it has mainly come to exist through a partnership forged by former Mayor Jack Ford and The Chrysler Foundation.

So every year right on the banks of the Maumee River, you can find days worth of live jazz, R&B and blues all being played while an out-

door showroom displays a few of the Chrysler, Dodge and Jeep brands newest models. Last year, I watched most of the show from the seat of a \$50,000 SUV. This year they had the brand new Viper on display and you could even get a free picture with it or whatever.

The outdoor stage is better than any indoor stage

(Continued on Page 11)



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Father and Son Open Exhibit at The Truth Gallery

Sojourner's Truth Staff

Photographer Grover Cummings and painter Wade Harrison, father and son, opened their exhibit at The Truth Gallery on Friday June 6 to the delight of an audience of art lovers.

The exhibit, which will run until the end of the month, features two dozen photographs from the 40-year professional career of Cummings and about a dozen and a half of Harrison's oil paintings.

Both artists were in attendance for an evening of hors d'oeuvres and soft jazz music at the gallery at 1811 Adams.

Visitors may view the exhibit on Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.



Art4Food: Fundraiser for the Hungry

Sojourner's Truth Staff

Art4Food, a non-profit organization, hosted an art show and auction on Saturday, June 7, in order to raise money to feed the hungry people in the Toledo-area community.

The event, organized by Pastors David and Toni Banks of Cornerstone Church, brought together artists and patrons at the Secor Building.

Vocalist Monica Culp provided entertainment with a selection of jazz standards and the silent auction provided funds that will be distributed to food banks in the area.



Cynthia Ford, Elizabeth Jordan and Jordan's art



Jack Ford and United Way's Bill Kitson



Pastor Michael Pitts and his art



Sheila Shaffer, Cynthia Ford, Teresa Moore



Pastor Toni Banks



Marcia Culp and her art



Monica Culp

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Victoria Rowell



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Juneteenth is presented with the assistance of the Museum's Committee for Cultural Diversity (CCD).

Emerging Artists Exhibit, ARTOLEDO, Returns to 20 North Gallery

Seven Emerging Artists Show Their Work At Downtown Gallery

Special to The Truth

20 North Gallery announces the return of their Emerging Artist Exhibition, **ARTOLEDO**, the commercial gallery debut of seven rising regional artists: Jessica Besterman, Charlotte Salazar Betts, Michelle Carlson, Marcus Nunn, Brenda Price, Robert Rice and Adam Russell. The show features a variety of media—paintings, photography, prints and artist books will be displayed.

ARTOLEDO gives 20 North Gallery the opportunity to promote the professional development of promising new talent in the Toledo art landscape. All seven of the artists selected for the show have been establishing their artistic identities in the community, but have not yet been exhibited in a major commercial gallery setting.

Gallery owner Eric Hillenbrand says, "We view

the **ARTOLEDO** exhibit as an opportunity for 20 North Gallery to nurture and retain Toledo's rising artistic talent and give young artists a chance to enter the commercial art world in their home community and, at the same time, give Toledo art buyers an op-

portunity to have a first viewing of what is Toledo's continuing, rich art legacy." The artists and 20 North Gallery will be welcoming friends and collectors at the Opening Reception on Saturday, June 21 from 6 – 9 p.m.



Owens Community College Assists School Children With 'Backpack to the Future' Summer Supply Drive

Special to The Truth

As another school year comes to an end, many students are once again placing their backpacks in storage or are discarding them entirely in anticipation of buying next fall's latest fashion trend. Owens Community College's Alumni Association has taken the initiative of once again organizing a gently-used backpack drive to provide new life for what many students consider their mobile lifeline to learning.

The College's Alumni Association community service endeavor, titled "Backpack to the Future," is currently accepting gently-used backpacks and new school supplies from area residents during the summer months. Items collected, as part of the "Backpack to the Future" program, will be given to low-income elementary school children throughout northwest Ohio.

Owens Community

College's Alumni Association is proud to once again coordinate a program benefiting such a worthy cause," said Kaye Koenig, Owens Community Service chairman of the Alumni Association.

"There are many low-income families that can barely afford to pay their bills, and may not be able to provide their children with new supplies. Our goal is to ensure that such occurrences do not happen and that all children begin their school year with new educational resources."

In addition to the gently-used backpacks and new backpacks, individuals can donate crayons, markers, bottles of glue, glue sticks, colored pencils, pencils, pink erasers, school boxes, pocket folders, marbled covered composition books and Kleenex tissues. Area residents can bring their charitable donations to the Office of Alumni Relations on the

Toledo-area Campus in Perrysburg Township and to the Enrollment Services Office on the Findlay-area Campus in Findlay.

Since establishing the program in 2004, the Owens Alumni Association has given over 850 backpacks and over 12,500 school supplies to benefit disadvantaged children throughout Northwest Ohio.

Since opening its doors in 1965, Owens has provided higher education to more than 250,000 students. Owens' Alumni Association is committed to the personal and professional success of alumni and students through the ongoing development of value-added initiatives.

For more information about the school supply drive, or to make a donation, contact the Owens Alumni Relations Office at (567) 661-7876, 1-800-GO-OWENS, Ext. 7876 or alumni@owens.edu.

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OWENS
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This Adopton Celebration is free and open to the public.

Jazzfest

(Continued from Page 8)

you'll find in this city. The food/beverages are somewhat pricey and you have to buy tickets.

This year there were fewer choices than usual but new vendors kept it interesting.

Plenty of volunteers to keep things clean and organized.

Most years, I'm one of the youngest people I see there, so I guess the word jazz attracts certain folks and perhaps repels others.

But at any rate, the crowd is usually diverse in other ways.

All in all, this is one of the finest events in this city.

It's now become a well-oiled machine.

Pulling off a multi-day event is a symphony in and of itself and they've mostly got it down to a science. The only thing about this year was there seemed to be extensively long lag time between artists on the last day, but that's not a major gripe.

Speaking of gripes, though.

It is only fair to mention that even though The Toledo Jazz Society goes to great lengths to bring in world-class, top-billed headlining acts as well as a good mix of musicians from academia, there are more than a few local and regional jazz artists who feel slighted. But if you're reading this and you don't fall in that category, you really have no excuse for why you didn't come down and check it out?

Growing up the son of a musician and being around music all my life, I have sensed that Toledo seems to gravitate towards blues a little easier than jazz.

I'm not much for the blues, but I've always loved jazz.

Not so much storytelling, much of jazz isn't even lyrical.

Jazz captures the imagination.

I'm nowhere near an aficionado.

Perhaps only qualified to hear a piece and struggle to sub-categorize it.

Folk jazz, acid jazz, jazz fusion, classic jazz, etc.

Roberta Flack and Al Jarreau to name a couple.

This year Ellis Marsalis (more proof that jazz keeps people young into their 70s), was the headlining act to close it down on Sunday, but even the elder statesman of jazz music's prominent First Family couldn't bring more pleasant weather conditions to the

Original joints like "Always Ready" as well as renditions of soul classics such as "Let's Stay Together" and "Signed Sealed Delivered" chased away the cloudy skies and forced the crowd to remember they were here to party!

I was convinced that the busy streets of downtown Toledo were humming with the sounds of Vincelli's amazing band and as the crowd grew steadily until the very end of the night it seemed people were being drawn in by the music.

At some points switching to the flute, at other points letting the organs bring out the soul, Joseph Vincelli's band hit all the right places and wouldn't let the audience's spirits be dampened even if the seats were.

We kept waiting on the drummer for Vincelli's band to really get open, but his time never came.

All in all, the weather presented many a hurdle that evening but after a few adjustments The Art Tatum Jazz Heritage Festival started off 2008 on a winning note.

Now, if anyone not normally a Jazz fan or regular at this annual event wanted to pick a day to come - SAT-



But I am certainly a fan of jazz music.

My guest who attended the festival with me this past weekend pointed out that non-musicians may not pick out which instrument is doing what

but instead just listen to the sounds and experience a myriad of tones as if you could hear color.

I feel you definitely have to be a certain person or at least in a certain mood to really appreciate jazz.

Nothing is the same, even if you hear the same song covered by 10 different combos... it could never be the same experience.

But that's easy for me to say because I love this art form.

I just want the rest of Toledo to come down and check it out next year, so you can at least see if its your cup of tea or not.

Usually ... the bigger, more well-known names have brought out our citizens by the thousands in past years.

area.

But still, it was a great time.

Expanded to three days and moved across the river from International Park to Promenade Park (International Park is a better site in my opinion),

The Art Tatum Jazz Heritage Festival got underway ...in the midst of a dark grey down pour on Friday.

The event was vastly under-attended, due in no small part to the inclement weather.

Jazz fans aren't scared by a little rain but not only were there gusts of wind and rain, the skies were looking downright ominous that day.

Weather advisories weren't enough to stop the crowd from swelling into the low hundreds by Carol Welsman's set.

The only female-led headlining act was purely sensational, featuring mostly classic jazz stylings. Her original song "Caffeine" and a few others that mixed jazz with Caribbean and world influences were so rousing that the crowd seemed to start forgetting about the weather altogether.

Joseph Vincelli, however, came onstage and truly kicked things into overdrive.



URDAY WAS SURELY THAT DAY!

No rain, perfect skies and just enough heat and sun to really put summer right in your face.

Ya boy moved up in the world so the expensive VIP tickets that eluded me for years now made me privileged enough to get the free food and relax in the partially-shaded seating area reserved for the big wigs.

One new element to the layout of the jazz fest was the inclusion of an additional VIP section right down in front of the stage.

The space usually reserved for what I call the liquid courage dance troupe - those who have been so moved by the music, and just the right amount of something to sip, to remove inhibition enough that they don't mind dancing right in front of the stage. Hey, being a jazz groupie is a proud honor!

The musicianship of Tony Monaco's band members' solos drew much applause from the audience. Oh yeah, Saturday was the event's biggest crowd as over 2,000 jazz lovers gathered together.

And, oh what a day, for attendance to be at its highest, because as Steve Oliver's conga-inspired jazz stylings came to a close... it was Peter White and Gerald Albright's co-headlining night cap that turned the second day of the festival into a bonafide world class event!

Jeff Golub, Jeff Lorber and a young Latina named Jessie J. sharing saxophone duties with the mighty Gerald Albright with Peter White doing some of the

little handheld fan (those L.E.D. lights really did make those little Chrysler fans fun!) but I was on the edge of my seat.

And everyone around me was either on the edge of theirs or completely out of it.

At one point Peter White exclaimed in his British accent: "pretty funky for an Englishman, eh?"

There was a long lag time before they came on, but I'm telling you once this group of musicians hit the stage no one cared.

The audience was treated to a little "Mr. Magic" by Grover Washington Jr. And a rendition of Johnny Gill's "My My My" that morphed into jazz standard "Misty" and then back again.

Then, just when you thought you had seen it all, they hit you with the unbelievable.

Gerald Albright damn near beat boxing in his saxophone and Peter White

pulling off the 70's wah wah guitar ON AN ACOUSTIC!! (oh yeah, for those who don't know what a wah wah effect is I'll just say the "bam chicka wow wow" sound).

Before it was over, they touched on Sugar Hill Gang's Rappers Delight/Chic and some Frankie Beverly and Maze ... and eventually got the crowd up doing the hustle right in front of the stage.

It was an absolutely amazing night of music, artistry and showmanship.

I knew it would be hard to top.

Saturday was one of the best nights in the history of this festival.

Sunday the ominous skies were back and at more than a few points the weather presented a real problem for the show.

But the great music was back as well.

John Ellis brought the New Orleans sound and even got into a very convincing Satchmo impersonation on "What A Wonderful World."

John Batiste Quintet was the breakout moment of the night once onstage.

A younger band was a

(Continued on Page 14)



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50 Men & Women: Honoring High School Scholars Year After Year

By Faith A. McGlown
Sojourner's Truth Reporter

Rapidly increasing tuition costs and dwindling state and federal funding are specific barriers that block young, talented minds from attending college. Many deserving minority students who hope to attend college may never have the opportunity.

At least one organization has committed itself to helping as many minority students as possible attend college. 50 Men & Women of Toledo, Inc. awards scholarships to help offset the staggering costs of college. They have awarded over 200 primarily four-year renewable scholarships totaling over one million dollars to Toledo area minority youth.

On Friday, June 13, 50 Men & Women of Toledo, Inc. held its 28th Annual Scholarship Banquet & Dinner in the Great Hall of the Stranahan Complex honoring minority students.

They awarded \$100,000 in scholarships to deserving students in recognition of their academic achievements and desire to attend college. This special evening was filled with appreciation and encouragement.

The organization's president and founding member, James C. Caldwell, has been instrumental in empowering many minority youth to recognize the necessity of self reliance, economic empowerment, and contributing back to their community.

Caldwell eloquently served as the evening's master of ceremonies. The invocation by Rev. John E. Roberts, Pastor of Indiana Avenue Baptist Church was followed by the welcome from Billie S. Johnson, executive director for the Area Office on Aging.

The speaker for the evening, Honorable Charles J. Doneghy, was graciously introduced by Walter Crockel, Jr. After some humor, Doneghy, judge in the Lucas County Court of Common Pleas, addressed the 20 scholarship recipients and the rest of his audience about the seriousness of the evening.

Doneghy, a Toledo native, urged the honorees to be "wholesomely dissatisfied" with the state of society. Education should be the catalyst, said the judge, who earned both his doctor of jurisprudence and bachelors degree of Business administration from The University of Toledo.

Teachers who are satisfied with their teaching will

never teach better, Doneghy said to illustrate his point. "With satisfaction, people become stagnant. Nothing is worse than satisfaction."

Doneghy has been on the Common Pleas Court since 1984. Prior to that, he served as a Toledo Municipal Court Judge. Doneghy served in U.S. Army as a captain from 1966-1968.

"Sacrifice and toil has borne good fruit," Doneghy remarked, referring to the young scholars in audience.

After an elegant dinner and conversation, Bobby Rogers, Scholarship Committee, introduced the recipients of the evening's awards. Ten young scholars received the 50 Men & Women of Toledo, Inc. Scholarship, which is a four-year, renewable \$1,500 award and requires a 3.0 GPA or higher.

The 50 Men & Women of Toledo, Inc. scholarship recipients were: Francesca Adams (Start), Marcus Boyd (Central Catholic), Sura Khuder (Maumee), Gabrielle Lopez (Whitmer), Aleila McCulloch (Rogers), Jasmine Levesque-Neal (Central Catholic), Nicole Price (St. Ursula), Teresa Sanchez (Start), Debralyn Woodberry-Shaw (Central Catholic), and Nicolyn Woodcock (Central Catholic).

The Kevin Chad Ellis Scholarship is dedicated to the memory of Kevin Chad Ellis and requires a 2.5 GPA or higher. It was granted to Alma Aguirre (Rossford), who carried a 3.40 grade point average. She plans to attend UT as a pre-med major.

for.

The James C. Caldwell Scholarships were awarded to Christopher Greenwade (Rogers), Ashley Strickland (Toledo School of Arts),



Ashley Wilbert

Ashley Wilbert (Notre Dame), and Kristin Witcher (Start).

Wilbert, who plans to become a pediatrician, challenged the young scholars to be leaders and allow God to work through them.

"I want to help children similar to me," she said referring to her own medical condition that limited her activities. "One by one help children."

The James B. Simmons, Jr. Memorial Scholarship was given to Christian Stewart (Toledo Christian). The \$1,500 scholarship is renewable for four years and requires a 3.0 GPA or higher.

Stewart plans to attend Kent State University and study Journalism/Broadcasting.

Justin Barrientos (Bowsher) received the John A. Anderson Memorial Scholarship. The renewable, \$1,000 award is provided to the often-forgotten average

high school achiever, requiring a 2.3 GPA for consideration. It is restricted to UT and will be fully matched by the university.

Vanessa Elmore (Start), Kayla Lindsey (Start), and TaTiana Sanders (Notre Dame) were awarded the Owens-Illinois Scholarship, which emphasizes science, math, business and engineering. The \$3,000 award is renewable for four years and requires a 3.0 GPA or higher.

Elmore, who plans to at-



Vanessa Elmore

tend Bowling Green State

University, said she was the first generation in her family to attend college. She will also receive \$1,500 in matching funds from BGSU.

"College is the ultimate goal, but not everyone makes it," Elmore remarked as she addressed the audience. "It is a true honor."

The tables were dressed with beautiful blue and silver balloon bouquets and "college survival kits," which contained all the necessities for the new college students.

During his closing remarks, Caldwell, the first African-American corporate executive for a local Fortune 500 company, implored the young scholars to remember the bridge that brought them over after they have achieved success.

He recognized the many corporate and private sponsors' support that has enabled 50 Men & Women of Toledo, Inc. to grow from initially awarding three,

four-year renewable scholarships to over 20 per year today, such as The Anderson's, The General Mills Foundation, The Sears Foundation, UT and BGSU.

"A lot of hard work goes into giving you kids the money," Caldwell, who was the prime inspiration for forming the group, commented. "If you make it, reach down and help somebody else."

Before Reverend Wilbur Harris, Pastor of Faithway Church of God and Christ, performed the benediction, Caldwell remarked, "It's not going to be easy, nobody said it would be easy."

He offered some final and crucial parting words to the new graduates.

"We will cut off the funds," he said referring to those who don't maintain good academic standing in college. "Every once in a while, we have to make a believer."

"My husband, Willie, found out nothing more could be done for his cancer. He still had one last goal: to see our daughter, Joya, graduate from nursing school - which was nearly a year away.

"Hospice of Northwest Ohio provided care for Willie, right in our home. I believe their expertise helped him live to see the graduation, and made a lot more good days possible for him along the way."

Leora, Willie's Wife

"Whenever we had questions, Hospice explained every answer. They knew what to provide even before we knew what to ask for. And the staff connected on a personal level, too. My dad's nurse was like part of our family.

"Hospice made all the arrangements to get dad to my graduation, including the wheelchair and portable oxygen. Having dad see me cross that stage meant the world to me. Now that I'm an RN, I know great care when I see it. My dad had the best."

Joya, Willie's Daughter

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The Ohio Housing Finance Agency or OHFA, There's Really No Choice

By Alvin Thomas
Real Estate Columnist

I'll be the first to admit, I am prone to digress on occasion. Although, when I write this column, I normally stay on point for at least the first few paragraphs before I climb on my worn, dilapidated soapbox and stray off subject just long enough to spout my frustration about some annoyance of mine.

Today, however, I'm going to break completely from my norm. Well, almost completely. I'm still going to digress, I'm just going to start it a lot sooner.

As the headline suggests, this piece is eventually going to provide some helpful information about the services offered by The Ohio Housing Finance Agency (OHFA). However, before I plunge into the merits of this fine organization and the services it provides to homebuyers, I first need to address a pet peeve of mine, which also happens to be one of the few flaws of OHFA.

That's it, OHFA! My irritation isn't with the orga-

nization itself, just the abbreviation of its name. This acronym and many others are the crux of my grievance. I'm fed up with acronyms – all acronyms!

Acronyms rarely give any hint as to the nature or true identity of the company or agency they represent, and they have absolutely no attraction – no sex appeal! In fact, some acronyms are so clumsily assembled and anonymous that they become almost mysterious. Ok, that may all be a bit overstated, but I'm trying to make a point.

After all, does OHFA excite anyone? The full name of the Ohio Housing Finance Agency at least suggest that it maybe of some interest to homebuyers. It's obvious which version is faster to write and requires the least amount of type. But which one is easiest for most people to comprehend: Ohio Housing Finance Agency or OHFA? Most importantly, which one would have a better chance attracting an anx-

ious first-time homebuyer's attention?

I have digressed long enough. I just want to make one more point about acronyms, and my final point is directly related to this column's subject. To the real estate novice, which all first-time homebuyers are, the acronym OHFA completely masks the valuable services this major player in today's real estate arena has made available to Ohio residents.

Outside of the Ohio housing industry's in-the-know crowd, OHFA is a relatively obscure agency. OHFA's programs and services have helped more than 110,000 households achieve homeownership by providing affordable mortgage products and homeownership education since 1983.

Believe it or not, even though today's housing crisis has caused tough changes in the guidelines of conventional mortgage loan products, many loan officers are still shying away from the

unconventional, odd sounding programs such as OHFA that even sounds daunting and complicated. Today's environment should provide enough motivation to cause even the most timid LO (even mortgage loan officers are referred to by acronyms) to step out of his comfort zone.

OHFA offers affordable housing opportunities. The First-Time Homebuyer program offers low, competitive mortgage rates to homebuyers through conventional loans as well as FHA, VA and other government loans. OHFA partners with lenders throughout the state to make mortgage loans more attainable. Each of these 30-year, fixed-rate loans is available to consumers based on their household income. The program offers down payment assistance of a grant in an amount equal to three percent of the purchase price of the home.

Homebuyers who use OHFA's loan products are limited by established in-

come limits which can be as high as \$84,140 in Lucas County depending on family size and property location. The highest income limits are allowed in targeted areas. OHFA defines a targeted area as an economically distressed area as designated by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (unfortunately, better known by the acronym HUD). Most contain both targeted and non-targeted areas. The single family OHFA loan limit in Lucas County is \$289,705 in a targeted area and \$237,031 in a non-targeted area.

Also, first-time homebuyers who are active military personnel or military veterans, firefighters or emergency medical technicians - paramedics, healthcare workers, police officers or teachers can receive a 30-year fixed-rate mortgage at a quarter of a percent less than OHFA's rate for the First-Time Homebuyer program. Ac-

cording to OHFA, since the Ohio Heroes program began in March, more than 400 Ohioans have used it to purchase a home.

Unfortunately, OHFA is not alone. The real estate industry is flooded with agencies, products and even guidelines known only by confusing acronyms, which in many situations leave the layperson clueless. The occasional homebuyer probably doesn't readily recognize or appreciate the following list of mortgage related acronyms FHA, GFI, PMI, CDC, LTV, HUD, or VA not to mention FannieMae or FreddieMac just to name a few. I understand standard grammatical rules allow for these abbreviations, but do they help or hinder their intended clients they exist to serve.

Alvin Thomas is a mortgage loan officer with over 20 years of banking and mortgage lending experience. He can be reached at: alvin.thomas@noic.com or (419) 885-8300 ext. 150.

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Jazzfest

(Continued from Page 11)

great look, and the small but mighty audience hung on every note. Ellis Marsalis and John Batiste gave the audience a taste of something only seen by the NBA AllStar crowd in New Orleans as they used two pianos to bridge the generation gap and show the unified collaboration that exists in jazz music. With

Marsalis on the grand piano and Batiste on the baby grand, something weird happened.

The sky took on such an amazing orange glow you could see people visibly awestruck looking back and forth over their shoulders to the sky and back ahead to the stage. They were wondering if they were wit-

nessing something otherworldly, perhaps, but the only supernatural occurrence was the level of talent on display.

As the Ellis Marsalis Quartet closed the evening and the festival, it was so fitting that they covered more than a handful of Thelonious Monk tunes as Jason Marsalis (the un-of-

ficial star of the show) showed super human skills on the drums and the drew constant oohs and aaahs from the audience.

It was a beautiful event as always.

Next year, I'd personally love to see Roy Hargrove or Femi Kuti.

I'd love to see the festival return to International

Park.

But, most of all, you know what I would love most? That's to see YOU there, Toledo.

Trust me, you don't wanna keep letting these Detroit people come down and attend this event and then when the performers try to get Toledo into it all you hear are a bunch of

loud-talking Detroit peeps bad mouthing your city.

No excuses next year.

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CLASSIFIEDS

June 18, 2008

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As part of our expansion program, our company is looking for part time work from home account managers and sales representatives. It pays a minimum of \$3000 a month plus benefits and takes only little of your time. Please contact us for more details. Requirements - should be computer literate. 2-3 hours access to the Internet weekly. Must be honest and loyal. Must be efficient and dedicated. If you are interested and need more information, contact Michael J. Sloan, email - mjsloan01@aol.com

Attention All Vendors



The 4th Annual African American Festival will be held on the Scott Park Campus at The University of Toledo on Sat., July 13 and Sun., July 14.

As space is limited to 50 entries, please contact Eric at the Toledo Urban Federal Credit Union at 419.255.8876 for your application. Reservations will be given on a first come, first served basis. The deadline for reserving space is Friday, June 13, 2008.

Area Seniors Encourage Fitness at Annual 50+ Sports Classic

By Artisha S. Lawson
The Sojourner's Truth Reporter

Over 100 senior citizens from Toledo and the surrounding areas gathered on Saturday, June 14 to compete in nine sporting events at St. Francis DeSales High School.

Channel 13 ABC Action News personality Rob Powers welcomed the crowd, while Toledo's own JJ Express Drill & Drum Corp., paraded the participants onto



were also expressed by boxer Devin Vargas, a professional heavyweight boxer who represented the United States in the 2004 Olympics. Vargas

games. "This is the torch that I carried, we are showing society that great health and fitness is important at any age."



the track. Area Office on Aging CEO/President Billie Johnson praised the seniors who signed up as participants in the events, and their sup-

ports. "Fitness is important at any age, thanks for supporting this program."

Mayor Carleton Finkbeiner stressed the importance of healthy living. "I am one of you, the more you exercise the more breath you take in. It's not about health for ourselves; we have responsibilities to our grandkids, great-grandkids, sick friends and increasing our abilities in having a long-term life."

Words of encouragement

would like to see boxing added to the senior classic events in the upcoming years and lit the cauldron. Also stopping by to express her own words of encouragement was 1972 U.S. Olympian Mamie Rallins who carried the same Olympic torch she toted in the 1996

The opening ceremony closed with the National Anthem being sung by Steve Grudzien and group warm-ups led by Suzi Perlaky, the YMCA/JCC Fitness Coach.

Event organizer Justin Moore was excited about the festivities and the increase of participants in the past three years. "This is our third year since the name change from Senior Olympics. For over 20 years it was a week-long event at different locations, so we decided to pull it all together on one day. Our main focus is encouraging fitness, it's important for a long healthy life and also to have fun today."

100-meter runner 76-year-old Dorothy Gacksletter completed the race in first place. "I'm tired right now, but overall feel great."

A total of 115 participants competed in several track & field events, volleyball, basketball, softball, golf, swimming, table tennis, bowling and tennis. Participants were divided in nine different age groups ranging from 50-90+, and winners were awarded gold, silver and bronze medals.

The event was sponsored by the Area Office on Aging of Northwest Ohio, Inc., Toledo Free Press, YMCA & JCC of Greater Toledo, Mobile Medical Services, CareSource Management Group, Humana, Matthew's Ford, Mature Living News Magazine, and St. Francis De Sales High School.

The Area Office on Aging serves communities in Defiance, Erie, Fulton, Henry, Lucas, Ottawa, Paulding, Sandusky, Williams and Wood counties; in the areas of adult day services, case management, volunteering and other services. Contact the office at 1-800-472-7277 or via the Internet www.areaofficeonaging.com.



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