



Local and National News

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"And Ye Shall Know The Truth..."

November 26, 2008

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E. Michelle Mickens
Executive Director TCDC

"One of the things that TCDC is committed to doing is to create more educational forums for our residents in becoming more energy efficient. We don't want our residents to miss out on opportunities to improve the quality of their lives."

This Strikes Us ...

A Sojourner's Truth Editorial

In 1948, Arthur Schlesinger, Sr. a historian at Harvard University conducted the first poll of his fellow historians for the purpose of ranking the accomplishments, or lack thereof, of past presidents. The polls have continued but, needless to say, in subsequent polls presidents have risen and fallen as time passes and assessments are made of the long-term impact of their achievements or failures.

Always at the top of the list are George Washington, Abraham Lincoln and Franklin Delano Roosevelt, with Thomas Jefferson and Theodore Roosevelt lurking close behind. In recent years, Harry Truman, Dwight Eisenhower and Ronald Reagan have experienced a certain amount of ascendancy in the rankings.

And always at the bottom of the lists are Franklin Pierce, James Buchanan – Lincoln's two predecessors – and Warren Harding. Buchanan, because of his efforts to mollify the South and preserve slavery is usually accorded the honor of being the very worst of the worse.

Move over, Buchanan. Make room for George W. Bush.

It's a testament to just how terrible a president this man has been that in this very dark time of economic collapse, during which his administration asked for and received \$700 billion to bail out Wall Street and by all accounts has failed miserably in trying to do so, no one is really taking Bush to task for it. His name is scarcely mentioned. Fed Chairman Ben Bernanke and Treasury Secretary Henry Paulson are sharing the blame.

If you like irony – which we do – here's irony for you. As we gaze back over the Bush presidency, we are struck by the fact that he recorded the highest ever favorable ratings in an opinion poll at 90 percent. That was such a short time ago.

And it's easy to remember Bush's best moment. Certainly that appearance in the 9/11 rubble of New York, when while atop the vehicle with the firefighter he used a bull horn to stir up his audience, ranks right up there.

His address to Congress in the week following the attack – one of the great presidential speeches of all time – was a moment that should have been remembered.

For our money, however, the greatest Bush moment occurred in Yankee Stadium when the Yankees returned home for Game Three of the 2001 World Series – just a few weeks after 9/11 – and the president threw out the opening pitch.

Alone, wearing a sweat shirt with "FDNY" on it, Bush walked to the mound, glanced around at the crowd of 57,000, gave them a thumbs up and, awash in camera flashes, wound up and threw a strike ... a perfectly thrown ball in a charged up moment such as that.

Regrettably, the Bush presidency has been downhill since then. He should have stayed on the mound.

There were any number of misjudgments to follow such as keeping his tax cuts in place during the first term or assuming he had a mandate to privatize Social Security at the beginning of his second. In truth, his tax cuts were designed to spread the wealth of the Clinton surplus even though Bush himself was faced with deficits caused by recession and war.

The Bush administration may have had the vision to do something about Social Security but they had neither the muscle nor the competence to get it done.

Those were the minor missteps, however. Rarely is a president blessed with the opportunity to mishandle three major challenges of cataclysmic proportions. It's easy for a president to be judged successful when little or nothing happens during his tenure (See, e.g., Bill Clinton). In order to be judged great, or utterly abysmal, one has to encounter great challenges.

First, Bush, faced with a terrorist threat, overlooked the threat and went to war at the wrong time, in the wrong place and against the wrong enemy. Somewhere along the line Bush concluded that he could use the military to shove democracy down the throats of the reluctant and change the course of world history.

Those who urge us to await the judgment of history on this one say that Iraq may yet become truly democratic and act as the catalyst for the democratization of the entire region.

That could happen. We could be waiting on this for a while however. Egypt has been a republic since 1953 but has yet to hold a truly fair election. By the time Iraq experiences true democracy, it will be impossible to highlight any one point in history that moved the country in that direction.

Bush's second great challenge was Hurricane Katrina, a natural disaster of epic proportions. The Bush administration not only failed miserably to bring immediate relief to the area by providing immediate assistance and relocating people with effectiveness, as time wore on the government has been unable to put together a plan to rebuild one of the historic cities of the nation ... a unique treasure.

Interestingly, there is a blueprint for how to handle such a mess. During the Great Mississippi Flood of 1927, Herbert Hoover, at that time Commerce Secretary under Calvin Coolidge, was called upon to organize the relief mission. He did what he set out to do and earned high marks for it – high enough to win the presidency the following years.

We should add as a footnote that Hoover deliberately, for political purposes, declined to provide aid to African-Americans, with the collusion of African-American leaders who accepted his promises of help if he were to win the election. Hoover reneged on those promises and the backlash helped to propel Roosevelt into office in 1932.

Finally, the Bush administration was presented with an economic collapse in our banking institutions that has threatened to spread to every sector of the American economy. A catastrophe looms because the administration most certainly fell asleep at the wheel as Wall Street ran amok making and buying bad loans.

Bush folks asked for the \$700 billion to purchase illiquid mortgage assets from the banks so the credit freeze would unblock. Before Congress had even granted the money to the Treasury Department, Paulson decided that buying the assets would not work as well as he had thought. So he has since just dumped the billions into the banks vaults without imposing conditions on its use.

The banks are now using those monies for shareholders' dividends and for acquisitions. The credit crunch continues as the Big Three auto makers remind us daily but the owners of the financial institutions are getting their dividends on a regular basis – no matter the performance of the companies.

That's it in a nutshell. One problem he created, one problem was thrust upon him and one had been brewing for the length of his presidency. The man is 0 for 3 in critical situations.

He never should have gotten off of that mound.

Community Calendar

November 26

Ebenezer Outreach Ministry's Annual Need to Feed Thanksgiving Dinner: Ebenezer MBC; 11 am to 3 pm; All are invited: 419-729-1466

November 27

Thanksgiving!!

Pilgrim Church Annual Thanksgiving Community Meal: 11 am to 2 pm: 419-478-6012
Thanksgiving Day Dinner: St. Mark's MBC; 11 am to 2 pm: 419-241-1726
Thomas Temple Annual Free Thanksgiving Dinner: 1 to 3 pm; Dine in only

November 28

Black Friday!!

November 30

Bethesda Christian Center Cathedral Youth Day: Service at 11 am; Speaker Prophetess Tiwana Alexander: 419-944-0984

Gospel Fest at Lima's Christian Convention Center: Featuring Lima's finest – The Hubble Sisters, the Spiritualets, the Vessels of Honor, Viola Dorsey, the Voices of Angels and more; 4 pm

December 4

"An Evening with Santa:" Robinson Middle School; 6 to 8 pm; Food, fun, games, music; Admission is two non-perishable items per person to help with community baskets

December 5-6

Christmas Extravaganza: Adams Township Post No. 553 American Legion; 11 am to 11 pm both days; Vendors, gifts, raffle for gas cards: 419-242-9705

December 6

Annual Tribute to Rosa Parks: Sponsored by Board of Community Relations and "Save Our Children;" Keynote Speaker John Jones of Urban League; 2 pm; Main Branch Library's McMaster Center: 419-245-1565

10th Annual Cookie Walk: Collingwood United Methodist; 10 am to 3 pm: 419-476-8034

UTMC Cares Health Expo: St. Stephens Church; 9 am to noon; Free health expo to help individuals obtain health information and screenings: 419-383-2348

December 6-7

Grace Temple's Annual Christmas Bazaar: One Stop Shopping; Saturday from 10 am to 4 pm; Sunday from 1 to 5 pm; Vendors include Mary Kay, Victoria Sims, Twice as Nice Kids Clothes, Handcrafted scarves by Susan, Kids Corner, Sally's Accessories, Art by Klaire and more: 419-841-4614/419-841-4642

December 12

Graduation for TPS Adult Education: Summit Annex near Riverside Hospital; 5 pm; Students in Practical Nursing, ABLE/GED, Barber Academy, Nurse Aide, Aviation Technology: 419-671-8700

December 13

"An Appreciation Service:" Majestic Praise Ministries honors Jason C. Carter; 6 pm: 419-250-3479

Toledo Business Networking/Expo: Sponsored by ASSETS Toledo and Negro Business and Professional Women's Clubs, Inc; Garden Lake Hall; Reserve table by December 1: 419-251-9870

Mega Garage Sale: Bethlehem Baptist Church New Life Center: 10 am to 4 pm; Crafts, holiday gifts, pictures taken with Santa: 419-578-1620

December 14

Clarence Smith Community Christmas Concert: Christian Community Church; 6 pm; Free musical event: 419-534-3370 or www.cscchorus.com

The Sojourner's Truth

Toledo's Truthful African-American
Owned and Operated Newspaper

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Publisher
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Business Manager

Reporter
Reporter
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Political Columnist
Entertainment Critic

Layout Designer
Webmaster
Sales Representative
Ad Creation

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The Sojourner's Truth, 1811 Adams Street, Toledo, Ohio 43604

Phone 419-243-0007 • Fax 419-255-7700

thetruth@thetruthtoledo.com

www.thetruthtoledo.com

My View

By Jack Ford
The Truth's Political Columnist



The news that the federal government will now investigate EOPA is not good. The feds will look in every nook and cranny until they find something. And, they are here at the behest of some specific people who have axes to grind over the mess at EOPA. It may turn out that the resignation of five board members a few months back resulted in the federal intervention.

As for Jim Powell, interim director, where might EOPA be if he had not been around the last few years as the health of Oscar Griffith deteriorated? We really do not know.

Look for Tyrone Riley to try to succeed Councilwoman Wilma Brown as the District 1 representative. Riley is a lawyer who previously worked as an aide to Casey Jones in Columbus. Riley also did a

stint in the Housing Department of the City of Toledo in early 2003 through 2004.

Jamilah Jones is interested in serving on the Toledo Board of Education. She works in academia at North West State near Archbold as she completes her doctorate at The University of Toledo. She may run in 2009 when the board has three spots open. Look for current members Darlene Fisher, Steve Steel and Bob Vasquez all to be on a ballot somewhere... but not necessarily for a position on school board.

"Be careful what you ask for." As Keith Wilkowski starts a brick by brick mayoral buildup, he should keep in mind that the City of Toledo will not have any money in the till... zip. Whether it is Wilkowski, Mayor Carty Finkbeiner, Ben Konop, Mike Bell or whoever as our next mayor, the money till will be empty. So the next mayor will have to cut the budget.

Wilkowski's recent "call to arms" was confusing to some people. A few folks thought that this post-election rally was a "celebrate Obama" meeting not a rally for Wilkowski's mayoral campaign. Whatever the reason, Wilkowski came out of it with a good start to his campaign.

Wilkowski is also attending block watch meetings and appearing on the television talk shows. If Bell is planning on entering this race, it will be interesting to see how he will organize his campaign. And, if Finkbeiner has his druthers, the more candidates in the pool, the better he will be able to survive a run-off. And once you get down to two candidates, anybody can win.

Next to last, who is checking with Councilman Michael Ashford re the 2009 campaign? Ashford has the best political machine in the central city. He has a great group of people starting in the old TOTCO area through the Old West End.

Lastly, remember the dance we are seeing from City Hall regarding the budget cuts - no swimming pools, many lay offs, etc. This is just a run-up to the state budget. There will be cuts there which will impact Toledo's budget. Watch out for an increase, for example, in the garbage tax. Nobody is talking about it as a source of new monies. The pain will grow as time goes by. At a certain point, a small increase in that tax will not seem too bad.

Where is the anti-tax candidate for mayor?

Hey!..Who's Crying "Socialism" Now?

By Lafe Tolliver, Esq
Guest Column



Remember during the presidential debates and campaign that the Republicans were practically hysterical with the cry that Barack Obama was spewing forth socialistic nonsense about the economy and specifically that he wanted to "redistribute the wealth?"

That was the war cry of the Republicans and it gave birth to the Holland, Ohio gadfly now known by the moniker Joe the Plumber.

Now fast forward the economic clock of the USA and guess who is behaving like a socialist state...the US government! It seems that they can not dish out billions and billions fast enough to save these humongous capitalistic enterprises known as Citi Bank, mortgage and banking companies and WAMU, et al.

Socialistic in the sense that the US government is passing out free tax payer money tickets as if there was a fire sale and it is all done under the rubric that unless we do this these giant companies will take us all down with their swirling economic undertow.

What with millions of primary and secondary jobs on the line, the capitalistic USA economy is willing to take a long blink and redistribute wealth as long as such a dis-

tribution fulfills their mission. In other words, he who defines the word, controls the economic SCRABBLE board.

So, while Republicans then decried socialism and tried to paint Barack Obama as a "pinko" with leftist tendencies, the economic credo of the day is:... pass out the money and pass it out fast...or we are busted!

Now, can you imagine the hue and cry if Obama was to have told audiences a few months ago that he would be willing to take trillions of taxpayer dollars and bail out capitalistic companies due to their shoddy management practices and paper thin investments?

They would have demanded his scalp and John McCain would have been the President-elect with Sarah Palin pan frying mooseburgers in the White House and saying, "you betcha" at every photo op.

What happened in America? Simple. Drastic means require drastic measures even if that means a FDR approach to massaging the economy until it is revived. And those measures include a redistribution of wealth.

Is this a suspension of the hallowed values of capitalism? Yes. Capitalism can only go so far before it may need a pinch hitter when it shows signs of going belly up and belly up it will be going especially if the auto companies are not also handed some "redistributed wealth" so they can continue to be capitalistic companies that worship profit at any cost.

However, to be fair, this type of social-capital "ism" does have some strings attached so that if these companies are revived, they have to share their increased goodies with the paying taxpayer.

What is not to be forgotten is that this current chapter in American economic history is and will cause hallowed economic books to be revised and MBA school curriculums revisited since we have now, albeit temporarily, looked the other way and are willing to bend our current system for our cobbled mission of saving the backbone industries of America.

For the uninitiated, redistribution of wealth is not new. FDR did it in the 1930's with the Works Progress Administration and the New Deal and other "socialistic" programs that kept Americans fed and housed and working... and it worked.

Any tax system is a form of redistribution of wealth through the use of tax shelters, credits, write offs, deductions, child care credits, tax brackets etc...etc. Some get to keep more and some keep to pay more.

For this writer, I smile smugly to myself when I recall the look of horror (pretended or otherwise) when the Republicans tried to castigate Obama on redistributing the wealth but, now, nary a critic is hurling such an invective against him...they are too busy trying to keep the economic dominoes from falling and if it takes a "redistribution of wealth" to do it... so be it.

The Truth About the Down Low and HIV

Special to The Truth

New infections of HIV continue to be on the rise in Toledo. Often various misconceptions lead people to think that they are not at risk because HIV happens "to other people." Consequently, many people fail to understand what is really happening and to protect themselves from HIV or other sexually transmitted infections. One such challenge is that of the "Down Low." The Down Low (DL) has historically referred to African-American men who – even

though they have a wife or girlfriend – sleep with other men. They keep their male-to-male contact quiet; or using slang "on the DL." Men on the DL are often considered to be a significant contributor to the spreading of HIV. The reality, however, is not that simple.

The DL stigmatization fails to acknowledge that anyone – regardless of skin color, background, gender, or sexual orientation – can choose to have sex with someone other than their pri-

mary partner. That choice can entail both opposite-sex and same-sex partners. Does the DL exist? Yes, absolutely. In fact, it is much more common than most people realize. But is it to "blame" for the spread of HIV?

HIV does not discriminate. It does not care if a person is male or female, who is sleeping with whom, or who is sharing needles. All it cares about is having a human host with which to make a warm, cozy home for itself. When it comes to HIV, it does

not matter *who* you are sleeping with; what matters is *what* you are doing, the type of contact you are having and whether or not that contact is protected. When someone is feeling social and psychological pressure to maintain one life (such as the heterosexual model of family and children) while also attempting to be true to themselves (such as having same-sex partners outside of the home), often times safer sexual practices are harder to maintain. When balancing two lives it can be difficult to ensure safety to one's health, or the health of their partners.

In Toledo, like the rest of

the country, male-to-male sexual contact continues to be the number one behavior for new HIV infections. Perhaps this is why it can seem easy to blame male-to-male contact or the DL for the spread of HIV. But that would neglect the entire picture. Almost half of the new infections have nothing to do with male-to-male contact. Women, men who only have sex with women, and individuals who share needles are also infected with HIV. The longer communities treat HIV/AIDS with misunderstood or misinterpreted thinking, such as "it's a gay disease" or even "the fault of men on the DL",

the longer and harder it is to join together and work towards stopping its spread.

Prevention and knowledge are the keys to fighting this disease. Anyone who has had unprotected sex or shared needles should be tested for HIV. The test can be as easy as a mouth swab and completed quickly at AIDS Resource Center Ohio, Toledo-Lucas Co. Health Dept., Planned Parenthood of NW Ohio, University of Toledo Medical Center, or Substance Abuse Services, Inc. **As with many diseases, early detection is the key to successful treatment.**

African-American Youth Advocate Project Holds Education Forum

By Nadean Hamilton
Sojourner's Truth Reporter

On Saturday, Nov. 8, more than a dozen parents, students, and concerned community members, gathered at Church of the New Covenant to learn how they could work together in conjunction with the African-American Youth Advocacy Project to improve the educational attainment of African-American youths in the city of Toledo.

Among the many topics discussed during the 90 minute forum were how to raise individual student test scores, how to get parents involved in their children's education, mentoring, leadership and the Rogers High School and Central Catholic High School football game

"We've seen fourth-seventh graders who have never seen long division, who cannot read ...you need to get your students involved in tutorial programs," said Albert Earl Jr., president of AAYAP.

Earl specifically chided men for not playing a more active role in their children's education.

"When men know more about the coaching staff and player roster of a sports team, than they do the name of the kids teachers, something needs to change," said Earl.

Earl, who says that he and other founders of AAYAP were inspired by the historic campaign of President-Elect Barack Obama, believes that the commitment and determination shown by the African-American community in getting the first African-American man elected president, is the same commitment and determination that we must display in making sure that are children are properly educated.

"If we were so motivated about putting him [Barack Obama] in the White House, how motivated are we going to be about [our] kids?"

Before closing the forum, Earl raised concern that students from Rogers High School were portrayed in a negative light by the local media after the ruckus that occurred during the October 3 football game between Rogers High School and Central Catholic High School, and

the subsequent one-game suspension of Rogers High School football team that followed.

"The decision that John Foley [superintendent of Toledo Public Schools] made was the right decision, we weren't discouraged about that, but what we were upset about is Rogers kids seemed to be thrown under the bus by the media," Earl said.

Earl also says that a lot of what was reported in the media was inaccurate, including reports that Rogers team was the only team to leave the bench, and that Rogers kids took their helmets off and began hitting other students.

The forum concluded with Earl calling for accountability and cooperation in TPS and all organizations that have taken up the task of educating students, including his own.

"We are not an attack group," said Earl.

"We will be working collectively with any organization that helps kids."

Afro-Semitic Experience Sunday, December 14, 2008

At the Temple Congregation Shomer Emunim
6453 Sylvania Ave. • Sylvania, Ohio

On Sunday, December 14, at 3:30 p.m., Congregation B'nai Israel, Congregation Etz Chayim, Congregation Shomer Emunim, the United Jewish Council of Greater Toledo and members of the African American Community of Toledo will present a concert by The Afro-Semitic Experience, a cross-cultural band that delivers a positive and meaningful musical message about Jewish-Black relations.

The ensemble has a unique sound...too jazzy to be labeled "folk" and too inter-cultural to be labeled just jazz. Indeed, their name aptly describes their style and sound; they are a tapestry of the many sounds of the Jewish and African Diaspora. The Afro-Semitic Experience is a band of African-American and Jewish musicians, dedicated to preserving and expanding the rich cultural and musical heritage of both the Jewish and African Diasporas. (Diaspora refers to any people or ethnic population forced or induced to leave their traditional ethnic homelands, being dispersed throughout other parts of the world, and the ensuing developments in their dispersal and culture.) They will offer dynamic musical interpretations from the rich tradition of these two cultures: Gospel, Klezmer, Niggunim, Spirituals, Bebop, and Swing. They will frame their music with stories about the selections, what they mean, how they relate to us as individual members of a community, and how they reflect upon the relations between Blacks and Jews.

Through their concerts, recordings, and workshops, The Afro-Semitic Experience has created an artistic response to anti-Semitism and racism of all kinds.

This is going to be a fabulous afternoon of music, one you won't want to miss. A dessert reception will precede the concert. Please consider becoming a sponsor of The Afro-Semitic Experience. Your donation is fully tax deductible. General admission tickets to the concert will be available beginning November 1st at Congregation B'nai Israel, Congregation Etz Chayim and Temple Shomer Emunim, United Jewish Council, Grace Temple and Universal New Beginnings. The cost of a General Admission ticket is \$5.

It is our hope that you will support this wonderful afternoon of music and cultural enrichment.

Generous funding provided by the Dr. Morton Goldberg Lecture Fund of the Toledo Community Foundation and the Toledo Jewish Community Foundation.

The Afro-Semitic Experience Committee: Joanne Treuhaft, Co-chair, Carole Martin, Co-chair, Cantor Jamie Gloth, Cantor Evan Rubin, Cantor Jen Roher, Lynn Nusbaum, Wendy Goldstein, Elsa Leveton, Rosemary Bramson, Marilyn Jacobs, Shelley Kahn, Kevin and Becky McQueen, Sheila Odesky, Jackie Orichio, Janet Rogolsky, Arlene Russell, Donna Trail, Diane Treuhaft, Phyllis Wittenberg & Rhonda Witty.

For questions, call Lynn Nusbaum at 419-885-3341 or email lnusbaum@temple.com.

2008 Sponsorship Categories

Presenting sponsor	\$500	page camera-ready ad	
•10 tickets to the event in a reserved seating section		•Recognition as "Event Sponsor" Underwriter	\$150
•Invitation to the post-event gathering		•2 Tickets to the event in a reserved seating section	
•Recognition in the program with a full size camera-ready ad		•Invitation to the post event gathering	
•Recognition as "Presenting Sponsor"		•Recognition in the program with a camera-ready business card size ad	
Event Sponsor	\$250	Friend	\$50
•5 tickets to the event in a reserved seating section		•Camera-ready business card size ad	
•Invitation to the post event gathering			
•Recognition in the program with a half			

E. Michelle Mickens: "E" Is for Everyone ... As in Getting Everyone Involved

By Fletcher Word
Sojourner's Truth Editor

The Toledo Community Development Corporation (TCDC), founded in 1992 as the Toledo Central City Neighborhood CDC, has invested over \$38 million in the community the organization serves, according to E. Michelle Mickens, executive director.

Even in these difficult times – especially for real estate – the non profit group is not shying away from development and in-

ing development (West Central Homes in partnership with Ottawa CDC) – all affordable housing units using tax credits.

In addition to these projects, TCDC has four single-family houses for sale at 1027 W. Woodruff, 1303 Grand, 234 Maumee and 1044 Lincoln.

It's not just housing, however, that is the focus of Mickens' attention these days. She is in the process

"Part of my dream is to get green jobs and create employment opportunities for ex-offenders in the green economy movement,"

vestment. Mickens anticipates breaking ground, next spring, for a 38-unit project on Monroe Street, near Robinson Middle School.

The Englewood Senior Housing Project – in the Historic Englewood District – will be TCDC's first multi-unit development.

The economic times, particularly the credit crunch, has not helped TCDC at all but Mickens' group forges on. Since she has been at the helm of the organization over the past four years, TCDC has completed a 16 housing project (Oakwood Homes III), a 35 housing project (Oakwood Homes IV) and a 32 hous-

ing development (West Central Homes in partnership with Ottawa CDC) – all affordable housing units using tax credits.

ing development (West Central Homes in partnership with Ottawa CDC) – all affordable housing units using tax credits. In addition to these projects, TCDC has four single-family houses for sale at 1027 W. Woodruff, 1303 Grand, 234 Maumee and 1044 Lincoln. It's not just housing, however, that is the focus of Mickens' attention these days. She is in the process of putting together a program that will assist ex-offenders while at the same time helping TCDC-area residents go "green."

"Part of my dream is to get green jobs and create employment opportunities for ex-offenders in the green economy movement," says Mickens. Employment and entrepreneurial oppo-



nental opponents, Mickens adds. In fact, when The Truth first spoke with Mickens for this article, she was at a conference in Boston, MA that was devoted to the impact non-profits can have on the green economy. One of the keynote speak-

ers at that conference – someone whom Mickens would like to emulate – was Majora Carter, an environmental advocate who is the executive director and founder of Sustainable South Bronx – located in her hometown of New York City. Carter was named one of "Who's Next in 2007" by Newsweek magazine and one of the 50 most influential women in New York by the New York Post. She has managed to connect poverty alleviation and the environment by bringing clean-tech solutions for the most persistent urban pub-

lic health and global climate concerns.

"She has been successful in taking groups of residents and giving them starts in environmental remediation through a stewardship training program and has created entrepreneurs within the 'hood," says Mickens of Carter. "One of the things that TCDC is committed to doing is to create more educational forums for our residents in becoming more energy efficient. We don't want our residents to miss out on opportunities to improve the quality of their lives."

One of the ways in which TCDC will quite literally "go green" is with the introduction of what Mickens calls "an urban agriculture business." The agency has a two-acre site on Fernwood that was originally going to be utilized for housing development, but it has been decided that it is an excellent location for "greenhouses and growing organic fruits and vegetables," says Mickens. "We need that for our residents. We need healthy, organic food to strengthen our young people."

The TCDC will be partnering with the Greater Toledo Urban League, the Boy Scouts of America and Robinson Middle School on this project.

"We want everyone involved in the neighborhood," says Mickens. "We are going to teach young people to grow and we also want to work with seniors on the project."

By the way, that's what the "E." in Mickens' name stands for – "everyone."

It seems that Mickens' family has a lot of people with first names starting in "E." As the first-born child in her immediate family and the first-born grandchild, her parents were swamped with requests from family to give her various first names starting with the letter E. Too many, in fact, for her mother's taste. In order to satisfy all concerned or, perhaps, to avoid disappointing the entire clan, her mother simply put the "E" on her birth certificate and told the family what it represented.

Mickens, a Cleveland-area native, earned her undergraduate degree from Fisk University in political science and psychology before returning to her hometown to work in the Cleveland Clinic.

She eventually moved to Atlanta and stayed there



Hospice helped our family reach a final goal.

Having my dad at graduation made my wish come true, too.

HOSPICE OF NORTHWEST OHIO

"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."

Laura, 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

Hospice can help make the end of life meaningful and fulfilling. To learn more, ask for our FREE brochure series, "Hospice Answers." Call 419-661-4001 or visit hospicenwo.org.

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for five years working in the field of advertising sales. Then came an eight-year stint in San Diego where she managed a Consumer Credit Counseling branch.

She came to Toledo at the urging of one of her sisters who lived here – and who has since left. Eight years ago she started working as the housing project manager for the North River CDC before moving to the TCDC position four years ago.

Her passion for her job and her church – she is a minister at River of Life Church where she works frequently with youth – will keep her in Toledo for some time, she predicts, especially since there is so much work to be done in turning the place green.

Friendship New Vision, Inc's Annual Ball Supports Local Service Projects

By Artisha S. Lawson
Sojourner's Truth Reporter



Bishop's Charity Ball 2008
Planning Committee

A long red carpet decorated with lights and balloons welcomed supporters and guests to the second annual Bishop's Charity Ball presented by Friendship New Vision, Inc.

The Friday, November 21 gala was held at the Crowne Plaza Hotel in downtown Toledo, where more than 75 supporters attended to help fund the organization's local service projects throughout the year.

Currently, the group sponsors New Concepts, a drug and alcohol outreach program; residential housing programs; tutorial programs; teen programs; welfare to work programs and NAOMI, the drug transitional house for women. All programs were organized within the church and are run by volunteers from the church. Executive board member Eric Belle wants the community to know that the organization is here to stay and work within the community of Toledo.

"Our passion and our heart are to give service to the community. We know these are trying times and we try to set up programs that benefit the community. We are not out for our own intentions but trying to make an impact in this community," said Belle.



First-lady Thelma Tisdale,
Bishop Duane C. Tisdale,
and their children

Event Chairman Patricia Hogue said that NAOMI is the program that really touches her. NAOMI (New Attitude On My Image) Transitional House focuses on the total woman. This is accomplished by educating her physically, mentally and spiritually, while incorporating structure, providing residency and dealing with substance abuse. The program provides housing for 10 women for a 12-month period, while the treatment component is broken down into three phases: treatment, defining self and life skills. "NAOMI house is my one

passion because it is for women who are trying to rehab from substance abuse. It's a year-long program that can be court ordered, some of them are. This is an intensive program, they are not just hanging out all day long. They are out there working, there are counseling groups and all types of programs to reintroduce them to society as women who are now sober. That is the program I work a lot with," said Hogue. Along with dinner, guests were treated to musical selections by jazz musician Tim Bowman and could participate in a silent auction with items donated by Belinda Collier, Carol Sharp, Elizabeth Bates, Party City,

Friendship Baptist Church Media ministry and crocheting with a purpose ministry, Gheinar Finn, My Momma's House Catering, and Minister McClurin.

The event was organized by a dedicated group of supporters, they were: Deborah Barnett, Elizabeth Bates, Christopher Cleaves, Toni Gaines, Patricia Hogue, Olivia Holden, Ann Hubbard, Shawnie Jackson, Tina Lawrence, Joan Mulligan, Debra Munn, Pamela Pierce, Sandra Gill, Patricia Sloan, Rosalind Welch, and Dana Rollerson. Friendship New Vision, Inc. is the outreach ministry of Friendship Baptist Church, where Bishop

Rosa Parks Day: "The Power of One"

Special to The Truth



Ohio House Democratic Leader Joyce Beatty, the Central Ohio Transit Authority (COTA) and the Ohio Historical Society will host "The Power of One," a statewide tribute to recognize "Rosa Parks Day," on Monday, December 1 at the Ohio Historical Center and Ohio Village.

The special day – designated by legislation championed by Leader Beatty and signed into law by then-Governor Bob Taft – celebrates the contributions of the woman recognized as the "mother of the modern Civil Rights Movement." Activities will commemorate Mrs. Parks' bravery in standing up for her rights on a bus in Montgomery, Alabama and the subsequent events that changed the course of history.

Elementary school children from across Ohio will participate in the statewide celebration at a morning assembly featuring a keynote speech from civil rights pioneer Robert Graetz. Rev. Graetz, who served as pastor of a black congregation in Montgomery at the time, was one of the few white community leaders in Montgomery who supported Mrs. Parks' actions and the Bus Boycott that followed. He joined Mrs. Parks and the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. to spread the message of equality and civil rights across America. Rev. Graetz lives in both Montgomery, Alabama and Vinton County, Ohio.

On Monday night, December 1, Rev. Graetz will be the special guest at a **community conversation** about his experiences, moderated by Leader Beatty. The event, also at the Ohio Historical Center, is free and open to the public.

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HOLIDAY SHOPPING Guide

Bag it! Book it! Buy it!

“\$2 mini-bag” and “\$5 brown grocery sac” Day-after-Thanksgiving sale at Classics Gift Shop

Got two bucks? What about five bucks? If so, then head over to the Classics Gift Shop, located on the garage level of Main Library, 325 Michigan St., for a \$2 “mini-bag” and a \$5 “brown grocery sac” sale scheduled from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. next Friday, November 28. The day after Thanksgiving is traditionally one of the largest shopping days of the year!

Here's how it works:

- We'll give you one of our “mini-bags” – the size of a small gift bag; or one of our “brown grocery sacs.”
- You fill as many bags to capacity with books from our specialty-marked carts.
- Then purchase your “mini-bag” for only \$2, or your “brown grocery sac” for only \$5, and you're on your way. You can buy as many bags as you fill!

Before you leave the store, also be sure to check out Classics Gift Shop's merchandise clearance carts for many gift items to choose from.

Classics Gift Shop is operated by the Friends of the Library (FOL). All proceeds benefit FOL, a 3,000-member non-profit organization, and help support Library programs such as the Children's Summer Reading Club and Authors! Authors! Visa and MasterCard are accepted.

For more details, please call 419.259.5358

A Store For Designer Holiday Bargains

Special to The Truth

The best-kept secret for fashion conscious ladies in Toledo who are budget-oriented is a wonderful shop in the Hobby Lobby Center on

celebrated its 18th birthday in September.

The fall/holiday collections of designer brand name jewelry, look-a-like

signer jewelry by Swarovski, Erwin Pearl, Esposito, Kenneth Lane, Hobe Cie, Chicos and more everyday at 75 percent off luxury store retails.

Blossom, Delicious, Classified, GF Original, Michael Antonio, Steve Madded, Valenci, Lady Godiva, Anne Michelle, Elegante, Glaze, Bamboo, Milagoras, Top Moda Boots. All are Accessorize sale priced at \$10 to \$30. Just in for holiday parties is a closeout special Anne Michelle sequin boot in silver, gold or black for \$30!!

Accessorize recently did a hat and handbag show for the ladies at Warren AME Church. All fall hat samples are holiday priced at \$25!

Doncaster private showing clothing closeouts were added in July. This top of the line classic clothing collection normally retails for \$195-\$1,500. Accessorize sells the closeouts for 80 percent off those retails. PLUS, there is a special group of \$345 blazers in wool and corduroy for \$49.

An upcoming charity bazaar where Accessorize will feature handbags, jewelry and shoes plus a line of custom-designed decorator pillows at their closeout prices will be at Grace Church of God in Christ at 2730 Fulton Ave. on December 6 from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. and December 7 from 1 to 5 p.m.

With the current economic situation threatening Christmas budgets, Accessorize decided to fill the store now with top quality closeouts offered by struggling manufacturers in need of cash. Their loss is Accessorize customers gain.

Accessorize is open daily from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. with evening hours until 7 p.m. on Tuesday and Thursday. Sunday from 1 to 5 p.m.



Monroe Street named Accessorize.

Not the usual big box store that offers bargains to the shopper but rather a small intimate service-oriented store filled to the brim with the best fashions for today at very special prices. Accessorize

handbags, shoes and boots, hats, scarves and designer clothing are in and priced 75 to 85 percent below retails found in stores in New York, Chicago, San Francisco and Detroit's Somerset Mall.

You will find famous de-

Their designer look-a-like handbags offer the top fashion looks but are priced at \$25-\$45 during the holiday sale. A special group of custom-design store handbags from a top luxury store manufacturer are priced at \$10 and \$15 for the perfect gift budget. Add a hot look scarf for \$10 or buy four for \$30 for gifts!!

New, since January is the Accessorize shoe department featuring name brands like soda, Rasolli, Jolie Victoria,

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Seaway Market Place: Fresh, Clean and Fast Is the Mission

During the three days following Thanksgiving, Seaway will be offering a 10 percent discount on all items with a total purchase of over \$40

Sojourner's Truth Staff

"Farmer Jack was here for two and a half years, Food Basic for one year, but we are beginning our fourth year and going strong," said Steve Fuller, manager of the Seaway Market Place of Toledo at the corner of Bancroft and Cherry Sts.

Sales are climbing at the market says Fuller because the community has been so supportive and because the independent operation has been successful at bringing the

Fuller emphasized that Seaway believes in bringing in the freshest possible meat and produce and that cleanliness is imperative—every morning an outside crew comes in to clean the floors, for example.

And fast service is Fuller's passion.

The store tracks sales by the day and hour so that management is always ready to handle peak hours.

"We always have four people in the store who can

Last winter, Seaway brought in a deli operation to expand its services and, in the near future, Fuller is planning to add a Chinese restaurant that will provide both takeout and sit down service.

Over the Thanksgiving holiday, the store is offering a special promotion. Generally promotions are product-specific ... an item here or there. During the three days following Thanksgiving, Seaway will be offering a 10 percent dis-



community what it expects in a market.

"As an independent, we really are focused more on customers," said Fuller. "Our mission is - fresh, clean and fast."

open a register in a rush," he said comparing customer service at the independent store favorably to that of the area chains.

Seaway, however, is not taking its success for granted.

count on all items with a total purchase of over \$40.

It's all part of the grand plan to offer a high level of service, noted Fuller. "This is an area and a community that expects service," he said.

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Holiday Shopping Guide ~ Holiday Shopping Guide ~ Holiday Shopping Guide ~ Holiday Shopping Guide ~ Holiday Shopping Guide

Owens Collaborates with Perrysburg Township Fire and Police Through Food and Clothing Drive, Nov. 24 - Dec. 15

Special to The Truth

Owens Community College Department of Safety and Security, in collaboration with the Perrysburg Township Fire and Police departments, is once again encouraging area residents to help local families in need of food and clothing by donating to a community-wide Operation Breadbasket collection drive, Nov. 24 - Dec. 15.

The initiative, now in its 31st year of existence, is sponsored by the Perrysburg Township Fire and Police departments in conjunction with Perrysburg Christians United, the Salvation Army and the Marine Corps "Toys for Tots". Last year alone, Operation Breadbasket helped over 100 families in the surrounding communities.

Starting on Monday, Nov. 24, Owens' Department of Safety and Security will be accepting a variety of new and used clothing and toy items, as well as non-perishable food and monetary donations. Such items include



clean and usable clothing in all sizes with a specific need for coats, jackets, hats, gloves, boots, scarves and headbands. In addition, toys, blankets and non-perishable food items are welcomed.

"Owens Community College is proud to once again

work with the Perrysburg Township Fire and Police departments on an initiative benefiting such a worthy cause," said Julee Cope, Owens Chief of Security. "There many families that are in need of assistance, whether the help comes in the form of

a coat, shoes or food. I encourage area residents and Owens employees to lend a helping hand during this holiday season by making a donation to Operation Breadbasket."

The collection point will be located inside the entrance to the safety and security office, which is located in Alumni Hall on the Toledo-area Campus. Individuals can drop off their donations 24 hours a day.

In addition, according to Cope, individuals who have received an Owens parking citation up to \$100 within the past year will have a very unique opportunity to trade in their ticket with the donation of a canned food or new toy item.

"The Owens Safety and Security Department is once again calling the food and toy drive, 'Food for Fines' and 'Toys for Tickets,'" stated Cope. "Our goal is to provide a little extra incentive for individuals to donate to Operation Breadbasket."

The Department of Safety and Security will only be accepting canned goods and new toys as part of the parking fine program. Each canned good donated will be worth \$1. Therefore, a person who brings in 20 canned goods and owes a \$20 park-

ing fine will now have their fine paid in its entirety. For every \$1 that a new toy is worth, the individual will receive a \$2 credit.

For more information about Operation Breadbasket, call (567) 661-7575 or 1-800-GO-OWENS, Ext. 7575.

Cutting Costs With Go-Together Gifts

A shrinking holiday budget doesn't have to mean a smaller holiday shopping list.

Instead, gift-giving gurus say to focus on practical presents--high-quality gifts that can be paired with other items for added value. Considering that 82 percent of respondents in a recent survey said they planned to trim their holiday budget and spend less on gifts, it may be a holiday hint that could pay off.

Here's a look at four practical gift pairings that could help people stretch their gift-giving dollar even further. They range from clothing to gifts for the home to holiday decor. Plus, you can find each of them at landsend.com, meaning you can save time and money while you shop.

Fleece Jackets--Give the gift of warmth. A lightweight fleece jacket is a great choice. It works well as a base layer or a sweater substitute. The latest trend in fleece is texture, from chunky piling to soft plush fabrics. For a great complement to the jacket, add a down vest or a pair of fleece gloves. This season, fleece comes in a plenitude of neutral and bright colors and can be coordinated with a down vest in tonal or pop colors to add a little fun.

Throws--Give the gift of comfort. Wrapping up in a throw with a good book by the fireplace is a wonderful way to enjoy the season. Plus, throws are a great gift and one size fits all. Lands' End's HeatComfort Throw features 11 heat settings for adjustable warmth and can help keep the thermostat down. Slippers are a great addition to a "curl-up" gift and don't forget to tuck in a tin of cocoa.

Towel Sets--Give the gift of relaxation. Thick, plush towels can make people feel as good as they did on their last visit to the spa. For the holidays, consider adding a unique touch by including a "Ho Ho Ho" or "Joy" monogram. You can find towel sets to complement every bathroom style. A holiday scented candle and soothing bubble bath are a festive addition to the in-home spa gift go-together.

Fresh Wreaths--Give the gift of scent. Fresh wreaths make great gifts for co-workers or for sending to faraway friends. In fact, seven out of 10 people surveyed said they hang a wreath at the holidays. Don't forget to send a wreath holder to make the gift easier to hang.

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Darrick Beckwith
Community Relations
Asst. Executive Director

Holiday Shopping Guide ~ Holiday Shopping Guide ~ Holiday Shopping Guide ~ Holiday Shopping Guide ~ Holiday Shopping Guide

Second Annual Buy Local Week

Buy Local Week is November 29 - December 6 this year - a year when holiday shopping at local independent retailers is taking on more economic importance than ever before. Toledo Choose Local will be kicking off the week with Muddy the Mud Hen and celebrating with the continuation of their Local Business Scavenger Hunt and a Holiday Gala on December 6 at 20 North Gal-

lery from 4-6 pm.

According to Stacy Jurich, executive director of Toledo Choose Local, "The statistics support our efforts. More than twice as much money re-circulates in our community for every \$100 dollars spent at a locally owned business than at non-local companies. Not only do local businesses provide more for us in terms of unique shopping experi-

ences and personal relationships, but strong local businesses create a healthier, more stable local economy."

Another study shows the potential impact of shopping at locally owned stores, whatever the season: The Toledo-Lucas County Merchant Study found that if each household in Lucas County re-directed \$100 of its spending to locally owned stores, the economic impact would

be \$8 million.

"There is now overwhelming evidence that local businesses are the key to pumping up local income, wealth, jobs, and taxes," says Michael Shuman, an economist who has authored several books about the importance of independent businesses. "The more residents, businesses, and city officials support locally owned businesses, the greater the eco-

nomie rewards."

Toledo Choose Local's Scavenger Hunt makes it easy and fun to choose local this holiday season, and gives shoppers a chance to win prizes. Visit www.toledochooselocal.com/

hunt.php to download a Scavenger Hunt playing card and find out how you can participate. Look for Toledo Choose Local's logo on business' windows to identify them as locally-owned.

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In our tough economy, with no relief in sight, we must be more aware of how we spend our dollars than in the past. Unfortunately, we also have to be aware of the old "bait and switch" schemes that have resurfaced at a very alarming high rate. It is once again unfortunate that the funeral industry is not exempt from this practice. When shopping for costs you must ask what your dollars will include, especially in the area of cash advances, such as cemetery, printed material, etc. If you cannot get a bottom line cost for a total service, then truth in pricing can be a first sign of suspect.

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Books and Haircuts a Community Effort at Library and Poor Clark's

Sojourner's Truth Staff

"The hair cut gives them the look and the books will give them the knowledge," said Rev. Cedric Brock of his "Adopt a Haircut" program last week as he made a pitch to keep the year and a half project alive and well.

"We need to keep our children groomed to keep them successful," he added.

The Adopt a Haircut program is a collaborative effort of Brock's Mt Nebo Missionary Baptist Church, the Mott Branch Public Library and Poor Clark's Barbershop.

All a boy has to do is to go to the library, check out a book and bring it to Poor Clark's to receive a free haircut ... as well as a reading lesson.

"If you can read, you can achieve," said Brock.



Since the program's inception in August 2007, over 500 haircuts have been

donated to central city boys. The expense for those haircuts have been donated by

gram alive," he said last Friday. "Our children can be whatever they want to



Rev. Cedric Brock with KeiShon McClendon(L) and Trazarious Faulkner

"We need to keep our children groomed to keep them successful."

the community at large and Brock is anxious for the community to continue stepping up.

"This is a plea to the community to keep the pro-

be."

Those who wish to donate to the program can take their donations directly to Poor Clark's Barbershop at 1723 Detroit. Receipts will be provided for the tax deductible donations.

Visit us online at thetrutholedo.com

Non-Profit Discount Prescription Drug Program Available for Lucas County Residents

Special to The Truth

In the midst of a severe economic downturn and rising healthcare costs, Lucas County Commissioner Ben Konop is promoting a program to help lower the price of vital prescription drugs for working families in Lucas County. Konop visited a job seekers forum at UAW Local 12 on Monday, November 24, as well as several senior centers to promote the program.

"In these tough economic times, it is essential that we help seniors and working families stay healthy and stretch every dollar," said Konop.

The Ohio Best Rx program is a free program for Ohio residents who lack prescription drug coverage and senior citizens with Medicare benefits. According to the 2007 Lucas County Health Assessment Report, over 50,000 Lucas County residents lack health insurance and would be eligible for the Ohio's Best Rx program. Only approximately 10 percent of residents are currently using this benefit.

In order to qualify for the program, individuals must be over the age of 60 or within 300 percent of the federal poverty level (\$31,200 for a single person, \$63,600 for a family of four). The drug card cannot be used in conjunction with any private insurance or Medicaid. Seniors with Medicare benefits are eligible for Ohio's Best Rx. To apply, individuals can call 1-866-923-7879 or fill out an application online at www.ohiobestrx.org.

The Ohio's Best Rx program was created by a partnership between drug manufacturers, the Ohio AFL-CIO, and the American Association of Retired Persons. The program was signed into law in 2003 and is currently housed in the Ohio Department of Aging.

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Notre Dame Academy's Vision Quest Program

By Faith A. McGlown
Sojourner's Truth Reporter

Nestled on a spacious campus covered with cathedral-style brick buildings and green, lush landscapes, Notre Dame Academy has been educating young women, grades 7 through 12, since 1904.

In 2001, Notre Dame Academy, a Catholic, single-sex school, began offering four-year, full-scholarships to minority girls through their Vision Quest Program: "Seeking the Future" to help them reach their full potential—academically and in life.

"NDA's Quest program encourages young women to explore their vision of the future with hands-on opportunities in business, engineering, law/politics, media arts, and science." NDA offers 16 advanced placement and 30 honors classes to help prepare students for college.

The program's mission is providing a college-preparatory education to young women, primarily from the Central City, with the support and care that will enhance their academic, personal and spiritual development.

"The all-female environment is a lot more nurturing. It takes out the one element that causes friction and al-

lows them to concentrate on academics," said Director of Marketing, Enrollment and Annual Fund Gail A. Christie.

Currently, there are 15 students in the school's Quest program, which is financed through mostly private and corporate donations. The maximum number of participants is 16 students—four students in each grade level.

Quest Program Director Christine Knaggs, who also teaches biology at NDA, said the program's small size allows her to develop close-knit relationship with the students and it creates intimacy within the program. Its small size also makes the selection process much more difficult for administrators and competitive for the pool of deserving young ladies.

Applicants must have satisfactory academics, two letters of recommendation: one from a principal and one from a teacher or counselor, and submit a student essay about how a NDA education will impact her life and how she plans to make a difference in the world. A parent essay is also submitted and a parent and child interview is conducted for Quest scholarships, which are automatically re-

newed if the student maintains good academic standing.

Students will demonstrate a strong commitment to the community by completing 62 service hours a year. Scholarship recipients give 32-hours of community service at St. Anne's Hospital over eight-weeks in the summer. In addition, any student receiving a Quest scholarship must participate in a study skills session for a week in the summer and a 30-hour work-study program during the school year.

Parents and students attend a monthly Saturday meeting, including two meetings during the summer. Parents must remain in close communication with Quest's program director over the course of the student's academic career at NDA.

Some new recruits may experience a kind of culture shock. NDA has incorporated several tools to ease students into the demanding course load and the academy's block scheduling, which consists of four, 85-minute classes which meet every other day, like integrating grade levels, a mentorship program, and Knaggs.

Chahaael Smith, a junior and Quest scholar, describes Knaggs, who was chosen as NBC 24's Glass Apple Award winner in April 2008 for favorite educator, as a second mom. She credits Knaggs with much of her success at NDA.

"She's a big ball of sunshine," Smith said about Knaggs. "She gives words of encouragement and goes beyond her call of duty."

Smith hopes to attend Yale University or Cornell University to study psychology and she participates in track and gymnastics. She is a member of the African-American Club, Enviro Club, and the speech team.

"I'll never trade the memories," Smith said about her time at NDA. She said she has made some friends for life.

Knaggs stressed that the program's nurturing environment allows students to successfully transition into NDA, graduate, and go to college. Quest offers peer-tutoring, college visits and Ohio Graduation Test preparation.

Senior Raquel Hernandez, Hispanic Club president, says she has friends who do not feel prepared for college but she does. If your goal is to move on to higher education, Hernandez says that NDA is the school to prepare for it.

"I feel really prepared. [NDA] has given me the opportunity that I wouldn't have had to challenge myself academically," said Hernandez, who has applied to The Ohio State University, Cleveland State University, John Carroll University, and Loyola University.

Hernandez is a Link Crew Leader and a member of the Current Events and Global Concerns Clubs.

Adapting to the single-sex campus may have been difficult but only at first.

"No drama. No guys. Never gossip," Smith said about that the all-female environment that allows more focus to put on grades. "Nobody cares about what you're wearing or what you look like."

The all-girl atmosphere also has other benefits other

than its garden courtyards, high-quality education, and bonds of sisterhood.

"It's easier to talk about some things—there's no immaturity," Hernandez said about the male-free campus.

Knaggs said they can openly discuss behaviors and situations that can be detrimental to young women in a spiritual way.

"There is a strong sense of community within Quest," Knaggs said. "Students are socially very comfortable and in the groove."

She said she has witnessed some incredible transformations and she feels great pride knowing that she had a hand in that. Past graduates come back to NDA to speak and serve as role models for students.

For more information about NDA's Vision Quest Program, contact Christine Knaggs at 419-475-9359 or at their website: www.nda.org. Notre Dame Academy is located at 3535 West Sylvania Avenue in Toledo. Notre Dame Academy's Vision Quest Program

Direct Selling Can Often Offer Career Options

Special to The Truth

A growing number of Americans are taking a more direct approach when it comes to supplementing their income or starting a second career. They've taken up direct selling.

Direct selling, or the sale of products and services on a one-on-one basis away from a fixed retail establishment (think Pampered Chef and Mary Kay), has long been a way for many people to work part-time and add to the family income. For some, it's also been a way to start a new business and become their own boss.

For anyone interested in becoming a direct selling representative, the Direct Selling Association (DSA) offers these helpful hints:

- Check to see if the company you're thinking of working for is an Association member. If it is it must follow the Association's rigorous Code of Ethics.

- Make sure the company sells an actual product or service. If it focuses only on recruiting, it may



Many people find that direct selling can be a satisfying way to supplement their income or start a new career.

be an illegal pyramid scheme.

- Start-up costs should be minimal. The start-up fees in direct selling companies are generally modest—usually the cost of a sales kit.

According to the Direct Selling Association, interest in the business tends to rise during difficult economic times. "In 2007, 15 million Americans worked as direct selling representatives and they sold more

than \$30 billion worth of products and services," said DSA spokeswoman Amy Robinson. "Representatives are their own bosses, set their own schedules around family and other obligations, and establish their own expectations."

For more information on how to become a direct selling representative, visit www.directselling411.com.



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My Job As An Entertainment Columnist

By Michael Hayes
Minister of Culture



What's good people? Okay, I appreciate y'all rocking with me these last few weeks from the Obama articles to the personal stories. It means a lot that so many of you out there even take time to read my section and it means even more that you put up with all my various wanderings of the mind. Still and all, I like to sometimes take a minute to reflect on how this all came to be.

The love is all good and I crack up at the different questions people ask about how I got this job and what exactly they think this job is.

I had an artist tell me a couple of days ago that they thought I sat at a desk all week frantically coming up

with stories and scrapping them, following leads and the whole Clark Kent/Daily Planet thing. We were too weak behind that one.

Some people who have known me since high school and remember me doing music and writing and they think I am fulfilling a life long dream.

There are people who think I'm not actually a staff writer for The Truth but they think I'm just some dude who submits articles each week with no pay and just keeps getting lucky.

It's all just harmless fun and I don't mind if peeps have a few misconceptions. It's cool.

In the interest of clarity though, I don't mind telling people how I got here and exactly what I do.

WHAT I DO

I have a day job, I have this job and I have my music company.

All provide me with income/resources but I am still grinding so I can live better, pay off loans, do my thing and make a come up.

So throughout the day/ week, no, I am not being sent

on assignments or searching for a "scoop."

I am not a reporter. I am a columnist.

Reporters have to report news and news worthy things.

I can, but that is not my job description at all.

It's pretty much my choice entirely what I write about/ don't write about.

Autonomy is not a word people can use a lot at work, but I am happy to say that I pretty much get to do as I please. My boss helps me by giving me a very wide set of parameters.

I basically just do me and my editor steps in only when absolutely necessary.

I may get assigned to do certain things around the city but I don't complain.

Free tickets to all these events... I am happy to do whatever.

Honestly, come to think of it I have a great deal of freedom in all my work so I am thankful for that.

But yeah, I was a junior at The University of Toledo and there was a girl in one of my Public Relations core classes who told me about this new paper being started.

I was downtown one day, decided to stop through and ended up hitting it off with the minds and money people behind this new venture. I told them what I would like to bring to the table and how it fit into their plan to serve Toledo and black Toledo in a way never seen before in media.

Fletcher said to me one day at the office, "I've got it! - You're gonna love this... we're gonna call you 'The Minister of Culture'."

Oh, how I wanted to believe he was joking but nope.

I got the whole "minister" part...not in a religious doctrine sense but in a Black Panther "minister of this, minister of that" sort of way.

But, hey, what are ya gonna do?

So I started getting music for free, got my critics pass for the free movies and away I went. Then I started getting local albums, press releases, letters and the whole nine.

I write about societal issues, media, pop culture, entertainment, local issues, political issues, relationships, and even personal reflection pieces as evidenced in the two recent

"Gaining Perspective" pieces. Celebrity interviews lined up by my boss (Sinbad interview, etc.) or celebrity interviews through my own contacts (Danita Kane Interview, etc).

But even with all of that, I honestly do not consider myself a writer by trade.

Honestly... I hated journalism and news writing in college.

I don't do this because I have a self inflated ego about this profession, believe dat.

I can't think of one day in my life where I ever even sat back and dreamed of doing this.

But I have always had a voice, always used art to express and always tried to big up Toledo.

And that's what I feel I do more than anything.

I just try to help people navigate their way through things, that's all.

Because I surely need help getting through life and so many of my most loyal readers are also close friends and family who I rely on to advise me.

CELEBRITY STATUS?

I am NOT a local celebrity by any stretch of the imagination.

Charlie Mack, Shenikwa Stratford and those people - those are people who if you see them out somewhere it's like "aww wow, it's you!! I'm happy to be among

them as members of the media and our city is blessed to have such shining examples of talent who are also humble (I mean that, Charlie Mack... Shenikwa Stratford, Kaj Boogie, King Keyser, Hutch Daddy ... and many other voices and faces you recognize are all very humble people). Man, I even called up Brad Fanning last week at Fox Toledo to discuss some things with him and he was cool.

I'm just saying all this to say that I may be a member of the media, but I'm not someone on a level you should trip over... feel me?

People see me out and talk to me but half the time my mind is completely somewhere else and it takes me a minute to remember where they recognize me from.

I just keep myself grounded and focused.

True story: The Sojourner's Truth circulation reaches at least 80,000 readers each week. But that doesn't mean that even 9,000 of them read MY section.

I have no fame. I can't take away fame and I can't really give anyone fame either.

Acknowledgement? Yes. But fame, Nope.

WHAT I WRITE ABOUT AND WHY

I talk about single life in Toledo because that's what Toledo is talking about when they talk to me.

I talk about being involved in the community and the arts because that's how I was raised.

I talk about the local music industry because it has been a part of my everyday reality for longer than I remember.

I talk about the pot holes, the prejudice, the pride (or lack thereof) and the people of this city because I have lived here all my life and I'm just trying to represent us accurately.

I talk about the disenfranchised, the un-popular viewpoints, the under dogs, the little-known heroes because they need a voice.

I talk about stuff I'm involved in because...hell, I'm involved in it.

My small music company Under Godz Ent. (U.G.E.) and the artists I work with and events I'm apart of. Being on the local arts scene and dealing with spoken word nights and such. Even back when I was doing political work with The League of Pissed Off Voters... I mean I wrote a play-by-play recap of going down to D.C. to protest at Bush's 2004 in-

auguration. Readers probably could tell I was extra heated back then, yo.

For like two months, almost every article I wrote was centered around all the work I was doing on the 2004 campaign and protesting and all that.

But, hey, whether U.G.E. or L.P.O.V. I write about what's going on in my world.

I wrote two recent articles about my god sister who was involved in that car accident and all it has taught me about compassion and truly honoring life while we are living.

From my art/business to experiences that change how I look at the world... my writing is this little window into my world and if you learn anything from it than that's cool.

I write about what it's like to look for a job here, what its like to look for nightlife here...what it's like to just look for life in Toledo period.

I try to offer people a way through.

You wanna know what album to buy...what artists I stand behind.. I just tell you what I feel and hope that you take my opinion into consideration.

When it comes to buying music, going to the movies, going to the club, getting things done - the truth is you can lose money and leave very unfulfilled if you're not careful.

I'm trying to keep people informed of what I have found that works for me in the hopes that it will work for them.

You need a barbershop, Fosters on Bancroft.

You need honest/dependable and affordable work done on your car, Excel Auto on Monroe/ Sylvania.

You need a daycare that's clean, professional and truly will help your child develop, Learners For Life Daycare on Monroe/Upton.

You need any type of computer repair or custom computer work done, Justin at Allied P.C. on Secor/ Sylvania.

I know first hand that this city has some places that are crappy, disorganized and largely inefficient when it comes to certain businesses but all the places I just named are wonderful and I trust them all implicitly.

All of the places I just mentioned are establishments where I can say first-hand that they will treat you right and their work is exceptional.

If we all can talk about what's so bad about Toledo, why not balance it out by

(Continued on Page 16)



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CLASSIFIEDS

November 26, 2008

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State of Ohio Ohio School Facilities Commission NOTICE TO BIDDERS

Bids will be received by the Toledo Public School District (the "District or TPS"), at the School Board Office, Treasurers Room 3, 420 E. Manhattan Blvd., Toledo, Ohio 43608 for the Bowsher High School Pre-demolition Asbestos/HazMat Abatement Projects in accordance with the Drawings and Specifications prepared by:

TTL Associates, Inc.
1915 N. 12th Street
Toledo, Ohio 43604
Phone No. 419-324-2222
Fax No. 419-321-6252

The Construction Manager for the Project is:

Lathrop/Gant/Barton Malow, LLC
701 Jefferson, Suite 302
Toledo, Ohio 43604
Phone No. 419-776-5600
Fax No. 877-281-0784

Any Proposed Equal for a Standard shall be submitted to the Consultant, no later than ten (10) days prior to the bid opening. If no Addendum is issued accepting the Proposed Equal, the Proposed Equal shall be considered rejected.

Sealed bids will be received for: Estimates

Bid Item No. 1: Asbestos/HazMat Abatement of Bowsher High School
\$325,705.00

Abatement Dates: February 2nd through May 1st, 2009

until **December 12th, 2008 at 2:00 p.m. (as determined by Stratum clocking (cell phone time))** and will be opened publicly and read immediately thereafter.

A pre-bid meeting will be held on **December 5th, 2008 at 10:00 a.m.** at the former Bowsher High School, 3548 South Detroit Avenue, Toledo, OH.

Bidders will be required to comply with the Toledo Public School District's Community Inclusion Plan. Contract Documents can be obtained from **Toledo Blue Print, 6964 McEnerney Street, Northwood, Ohio 43619, phone: (419) 661-9841** for the cost of the printing, to be paid to the printing company at the time the drawings are picked up. CD-Rom copies of the bid drawings are also available from **Toledo Blue Print** for no cost with the purchase of the specification books.

The Contract Documents may be reviewed for bidding purposes without charge during business hours at the following locations:

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Maumee, OH 43537
PH: 419-861-1300
FX: 419-861-1325

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FX: 419-530-3242

Northwest Ohio Hispanic Chamber of Commerce
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Toledo, Ohio 43602
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Dublin, OH 43215-1073
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Ohio Construction News

7261 Engle Rd., Suite 304
Cleveland, Ohio 44130
PH: 800-969-4700

The Plan Room
3135 South State St., Suite 210
Ann Arbor, MI 48108
PH: 734-662-2570
FX: 734-662-1695

Builders Exchange
5555 Airport Hwy, Suite 140
Toledo, OH 43615
PH: 216-661-8300

E.O.P.A. - Hamilton Building
505 Hamilton St.
Toledo, Ohio 43602
PH: 419-242-7304

Construction Association of Michigan
43636 Woodward Ave.
Bloomfield Hills, MI 48302
PH: 248-972-1014
FX: 248-972-1136

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For confidential consideration, please submit your resume through our website career center at www.sunocoinc.com . EOE/M/F/D/V

My Job

(Continued from Page 13)

also mentioning all that is going well?

See...this is all just about things that have made an impact on me.

I offer it to you all so hopefully you can take

something worthwhile from it.

If one day I end up writing for XXL, The Source, Vibe Magazine or even just a bigger paper/online mag that brings me more loot and gets my foot in the in-

dustry... I will have all of you to thank for being my readers so early in the game.

I will have more stories about my company U.G.E. and my artists in the near future.

I have at least six interviews that I have promised to other artists around the area just because I truly admire how they conduct business and how they approached me.

Since I'm NOT doing local album reviews (people too funny acting ...) anymore...

I will still give artists a way to tap into my readers by interviews and also a whole new concept I'm working on that's guaranteed to help create buzz.

I have experienced two more issues with shady promoters in the last week.

So I will continue warning artists/producers about when people come at you

about a show and they don't have all the necessary pieces in place (just be a little professional y'all...just a little).

I have an upcoming story on a monthly Hip Hop Charity event that U.G.E. has taken part in because the organizers really are using rap music to benefit those who need help the most.

And as always I keep y'all informed about the weekly Open Mic Night for artists/singers/rappers to come and try out their material... right here at The Truth Art Gallery each and every Saturday evening. U.G.E. makes it happen and we call it

The Listening.

Shouts to Mally and Chief of the Swagga Boys for coming down and of course the whole U.G.E., my dude The Light and all our regulars.

It's NOT a club y'all...no DJ, no big sound system, no stage.

Just a lil humble spot for you to build your skills and all that.

So it is what it is, thanks for rocking with me this week... see you in seven.

Peace.

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